

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2018 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 216
Ways and Means

(Prince George's County Delegation)

Prince George's County Board of Education - Student Hearing and Vision
Screenings - Reporting Requirements PG 504-18

This bill requires the Prince George's County Board of Education to report to the Maryland Department of Health on (1) the number of students who did not receive recommended services after failing a hearing or vision screening and (2) the reason each of those students did not receive the recommended services. The county board must develop a written strategy with quantifiable goals to increase the number of students receiving recommended services after failing a hearing or vision screening. The county board must also report annually to the county executive, the county council, and the county delegation to the General Assembly on the progress in meeting the goals.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None.

Local Effect: Prince George's County Board of Education expenditures increase by approximately \$151,400 in FY 2019 and by \$218,500 in FY 2023 to hire additional personnel to assist students in receiving recommended medical services. The county board can handle the reporting requirements with existing resources. Revenues are not affected.
This bill imposes a mandate on a unit of local government.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Each local board of education or local health department must provide hearing and vision screenings for all students in local public schools, and each local health

department must provide and fund the screenings for private and nonpublic schools in the jurisdiction. Unless evidence is presented that a student has been tested within the past year, the screenings must take place in the years that a child enters a school system, enters the first grade, and enters the eighth or ninth grade. Further screenings must be done in accordance with the bylaws adopted by the State Board of Education or policies adopted by a local board of education or local health department.

Results of screenings go in each child's permanent record, are given to the parents of any student who fails the screenings, and are reported to the local board of education or local health department. The parent or guardian of a student who does not pass a screening must report on the recommended services received by the student, and the report must be submitted on a form provided by the local board of education or local health department. The local board of education or local health department must report the results of the screenings and the number of students receiving recommended services to the Maryland Department of Health. A student whose parent or guardian objects in writing to a hearing or vision screening on religious grounds may not be required to take the screening.

Background: The Prince George's County Public School System provides hearing and vision screenings to approximately 23,000 students each year. Currently, school nurses have several ways of following up with families about recommended services, including phone calls, letters, and emails. However, some schools do not have a full-time nurse and, thus, may not be able to follow up with all students who fail a screening test.

The school system indicates that it plays no role in providing medical treatment. Rather, the school system refers a student for medical services after a failed screening. If a student fails a hearing or vision screening, school health personnel are required to notify and assist the family in selecting recommended services, to assist with identifying a primary care provider (if needed), follow up with the family regarding services received, and to inform appropriate personnel of students who have health problems that may impede learning or require special care.

Local Expenditures: Because the bill requires the county board to set quantifiable goals to increase the number of students receiving recommended services and to report annually on progress in meeting the goals, the school system will need to hire three additional hearing and vision technicians. The additional technicians will be able to improve the current screening process and help determine and document the reasons that parents did not follow up on the referral for recommended services. As shown in **Exhibit 1**, county expenditures increase by \$151,400 in fiscal 2019 and by \$218,500 in fiscal 2023.

Exhibit 1
Increased County Expenditures Under HB 216

	<u>FY 2019</u>	<u>FY 2020</u>	<u>FY 2021</u>	<u>FY 2022</u>	<u>FY 2023</u>
Personnel	\$148,759	\$202,311	\$206,358	\$210,485	\$214,695
Operating	2,625	3,570	3,641	3,713	3,788
Total	\$151,384	\$205,881	\$209,999	\$214,198	\$218,483

Source: Prince George's County; Department of Legislative Services

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Prince George's County; Maryland Department of Health;
Department of Legislative Services

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