

Department of Legislative Services  
 Maryland General Assembly  
 2020 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
 First Reader

House Bill 1340 (Delegate Acevero, *et al.*)  
 Ways and Means

Commission on History, Culture, and Civics in Education

This bill establishes the Commission on History, Culture, and Civics in Education to make recommendations to the State Board of Education and the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to further the discovery, interpretation, and learning of the history, culture, and civics of the United States and Maryland. MSDE must staff the commission; members of the commission may not receive compensation but are entitled to reimbursement for expenses, as provided in the State budget. By December 30 each year, beginning in 2020, the commission must report its findings and recommendations to the State Board of Education, the Governor, and the General Assembly. By July 1 each year, the State Board of Education must review the commission’s findings and recommendations and make any appropriate changes to the educational standards for prekindergarten through grade 12. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2020.**

Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** General fund expenditures increase by \$54,400 in FY 2021. Future years reflect ongoing costs. Revenues are not affected

| (in dollars)   | FY 2021    | FY 2022    | FY 2023    | FY 2024    | FY 2025    |
|----------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Revenues       | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        |
| GF Expenditure | 54,400     | 63,700     | 65,200     | 67,500     | 69,800     |
| Net Effect     | (\$54,400) | (\$63,700) | (\$65,200) | (\$67,500) | (\$69,800) |

*Note:() = decrease; GF = general funds; FF = federal funds; SF = special funds; - = indeterminate increase; (-) = indeterminate decrease*

**Local Effect:** To the extent education standards are changed, local school systems may need to update their social studies curriculums to meet the new standards. Any such changes or costs associated with them cannot be reliably estimated but may be meaningful. Revenues are not affected.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

## Analysis

**Bill Summary:** The bill establishes the membership of the commission, which, to the extent practicable, must reflect the gender, racial, ethnic, and geographic diversity of the State. In addition, a majority of the members must have classroom experience or experience in developing education content standards. Members serve for four-year terms, staggered as specified. The commission must elect a chair from among the members.

The commission must:

- examine the history, culture, and civics of the United States and Maryland including the contributions of specified minority groups; and
- make recommendations to the State Board of Education regarding the adoption of standards and programs that accurately reflect the discovery, interpretation, and learning of the history, culture, and civics of the United States and Maryland.

### Current Law:

#### *General Requirements for Instruction*

With the advice of the State Superintendent of Schools, the State Board of Education establishes basic policy and guidelines for the program of instruction for public schools. Subject to State law and the regulations, bylaws, policies, and guidelines established by the State Board of Education, each local board of education must establish the curriculum guides and courses of study for schools in its jurisdiction. Policies, rules, and regulations for the graduation of students from Maryland public schools are established by local boards of education and the State Board of Education.

The State Board of Education and the State Superintendent of Schools must assist each local board of education to establish educational goals and objectives that conform to statewide educational objectives for subject areas, including reading, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies. With the assistance of its local board, each public school must survey current student achievement in reading, language, mathematics, science, social studies, and other areas to assess its needs.

#### *Social Studies Instruction and Topics*

According to regulations, each local school system must provide an instructional program in social studies each year for all students prekindergarten through grade 8 and a program which enables students to meet graduation requirements and to select social studies electives in grades 9 through 12. These programs must at least meet the content standards in the regulations. In Maryland, among other required topics, regulations require that the

social studies instructional program teach students about the peoples of the nation and the world. Specifically, students must understand the diversity and commonality, human interdependence, and global cooperation of the people of the United States and the world through a multicultural and a historical perspective. Every five years, each local superintendent of schools must certify to the State Superintendent of Schools that the instructional programming for prekindergarten through grade 12 meets, at a minimum, all the requirements set forth in the regulations.

**Background:** The telling and teaching of history is always a choice of whose story it told. The stories of minority and disenfranchised groups have traditionally been marginalized.

### *Framework Updates Process and Recent Updates*

MSDE advises that educational frameworks are updated on an as-needed basis in response to increased academic awareness in the affected field. For example, in 2019, MSDE updated the modern world history framework to include the objective “Evaluating the cause, course, and consequences of the Holocaust” in addition to the existing “Analyzing the systematic and state-sponsored atrocities perpetrated by governments in Europe and Asia during World War Two.” This update was in response to studies conducted nationwide that revealed a concerning lack of knowledge among young people, specifically in their awareness of the Holocaust. MSDE further advises that drawing attention to the Holocaust as a secondary objective to that of “the atrocities perpetrated in World War Two” further highlights the need for it to be explicitly included in local curriculum.

In 2017, new State frameworks in American government and modern world history were released. In 2018, a new middle school United States history framework was released. MSDE advises that local school systems have undertaken the work of revising curriculum according to those new frameworks, and the support materials have been purchased. In spring 2020, the high school United States history and prekindergarten through grade 5 elementary social studies frameworks are scheduled to be released. Local development of those curricula will commence soon thereafter. MSDE advises that the commission could require additional changes to these areas, which could undermine the work already completed or planned by local school systems and require additional expenditures at the local level.

### *Resource Review and Program Adoption*

MSDE advises it traditionally has not endorsed materials and programs outside of those produced by Maryland teachers. Resource review and program adoption is conducted by the social studies supervisors within the local school systems.

**State Expenditures:** General fund expenditures increase by \$54,365 in fiscal 2021 for MSDE to hire a part-time educational program specialist to staff the commission, facilitate the reports, and facilitate changes to standards. This estimate is predicated on existing staff from multiple curriculum offices (*e.g.*, social studies, English language arts, health education, world languages, and fine arts) at MSDE assisting in the examination and review of the State standards. The estimate assumes a 90-day start-up delay following the bill's July 1, 2020 effective date (during the period in which commission members are appointed). It includes a salary, fringe benefits, one-time start-up costs, and ongoing operating expenses.

|   |                 |
|---|-----------------|
| Position                                | 0.5             |
| Salary and Fringe Benefits              | \$49,236        |
| Operating Expenses                      | <u>5,129</u>    |
| <b>Total FY 2021 State Expenditures</b> | <b>\$54,365</b> |

As the commission is a permanent entity with ongoing review and recommendation duties, future year expenditures reflect a full salary with an annual increase and employee turnover and ongoing operating expenses.

Any expense reimbursements for commission members are assumed to be minimal and absorbable within existing budgeted resources.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Designated Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Maryland State Department of Education; Department of Legislative Services

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