

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2020 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
First Reader

Senate Bill 695 (Senator Klausmeier)  
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

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Education - Comprehensive Health Education Program - Skin Cancer

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This bill requires, beginning in the 2020-2021 school year, each local board of education provide age-appropriate instruction on skin cancer as part of the comprehensive health education program. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2020.**

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Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** None. The bill is directed at local school systems.

**Local Effect:** Local school systems can provide instruction on skin cancer using existing resources; however, resources may be diverted from existing health curriculum requirements.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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Analysis

**Current Law:** Each local school system must (1) provide in public schools a comprehensive health education program with sufficient frequency and duration to meet the requirements of the State curriculum for all students in prekindergarten through grade 8 and (2) offer in public schools a comprehensive health education program in grades 9 through 12 that enables students to meet graduation requirements and to select health education electives. Access to the curriculum must be provided for nondiploma-bound students.

In order to graduate from a public high school in Maryland, students must complete a half credit of health. According to the Maryland State Department of Education, a half-credit course is about 67 hours of instruction time.

State law requires local school systems to teach a number of specified health topics including drug addiction and prevention education; awareness and prevention of sexual abuse and assault; and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) that includes hands-only CPR and the use of an automated external defibrillator.

State regulations require health instruction in the following topics: mental and emotional health; alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs; personal and consumer health; family life and human sexuality; safety and injury prevention; nutrition and fitness; and disease prevention and control.

**Background:** Skin cancer is the most common type of cancer. There are different types of skin cancer which have different treatment options. Exposure to ultraviolet (UV) light is a risk factor for many types of skin cancer. Sunlight is the main source of UV light. Limiting exposure to UV light by using sunscreen, wearing protective clothing, and being in the shade when possible is a way to reduce the risk of many types of skin cancer.

Melanomas are more likely to grow and spread than other types of skin cancer. According to the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention, in 2016 Maryland had approximately 1,650 new cases of melanoma of the skin. The same year, there were 140 people in Maryland who died of melanomas.

#### *Baltimore City Public School System*

Baltimore City Public School System (BCPSS) advises that skin cancer education is included in the disease prevention and control unit of the high school health curriculum, and early instruction begins in grade 2, specifically when students learn about non-communicable diseases. BCPSS advises that expanding the health curriculum to explicitly address skin cancer more in depth using materials that reflect the district's student population and needs would cost approximately \$2,400 in contracting costs.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Designated Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Maryland State Department of Education; Baltimore City Public Schools; Montgomery County Public Schools; Mayo Clinic; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; American Cancer Society; Skin Cancer Foundation; Department of Legislative Services

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