

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2021 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 820 (Delegate Rose)
Ways and Means

County Boards of Education - Computer Science Courses - Reporting
Requirements

This bill requires each local board of education, beginning in the 2023-2024 school year, to submit an annual report on computer science courses to the General Assembly and the State Board of Education. The report must include the number of computer science courses offered in each public school in the county, along with other specified information and disaggregated data. Each local board must post the prior fiscal year data (*i.e.*, data required to be included in the annual report) conspicuously on its website. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2021.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) can provide any requested technical assistance with existing resources.

Local Effect: Some local school systems may incur additional costs to meet specific data gathering and reporting requirements of the bill. **The bill may impose a mandate on a unit of local government.**

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law:

Computer Science Courses

Chapter 358 of 2018 requires, beginning in the 2021-2022 school year, each public high school to offer at least one high-quality computer science course that meets or exceeds the curriculum standards and requirements established by the State Board of Education. Local boards must also make efforts to (1) incorporate computer science in each public elementary and middle school and (2) increase enrollment in middle and high school computer science courses from the following categories:

- female students;
- students with disabilities; and
- students of ethnic, racial, and other demographic groups that are underrepresented in the field of computer science as identified by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

Student Data Collection

Since 1968, the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) has conducted the Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC) to collect data on key education and civil rights issues in our nation's public schools. CRDC collects a variety of information including student enrollment and educational programs and services, most of which is disaggregated by race/ethnicity, sex, limited English proficiency, and disability. CRDC is a longstanding and important aspect of the USDE Office for Civil Rights overall strategy for administering and enforcing the civil rights statutes for which it is responsible. Local educational agencies (LEAs) report required data to USDE. Information collected by CRDC is also used by other USDE offices as well as policymakers and researchers.

Furthermore, much of what is required in the legislation is currently collected in various data collections managed by MSDE, including student-teacher-course-grade data collection which entails data on specific courses, which teacher(s) teach a course, and student grade level, gender, race, ethnicity, English learner status, special education status, and eligibility for free and reduced-price meals.

Student Data Privacy

At the federal level, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act govern the privacy of student data when

educational institutions engage cloud service providers. FERPA generally prohibits the disclosure by schools that receive federal education funding of personally identifiable information from a student's education records, unless the educational institution has obtained signed and dated written consent from a parent or eligible student or one of FERPA's exceptions applies.

Educational institutions are bound by FERPA to protect the privacy of student and family information. In addition, MSDE follows guidelines specified by the Maryland Department of Information Technology's Information Security Policy.

Local Expenditures: Though local school systems currently must gather and report much of the data required under the bill, at least some systems may incur some additional costs to meet each specific data gathering and reporting requirement of the bill.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: HB 1195 of 2020 received a hearing in the House Ways and Means Committee, but no further action was taken. Its cross file, SB 894, received a hearing in the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee, but no further action was taken. HB 1224 of 2019 passed the House and received a hearing in the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee, but no further action was taken.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland State Department of Education; Baltimore City Public Schools; Montgomery County Public Schools; Prince George's County Public Schools; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 11, 2021
md/rhh

Analysis by: Caroline L. Boice

Direct Inquiries to:
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510