

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2021 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
First Reader

Senate Bill 243 (Senator Simonaire)  
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

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**Public High Schools - Health Education - Gambling Dangers and Addiction**

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This bill requires the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to develop, by July 1, 2022, a program of health education on the dangers of gambling and gambling addiction to be provided in public schools. Beginning in the 2022-2023 school year, each local board of education *may* require high schools to include instruction on the dangers of gambling and gambling addiction one time for students during grades 9 through 12. By December 31, 2024, MSDE must report on the implementation of the bill, including information on the program of education that each local board used. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2021.**

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** MSDE can develop the required program and produce the required report using existing resources.

**Local Effect:** Any impact is due to local school systems that choose to provide instruction on the dangers of gambling and gambling addiction to high school students.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Analysis**

**Bill Summary:** The gambling dangers and addiction education program must be coordinated with other State agencies that are responsible for gambling addiction education and control.

The State Board of Education may adopt regulations to implement the requirements of the bill.

**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 public high school in Maryland, students must complete a half credit of health. The [Maryland Comprehensive Health Education Framework](#) includes indicators related to addiction in general as part of mental and emotional health.

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.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** SB 322 of 2020, a similar bill, passed the Senate and was referred to the House Ways and Means Committee, but no further action was taken.

**Designated Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Maryland State Department of Education; Maryland Department of Health; Maryland State Lottery and Gaming Control Agency; Baltimore City Public Schools; Anne Arundel County Public Schools; Prince George's County Public Schools; Wicomico County Public Schools; St. Mary's County Public Schools; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - January 19, 2021  
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