

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2022 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**  
**First Reader**

Senate Bill 237  
(Senator Salling)  
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

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**Education - Curriculum - Unit of Instruction on September 11, 2001, Terrorist Attacks**

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This bill requires the State Board of Education (SBE) to develop contents standards for instructional content on the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks that is age-appropriate, interdisciplinary, and consistent with other required grade-level instruction by January 1, 2023. Beginning with the 2023-2024 school year, each public school and each nonpublic school that participates in State-funded education programs must include in the curriculum a unit of instruction on the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. A nonpublic school that does not participate in State-funded education programs is encouraged to include the instruction. **The bill takes effect on July 1, 2022.**

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) can develop the required standards using existing resources, although resources may be temporarily diverted from other projects. Revenues are not affected.

**Local Effect:** Local school system expenditures increase in FY 2023 and 2024 to train teachers and purchase resources and materials in alignment with the content standards by the 2023-2024 school year. Revenues are not affected. **This bill may impose a mandate on a unit of local government.**

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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## Analysis

**Current Law:** With the advice of the State Superintendent of Schools, SBE 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 SBE, 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 SBE.

Curriculum is often divided into units of study. There is no State definition for what constitutes a unit of study in terms of time or content. However, units generally range for two to six weeks, although they could be shorter.

**State Expenditures:** MSDE advises that the high school [U.S. history framework and content standards](#) meet the requirements of the bill, but elementary and middle school social studies frameworks and standards will need to be developed to include age-appropriate, interdisciplinary content on the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. Therefore, MSDE advises that general fund expenditures increase by an estimated \$40,000 in fiscal 2023 to hire a contractual content specialist for six months to develop elementary and middle school standards for instructional content on the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks so that local school systems can provide a unit of instruction on the topic beginning with the 2023-2024 school year. However, the Department of Legislative Services advises that MSDE can develop the standards using existing resources, although resources may be temporarily diverted from other projects including the existing content revisions.

MSDE advises that it is responsible for the approval and oversight of approximately 1,100 nonpublic and registered church exempt schools. The staff of MSDE's Textbook and Technology program can ensure compliance of nonpublic schools subject to the bill's requirements using existing resources.

**Local Expenditures:** By the 2023-2024 school year (fiscal 2024), each local school system must train teachers in the new curriculum and purchase resources and materials in alignment with the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks content standards for a unit on the topic for elementary and middle schools and to train teachers on the content. It is assumed that these tasks will occur in portions of fiscal 2023 and 2024. It is further assumed that additional materials or training are not needed for high schools because the topic is already included in the content standards; however, the content standards developed under the bill may require local school systems to expand their high school content on the topic. Actual costs will depend on the standards developed by MSDE.

Depending on the content standards developed by MSDE, expenditures may be absorbable by most, if not all local school systems given the limited scope of the topic. However, if

the content standards require extensive materials or teacher training, the costs may not be absorbable. Most costs are in fiscal 2023 and 2024 during the implementation of the new content standards. Costs for fiscal 2025 and beyond are likely minimal.

**Additional Comments:** A nonpublic school that receives State funds must also include in the curriculum a unit of instruction on the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. As for the local school systems, actual costs will depend on the actual content standards developed by the State board. Since nonpublic schools are not currently required to teach any information about the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, and the schools do not benefit from economy of scale, the ability to absorb the costs, at least initially, may be less.

A nonpublic school that does not receive State funds is encouraged to include in the curriculum a unit of instruction on the required material.

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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; Prince George's County Public Schools; St. Mary's County Public Schools; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 2, 2022

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