

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2022 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 758
Ways and Means

(Delegate Szeliga, *et al.*)

Education – Public Schools – Lesson Plans and Instructional Material

This bill requires a public school to prominently post on its website (1) each lesson plan, including specified instructional materials, that was used at the school during the immediately preceding school year; (2) each gradewide or schoolwide presentation, assembly, lecture, or other activity or event facilitated by the school during instructional hours; (3) information on how the school documents, reviews, and approves lesson plans; and (4) the rules established by the local board of education for the production and inspection of instructional material that is not publicly available on the Internet. The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) must develop a template for public schools to report lesson plans. A public school may use the MSDE or a locally created template. A local school may allow a teacher to update a lesson plan throughout the school year if all updates are completed by June 30 of that year. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2022.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: MSDE can develop the required lesson plan template using existing resources. Revenues are not affected.

Local Effect: Local school system expenditures increase, potentially significantly, in FY 2023 and likely beyond to develop and host the lesson plans and other documentation, as described below. Revenues are not affected. **This bill may impose a mandate on a unit of local government.**

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: Each course or class taught at a public school must have a lesson plan. However, the requirements of the bill do not apply to a public school with fewer than 400 students or to a student presentation.

A lesson plan is an outline of the instruction provided by a teacher for the course. At a minimum, the lesson plan must identify and describe the instructional material as specified. If the material is publicly available on the Internet, the lesson plan must include a link or information on how to request the material. A single volume used throughout the lesson plan must be listed only once. If instructional material was created by a teacher at the school, the lesson plan must identify the teacher as the author.

At a minimum, the information that must be published on a school's website, including the lesson plans, must be organized by subject area and grade level. A public school must post lesson plans and school presentations on the school's website for at least 60 days after the end of the school year. This information must be retained for two years after posting.

Each local board of education must (1) ensure that each public school complies with the requirements of the bill and (2) adopt reasonable rules that govern the timely production and inspection of instructional material that is not publicly available on the Internet.

A public school may allow a teacher to use online collaborative software, documents, or spreadsheets to complete or update a lesson plan.

MSDE, in consultation with local boards of education, may adopt regulations to implement the bill.

Current Law: With the advice of the State Superintendent of Schools, the State Board of Education (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.

The [State Standards and Frameworks](#) defines what students should know and be able to do at each grade level. Using the standards and frameworks, local school systems develop curriculums. Teachers then develop lesson plans to teach the curriculum. Several local school systems advise that standards, scopes, sequences, and curriculums are posted on their websites; however, significant modifications are required to capture the information

required by the bill. Baltimore County Public Schools advises that members of the public can request a review of instructional material.

Local Expenditures: Beginning with the 2022-2023 school year, each public school must post on its website specified information, including a lesson plan for each course or class that was used at the school during the immediately preceding school year. The teacher and administrative time to develop the lesson plans and other required documentation in the detail and format required by the bill is likely significant, especially in the first year of implementation (fiscal 2023). In that first year, teachers and administrators must be trained how to develop lesson plans and other documentation that contain all the required information and then develop the lesson plans and other required information. In future years, existing lesson plans may be used as a template, which may reduce, although not eliminate, the time required to produce the lesson plans.

Although local school systems will likely direct teachers and administrators to use existing planning and training time to develop the required lesson plans, some local school systems may need to pay teachers and administrators for additional hours, especially for the initial training and development of the lesson plans in fiscal 2023. To the extent local school systems require additional work hours, local school system expenditures increase significantly; however, any such costs cannot be reliably estimated.

For illustrative purposes, if creating lesson plans that meet the requirements of the bill require an additional hour of planning time per week, each teacher would need an additional 36 hours of planning time per year. This illustrative example is based on there being 36 full weeks in a 180-day school year. It is likely that the time required to develop the required lesson plans varies significantly by subject and grade.

Any time directed to developing the lesson plans and other documentation required by the bill will reduce time spent on existing teacher and administrator responsibilities and training. To reduce the time spent on developing lesson plans, local school systems or schools may choose to develop uniform lesson plans for courses; however, this practice may result in other costs, such as the purchase of additional materials. In addition to direct costs, local school systems advise that the bill may impact teacher retention at a time when there is a national teacher shortage.

Further, although every local school system has a website and most schools have a website, local school systems may need to invest in technology to efficiently host and organize all the lesson plans and other information required to be posted by the bill. Depending on the technological solutions chosen, costs may be one-time and/or ongoing. These costs cannot be reliably estimated but are likely significant. Local school systems may choose to add backend functionality to streamline the review and posting process to reduce staffing costs. Any such costs cannot be reliably estimated.

Thus, overall local school system expenditures increase, potentially significantly, in fiscal 2023 to develop and post the lesson plans and other required documentation. Costs likely diminish somewhat but continue in fiscal 2024 and beyond. Although costs are likely significant, they depend on implementation choices and cannot be reliably estimated.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Designated Cross File: None.

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

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