

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

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**  
**Third Reader - Revised**

Senate Bill 318

(Senator Rosapepe, *et al.*)

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Ways and Means

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**More Opportunities for Career-Focused Students Act of 2022**

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This bill generally requires local school systems to assist high school students in preparing for admission to registered apprenticeship programs in a manner similar to how they assist students in preparing for admission to postsecondary institutions. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2022.**

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** None. The bill pertains only to local school boards.

**Local Effect:** Local school system expenditures may increase minimally to pay for apprenticeship-related exams for some students, as discussed below; otherwise, local school systems can implement the bill's requirements with existing resources. Revenues are not affected.

**Small Business Effect:** Potential meaningful.

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**Analysis**

**Bill Summary:** To help high school students prepare to apply for admission to registered apprenticeship programs, local school systems must:

- with regard to college and career readiness software “platforms” that help align students’ strengths and interests to postsecondary goals and careers, consider the pursuit of a vocational certificate, industry certification, or apprenticeship program as the equivalent of pursuing postsecondary education;

- allow students, parents, or guardians to choose to authorize release of a student's personal information and platform results to registered apprenticeship programs or specified employers from within the platform;
- in the same manner in which they inform students of postsecondary educational options, inform students of employment and skills training opportunities available through registered apprenticeships and specified employers; and
- if the local school system pays for any student to take specified college admissions or college preparatory exams, pay for a student to take specified apprenticeship entrance or certification exams.

**Current Law:** For an overview of registered apprenticeship programs in the State, please see the **Appendix – Apprenticeship**.

**Local Expenditures:** Some local school systems indicate that they already comply, at least in part, with the bill's requirements. For instance, both Montgomery County Public Schools and Prince George's County Public Schools advise that, using federal funds, they already cover the cost of some industry licensing exams for students. However, those federal funds are not available to cover the cost of apprenticeship entry exams or other qualifying exams. Therefore, local school system expenditures to cover the cost of additional exams may increase minimally, but a reliable estimate is not feasible as it depends on the number of students taking those exams and whether a school system already pays for them.

**Small Business Effect:** Small businesses that rely on apprentice labor may have a broader pool of applicants from which to choose.

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## Additional Information

**Prior Introductions:** SB 668 of 2021, which included provisions similar to those in this bill among others, received a hearing in the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee, but no further action was taken.

**Designated Cross File:** HB 652 (Delegate Guyton) - Ways and Means.

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

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## Appendix – Apprenticeship

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Generally, apprenticeship is a voluntary, industry-sponsored system that prepares individuals for occupations typically requiring high-level skills and related technical knowledge. Apprenticeships are sponsored by one or more employers and may be administered solely by the employer or jointly by management and labor groups. An apprentice receives supervised, structured, on-the-job training under the direction of a skilled journeyperson and related technical instruction in a specific occupation. Apprenticeships are designed to meet the workforce needs of the program sponsor. Many industry sponsors use apprenticeship as a method to train employees in the knowledge necessary to become a skilled worker. This also means the number of apprenticeships available is dependent on the current workforce needs of the industry and the capacity and willingness of employers to supervise them.

Apprenticeships are available to individuals age 16 and older; an employer, however, may set a higher entry age. By law, individuals must be age 18 to apprentice in hazardous occupations. Apprenticeships last from one to six years, although most are three to four years, and involve a minimum of 144 hours of classroom instruction per year and at least 2,000 hours per year of on-the-job training. A national apprenticeship and training program was established in federal law in 1937 with the passage of the National Apprenticeship Act, also known as the Fitzgerald Act. The purpose of the Act was to promote national standards of apprenticeship and to safeguard the welfare of apprentice workers.

Along with [26 other states and the District of Columbia](#), Maryland has chosen to operate its own apprenticeship programs under the federal law. The Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning (DWDAL) within the Maryland Department of Labor is responsible for the daily oversight of State apprenticeship programs. More specifically, DWDAL approves new apprenticeship programs, changes to current programs, and compliance with State and federal requirements. The approval process involves assessing the appropriateness of an apprenticeship program in a proposed industry, the education that will be provided to the apprentice, the current staffing level of the entity proposing the program to determine whether adequate supervision can be provided, recruitment and retention efforts, and the overall operations of the entity. The Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Council serves in an advisory role for legislation and regulations, recommending changes to update apprenticeship laws.

As of December 2020, there were 11,076 apprentices registered, and there were 3,713 participating employers. During calendar 2020, the State added 25 new apprenticeship programs.