

Department of Legislative Services
 Maryland General Assembly
 2022 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

Senate Bill 498 (Senator Gallion)
 Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Education - Student Horizon Database and Scorecard (Students Right to Know Act of 2022)

This bill requires the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), in collaboration with other specified agencies, to annually collect specified information on jobs and postsecondary education, including the most in-demand jobs in the State and average cost of attendance. Using this information, the agencies must create and maintain a searchable Student Horizon Database that includes specified functions. By October 1, 2023, and each October 1 thereafter, MSDE must publish a Student Horizon Scorecard that ranks specified information. By October 31, 2023, and each year thereafter, each local school system must distribute the most recent scorecard to each high school student.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: General fund expenditures increase by an estimated \$168,300 in FY 2023 and \$275,400 in FY 2024 to hire a contractor to build the database that creates the searchable database and annual scorecard. To the extent additional data collection by State agencies and institutions is required, expenditures increase, potentially significantly. Future years reflect elimination of one-time costs. Revenues are not affected.

| (in dollars) | FY 2023 | FY 2024 | FY 2025 | FY 2026 | FY 2027 |
|----------------|-------------|-------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Revenues | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| GF Expenditure | 168,300 | 275,400 | - | - | - |
| Higher Ed Exp. | - | - | - | - | - |
| Net Effect | (\$168,300) | (\$275,400) | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |

Note: () = decrease; GF = general funds; FF = federal funds; SF = special funds; - = indeterminate increase; (-) = indeterminate decrease

Local Effect: Local school systems can distribute the most recent scorecard to each high school student in their district using existing resources. To the extent that additional data collection by local school systems is required, expenditures may increase. Revenues are not affected.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: Specifically, MSDE, the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC), the Maryland Department of Labor (MDL), and the Maryland Longitudinal Data System (MLDS) Center must annually collect information on:

- the most in-demand jobs in the State, including the starting salary and education levels required for each job;
- for all institutions of postsecondary education and private career schools in the State, specified cost, loan, graduation, and starting salary information;
- for all public four-year higher education institutions, the average total student loan debt of graduates of each institution for each undergraduate and graduate degree program at the institution;
- the completion rate and average starting salary of students enrolled in apprenticeship, credential, and career and technical education programs while in high school;
- the completion rate and average starting salary for the first term of enlistment of students who enlist in the military; and
- the number of college graduates in the State working in an occupation that does not require a college degree.

Student Horizon Database

The searchable Student Horizon Database must include the 50 highest enrolled college majors at each public four-year education institution, vocational and private career schools, and high school career and technical education programs. It must also have a function that allows a user to compare all postsecondary education institutions and private career schools by specified metrics, including average annual cost, starting salary after graduation or completion, and percentage of students successfully paying student loan payments. Further, the database must have a search function to allow a user to choose a specific major or program at an institution of postsecondary education or private career school that yields specified results, including the percentage of students who will graduate in six years or less or complete on time.

Student Horizon Scorecard

The Student Horizon Scorecard to be published by MSDE on its website must include a list of the following:

- 50 highest enrolled majors among all public four-year higher education institutions in the State;

- 20 career and technical education and certificate programs with the highest starting salary after graduation or completion;
- 25 most in-demand jobs in the State and their corresponding salaries and education requirements; and
- base pay, benefits, and the average signing bonus of students who enlist in the military after high school graduation, along with the necessary Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery Score by military branch.

Other

In order to satisfy the requirements of the bill, an institution of postsecondary education or a private career school may enter into agreements to incorporate data from existing databases and reports, including those specified.

MSDE must adopt regulations to implement the bill.

Current Law:

Federal Student Right-To-Know Act

The federal Student Right-To-Know Act of 1990 requires institutions eligible for Title IV funds under the Higher Education Act of 1965 to calculate completion or graduation rates of certificate- or degree-seeking, full-time students entering the institution. This information, as well as average cost of attendance, average loans, and salary of students who received loans two years after graduation are available on the U.S. Department of Education [College Scorecard](#).

Maryland Longitudinal Data System Center

Chapter 190 of 2010 established MLDS to contain individual-level student data and workforce data from all levels of education and the State's workforce. The legislation also established the MLDS Center within State government to serve as a central repository for the data, to ensure compliance with federal privacy laws, to perform research on the data sets, and to fulfill education reporting requirements and approved public information requests. The MLDS Center is administratively housed within MSDE.

The purpose of the data system is to facilitate and enable the exchange of student data among agencies and institutions within the State as well as generate timely and accurate information about student achievement that can be used to improve the State's education system and guide decision makers at all levels. The data system allows users to effectively organize, manage, disaggregate, and analyze individual student data and to examine

student progress and outcomes over time, including preparation for postsecondary education and the workforce.

The MLDS Center may only use de-identified data in the analysis, research, and reporting conducted by the center. The center may only use aggregate data in the release of data in reports and in response to data requests.

Student data collected by MLDS includes State and national assessments; course taking and completion; grade point average; remediation; retention; degree, diploma, or credential attainment; enrollment; demographic data; juvenile delinquency records; and elementary and secondary school disciplinary records. Criminal records, children in need of assistance records, and medical and health records are specifically excluded from the types of data that MLDS may collect.

The MLDS governing board decides the specifics on incorporating new data elements into MLDS.

Local school systems, community colleges, public four-year institutions of higher education, and State agencies are required to transfer student-level and transcript-level data as well as workforce data to MLDS.

State/Local Expenditures: The MLDS Center advises that it is the agency best suited to produce the database and scorecard required by the bill, as it was created to address cross-sector data collection and reporting. The Department of Legislative Services concurs with that assessment and advises that the center can meet the bill's requirements the most efficiently. Therefore, this estimate reflects center staff building and maintaining the database and scorecard for MSDE to host on its website and distribute to local school systems.

The center advises that it has some, but not all, of the data required for the scorecard. It has also developed reports and dashboards that are partially responsive to the bill's database requirements; however, none of the existing reports or dashboards fully meets the requirement of a consolidated searchable database with all the bill's required components. The center advises that it requires the services of a contractor to create a database and scorecard with the bill's functionality. After the system is built, the center advises that it can be maintained using existing resources.

Thus, general fund expenditures increase by an estimated \$168,300 in fiscal 2023 and \$275,400 in fiscal 2024, a total of \$443,700. This estimate reflects the cost of hiring a database contractor team to build a database that automatically incorporates existing data into a searchable database and scorecard to be hosted on MSDE's website by October 31, 2023 (fiscal 2024). Future year expenditures reflect the elimination of one-time costs.

This estimate assumes that, with the MLDS Center taking the lead in producing the database and scorecard, MHEC, MDL, and MSDE can provide the center with their existing data using existing resources. To the extent that the database requires these agencies or local school systems to produce additional data, enter additional data, or match individual-level data, or that the database cannot be fully automated, costs for those agencies or local school systems may increase, potentially significantly. These costs could include hiring additional full-time staff. A full analysis of the data required to build the database and scorecard as well as current data availability is needed for a more accurate fiscal analysis, including the need for additional staff for data collection. Once the database and scorecard are created, MSDE can host the center on its website using existing resources.

To the extent that data is easier to obtain and the database requirements are less complex than estimated, costs are less. Likewise, to the extent that the project is more challenging than estimated, general fund expenditures increase.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: HB 46/SB 584 of 2021 received hearings in the House Appropriations and the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs committees, respectively. No further action was taken by either committee.

Designated Cross File: HB 132 (Delegate Griffith) - Appropriations.

Information Source(s): Maryland Longitudinal Data System Center; Maryland State Department of Education; Maryland Higher Education Commission; Maryland Independent College and University Association; Maryland Department of Labor; Baltimore City Public Schools; Anne Arundel County Public Schools; Montgomery County Public Schools; Prince George's County Public Schools; St. Mary's County Public Schools; Frederick County Public Schools; University System of Maryland; Department of Legislative Services

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