

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2023 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Enrolled - Revised

House Bill 243

(Delegates Korman and Solomon)

Ways and Means

Education, Energy, and the Environment

**Baltimore City Young Readers Program and Young Readers Matching Grant
Program - Alterations (Young Readers Program Act of 2023)**

This bill transfers the Baltimore City Young Readers Program and the Young Readers Matching Grant Program from the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services (GOCPYVS) to the Maryland State Library Agency (MSLA) and requires the State Librarian to administer both programs. The bill requires the Governor to include \$350,000 (rather than \$250,000) in the annual budget bill for the Young Readers Matching Grant Program. Additionally, the bill authorizes public libraries to apply for program grants under the Young Readers Matching Grant Program. By December 1, 2024, and every other year thereafter, the Maryland State Library Board must report to the General Assembly on the effectiveness of the Young Readers Matching Grant Program and collect statistics and other information necessary for this purpose.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: General fund expenditures increase by \$100,000 in FY 2025 for additional grant funding and staff; future years reflect ongoing administrative costs and the bill's mandated appropriation to the grant program. Revenues are not affected. **This bill increases a mandated appropriation beginning in FY 2025.**

(in dollars)	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditure	0	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000
Net Effect	\$0	(\$100,000)	(\$100,000)	(\$100,000)	(\$100,000)

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

Local Effect: For a county or local library that is an affiliated service and applies for and receives a matching grant, county revenues and expenditures increase, as discussed below.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: In fiscal 2016, the Governor’s Office for Children implemented the Governor’s Young Readers Program in Baltimore City with funds from the Children’s Cabinet Interagency Fund. The program is a partnership between GOCOPYVS, the Banneker-Douglass Museum Foundation, and Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library to mail a free book each month to all children up to the age of five in Baltimore City, regardless of family income.

Chapters 446 and 447 of 2022 codified the Baltimore City Young Readers Program in GOCOPYVS and mandated annual funding of \$200,000 for the program beginning in fiscal 2024. The purpose of the program is to work with an “early reader organization” to mail free, high-quality books to children in Baltimore City.

The Acts also established the Young Readers Matching Grant Program to provide matching grants to an “affiliated service” to support the establishment and operation of the affiliated service; the Governor must include \$250,000 in the annual budget bill for the matching grant program beginning in fiscal 2024.

State Fiscal Effect: The fiscal 2024 State budget as passed by the General Assembly includes \$246,193 in funds for the Baltimore City Young Readers Program and \$500,000 for the Young Readers Matching Grant Program (\$746,193 in total for both programs). These funds are assumed to be transferred from GOCOPYVS to MSLA in fiscal 2024. Beginning in fiscal 2025, general fund expenditures increase by an additional \$100,000 for the Young Readers Matching Grant Program, reflecting the increased mandated appropriation established by the bill.

MSLA advises that additional staff is required to operate the expanded grant program when it is transferred to MSLA on October 1, 2023. Thus, MSLA administrative expenditures increase by \$42,300 in fiscal 2024, which reflects the bill’s October 1, 2023 effective date. This estimate reflects the cost of hiring one half-time administrative officer to receive and approve grant applications and distribute grant awards and associated operating expenses. The estimate assumes these administrative costs are part of the annual mandated appropriation and remaining funds are used for grants.

Local Fiscal Effect: Under the bill, a county that is an affiliated service may apply for additional matching grants to establish and operate an affiliate service to gift books to eligible children. For a county that applies for and receives a matching grant, revenues and expenditures increase accordingly.

The bill also authorizes public libraries (in addition to an affiliated service) to apply for grant funds under the Young Readers Matching Grant Program. Thus, once the bill takes

effect, local public library systems may also be eligible to receive additional funds, to the extent they meet program requirements.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

Designated Cross File: SB 300 (Senator McCray) - Education, Energy, and the Environment.

Information Source(s): Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services; Maryland State Library Agency; Department of Budget and Management; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 7, 2023
km/clb Third Reader - March 20, 2023
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