

SENATE BILL 370

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4lr1540
CF 4lr0625

By: **Senator Hettleman**

Introduced and read first time: January 17, 2024

Assigned to: Budget and Taxation and Education, Energy, and the Environment

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Community Schools – Rental Assistance for Community School Families**
3 **Program and Fund – Establishment**

4 FOR the purpose of establishing the Rental Assistance for Community School Families
5 Program to provide rental assistance to eligible student households; requiring the
6 State Department of Education, in consultation with the Department of Housing and
7 Community Development, to administer the Program; establishing the Rental
8 Assistance for Community School Families Fund as a special, nonlapsing fund;
9 requiring interest earnings of the Fund to be credited to the Fund; and generally
10 relating to the Rental Assistance for Community School Families Program and Fund.

11 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
12 Article – Education
13 Section 9.9–103 and 9.9–104
14 Annotated Code of Maryland
15 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)

16 BY adding to
17 Article – Education
18 Section 9.9–104.1
19 Annotated Code of Maryland
20 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)

21 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
22 Article – State Finance and Procurement
23 Section 6–226(a)(2)(i)
24 Annotated Code of Maryland
25 (2021 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)

26 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
27 Article – State Finance and Procurement

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 Section 6–226(a)(2)(ii)189. and 190.
2 Annotated Code of Maryland
3 (2021 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)

4 BY adding to
5 Article – State Finance and Procurement
6 Section 6–226(a)(2)(ii)191.
7 Annotated Code of Maryland
8 (2021 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)

9 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
10 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

11 **Article – Education**

12 9.9–103.

13 (a) There are community schools in the State.

14 (b) A community school shall:

15 (1) Promote active family and community engagement, including
16 educational opportunities for adults and family members of students at the school who live
17 in the neighborhood of the school;

18 (2) Have a community school coordinator, as described under § 9.9–104 of
19 this title;

20 (3) Promote expanded and enriched learning time and opportunities
21 provided after school, during weekends, and in the summer that emphasize mastering
22 21st-century skills through practical learning opportunities and community
23 problem-solving;

24 (4) Promote collaborative leadership and practices that empower parents,
25 students, teachers, principals, and community partners to build a culture of professional
26 learning, collective trust, and shared responsibility using strategies such as site-based
27 leadership teams and teacher learning communities;

28 (5) Have a parent teacher organization or a school family council; and

29 (6) Have a community school leadership team.

30 (c) (1) There shall be a Director of Community Schools in the Department.

31 (2) The Director of Community Schools in the Department shall coordinate
32 professional development for community school coordinators at each community school.

1 (3) **THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SCHOOLS SHALL ADMINISTER**
2 **THE RENTAL ASSISTANCE FOR COMMUNITY SCHOOL FAMILIES PROGRAM**
3 **ESTABLISHED UNDER § 9.9–104.1 OF THIS SUBTITLE.**

4 (4) In addition to the funding provided for the Director of Community
5 Schools position in the Department, the Governor may include in the annual budget bill an
6 appropriation of at least \$100,000 to the Department for the Director of Community Schools
7 to provide training and technical assistance to community schools and for additional staff.

8 9.9–104.

9 (a) (1) A community school shall have an experienced and qualified
10 community school coordinator who:

11 (i) Is hired at the appropriate administrative level;

12 (ii) Understands, respects, and demonstrates a high degree of
13 cultural awareness of and competency in the diversity in the community and in
14 cross-cultural practice with stakeholders; and

15 (iii) May be employed by the school district.

16 (2) A community school coordinator may be a social worker.

17 (b) (1) A community school coordinator shall be responsible for:

18 (i) Establishing a community school;

19 (ii) Completing an assessment of the needs of the students in the
20 school for appropriate wraparound services to enhance the success of all students in the
21 school;

22 (iii) Developing an implementation plan based on the assessment of
23 needs for the community school, in cooperation with other interested stakeholders; [and]

24 **(IV) IDENTIFYING STUDENT HOUSEHOLDS ELIGIBLE FOR THE**
25 **RENTAL ASSISTANCE FOR COMMUNITY SCHOOL FAMILIES PROGRAM**
26 **ESTABLISHED UNDER § 9.9–104.1 OF THIS SUBTITLE AND AIDING IN THE**
27 **ADMINISTRATION OF THE PROGRAM AT THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL; AND**

28 [[iv]] (v) Coordinating support programs that address
29 out-of-school learning barriers for students and families, including:

30 1. Wraparound services; and

31 2. As appropriate:

- 1 A. Tutoring;
- 2 B. English language learner courses;
- 3 C. Early childhood development and parenting classes;
- 4 D. College and career advising;
- 5 E. Employment opportunities;
- 6 F. Citizenship education;
- 7 G. Food pantries; [and]
- 8 **H. RENTAL ASSISTANCE, IN ACCORDANCE WITH §**
9 **9.9–104.1 OF THIS SUBTITLE; AND**

10 **[H.] I.** School-based behavioral and physical health
11 services.

12 (2) The needs assessment completed under this subsection shall:

13 (i) Be completed in collaboration with:

- 14 1. The principal;
- 15 2. A school health care practitioner; and
- 16 3. A parent teacher organization or a school council;

17 (ii) Include an assessment of the physical, behavioral, and mental
18 health needs and wraparound service needs of students, their families, and their
19 communities; and

20 (iii) Be submitted to the Department and the local school system
21 within 1 year of receiving a personnel grant under § 5–223 of this article or within 1 year
22 of becoming a community school.

23 (3) The implementation plan completed under this subsection shall
24 include:

25 (i) A strategy for providing wraparound services to address the
26 needs of the students, their families, and their communities, building on and strengthening
27 community resources near the school;

1 (ii) Inclusion, if possible and practicable, of community partners in
2 geographic proximity to the school that can assist in meeting the needs identified in the
3 assessment;

4 (iii) Ensure that time is made available to train staff on the supports
5 available, the need for the supports, and how to engage with the community schools
6 coordinator to access these supports; and

7 (iv) Develop strategies to maximize external non-State or non-local
8 education funding.

9 (4) (i) The implementation plan shall be submitted to the local school
10 system for approval within 1 year of completion of the needs assessment.

11 (ii) After the implementation plan is approved by the local school
12 system it shall be submitted to the Department.

13 **9.9-104.1.**

14 (A) (1) IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS
15 INDICATED.

16 (2) "FUND" MEANS THE RENTAL ASSISTANCE FOR COMMUNITY
17 SCHOOL FAMILIES FUND.

18 (3) "PROGRAM" MEANS THE RENTAL ASSISTANCE FOR COMMUNITY
19 SCHOOL FAMILIES PROGRAM.

20 (B) THERE IS A RENTAL ASSISTANCE FOR COMMUNITY SCHOOL FAMILIES
21 PROGRAM.

22 (C) (1) THE PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAM IS TO PROVIDE RENTAL
23 ASSISTANCE TO ELIGIBLE STUDENT HOUSEHOLDS AT COMMUNITY SCHOOLS.

24 (2) THE PROGRAM SHALL BE ADMINISTERED BY THE DEPARTMENT,
25 IN CONSULTATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY
26 DEVELOPMENT.

27 (D) TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR RENTAL ASSISTANCE UNDER THE PROGRAM, A
28 COMMUNITY SCHOOL STUDENT MUST BE:

29 (1) ENROLLED IN A COMMUNITY SCHOOL THAT RECEIVES FUNDING
30 UNDER § 5-223 OF THIS ARTICLE;

1 **(2) COUNTED UNDER COMPENSATORY EDUCATION ENROLLMENT AS**
2 **DEFINED UNDER § 5-222 OF THIS ARTICLE;**

3 **(3) FROM A HOUSEHOLD THAT IS HOUSED IN A RENTAL PROPERTY,**
4 **WHERE AT LEAST ONE HOUSEHOLD MEMBER IS AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS OR**
5 **HOUSING INSTABILITY, AS EVIDENCED BY PAST DUE RENT OR UTILITY NOTICES,**
6 **UNSAFE LIVING CONDITIONS, OR OTHER EVIDENCE DETERMINED BY THE**
7 **COMMUNITY SCHOOLS COORDINATOR; AND**

8 **(4) FROM A HOUSEHOLD WHERE AT LEAST ONE MEMBER IS**
9 **EXPERIENCING FINANCIAL HARDSHIP, AS EVIDENCED BY RECEIPT OF**
10 **UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS OR OTHER EVIDENCE DETERMINED BY THE COMMUNITY**
11 **SCHOOLS COORDINATOR.**

12 **(E) (1) THE PROGRAM SHALL PROVIDE RENTAL AND UTILITY PAYMENTS**
13 **ON BEHALF OF ELIGIBLE COMMUNITY SCHOOL STUDENT HOUSEHOLDS DIRECTLY**
14 **TO A HOUSEHOLD'S LANDLORD OR UTILITY COMPANY TO ASSIST WITH:**

15 **(I) RENTAL PAYMENTS;**

16 **(II) RENTAL ARREARS;**

17 **(III) FINES OR FEES ASSOCIATED WITH RENTAL PAYMENTS,**
18 **INCLUDING A LATE FINE OR FEE;**

19 **(IV) UTILITY PAYMENTS;**

20 **(V) UTILITY ARREARS; OR**

21 **(VI) FINES OR FEES ASSOCIATED WITH UTILITY PAYMENTS,**
22 **INCLUDING A LATE FINE OR FEE.**

23 **(2) EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH (3) OF THIS SUBSECTION,**
24 **AN ELIGIBLE STUDENT'S HOUSEHOLD MAY RECEIVE SUPPORT FROM THE PROGRAM**
25 **FOR UP TO 12 MONTHS.**

26 **(3) SUBJECT TO THE AVAILABILITY OF FUNDING, AN ELIGIBLE**
27 **STUDENT'S HOUSEHOLD MAY RECEIVE ONE 3-MONTH EXTENSION OF SUPPORT IF**
28 **THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL STUDENT REMAINS ELIGIBLE UNDER SUBSECTION (D) OF**
29 **THIS SECTION FOLLOWING 12 MONTHS OF SUPPORT.**

1 **(F) THE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS COORDINATOR SHALL IDENTIFY ELIGIBLE**
2 **STUDENT HOUSEHOLDS AND FACILITATE DIRECT PAYMENTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH**
3 **SUBSECTION (E) OF THIS SECTION.**

4 **(G) (1) THERE IS A RENTAL ASSISTANCE FOR COMMUNITY SCHOOL**
5 **FAMILIES FUND.**

6 **(2) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ADMINISTER THE FUND.**

7 **(3) (I) THE FUND IS A SPECIAL, NONLAPSING FUND THAT IS NOT**
8 **SUBJECT TO § 7-302 OF THE STATE FINANCE AND PROCUREMENT ARTICLE.**

9 **(II) THE STATE TREASURER SHALL HOLD THE FUND**
10 **SEPARATELY, AND THE COMPTROLLER SHALL ACCOUNT FOR THE FUND.**

11 **(4) THE FUND CONSISTS OF:**

12 **(I) MONEY APPROPRIATED IN THE STATE BUDGET TO THE**
13 **FUND;**

14 **(II) INTEREST EARNINGS; AND**

15 **(III) ANY OTHER MONEY FROM ANY OTHER SOURCE ACCEPTED**
16 **FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE FUND.**

17 **(5) THE FUND MAY BE USED ONLY TO:**

18 **(I) PROVIDE RENTAL ASSISTANCE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE**
19 **PROGRAM; AND**

20 **(II) COVER THE COSTS OF THE DEPARTMENT TO ADMINISTER**
21 **THE FUND.**

22 **(6) IN DETERMINING WHICH ELIGIBLE STUDENT HOUSEHOLDS TO**
23 **SUPPORT UNDER THE PROGRAM, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL GIVE PREFERENCE TO**
24 **ELIGIBLE STUDENT HOUSEHOLDS FROM COMMUNITY SCHOOLS WITH THE LOWEST**
25 **PROPORTION OF ELIGIBLE STUDENT HOUSEHOLDS.**

26 **(7) FOR FISCAL YEAR 2026, THE GOVERNOR SHALL INCLUDE IN THE**
27 **ANNUAL BUDGET BILL AN APPROPRIATION OF \$10,000,000 FOR THE FUND.**

28 **Article – State Finance and Procurement**

1 (a) (2) (i) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, and unless
2 inconsistent with a federal law, grant agreement, or other federal requirement or with the
3 terms of a gift or settlement agreement, net interest on all State money allocated by the
4 State Treasurer under this section to special funds or accounts, and otherwise entitled to
5 receive interest earnings, as accounted for by the Comptroller, shall accrue to the General
6 Fund of the State.

7 (ii) The provisions of subparagraph (i) of this paragraph do not apply
8 to the following funds:

9 189. the Teacher Retention and Development Fund; [and]

10 190. the Protecting Against Hate Crimes Grant Fund; AND

11 **191. THE RENTAL ASSISTANCE FOR COMMUNITY SCHOOL**
12 **FAMILIES FUND.**

13 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July
14 1, 2024.