

Department of Legislative Services
 Maryland General Assembly
 2024 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
 First Reader

House Bill 1385 (Delegate Feldmark)
 Ways and Means

Early Childhood Education - Prekindergarten Providers - Resident and Conditional Teaching Certificates

This bill requires the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to establish (1) a resident early childhood teaching certificate for an individual who is beginning a career in early childhood education and (2) a conditional early childhood teaching certificate for an individual applying to work in an eligible prekindergarten program that is unable to fill an open teaching position with a teacher who meets the standard qualifications. Both types of certificates must be (1) valid for a limited period of time determined by MSDE and (2) qualifying for employment as a teacher at both public and private eligible prekindergarten providers. MSDE must adopt regulations to carry out the bill. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2024.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: General fund expenditures increase by \$53,600 in FY 2025 for staffing. Out-year expenditures reflect annualization. Revenues may increase if MSDE charges a certificate fee.

(in dollars)	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditure	53,600	61,400	64,100	67,000	69,900
Net Effect	(\$53,600)	(\$61,400)	(\$64,100)	(\$67,000)	(\$69,900)

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

Local Effect: Local school system finances are not materially impacted; however, local school systems may have a larger pool of individuals from which to hire prekindergarten teachers.

Small Business Effect: Potentially meaningful.

Analysis

Current Law:

Blueprint for Maryland's Future

The Blueprint for Maryland's Future (Blueprint) legislation (including Chapter 771 of 2019, Chapters 36 and 55 of 2021, and Chapter 33 of 2022) established new programs, updated education funding formulas, and, among other provisions, included mechanisms for holding units of State and local government accountable for implementing the Blueprint.

State and local government units responsible for implementing an element of the Blueprint must develop implementation plans consistent with a specified Comprehensive Implementation Plan that describe the goals, objectives, and strategies that will be used to improve student achievement and meet the Blueprint recommendations for each segment of the student population.

High Staff Qualifications

All eligible prekindergarten providers must include structural elements that are evidence based and nationally recognized as important for ensuring program quality, including, beginning in the 2027-2028 school year, high staff qualifications. This includes teachers who, at a minimum hold (1) State certification for teaching in early childhood education or (2) a bachelor's degree in any field and are pursuing residency through the Maryland Approved Alternative Preparation Program, which includes early childhood coursework, clinical practice, and evidence of pedagogical content knowledge.

State Expenditures: MSDE advises it does not currently process applications and issue certificates to individuals who do not meet the qualifications for State certification working in eligible prekindergarten programs. Moreover, MSDE must develop criteria and procedures for the award of two new certificates in collaboration with multiple stakeholders, including local school systems, prekindergarten teacher preparation programs, and private prekindergarten providers. Accordingly, general fund expenditures increase by \$53,590 in fiscal 2025, which assumes a 90-day start-up delay from the bill's July 1, 2024 effective date. This estimate reflects the cost of hiring one half-time staff member to manage the development of the new certificates and review and process applications for resident and conditional early childhood teaching certificates. This position is also responsible for providing technical assistance and direct support to eligible prekindergarten providers that are responsible for submitting applications for certification on behalf of their staff. It includes a salary, fringe benefits, one-time start-up costs, and ongoing operating expenses.

Position	0.5
Salary and Fringe Benefits	\$46,738
Operating Expenses	<u>6,852</u>
Total FY 2025 State Expenditures	\$53,590

Future year expenditures reflect a full salary with annual increases and employee turnover and ongoing operating expenses.

Small Business Effect: Private prekindergarten providers participating in a publicly funded full-day prekindergarten program may have a larger pool of individuals from which to hire prekindergarten teachers.

Additional Information

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

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland State Department of Education; Baltimore County Public Schools; Prince George’s County Public Schools; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 3, 2024
km/mcr

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