

Department of Legislative Services
 Maryland General Assembly
 2025 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
 First Reader

Senate Bill 350 (Senator Lam)
 Education, Energy, and the Environment

Primary and Secondary Education - Educator Professional Development -
 Course on Student Well-Being and Flourishing

This bill requires the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), by July 1, 2026, to develop and offer a continuing professional development course for all school personnel and administrators on student well-being and flourishing that meets specified requirements. The course must consist of instruction on understanding the eight dimensions of well-being identified by the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, including social, environmental, physical, emotional, spiritual, occupational, intellectual, and financial well-being, with an emphasis on pedagogical applications. The course must be offered asynchronously at rates comparable to similar professional development courses. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2025.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: MSDE general fund expenditures increase by an estimated \$106,000 only in FY 2026 to develop and offer a course on well-being and flourishing. Future year expenditures are likely minimal and absorbable. Revenues are likely not affected.

(in dollars)	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029	FY 2030
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditure	106,000	0	0	0	0
Net Effect	(\$106,000)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

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

Local Effect: None. Allowing school personnel and administrators to take a course developed and offered by MSDE has no impact on local school system finances.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: According to regulations, to renew an Initial Professional, Professional, or Advanced Professional license for successive five-year terms, educators must complete at least 90 professional development points (PDPs). These PDPs must be part of an individual professional development plan. The 90 PDPs must include content or pedagogy related to the educator’s license, English as a Second Language, strategies for teaching students with disabilities, and culturally responsive teaching. Educators working in a Maryland school systems must get their proposed plan approved by their supervisor. Some specialties have specialized requirements, for example, school counselor must complete one semester hour of coursework, or its equivalent, in topics such as depression, trauma, violence, youth suicide, and substance abuse.

PDPs can be earned through college credit, continuing development credits, continuing education units, professional conferences, curriculum development, publication of a book or article, mentorship, micro-credentials, or other approved professional development activities. An educator who earns a National Board Certificate may present it as a substitute for the PDPs requirements when renewing a Maryland educator license.

State Fiscal Effect: MSDE advises that implementing the bill requires a regular full-time education program specialist, up to \$50,000 in consultant fees, and additional time from existing staff. However, the Department of Legislative Services advises that because the course must be developed by July 1, 2026, and must be offered asynchronously, it is likely that MSDE can continue offering the course without a permanent full-time specialist by utilizing asynchronous course modules, and thus, the work of developing the course can be performed by a contractual employee.

This estimate reflects the cost of hiring one half-time education program specialist to develop the course required by the bill, in consultation with existing MSDE staff and with additional support from content area experts, as needed. It includes a half-time salary, fringe benefits, one-time start-up costs, and \$50,000 in consultant fees. It assumes that the existing learning management system is used to offer the course and does not include any additional costs related to technology or ongoing maintenance. To the extent MSDE can use existing courses or course resources that are available for free, costs may be less.

Contractual Position	0.5
Salary and Fringe Benefits	\$48,906
Contractual Experts	50,000
Operating Expenses	<u>7,093</u>
Total FY 2026 State Expenditures	\$105,999

Future year expenditures reflect the termination of the position on July 1, 2026 (fiscal 2027), aligning with the required launch date of the course. This estimate assumes that any maintenance costs in fiscal 2027 and beyond are minimal and absorbable. However, to the extent maintenance costs are more than anticipated, general fund expenditures increase.

This estimate does not include any health insurance costs that could be incurred for specified contractual employees under the State's implementation of the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

This estimate assumes that MSDE will offer the course free of charge to all school personnel and administrators; therefore, revenues are not affected. However, if a fee is charged (such as to offset any maintenance costs), revenues increase accordingly.

Additional Information

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

Designated Cross File: HB 457 (Delegate Wolek) - Ways and Means.

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

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