

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2025 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
Third Reader - Revised

House Bill 493

(Delegate Fennell, *et al.*)

Ways and Means

Education, Energy, and the Environment

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Public Schools - Commemorative Day - Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day

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This bill designates November 14 each year as “Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day” to commemorate Ruby Bridges, who, on November 14, 1960, became the first African American student to integrate an all-white elementary school in New Orleans, Louisiana. The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) must develop model content for a program of education, as specified. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2025.**

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Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** MSDE can develop the required model content for the program using existing resources; however, resources may be temporarily diverted from current priorities.

**Local Effect:** None. However, local school systems may choose to implement a program of education based on the model resources developed by MSDE. Any impact is at the discretion of local school systems.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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Analysis

**Bill Summary:** The model content developed by MSDE may include instructional materials, including those specified, and must include resources to assist teachers to engage in discussion about civil rights and social justice.

**Current Law:** The public schools must devote a part of the day to appropriate exercises for the following days: Washington’s Birthday; Lincoln’s Birthday; Veterans’ Day; Columbus Day; Arbor Day; Black History Month with an emphasis on Harriet Tubman

and Frederick Douglass and the contributions they made in the fight against slavery; and any other day of national significance.

The [Maryland Standards and Frameworks in Social Studies](#) provides students with several age-appropriate opportunities to learn about Ruby Bridges and civil rights, including those for grade 5 social studies, middle school U.S. history, high school U.S. history, and U.S. Government. State Frameworks are defined as supporting documents and provide guidance for implementing the State Standards in Social Studies, which are reviewed and adopted by the Maryland State Board of Education every eight years.

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### **Additional Information**

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

**Designated Cross File:** SB 1003 (Senator Benson) - Rules.

**Information Source(s):** Governor's Office of Small, Minority, and Women Business Affairs; Maryland State Department of Education; Baltimore City Public Schools; Anne Arundel County Public Schools; Baltimore County Public Schools; Prince George's County Public Schools; Frederick County Public Schools; St. Mary's County Public Schools; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 10, 2025  
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Analysis by: Caroline L. Boice

Direct Inquiries to:  
(410) 946-5510  
(301) 970-5510