

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2025 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 773

(Delegate Hartman, *et al.*)

Ways and Means

Public Middle and High Schools - Student Discipline (Right to Teach Act of 2025)

This bill authorizes a teacher in a public middle or high school in the State to remove a student from the classroom under specified conditions. If a teacher removes a student from the classroom, the teacher must document the student's behavior, submit the documentation to the principal, and send the student to the school principal or guidance counselor. A local board of education may not take disciplinary action against a teacher who removes a student from a classroom in accordance with the bill. The bill specifies actions a principal may take when a student is sent to the principal and requires a teacher's consent to return a student to the classroom, unless the principal, school counselor, and teacher determine that the placement is the best or only option available. The bill likewise requires the school counselor to discipline students sent to the school counselor using restorative approaches in accordance with current law. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2025.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The bill pertains only to local school systems.

Local Effect: None. The bill is generally procedural in nature and local school systems can implement the bill with existing resources. However, to the extent that school principals elect to refer more students to alternative programs (as allowed under current law), costs for those programs may increase. As those costs are discretionary, they are not reflected in this analysis.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: A teacher may remove a student from the classroom if (1) the student has repeatedly interfered with the teacher's ability to communicate with other students in the classroom or with other students' ability to learn effectively and the student's conduct has been previously documented by the teacher or (2) the student exhibits behavior that is unruly, disruptive, or abusive, and the behavior significantly interferes with the teacher's ability to communicate with other students in the classroom or with other students' ability to learn effectively.

When a student is sent to the principal after being removed from a classroom, the principal may (1) return the student to the classroom; (2) place the student in another classroom; (3) place the student in in-school suspension; (4) place the student in an alternative program for disruptive students as required by current law; or (5) limit or prohibit the student's attendance or participation in school-sponsored or school-related activities.

A student removed from a classroom in accordance with the bill may not be considered removed from the classroom for purposes of discipline reporting requirements under current law.

Current Law:

Discipline Guidelines and Alternative School Discipline Practices

The State Board of Education must establish guidelines that define a State code of discipline for all public schools with standards of conduct and consequences for violations of the standards. The guidelines were last updated in 2014. The State board must also (1) upon request, provide technical assistance and training to local school boards on the use of restorative practices and (2) assist each local school board with implementing the guidelines. Each local school board must adopt regulations designed to create and maintain within schools the atmosphere of order and discipline necessary for effective learning. The local regulations must state that the primary purpose of any disciplinary measure is rehabilitative, restorative, and educational. They must also provide for educational and behavioral interventions, restorative approaches, counseling, student and parent conferencing, and alternative programs.

On or before October 1 each year, MSDE must submit a [report](#) to the Governor and the General Assembly on student discipline data, including a description of the use of restorative approaches in the State and a review of disciplinary practices and policies in the State. MSDE must collect data on alternative school discipline practices in public schools for each local school system, including (1) the types of alternative school discipline practices that are used in a local school system and (2) the type of misconduct for which

an alternative discipline practice is used. Also, MSDE must disaggregate the information in any MSDE student discipline data [report](#) by race, ethnicity, gender, disability status, eligibility for free or reduced-price meals or an equivalent measure of socioeconomic status, and English language proficiency for (1) the State; (2) each local school system; and (3) each public school. Special education-related data in any such report must be disaggregated by race, ethnicity, and gender.

“Restorative approaches” means a relationship-focused student discipline model that (1) is preventative and proactive; (2) emphasizes building strong relationships and setting clear behavioral expectations that contribute to the well-being of the school community; (3) in response to behavior that violates the clear behavioral expectations that contribute to the well-being of the school community, focuses on accountability for any harm done by the problem behavior; and (4) addresses ways to repair the relationships affected by the problem behavior with the voluntary participation of an individual who was harmed. “Restorative approaches” may include conflict resolution, mediation, peer mediation, circle processes, restorative conferences, social emotional learning, trauma-informed care, positive behavioral intervention supports, and rehabilitation.

Special Programs for Disruptive Students

Generally, each local board of education must establish special programs for students in the public school system who exhibit disruptive classroom behavior. Two or more county boards may establish special programs for their joint use.

Additional Information

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

Designated Cross File: SB 482 (Senator Gallion, *et al.*) - Education, Energy, and the Environment.

Information Source(s): Maryland State Department of Education; Baltimore City Public Schools; Anne Arundel County Public Schools; Frederick County Public Schools; Montgomery County Public Schools; Prince George’s County Public Schools; St. Mary’s County Public Schools; Department of Legislative Services

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