

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2025 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
First Reader

House Bill 1185  
Ways and Means

(Delegate Nkongolo, *et al.*)

---

Homeschool Students in Maryland - Right to Play

---

This bill authorizes a public high school in the State to allow a home-schooled student to participate in interscholastic athletics sponsored by the school (regardless of the student's residency or eligibility to attend the school) to the same extent that a student who is enrolled in the public school may participate. This authorization applies to interscholastic athletics in which a student may participate outside regular school hours and for which a student does not earn academic credit. A public high school must give placement priority to a student enrolled in the school if there are a limited number of spaces available for students in a given athletic activity. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2025.**

---

Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) can develop any regulations using existing resources. Revenues are not affected.

**Local Effect:** None. Authorizing, but not requiring, a public high school to allow home-schooled students to participate in extracurricular activities does not affect local school expenditures. It is assumed that under the bill the total number of students participating in public school interscholastic athletic activities is not expanded.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

---

Analysis

**Current Law/Background:** State regulations under MSDE govern the athletic program for all high school students in Maryland public secondary schools that are members of the Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association (MPSSAA), which includes all

24 school systems. Local school systems may adopt rules governing their athletic programs that are more restrictive than those of MPSSAA; less restrictive rules may not be adopted.

Per State regulation, to be eligible for participation in high school level interscholastic athletics, students must be officially registered and attending the MPSSAA member school they are authorized to attend under regulations of the local school system. They may represent only the school in which they are registered and at which it is anticipated they will complete their graduation requirements. Each local school system must establish standards of participation that assure that students involved in interscholastic athletics are making satisfactory progress toward graduation.

Failure to comply with regulations constitutes a violation that results in specified penalties against the MPSSAA member school and either the student or the coach or both. Depending upon the severity of the violation, more than one penalty may be imposed against the MPSSAA member school, student, coach, or all of the above.

MSDE advises that there are approximately 40,000 home-schooled students in the State.

**Additional Comments:** Though the bill refers to placement priority with respect to “extracurricular activity,” it is assumed that this placement priority is limited specifically to athletic activity, as defined by the bill.

---

### **Additional Information**

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

**Designated Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Anne Arundel County Public Schools; Frederick County Public Schools; Montgomery County Public Schools; St. Mary’s County Public Schools; Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association; Maryland State Department of Education; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 3, 2025  
rh/mcr

---

Analysis by: Scott P. Gates

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