

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2025 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader - Revised

House Bill 1316

(Delegate Wolek, *et al.*)

Ways and Means

Education, Energy, and the Environment

**Primary and Secondary Education - Youth-Centric Technology and Social Media
Resource Guide**

This bill requires the National Center for School Mental Health (NCSMH) at the University of Maryland School of Medicine, in consultation with the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), to develop and publish a youth-centric technology and social media resource guide as specified. To assist in the development of the guide, NCSMH must develop a needs assessment as specified by September 1, 2026. The guide must be completed before the 2027-2028 school year, and NCSMH must periodically update the guide. The guide must be posted and distributed as specified on or before the first day of each school year beginning with the 2027-2028 school year. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2025.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: *Under one set of assumptions*, general fund expenditures increase by \$175,000 in each of FY 2026 and 2027 to fund the University System of Maryland (USM). Correspondingly, USM higher education revenues and expenditures increase by the same amount to support development of the youth-centric technology and social media resource guide and required needs assessment. In the out-years, general fund expenditures, and corresponding higher education revenues and expenditures, may increase to support periodic updates to the guide, contingent on available funding and USM's continued role.

(in dollars)	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029	FY 2030
Higher Ed Rev.	\$175,000	\$175,000	-	-	-
GF Expenditure	\$175,000	\$175,000	-	-	-
Higher Ed Exp.	\$175,000	\$175,000	-	-	-
Net Effect	(\$175,000)	(\$175,000)	(-)	(-)	(-)

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

Local Effect: Local school systems can post and distribute the guide as specified with existing resources. Revenues are not affected.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary:

Needs Assessment

The NCSMH needs assessment must include a review of existing State and federal resources for contribution to the development of the guide, existing efforts to educate families on the impact of technology and social media on the mental health of youth in the State, and gaps in the existing resources and education efforts.

Student Technology and Social Media Resource Guide

Beginning in the 2027-2028 school year, NCSMH must develop and publish a youth-centric technology guide that covers youth-centric technology for personal use by children and delivering education to children. NCSMH must periodically update the guide thereafter.

Generally, the guide must include age-appropriate information and best practices that encourage students and caregivers to understand how technology and social media can be used and misused by developers and users, as well as promote informed decision making when using youth-centric technology. The guide must also include information and guidance on safe youth-centric technology usage by students in prekindergarten through grade 12. In the case where there is a gap in available information relating to specific category of technology or social media, the guidelines must include a reference to the lack of available information. The guide may include other State, federal, nonprofit, or public resources.

The guide must include a service and product landscape review that contains (1) the name of a specific product or service; (2) the supported function of the product or service; (3) any privacy, safety, or security concerns with regard to whether and how data is captured, stored, or shared by the product or service; (4) whether the product or service affects additive qualities in a user and if so, how; (5) ways in which a student in prekindergarten through grade 12 could access a specific product or service, including whether a specific product or service is available through a device provided by a public school; (6) any information on the potential harmful impact on a user, including emotional, psychological, and physical impacts; and (7) positive and negative impact potential on academic growth and learning.

The guide must be written in plain English and clearly display contact information for NCSMH. On request, NCSMH must provide translated copies of the guides.

Current Law: There are no requirements in current law to develop or provide a student technology and social media resource guide for public schools.

All students in Maryland's public schools, without exception, have the right to educational environments that are safe, appropriate for academic achievement, and free from any form of harassment.

MSDE advises that the agency is in the process of convening the Task Force on Student Cell Phone Use in Schools. Comprising teachers, administrators, parents, students, superintendents, and other educational experts across all grade bands, the task force will review current policies across the State on allowable student use of cell phones in schools. MSDE anticipates the task force will generate a set of policy recommendations to support school districts in addressing student cell phone use by April 2025.

State Expenditures: *Under one set of assumptions*, general fund expenditures increase by \$175,000 in each of fiscal 2026 and 2027 to support USM, which is responsible for producing the *Youth-Centric Technology and Social Media Resource Guide* through NCSMH at the University of Maryland School of Medicine. Accordingly, USM higher education revenues and expenditures increase by \$175,000 annually in fiscal 2026 and 2027 to cover the cost of the required needs assessment by September 1, 2026, and subsequently developing the guide by the 2027-2028 school year.

The University of Maryland School of Medicine advises that total costs to develop the guide are approximately \$350,000, primarily reflecting salary expenditures for professional staff to research and develop the guide, with additional minimal costs for equipment, research-related expenses, website development, and travel. This estimate assumes that costs are split evenly across fiscal 2026 and 2027, during which NCSMH will complete the needs assessment and produce the final guide for release prior to the 2027-2028 school year.

Because NCSMH operates as a grant-funded technical assistance and research center, its staff are not typically supported through ongoing general funds. Absent a dedicated general fund appropriation, NCSMH would need to secure alternative external funding sources to support the work required by the bill. If such funding is unavailable, the center may need to redirect staff time and resources from existing grant-funded projects, which could delay or scale back other deliverables. The projected increase in general fund expenditures assumes the State elects to fund this requirement directly, as alternative sources are not likely. However, to the extent that external funding is secured, internal resources are

redirected, or actual costs are lower than anticipated, general fund expenditures may be reduced.

In the out-years, beginning in fiscal 2028, general fund expenditures may increase by approximately \$43,562 annually to support periodic updates to the guide and ongoing website maintenance. Correspondingly, higher education revenues and expenditures increase by a similar amount to the extent the USM continues to perform this work and general funds are provided. The University of Maryland School of Medicine estimates this level of effort is necessary to keep the guide accurate and up to date, although the bill does not mandate annual updates. To the extent updates are less frequent or conducted at a reduced scale, out-year costs may be lower. These expenditures also remain contingent on available funding, as NCSMH would likely need to identify new grant support or other revenue sources in the absence of dedicated general funds.

MSDE advises that the department can collaborate with NCSMH as needed in the development of the guide and post the guide to its website with existing resources.

Additional Information

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

Designated Cross File: SB 897 (Senator Love) - Education, Energy, and the Environment.

Information Source(s): Maryland State Department of Education; University System of Maryland; Department of Budget and Management; Anne Arundel County Public Schools; Baltimore City Public Schools; Baltimore County Public Schools; Frederick County Public Schools; St. Mary's County Public Schools; Wicomico County Public Schools; Montgomery County Public Schools; Department of Legislative Services

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