

**Department of Legislative Services**  
 Maryland General Assembly  
 2025 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**  
**First Reader**

Senate Bill 486 (Senator Lam)  
 Finance

**School Health and Wellness Personnel Assessment and Maryland Council on Advancement of School-Based Health Centers**

This bill requires the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) and the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to conduct an annual assessment of the “school health and wellness personnel” workforce in the State, as specified. MDH and MSDE must jointly submit a report to the General Assembly on the findings of the assessment by December 1, 2027, and annually thereafter. The bill also adds a school nurse member, nominated by the Maryland Association of School Health Nurses, to the Maryland Council on Advancement of School-Based Health Centers.

**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** No effect in FY 2026. MDH general fund expenditures increase by \$61,700 in FY 2027 for a part-time position to work with MSDE to perform the survey and generate a wellness personnel workforce assessment annually. Future years reflect elimination of one-time costs, inflation, and ongoing expenses. Revenues are not affected.

(in dollars)	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029	FY 2030
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditure	0	61,700	57,700	60,300	62,900
Net Effect	\$0	(\$61,700)	(\$57,700)	(\$60,300)	(\$62,900)

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

**Local Effect:** Local school systems and local health departments (LHDs) can gather and report information on school health and wellness personnel with existing budgeted resources. Revenues are not affected.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

## Analysis

**Bill Summary:** “School health and wellness personnel” includes counselors, dental hygienists, occupational therapists, occupational therapy assistants, physical therapists, school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers, and speech-language pathologists.

The assessment of school health and wellness personnel must (1) identify the ratio of school health and wellness personnel to students and schools by jurisdiction, (2) obtain information from each local school system and LHD regarding vacancy rates for each type of provider of school health and wellness services, and (3) obtain feedback from each local school system, LHD, and other stakeholders on strategies to improve the recruitment and retention of school health and wellness personnel.

**Current Law:** MSDE advises that the agency collects staffing information on some school health and wellness personnel through the Maryland Report Card. Additionally, MSDE’s [Staff and Student Publications](#) provide some detail on the types of health and wellness personnel employed in public schools.

### *School-based Health Centers*

School-based health centers (SBHCs) are health centers located in a school or on a school campus that provide on-site comprehensive preventive and primary health services. Services may also include behavioral health, oral health, ancillary, and supportive services. Chapters 605 and 606 of 2021 require the Governor to transfer administration of SBHC grants and any related functions from MSDE to the Bureau of Maternal and Child Health within MDH by July 1, 2022. According to MDH’s [fiscal 2023 School-based Health Centers Report](#), for the 2022-2023 school year, there were 96 SBHCs operating across 17 local jurisdictions.

### *Maryland Council on Advancement of School-based Health Centers*

The Maryland Council on Advancement of School-based Health Centers must develop specified policy recommendations to improve the health and educational outcomes of students who receive services from SBHCs and report its findings and recommendations by December 31 of each year. The Maryland Community Health Resources Commission must provide staff support for the council but may seek the assistance of organizations with relevant expertise to provide additional staffing.

**State Expenditures:** MSDE advises that the agency requires one regular part-time (50%) education program specialist to coordinate with MDH, perform data collection and analysis, and prepare the final report annually. MSDE further advises that, although the

agency collects some staffing information on some school health and wellness personnel through its annual Maryland Report Card, vacancy rates, retention, and feedback from local school systems and LHDs are not part of any currently available data.

MDH similarly advises that existing resources are not sufficient to conduct the survey and generate an annual report, as completion of the report requires a cross-agency workgroup and additional data collection efforts. MDH anticipates that the agency requires one regular full-time coordinator and two regular part-time analysts to coordinate with MSDE, local school systems, and LHDs and to collect, interpret, and analyze the needed data.

The Department of Legislative Services advises that, although there are likely meaningful additional data collection and analysis tasks, given the partially existing data on school health and wellness professionals and the combined existing resources of MSDE and MDH, one additional part-time (50%) health policy analyst position in MDH is likely sufficient to conduct the survey and generate the additional annual report.

Therefore, MDH general fund expenditures increase by \$61,695 in fiscal 2027, which assumes hiring of one part-time (50%) health policy analyst (effective July 1, 2026) to coordinate with MSDE, local school systems, and LHDs to establish processes for annual data collection; collect data; and analyze and present findings by December 1 annually. It includes a salary, fringe benefits, one-time start-up costs, and ongoing operating expenses.

Position	0.5
Salary and Fringe Benefits	\$54,597
Operating Expenses	<u>7,098</u>
<b>Total FY 2027 State Expenditures</b>	<b>\$61,695</b>

Future year expenditures reflect a part-time salary with annual increases and employee turnover as well as annual increases in ongoing operating expenses.

Any additional expense to add a school nurse member to the Maryland Council on Advancement of School-based Health Centers is assumed to be minimal and absorbable within existing budgeted resources.

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### **Additional Information**

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

**Designated Cross File:** HB 672 (Delegates Cullison and Palakovich Carr) - Health and Government Operations and Ways and Means.

**Information Source(s):** Maryland Association of County Health Officers; Maryland State Department of Education; Maryland Department of Health; Baltimore City Public Schools; Montgomery County Public Schools; Prince George’s County Public Schools; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 6, 2025  
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Analysis by: Michael E. Sousane

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