

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2026 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 662 (Delegates D. Jones and Chang)
Government, Labor, and Elections

Election Law - Election Judges - Compensation for Public School Students

This bill authorizes a public school student serving as an election judge to both (1) earn hours toward the service-learning requirement for graduation under State Board of Education regulations and (2) receive the applicable election judge compensation.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: State finances are not expected to be materially affected.

Local Effect: Local government expenditures are expected to increase relatively minimally, per county, beginning in FY 2027, as discussed below. Revenues are not affected.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law:

Election Judge Compensation and Training

For service as an election judge, a public school student in the State may (1) earn hours toward the service-learning requirement for graduation under State Board of Education regulations or (2) receive the applicable election judge compensation. A minor who is at least age 16 and who is a registered voter may be appointed and serve as an election judge.

The compensation for each election judge who is not a returning election judge must be at least \$250 per day for each Election Day and each early voting day actually served. For

each election judge who is a returning election judge, the compensation for each Election Day and each early voting day actually served must be at least \$100 more per day than the compensation provided to an election judge who is not a returning election judge. “Returning election judge” means an election judge who has served a term of office for the immediately preceding statewide election.

The State Board of Elections (SBE) is required to develop (and oversee the implementation of), in consultation with the local boards of elections, a program of instruction of election judges. Each local board must conduct election judge training based on the program developed by SBE, and each election judge, unless appointed under emergency circumstances, must participate in the program. A local board must pay an election judge at least \$50 for each training the election judge completes, only after the election judge actually serves an Election Day or early voting day.

Student Service-learning Requirement

Pursuant to State Board of Education regulations, in order to graduate, students must complete (1) 75 hours of student service that includes preparation, action, and reflection components and that, at the discretion of the local school board system, may begin during the middle grades or (2) a locally designed program in student service that has been approved by the State Superintendent of Schools.

Local Fiscal Effect: Local government expenditures are expected to increase relatively minimally, per county, beginning in fiscal 2027 to provide compensation to public school students who serve as election judges and, in the absence of the bill, choose to earn hours toward the service-learning requirement and do not receive compensation.

Information on the number of public school students, statewide, who have served as election judges in recent elections and chosen to earn hours toward the service-learning requirement is not readily available. However, for *illustrative purposes*, if the number of public school students who served as election judges in the 2024 general election and chose to earn hours toward the service-learning requirement in one county (44 students, in Montgomery County) is extrapolated statewide (in proportion to the level of voter registration in the counties), and it is assumed that each works one early voting day or Election Day, is paid the base salary of \$250 and \$50 for training, and is not a returning election judge (that receives higher compensation), local government expenditures collectively increase by approximately \$81,000 per election to provide compensation to public school students serving as an election judge who otherwise choose to earn hours toward the service-learning requirement (and do not receive compensation) in the absence of 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): Baltimore, Harford, and Montgomery counties; Maryland State Department of Education; Maryland State Board of Elections; Prince George's County Public Schools; St. Mary's County Public Schools; Department of Legislative Services

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