

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2026 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 423
Ways and Means

(Prince George's County Delegation)

Prince George's County - Public High Schools - Drug Detection Products
PG 501-26

This bill requires the Prince George's County Board of Education, beginning in the 2026-2027 school year, to require each public high school to provide drink spiking detection products and drug detection strips at no charge to students. Drink spiking detection products, as defined in the bill, allow the user to test a portion of a beverage to determine whether it has been contaminated with the drug gamma-hydroxybutyric acid (GHB) or ketamine. Drug detection strips are disposable test strips that allow an individual to test a drug for the presence of fentanyl. These detection products may be made available in school-based health clinics or school libraries. Beginning October 1, 2027, each public high school in Prince George's County must report to Maryland's Office of Overdose Response (MOOR) on the quantity of drug detection products distributed annually.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2026.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: MOOR can receive reports from Prince George's County public high schools with existing budgeted resources. Revenues are not affected.

Local Effect: Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) expenditures increase to provide drug detection products as specified under the bill. Revenues are not affected.
This bill imposes a mandate on a unit of local government.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law:

Public Schools – Program of Drug Addiction Prevention and Education

Chapters 573 and 574 of 2017, the Heroin and Opioid Education and Community Action Act (Start Talking Maryland Act) require the State Board of Education to implement a program of drug addiction and prevention education in schools that includes instruction related to heroin and opioid addiction and prevention, including information relating to the lethal effect of fentanyl. This instruction must be delivered in grade bands as follows: (1) third grade through fifth grade; (2) sixth grade through eighth grade; and (3) ninth grade through twelfth grade. The instruction must be delivered as a stand-alone unit in the program.

Public Schools – Authority to Administer and Possess Overdose-reversing Medication

Under Chapters 573 and 574, each local board of education, in accordance with school health guidelines and State laws and regulations, must authorize the school nurse, school health services personnel, and other school personnel to administer naloxone or another overdose-reversing medication to a student or other person on school property who is reasonably believed to be experiencing an opioid overdose. The policy must include (1) a provision requiring all public schools to obtain and store naloxone or another overdose-reversing medication and (2) a requirement that each public school develop and implement a method for notifying parents or guardians of the policy. Current law exempts a school nurse, other school health services personnel who are licensed or certified under the Health Occupations Article, and other school personnel who respond in good faith to an overdose emergency from personal liability for any act or omission in the course of responding to the emergency, except for willful or grossly negligent acts.

By October 1 of each year, each public school must submit specified reports to the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) on each incident at the school that required the use of naloxone or another overdose-reversing medication on a form developed and disseminated by MSDE.

Local Expenditures: PGCPS enrolls approximately 40,000 high school students in grades nine through twelve. Fentanyl detection strips can cost as little as \$1 to \$3 per test and drink spiking detection products that test for the presence of GHB and ketamine can cost less than \$1 to \$5 per test, with single test strips generally costing less than tests with multiple test spots.

Exact costs depend on the number of tests distributed annually and the cost of any distribution methods the school system elects to install, but overall costs could be meaningful to the school system. *For illustrative purposes only*, assuming PGCPS purchases fentanyl test strips at a cost of \$1 per test and drink spiking tests at a cost of \$2.50 per test in sufficient number for every student in a secondary school in the county to receive one of each test per year, costs increase by \$140,000 annually. However, total costs may be reduced to the extent PGCPS is able to acquire lower-cost tests in bulk and to the extent fewer overall students obtain the tests annually. Conversely, costs may be higher if PGCPS provides more tests than anticipated or if actual test costs exceed these estimates.

PGCPS can report to MOOR on the distribution of drug detection products with existing budgeted resources.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has been introduced within the last three years. See HB 379 of 2025.

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland's Office of Overdose Response; Maryland State Department of Education; Maryland Department of Health; Prince George's County Public Schools; Department of Legislative Services

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