

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2026 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 627

(Delegate Acevero, *et al.*)

Ways and Means

Commission on History, Culture, and Civics in Education - Establishment

This bill establishes the Commission on History, Culture, and Civics in Education to make recommendations to the State Board of Education (SBE) and the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to further the discovery, interpretation, and learning of the history, culture, and civics of the United States and Maryland and provide equitable learning outcomes consistent the Blueprint for Maryland's Future (Blueprint). MSDE must staff the commission; members of the commission may not receive compensation but are entitled to reimbursement for expenses as provided in the State budget. By December 30 each year, beginning in 2026, the commission must report its findings and recommendations to SBE, the Governor, and the General Assembly. By July 1 each year, SBE must review the commission's findings and recommendations and make any appropriate changes to the educational standards for prekindergarten through grade 12. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2026.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: General fund expenditures increase by \$56,400 in FY 2027 for staffing. Future years reflect ongoing costs and inflation. Revenues are not affected.

(in dollars)	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029	FY 2030	FY 2031
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditure	56,400	63,900	67,100	70,200	73,300
Net Effect	(\$56,400)	(\$63,900)	(\$67,100)	(\$70,200)	(\$73,300)

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

Local Effect: Local school system expenditures may increase due to future curriculum or instructional changes adopted in response to the commission's recommendations; however, such costs are expected to be aligned with regular curriculum review cycles, and the magnitude and timing cannot be reliably estimated. Revenues are not affected.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: The bill establishes the membership of the commission, which, to the extent practicable, must reflect the gender, racial, ethnic, and geographic diversity of the State. In addition, a majority of the members must have classroom experience or experience in developing educational content standards. Members serve for four-year terms, staggered as specified. The commission must elect a chair from among the members.

The commission must:

- examine the history, culture, and civics of the United States and Maryland including the contributions of specified minority groups; and
- make recommendations to SBE regarding the adoption of standards and programs that accurately reflect the discovery, interpretation, and learning of the history, culture, and civics of the United States and Maryland.

The commission must make all of its activities and material available on MSDE's website, as specified. Further, the commission must use multiple communication methods to provide updates and announcements related to the commission.

Current Law:

General Requirements for Instruction

With the advice of the State Superintendent of Schools, SBE establishes basic policy and guidelines for the program of instruction for public schools. Subject to State law and the regulations, bylaws, policies, and guidelines established by SBE, each local board of education must establish the curriculum guides and courses of study for schools in its jurisdiction. Policies, rules, and regulations for the graduation of students from Maryland public schools are established by local boards of education and SBE.

SBE and the State Superintendent of Schools must assist each local board of education to establish educational goals and objectives that conform to statewide educational objectives for subject areas, including reading, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies. With the assistance of its local board, each public school must survey current student achievement in reading, language, mathematics, science, social studies, and other areas to assess its needs.

Social Studies Instruction and Topics

According to regulations, each local school system must provide an instructional program in social studies each year for all students, prekindergarten through grade 8, and a program that enables students to meet graduation requirements and to select social studies electives in grades 9 through 12. These programs must at least meet the content standards in the regulations. In Maryland, among other required topics, regulations require that the social studies instructional program teach students about the peoples of the nation and the world. Specifically, students must inquire about the people of the United States and the world using a historically grounded, multidisciplinary approach in order to recognize multiple narratives and acknowledge the diversity and commonality of the human experience. Every five years, each local superintendent of schools must certify to the State Superintendent of Schools that the instructional programming for prekindergarten through grade 12 meets, at a minimum, all the requirements set forth in the regulations.

Blueprint for Maryland's Future

Blueprint for Maryland's Future legislation, including Chapter 771 of 2019; Chapters 36 and 55 of 2021; and Chapter 33 of 2022 established new programs and updated education funding formulas to, among other provisions, provide additional support for schools serving high concentrations of students living in poverty, including community schools and wraparound services, and increased support for students learning English and students with disabilities.

State Expenditures: MSDE advises that the agency requires a full-time permanent education program specialist to staff the commission as well as \$10,000 in annual travel costs. However, the Department of Legislative Services advises that the work of the commission likely can be accomplished by a half-time permanent position.

Thus, general fund expenditures increase by \$56,403 in fiscal 2027 for MSDE to hire a half-time educational program specialist to staff the commission, facilitate the reports, and oversee changes to standards. The estimate assumes a 90-day start-up delay following the bill's July 1, 2026 effective date (during which commission members are appointed). It includes a half-time salary, fringe benefits, one-time start-up costs, and ongoing operating expenses.

Position	0.5
Salary and Fringe Benefits	\$48,304
Operating Expenses	<u>8,099</u>
Total FY 2027 State Expenditures	\$56,403

As the commission is a permanent entity with ongoing review and recommendation duties, future year expenditures reflect a half-time salary with an annual increase and employee turnover and ongoing operating expenses.

Many of the [State Standards and Frameworks in Social Studies](#) have been revised to address the contributions of specified minority groups. Thus, to the extent that the commission's recommendations align with existing revisions to the State Standards and Frameworks, the bill's requirements may be met with existing resources. However, any alignment cannot be determined until the commission is appointed and makes recommendations.

Any expense reimbursements for commission members are assumed to be minimal and absorbable within existing budgeted resources.

Local Expenditures: The bill does not impose direct requirements on local school systems. However, if SBE adopts new or revised standards or guidance based on the commission's recommendations, local school systems may incur costs to update curriculum materials, instructional resources, or professional development. Any such costs are expected to be highly variable and are likely incurred as part of existing curriculum review and update cycles; therefore, the magnitude and timing of potential local expenditures cannot be reliably estimated, and in some cases may already be factored into local school system budgets.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has been introduced within the last three years. See HB 875 of 2025; HB 50 of 2024; and HB 890 of 2023.

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland State Department of Education; University System of Maryland; Department of Legislative Services

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