

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2026 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 198 (Delegate Griffith)
Ways and Means and Judiciary

School Systems - Reportable Offenses - Notification of Student as Suspect

This bill requires that a law enforcement agency notify the State's Attorney when a student is a suspect in an investigation of an act that, if committed by an adult, would be a felony or crime of violence, as specified, and makes conforming changes to reporting requirements related to reportable offenses. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2026.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) can adjust its reporting of reportable offenses with existing resources. No effect on revenues.

Local Effect: The bill's changes to notification requirements and procedures are not anticipated to materially affect local finances.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: If a student is the suspect in an investigation of an act that if committed by an adult would be a felony or a crime of violence, the law enforcement agency conducting the investigation *must* notify the State's Attorney within 24 hours of the student being identified as a suspect, as practicable. The State's Attorney *may* notify the local superintendent within 24 hours of the notification, or as soon as practicable. If the law enforcement agency, after providing notice to the State's Attorney, determines that the student is no longer a suspect, the law enforcement agency must notify the State's Attorney that the student is no longer a suspect within 24 hours of making that determination. Similarly, if the State's Attorney has notified the local superintendent of a student's

identification as a suspect, the State’s Attorney must notify the local superintendent that the student is no longer a suspect.

Current Law: When a student is arrested for a “reportable offense” or an offense related to the student’s membership in a criminal organization, the law enforcement agency making the arrest *must* notify (1) the local superintendent; (2) the school principal; and (3) if appropriate, the school security officer. The law enforcement agency *may* also notify the State’s Attorney.

A reportable offense is an offense that (1) occurred off school premises; (2) did not occur at an event sponsored by the school; and (3) includes a crime of violence, as specified in the Criminal Law Article and numerous other specified weapons-, drug-, assault-, and theft-related offenses. If a student is removed or excluded from the student’s regular school for a reportable offense, the student’s attorney (if applicable) must be invited to participate in a conference between the student or the student’s parent or guardian and the principal or county superintendent.

The Criminal Law Article defines a crime of violence as any of 26 enumerated crimes, including abduction, arson, murder, rape, armed carjacking, and sexual offenses.

Except by order of a juvenile court with good cause shown, information about a student’s arrest is confidential and may not be redisclosed, except as specified, and may not be part of the student’s permanent educational record. A superintendent may share the information as part of a confidential file with another superintendent or a nonpublic school in the State in which the student has enrolled. The information shared must include information regarding any educational programming and related services provided to the student. The State Board of Education is required to adopt regulations to ensure that information obtained by local superintendents, principals, or school security officers is used only for specified educational purposes and is destroyed when the student graduates, otherwise permanently leaves school, or turns 22 years old, whichever comes first.

Annually by December 30, MSDE must submit to the Governor and the General Assembly a report that includes specified information about each reportable offense for which a local school system received information in the preceding school year.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years; however, legislation with similar provisions has been proposed. For example, see HB 951 of 2025.

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland Municipal League; Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts); Maryland State Department of Education; Department of State Police; Baltimore City Public Schools; Anne Arundel County Public Schools; Montgomery County Public Schools; Prince George's County Public Schools; Frederick County Public Schools; Wicomico County Public Schools; St. Mary's County Public Schools; Department of Legislative Services

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sj/clb

Analysis by: Michael C. Rubenstein

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