

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2026 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
First Reader

House Bill 868 (Delegate Conaway)  
Ways and Means and Judiciary

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**Baltimore City - Public Middle Schools - Instruction on the Consequences of a Conviction for Felony Murder**

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This bill requires the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners to develop age-appropriate curriculum resources on the consequences of a conviction for felony murder for Baltimore City Public Schools (BCPS) students in grades 6 through 8. The board must determine the appropriate subject area in which to incorporate the instruction. Beginning in the 2027-2028 school year, the board must implement instruction based on the developed curriculum resources and the chief academic officer must ensure that each student receives the instruction at least once during grades 6 through 8. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2026.**

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** None. This bill pertains only to BCPS.

**Local Effect:** BCPS expenditures may increase in FY 2027 to develop age-appropriate curriculum resources on the consequences of a conviction for felony murder. Beginning in FY 2028 (2027-2028 school year), BCPS expenditures may increase to incorporate the required instruction into an existing subject area and ensure that each student receives the instruction at least once during grades 6 through 8. Revenues are not affected. **This bill may impose a mandate on a unit of local government.**

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Analysis**

**Bill Summary:** “Consequences of a conviction for felony murder” is defined as the legal penalties that take away an individual’s freedom, rights, and access to programs or services after a conviction for murder in the first degree under Title 2 of the Criminal Law Article.

**Current Law:** With the advice of the State Superintendent of Schools, the State Board of Education (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.

The Maryland State Department of Education advises that at the middle school level the [State Standards and Frameworks in Social Studies](#) do not include the content required by the bill; however, opportunities to learn about criminal law and the criminal justice system are directly addressed in [High School United States History](#) and [American Government](#).

**Local Expenditures:** The bill requires BCPS to develop age-appropriate curriculum resources and incorporate instruction on the consequences of a conviction for felony murder, beginning in the 2027-2028 school year. Each student must be taught the curriculum at least once in grades 6 through 8. It is assumed that, under the direction of the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners, BCPS develops the curriculum resources and trains teachers in fiscal 2027 and 2028 to ensure implementation by the 2027-2028 school year. As a result, BCPS expenditures for curriculum development are expected to increase during both fiscal 2027 and 2028. There may also be costs associated with tracking that each student receives the instruction at least once during grades 6 through 8. The likely costs cannot be reliably estimated but may be meaningful.

**Additional Comments:** In December 2021, the Department of Legislative Services produced a report entitled [Collateral Consequences of a Criminal Conviction](#).

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### Additional Information

**Recent Prior Introductions:** Similar legislation has been introduced within the last three years. See HB 994 of 2025.

**Designated Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Maryland State Department of Education; Baltimore City Public Schools; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 23, 2026  
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