

UNOFFICIAL COPY OF SENATE BILL 370

SENATE BILL 370

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By: **Senator Hettleman**

Introduced and read first time: January 17, 2024

Assigned to: Budget and Taxation and Education, Energy, and the Environment

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A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Community Schools - Rental Assistance for Community School Families**  
3 **Program and Fund - Establishment**

4 FOR the purpose of establishing the Rental Assistance for Community School Families  
5 Program to provide rental assistance to eligible student households; requiring ~~the~~  
6 ~~State Department of Education, in consultation with~~ the Department of Housing and  
7 Community Development, in consultation with the State Department of Education, to administer the  
8 Program; establishing the Rental  
9 Assistance for Community School Families Fund as a special, nonlapsing fund;  
10 requiring interest earnings of the Fund to be credited to the Fund; and generally  
relating to the Rental Assistance for Community School Families Program and Fund.

11 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
12 Article - Education  
13 Section 9.9-103 and 9.9-104  
14 Annotated Code of Maryland  
15 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)

16 BY adding to  
17 Article - Education  
18 Section 9.9-104.1  
19 Annotated Code of Maryland  
20 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)

21 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,  
22 Article - State Finance and Procurement  
23 Section 6-226(a)(2)(i)  
24 Annotated Code of Maryland  
25 (2021 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)

26 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
27 Article - State Finance and Procurement

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1 Section 6-226(a)(2)(ii)189. and 190.  
2 Annotated Code of Maryland  
3 (2021 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)

4 BY adding to  
5 Article - State Finance and Procurement  
6 Section 6-226(a)(2)(ii)191.  
7 Annotated Code of Maryland  
8 (2021 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)

9 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
10 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

11 **Article - Education**

12 9.9-103.

13 (a) There are community schools in the State.

14 (b) A community school shall:

15 (1) Promote active family and community engagement, including  
16 educational opportunities for adults and family members of students at the school who live  
17 in the neighborhood of the school;

18 (2) Have a community school coordinator, as described under § 9.9-104 of  
19 this title;

20 (3) Promote expanded and enriched learning time and opportunities  
21 provided after school, during weekends, and in the summer that emphasize mastering  
22 21st-century skills through practical learning opportunities and community  
23 problem-solving;

24 (4) Promote collaborative leadership and practices that empower parents,  
25 students, teachers, principals, and community partners to build a culture of professional  
26 learning, collective trust, and shared responsibility using strategies such as site-based  
27 leadership teams and teacher learning communities;

28 (5) Have a parent teacher organization or a school family council; and

29 (6) Have a community school leadership team.

30 (c) (1) There shall be a Director of Community Schools in the Department.

31 (2) The Director of Community Schools in the Department shall coordinate  
32 professional development for community school coordinators at each community school.

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1 (3) **THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SCHOOLS SHALL ~~ADMINISTER~~ SUPPORT THE**  
 2 **IMPLEMENTATION OF**  
 3 **THE RENTAL ASSISTANCE FOR COMMUNITY SCHOOL FAMILIES PROGRAM**  
 4 **ESTABLISHED UNDER § 9.9 -104.1 OF THIS SUBTITLE.**

5 (4) In addition to the funding provided for the Director of Community  
 6 Schools position in the Department, the Governor may include in the annual budget bill an  
 7 appropriation of at least \$100,000 to the Department for the Director of Community Schools  
 8 to provide training and technical assistance to community schools and for additional staff.

9 9.9-104.

10 (a) (1) A community school shall have an experienced and qualified  
 11 community school coordinator who:

12 (i) Is hired at the appropriate administrative level;

13 (ii) Understands, respects, and demonstrates a high degree of  
 14 cultural awareness of and competency in the diversity in the community and in  
 15 cross-cultural practice with stakeholders; and

16 (iii) May be employed by the school district.

17 (2) A community school coordinator may be a social worker.

18 (b) (1) A community school coordinator shall be responsible for:

19 (i) Establishing a community school;

20 (ii) Completing an assessment of the needs of the students in the  
 21 school for appropriate wraparound services to enhance the success of all students in the  
 22 school;

23 (iii) Developing an implementation plan based on the assessment of  
 24 needs for the community school, in cooperation with other interested stakeholders; [and]

25 (IV) **IDENTIFYING STUDENT HOUSEHOLDS ELIGIBLE FOR THE**  
 26 **RENTAL ASSISTANCE FOR COMMUNITY SCHOOL FAMILIES PROGRAM**  
 27 **ESTABLISHED UNDER § 9.9-104.1 OF THIS SUBTITLE AND AIDING IN THE**  
 28 **ADMINISTRATION OF THE PROGRAM AT THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL; AND**

29 [(iv)] (v) Coordinating support programs that address  
 30 out-of-school learning barriers for students and families, including:

31 1. Wraparound services; and

2. As appropriate:



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1 (ii) Inclusion, if possible and practicable, of community partners in  
 2 geographic proximity to the school that can assist in meeting the needs identified in the  
 3 assessment;

4 (iii) Ensure that time is made available to train staff on the supports  
 5 available, the need for the supports, and how to engage with the community schools  
 6 coordinator to access these supports; and

7 (iv) Develop strategies to maximize external non-State or non-local  
 8 education funding.

9 (4) (i) The implementation plan shall be submitted to the local school  
 10 system for approval within 1 year of completion of the needs assessment.

11 (ii) After the implementation plan is approved by the local school  
 12 system it shall be submitted to the Department.

13 **9.9-104.1.**

14 (A) (1) IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS  
 15 INDICATED.

16 (2) "FUND" MEANS THE RENTAL ASSISTANCE FOR COMMUNITY  
 17 SCHOOL FAMILIES FUND.

18 (3) "PROGRAM" MEANS THE RENTAL ASSISTANCE FOR COMMUNITY  
 19 SCHOOL FAMILIES PROGRAM.

20 (B) THERE IS A RENTAL ASSISTANCE FOR COMMUNITY SCHOOL FAMILIES  
 21 PROGRAM.

22 (C) (1) THE PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAM IS TO PROVIDE RENTAL  
 23 ASSISTANCE TO ELIGIBLE STUDENT HOUSEHOLDS AT COMMUNITY SCHOOLS.

24 (2) THE PROGRAM SHALL BE ADMINISTERED BY THE ~~DEPARTMENT~~  
 25 ~~IN CONSULTATION WITH THE~~ DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY  
 26 ~~DEVELOPMENT~~ , IN CONSULTATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT.

27 (D) TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR RENTAL ASSISTANCE UNDER THE PROGRAM, A  
 28 COMMUNITY SCHOOL STUDENT MUST BE:

29 (1) ENROLLED IN A COMMUNITY SCHOOL THAT RECEIVES FUNDING  
 30 UNDER § 5-223 OF THIS ARTICLE;

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1 (2) COUNTED UNDER COMPENSATORY EDUCATION ENROLLMENT AS  
 2 DEFINED UNDER § 5-222 OF THIS ARTICLE; AND

3 (3) FROM A HOUSEHOLD ~~THAT~~ :

(I) THAT IS HOUSED IN A RENTAL PROPERTY,  
 4 WHERE AT LEAST ONE HOUSEHOLD MEMBER IS AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS OR  
 5 HOUSING INSTABILITY, AS EVIDENCED BY PAST DUE RENT OR UTILITY NOTICES,  
 6 UNSAFE LIVING CONDITIONS, OR OTHER EVIDENCE DETERMINED BY THE  
 7 COMMUNITY SCHOOLS COORDINATOR; ~~AND OR~~

(II) WHERE AT LEAST ONE MEMBER QUALIFIES FOR ASSISTANCE  
UNDER THE FEDERAL MCKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT.

8 ~~(4) FROM A HOUSEHOLD WHERE AT LEAST ONE MEMBER IS~~  
 9 ~~EXPERIENCING FINANCIAL HARDSHIP, AS EVIDENCED BY RECEIPT OF~~  
 10 ~~UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS OR OTHER EVIDENCE DETERMINED BY THE COMMUNITY~~  
 11 ~~SCHOOLS COORDINATOR.~~

12 (E) (1) ~~THE PROGRAM SHALL PROVIDE RENTAL AND UTILITY PAYMENTS~~  
 13 ~~ON BEHALF OF ELIGIBLE COMMUNITY SCHOOL STUDENT HOUSEHOLDS DIRECTLY~~  
 14 ~~TO A HOUSEHOLD'S LANDLORD OR UTILITY COMPANY TO ASSIST WITH~~ ELIGIBLE USES FOR PAYMENTS UNDER  
THE PROGRAM INCLUDE:

15 (I) RENTAL PAYMENTS;

16 (II) RENTAL ARREARS;

17 (III) FINES OR FEES ASSOCIATED WITH RENTAL PAYMENTS,  
 18 INCLUDING A LATE FINE OR FEE;

19 (IV) UTILITY PAYMENTS;

20 (V) UTILITY ARREARS; ~~OR~~

21 (VI) FINES OR FEES ASSOCIATED WITH UTILITY PAYMENTS,  
 22 INCLUDING A LATE FINE OR FEE ; OR

(VII) RELOCATION EXPENSES.

23 (2) EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH (3) OF THIS SUBSECTION,  
 24 AN ELIGIBLE STUDENT'S HOUSEHOLD MAY RECEIVE SUPPORT FROM THE PROGRAM  
 25 FOR UP TO 12 MONTHS.

26 (3) SUBJECT TO THE AVAILABILITY OF FUNDING, AN ELIGIBLE  
 27 STUDENT'S HOUSEHOLD MAY RECEIVE ONE 3-MONTH EXTENSION OF SUPPORT IF  
 28 THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL STUDENT REMAINS ELIGIBLE UNDER SUBSECTION (D) OF  
 29 THIS SECTION FOLLOWING 12 MONTHS OF SUPPORT.

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1 (F) THE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS COORDINATOR SHALL IDENTIFY ELIGIBLE  
2 STUDENT HOUSEHOLDS AND FACILITATE DIRECT PAYMENTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH  
3 SUBSECTION (E) OF THIS SECTION.

4 (G) (1) THERE IS A RENTAL ASSISTANCE FOR COMMUNITY SCHOOL  
5 FAMILIES FUND.

6 (2) THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SHALL ADMINISTER THE  
FUND.

7 (3) (I) THE FUND IS A SPECIAL, NONLAPSING FUND THAT IS NOT  
8 SUBJECT TO § 7-302 OF THE STATE FINANCE AND PROCUREMENT ARTICLE.

9 (II) THE STATE TREASURER SHALL HOLD THE FUND  
10 SEPARATELY, AND THE COMPTROLLER SHALL ACCOUNT FOR THE FUND.

11 (4) THE FUND CONSISTS OF:

12 (I) MONEY APPROPRIATED IN THE STATE BUDGET TO THE  
13 FUND;

14 (II) INTEREST EARNINGS; AND

15 (III) ANY OTHER MONEY FROM ANY OTHER SOURCE ACCEPTED  
16 FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE FUND.

17 (5) THE FUND MAY BE USED ONLY TO:

18 (I) PROVIDE RENTAL ASSISTANCE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE  
19 PROGRAM; AND

20 (II) COVER THE COSTS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
TO ADMINISTER  
21 THE FUND.

22 (6) ~~IN DETERMINING WHICH ELIGIBLE STUDENT HOUSEHOLDS TO  
23 SUPPORT UNDER THE PROGRAM, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL GIVE PREFERENCE TO  
24 ELIGIBLE STUDENT HOUSEHOLDS FROM COMMUNITY SCHOOLS WITH THE LOWEST  
25 PROPORTION OF ELIGIBLE STUDENT HOUSEHOLDS.~~

26 ~~(7) FOR FISCAL YEAR 2026, THE~~ THE GOVERNOR SHALL MAY  
INCLUDE IN THE  
27 ANNUAL BUDGET BILL AN APPROPRIATION OF \$10,000,000 FOR THE FUND.

28 Article - State Finance and Procurement

29 6-226.

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1 (a) (2) (i) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, and unless  
2 inconsistent with a federal law, grant agreement, or other federal requirement or with the  
3 terms of a gift or settlement agreement, net interest on all State money allocated by the  
4 State Treasurer under this section to special funds or accounts, and otherwise entitled to  
5 receive interest earnings, as accounted for by the Comptroller, shall accrue to the General  
6 Fund of the State.

7 (ii) The provisions of subparagraph (i) of this paragraph do not apply  
8 to the following funds:

9 189. the Teacher Retention and Development Fund; [and]

10 190. the Protecting Against Hate Crimes Grant Fund; AND

11 **191. THE RENTAL ASSISTANCE FOR COMMUNITY SCHOOL**  
12 **FAMILIES FUND.**

13 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July  
14 1, 2024.