

**BILL:** SB0499 - State Department of Education – School Psychologist Recruitment Program

**DATE:** February 28, 2024

**SUBJECT:** Letter of Information

**COMMITTEE:** Education, Energy, and the Environment

**POSITION:** Information only

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The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) provides this information for your consideration regarding Senate Bill (SB) 499 – *State Department of Education – School Psychologist Recruitment Program*.

SB 499 establishes the “School Psychologist Recruitment Program” within MSDE. The purpose of the program is to provide professional support and professional development to school psychologists and those seeking to become school psychologists in the State.

### **SB 499 Implementation**

The implementation of the newly established School Psychologist Recruitment Program, as outlined in SB 499, would require MSDE to provide professional support to certified school psychologists within the State. This support would extend to individuals who are either already certified or are seeking certification as school psychologists. MSDE would be tasked with the development and administration of virtual courses or webinars, the creation of mentoring and peer collaboration programs, and the provision of support materials. Additionally, MSDE would be responsible for reimbursing an amount equivalent to the certification fee charged by the National Association of School Psychologists.

SB 499 mandates that MSDE maintain a clearinghouse of best practices for school psychologists to aid in their professional development. It also requires MSDE to communicate and promote upcoming opportunities and resources available to certified school psychologists. Furthermore, the School Psychologist Recruitment Program, under SB 499, is required to reimburse certified school psychologists for expenses related to attending professional development conferences. Under the provisions of SB 499, MSDE would be required to adopt regulations governing the maximum reimbursement amount from the School Psychologist Recruitment Program, the procedures for individuals to submit applications to the program, and the criteria for selecting aid recipients.

MSDE does not have the capacity to implement this bill with existing resources. To fulfill the requirements of SB 499, MSDE would need to employ a full-time certified school psychologist to manage all fiscal and programmatic aspects of the program. This would include the development and administration of virtual professional development courses, the design of mentoring or peer collaboration programs, the development and provision of support materials, the creation of regulations governing the maximum reimbursement amount, and the development of application procedures and selection criteria for aid recipients.

In addition to staffing costs, MSDE estimates that consulting services would be needed to develop the required training courses and to establish the clearinghouse.

### **Reimbursements for School Psychologists**

Implementation of the provisions of SB 499 would increase agency expenditures to provide reimbursements for school psychologists attending professional conferences and providing aid for up to 100 individuals annually.

MSDE requests that you consider this information in your deliberation of **SB 499**. If additional information is needed, please contact Akilah Alleyne, Ph.D., Executive Director of Governmental Affairs, at 410-767-0504, or [akilah.alleyne@maryland.gov](mailto:akilah.alleyne@maryland.gov).