



Maryland

DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET
AND MANAGEMENT

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Governor

ARUNA MILLER
Lieutenant Governor

HELENE GRADY
Secretary

MARC L. NICOLE
Deputy Secretary

House Bill 359 Prince George's County - Early Childhood Education Program, High School Child Care Centers, and Fee in Child Support Cases - Established PG 502-25

Statement of Information

DATE: February 12th 2025

COMMITTEE: Ways and Means

EXPLANATION:

This bill establishes a requirement for Prince George's County schools to create child care centers and corresponding Child Development Career and Technical Education programs. The Maryland State Department of Education must provide support for the certification and evaluation of these centers. The legislation includes a state funding mandate of \$5.0 million annually beginning in fiscal year 2027 to implement the program. In addition to the cost of meeting the mandated spending amount, the agency noted that there will be additional costs for the program that would further the fiscal impact. The child care centers will require ongoing funding to support the continued operations, and program sustainability is uncertain. Additionally, MSDE notes that the resources required for construction would divert time and money from other construction and educational programming needs while creating disruptions to school operations.

The Department of Budget and Management (DBM) is charged with submitting a balanced budget to the General Assembly annually and will be working with the General Assembly to achieve structural balance over the long term. In light of current projected general fund deficits in fiscal 2027 forward as well as significant uncertainty regarding changes in federal funding and related economic impacts to Maryland, the Department urges caution in passing legislation to significantly increase general fund expenditures without commensurate decreases in other areas or additional revenue to fund the new activity. State government must be intentional, disciplined, and strategic with its allocation of State funding to ensure maximum impact toward priority outcomes.

Given the forecasted out-year deficits for the General Fund as well as significant uncertainty regarding the federal budget and policy changes, it would be challenging for the State to manage this increase in spending.

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