

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2013 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 1153
Ways and Means

(Delegate B. Robinson, *et al.*)

Task Force to Study the Need for Recess in Maryland Public Schools

This bill establishes the Task Force to Study the Need for Recess in Maryland Public Schools. The task force must study and make recommendations on the need for recess in all grade levels, including the health and academic benefits of recess; any other effects of recess on students, teachers, and other school employees; and the appropriate amount of time to provide for recess each school day. The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) must provide staff for the task force. The task force must report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly by December 31, 2013.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2013, and terminates June 30, 2014.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Any expense reimbursements for task force members and staffing costs for MSDE are assumed to be minimal and absorbable within existing resources.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law/Background: Local school systems may establish policies regarding recess and recess hours, and recess schedules often vary from school to school within a local school system. The U.S. Department of Agriculture required that schools participating in the National School Lunch or Breakfast Programs have wellness policies at the beginning of the 2006-2007 school year. All wellness policies are required to have

goals for at least four components: nutrition guidelines; physical education/activity; nutrition/health education; and other school based activities. MSDE's guide entitled *Making Wellness Work: A Guide to Implementing and Monitoring School Wellness Policies in Maryland*, is intended to be used as a template for implementation and monitoring of the wellness policy in a school system and provides suggestions for combining physical education time with recess time to ensure adequate time for student physical activity in a school day.

The National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) finds that children from age 5 to 12 should accumulate at least 60 minutes, and up to several hours, of age appropriate physical activity on all or most days of the week. This daily accumulation should include, according to NASPE, moderate and vigorous physical activity with the majority of the time being spent in activity that is intermittent in nature. NASPE further finds that children should participate in several bouts of physical activity lasting 15 minutes or more each day, and that extended periods (periods of two hours or more) of inactivity are discouraged for children, especially during the daytime hours.

A February 2008 national study by the Center on Education Policy on curriculum and instruction following implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act finds that for many school systems, time devoted to tested subjects (including math and English language arts) increased while time devoted to one or more other subjects and activities, including lunch, physical education, and recess was reduced.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Center on Education Policy, National Association for Sport and Physical Education, Maryland State Department of Education, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 11, 2013
ncs/rhh

Analysis by: Scott P. Gates

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