

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2017 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 1412
Ways and Means

(Delegate McMillan, *et al.*)

Education - Public School Holidays - Veterans' Day and Easter Monday

This bill designates Veterans' Day as a public school holiday and removes Veterans' Day from the list of school days for which a part of the day must be devoted to appropriate exercises. The bill also repeals the requirement that the Monday after Easter is a mandatory public school holiday; however, the bill also specifies that a local board of education may designate this day as a public school holiday.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2018.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: State finances are not affected.

Local Effect: Minimum requirements for the number of school days and school hours in the school year are not altered. Repealing one mandatory public school holiday while establishing another will not materially affect annual operating expenses for public schools. Revenues are not affected.

Small Business Effect: Minimal.

Analysis

Current Law/Background: Public schools must be open for at least 180 days and 1,080 school hours at elementary and middle schools and 1,170 hours at high schools during a 10-month period. However, a local board of education may apply to the State Board of Education for a waiver from these provisions of State law; the application must describe a demonstrated effort by the local board to comply with State law. In response, the State Board of Education may permit adjustments in the length of the school year,

exceptions from the 10-month period requirement, adjustments in the length of the school day, and schools to be open on holidays. These adjustments may be granted only if normal school attendance is prevented because of natural disaster, civil disaster, or severe weather conditions.

The State has designated several days as public school holidays. They include the following:

- Thanksgiving Day and the day after;
- Christmas Eve through January 1;
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day;
- Presidents' Day;
- the Friday before Easter through the Monday after Easter;
- Memorial Day; and
- primary and general election days for most counties.

The public schools must devote a part of some designated days, including Veterans' Day, to exercises that are appropriate to the day. Veterans' Day (November 11) is a holiday for State employees and is a mandatory bank holiday.

On August 31, 2016, the Governor issued Executive Order 01.01.2016.09 (later amended by Executive Order 01.01.2016.13) requiring, with few exceptions, the local boards of education to open schools for student attendance no earlier than the Tuesday following the Labor Day holiday and to conclude no later than June 15 beginning in the 2017-2018 school year.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Baltimore City; Caroline and Prince George's counties; Maryland State Department of Education; Department of Legislative Services

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mm/rhh

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