

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2018 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 1353 (Delegate Miele)
Ways and Means

Local Boards of Education - Fields and Courts - Naming Rights

This bill authorizes a local board of education to sell or lease to a private entity the naming rights for a sports field or basketball court at a public school and authorizes the local board to adopt specified regulations related to this authority. For purposes of the bill, “private entity” includes an individual and a corporation, a nonprofit entity, or any other business entity.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None.

Local Effect: Local school system revenues may increase to the extent that the bill results in local boards selling or leasing naming rights. Expenditures are not affected.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law/Background: With the approval of the State Superintendent, each county board of education may buy or otherwise acquire land, school sites, or buildings and rent, repair, improve, and build school buildings or approve contracts for doing so, if the plans conform to requirements of the State Board of Education. The sale or lease of naming rights is neither explicitly authorized nor prohibited under State law.

At least one local school system has existing policies regarding the sale or lease of naming rights for school facilities. In Washington County, the local board of education may grant naming rights for a facility or a portion of a facility that is donated or funded in part or

whole with private donations. Prior written approval of the local board of education is required before proceeding with any fundraising activities pursuant to the granting of naming rights. Any request for naming rights must include a funding plan and specified assurances.

Washington County Public Schools advises that it has engaged in a number of public-private partnerships related to school facilities, including projects involving naming rights. For example, Nora Roberts Foundation made a significant financial contribution to allow the modernization of a high school auditorium. According to the *Baltimore Sun* a \$500,000 donation secured the naming rights for the Mike Callas Stadium at North Hagerstown High School and other donors had their names placed on the field, scoreboard, and restrooms for lesser donations. Sources including the *Chicago Tribune*, *The New York Times*, and National Public Radio indicate that school districts across the United States have policies enabling the sale and/or lease of naming rights for school facilities, including athletic facilities – including school districts in Florida, Indiana, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Carroll, Queen Anne’s and Washington counties; *Baltimore Sun*; *Chicago Tribune*; *New York Times*; National Public Radio; Maryland State Department of Education; Department of Legislative Services

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nb/rhh

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