

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
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FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 733
Ways and Means

(Delegate Ebersole, *et al.*)

Primary and Secondary Education - Community Schools - Established

This bill establishes community schools in the State and specifies the purpose and requirements of a community school. A local school system (LSS) or an existing public school may form a school-community partnership for the planning and implementation of a community school. An LSS must review and approve a community school within 60 days of receiving a specified assessment of needs and specified implementation plan from a community school leadership team; a community school may not be implemented without LSS approval. An LSS must make public funding available to a community school, as specified. By July 1, 2020, an existing community school must comply with the provisions of the bill in order to receive public funds. The bill expresses the intent that community schools be included in any studies conducted related to the adequacy of the funding of public schools in the State and that funding for community schools be built into the baseline formula funding for public schools in the State. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2019.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: It is assumed that total State formula funding for public schools is not altered by the intent language in the bill. The bill prohibits the State from providing support (*i.e.*, public funds) for interventions and strategies at certain noncompliant schools beginning in FY 2021.

Local Effect: LSSs will incur some costs to review community school plans. Under the bill, approval of community schools is at the discretion of each LSS. Furthermore, beginning in FY 2021, county funding for interventions and strategies at certain noncompliant schools will be prohibited. The net impact on local government finances is indeterminate and assumed to be minimal.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: The bill defines a “community school” as a public school that establishes a set of strategic partnerships between the school and other community resources that promote student achievement, positive learning conditions, and the well-being of students, families, and the community. The purpose of a community school is to help students and families overcome the in-school and out-of-school barriers that prevent children from learning and succeeding over the course of their lives by having an integrated focus on academics, health and social services, youth and community development, and familial and community engagement. A community school must have:

- active family and community engagement;
- a community school coordinator (CSC) to coordinate support programs that address out-of-school learning barriers for students and families;
- expanded and enriched learning time and opportunities provided after school, during weekends, and in the summer that emphasize mastering 21st Century skills;
- collaborative leadership and practices that empower parents, students, teachers, principals, and community partners to build a culture of professional learning, collective trust, and shared responsibility;
- a parent teacher organization or a school family council; and
- a community school leadership team, whose membership is specified.

The community school leadership team must conduct an assessment of needs and assets as part of the planning year that precedes implementation of the community school plan. The assessment of needs must include a baseline analysis of the needs and assets of the students, family, and community. The plan developed by the leadership team includes specified components and describes how the leadership team will integrate and coordinate the services needed at the school into the existing school programming.

A community school leadership team or community school coordinator may solicit the assistance and support of community partners to fulfill the bill’s requirements. An LSS must provide public funding to a community school if it offers at least two of the following types of interventions, as detailed in the bill: (1) academic services; (2) parental involvement programs; (3) physical and mental health services; and (4) community involvement programs. Any existing community schools that receive public funds for interventions and strategies must continue to receive these funds until June 30, 2020.

Current Law/Background: State law does not prescribe what a community school must entail and provide nor an approval process for community schools.

Community Schools

The Coalition for Community Schools indicates that a community school is both a place and a set of partnerships between the school and other community resources. While models vary nationwide, implementation is typically guided by a school-site leadership team of school staff and community stakeholders, and the work is managed by a community school coordinator.

According to the Maryland Out of School Time (MOST) Network's website, there are five community school initiatives in Maryland: Baltimore City Community Schools, the Linkages to Learning collaborative in Montgomery County, TNI@School in Prince George's County, Y in Central Maryland in Baltimore County, and Bester Community of Hope in Washington County. According to the MOST Network, there are more than 50 community schools in Baltimore City that are supported through the Family League of Baltimore and other lead agencies.

State Programs

Chapter 32 of 2016 established the Public School Opportunities Enhancement Program (PSEOP) to assist local school systems, public community schools, and nonprofit organizations in the State in expanding or creating extended day and summer enhancement programs and to assist nonprofit organizations in the State and community schools in expanding or supporting existing educational programming during the school day. Specified counties are eligible to participate in the program. If the grantee is a local school system, the local school system must provide at least an equal match to State grant funding. Only those community schools that exist in the State and use a community school strategy that is recognized by MOST are eligible for a grant.

The law initially mandated \$7.5 million for PSEOP in fiscal 2018 through 2021. However, Chapter 361 of 2018 (Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education Act), extended the program indefinitely, while reducing required annual funding to \$3.0 million.

Chapter 361 also established the Learning in Extended Academic Programs (LEAP) Grant Program. Beginning in fiscal 2019, the Governor must appropriate at least \$4.5 million annually for the program, which was redirected from PSOEP. LEAP provides a grant to public schools in which at least 80% of students qualify for free and reduced-price meals (FRPM) to provide extended academic programming that has a positive measurable impact on or enriches the academic performance and overall well-being of students who are at risk of falling behind academic requirements. An extended academic program must include before and after school, weekend, or summer programs. To qualify, summer programs must provide at least four hours of daily programming for at least 30 days and

before and after school programs must provide at least eight hours of academic programming each full week that school is in session.

Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education and Adequacy Study

Chapter 701 of 2016 established the 25-member Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education. The commission's members include legislators and various representatives of State and local government and education stakeholders as well as the business community. University System of Maryland Chancellor Emeritus Dr. William "Brit" Kirwan was appointed by the Governor and Presiding Officers of the General Assembly to serve as chair of the commission.

The commission essentially has a two-part charge:

- reviewing the findings and recommendations of the Study on Adequacy of Funding for Education in the State of Maryland as required by Chapter 288 of 2002 and subsequent legislation; and
- determining how the State can better prepare students for postsecondary education and to be competitive in the workforce and with other high-performing countries in the global economy.

The commission must make recommendations on, among other things, updating the State's education funding formulas based on its findings.

The concept of adequacy is based on determining the level of resources that is adequate for all public school students to have the opportunity to achieve academic proficiency standards. The Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Act (Chapter 288 of 2002), which established new primary State education aid formulas based on adequacy cost studies and other education finance analyses, required the State to contract with a consultant to conduct a follow-up study of the adequacy of education funding. Work on the adequacy study began in June 2014, when a contract was awarded to Augenblick, Palaich, and Associates (APA) and its team of researchers. The final report was submitted to the Governor and General Assembly by December 1, 2016. The commission has reviewed the APA study, which did not include specific funding for community schools.

The commission submitted a preliminary report of its findings in January 2018, and based on those recommendations, Chapter 361 of 2018 was enacted, including LEAP. The January 2019 [interim report](#) of the commission recommends, among other things, categorical funding for all public schools where at least 55% of students qualify for FRPM to be used to (1) establish or enhance community schools and (2) establish or enhance school health and behavioral services. The recommendations include funding for a community school coordinator, a health care practitioner, and a per pupil grant to provide supports and interventions for all students in a concentration of poverty school at a *total*

estimated cost (State and local) of approximately \$622 million annually. The commission will make funding formula recommendations in fall 2019.

Local Fiscal Effect: LSSs will incur some costs to review community school plans. The bill authorizes, but does not require, the forming of partnerships for implementing community schools and it is assumed that an LSS may reject a community school implementation plan based on an assessment that the plan will substantially increase LSS costs. The number of community schools that would be approved by an LSS under the bill is not known.

Also, the bill specifies that a community school leadership team or community school coordinator may solicit the assistance and support of community partners to fulfill the bill's requirements. It is assumed that in-kind or direct financial support by community partners will be part of approved plans for community schools. Baltimore City Public Schools advises that its community schools coordinators are not typically paid by the LSS. Furthermore, beginning in FY 2021, county funding for interventions and strategies at certain noncompliant schools will be prohibited. The net impact on local government finances is indeterminate and assumed to be minimal.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: SB 661 (Senator Washington) - Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs.

Information Source(s): Anne Arundel County Public Schools; Baltimore City Public Schools; Montgomery County Public Schools; Maryland State Department of Education; Maryland Out of School Time Network; Coalition for Community Schools; Department of Legislative Services

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