

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2020 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
Third Reader - Revised

Senate Bill 322

(Senator Simonaire)

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Ways and Means

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**Public High Schools – Health Education – Gambling Dangers and Addiction**

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This bill requires the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to develop, by July 1, 2021, a program of health education on the dangers of gambling and gambling addiction to be provided in public schools. Beginning in the 2021-2022 school year, each local board of education must annually require high schools to include instruction on the dangers of gambling and gambling addiction one time for students grades 9 through 12. By December 31, 2023, MSDE must report on the implementation of the bill, including information on the program of education that each local board used. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2020.**

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** None. MSDE can develop the required program and produce the required report using existing resources.

**Local Effect:** Local school systems can provide instruction on the dangers of gambling and gambling addiction in grades 6 through 12 using existing resources; however, resources may be diverted from existing health curriculum requirements.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Analysis**

**Bill Summary:** The gambling dangers and addiction education program must be coordinated with other State agencies that are responsible for gambling addiction education and control.

The State Board of Education may adopt regulations to implement the requirements of the bill.

**Current Law:** Each local school system must (1) provide in public schools a comprehensive health education program with sufficient frequency and duration to meet the requirements of the State curriculum for all students in prekindergarten through grade 8 and (2) offer in public schools a comprehensive health education program in grades 9 through 12 that enables students to meet graduation requirements and to select health education electives. Access to the curriculum must be provided for non-diploma-bound students.

In order to graduate from public high school in Maryland, students must complete a half credit of health. According to MSDE a half-credit course is about 67 hours of instruction time.

State law requires local school systems to teach a number of specified health topics including drug addiction and prevention education; awareness and prevention of sexual abuse and assault; and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) that includes hands-only CPR and the use of an automated external defibrillator.

State regulations require health instruction in the following topics: mental and emotional health; alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs; personal and consumer health; family life and human sexuality; safety and injury prevention; nutrition and fitness; and disease prevention and control.

**Background:** Specified types of gambling are allowed in Maryland. According to a [factsheet](#) by the Maryland Center on Problem Gambling, teen rates for problem gambling are higher than for adults. Approximately 4% to 8% of children between 12 and 17 years of age meet criteria for a gambling problem, and another 10% to 15% are at risk of developing a problem.

Maryland's casino operators pay annual assessments into the Problem Gambling Fund of \$425 per slot machine per year and \$500 per table game per year to fund programs to combat gambling addiction. These funds are managed by the Maryland Department of Health. The fund collected \$5.3 million in fiscal 2019. Maryland's per capita problem gambling funding is among the 10 highest in the United States.

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## Additional Information

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Designated Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Maryland State Department of Education; Maryland Department of Health; Maryland State Lottery and Gaming Control Agency; Montgomery County Public Schools; St. Mary's County Public Schools; Maryland Center for Problem Gambling; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 3, 2020  
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