

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2020 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
First Reader

House Bill 1235  
Ways and Means

(Delegate Ebersole, *et al.*)

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Maryland Center for School Safety - School Employee Injury Reporting and  
Study

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This bill requires the Maryland Center for School Safety (MCSS) to collect data from local school systems on injuries to teachers, paraprofessionals, and staff members, and report the results of its analysis of the data annually to the Governor and General Assembly. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2020.**

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Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** MCSS can likely carry out the bill's requirements with existing resources. No effect on revenues.

**Local Effect:** Local school systems can provide injury reports to MCSS with existing resources. No effect on revenues.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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Analysis

**Bill Summary:** MCSS must develop a guidance document and data collection template for local school systems to collect and report data on injuries to teachers, paraprofessionals, and staff. Each public school must provide the data to the local school system's school safety coordinator, who must forward the data to MCSS every three months.

In conducting its analysis of the data, MCSS must:

- analyze the injury reports submitted by public schools;

- develop evaluation metrics to identify patterns within the data;
- assess opportunities for adapting school policies to prevent injuries to school staff; and
- develop recommendations for improving school safety.

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) must conduct outreach to publicize the reporting systems, and State and local bargaining agents for public school employees may also conduct outreach to encourage school staff to file injury-related reports.

By October 1, 2021, and each year thereafter, MCSS must report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly.

**Current Law:**

*Maryland Center for School Safety*

Chapter 372 of 2013 established MCSS as an independent unit within State government under the direction of a governing board chaired by the State Superintendent of Schools. Chapter 30 of 2018 (the Safe to Learn Act) made MCSS an independent unit *within* MSDE; MCSS is based at the Maryland Coordination and Analysis Center and must establish a satellite office at Bowie State University. Chapter 30 also increased the mandated appropriation for MCSS’s operations from \$500,000 to \$2.0 million annually, and expanded MCSS’s duties to include:

- assisting local school systems to identify resources and implement training for students and parents about relationship violence, identifying the signs of unhealthy relationships, and preventing relationship violence;
- analyzing data on school resource officers (SROs) and develop guidelines for local school systems regarding the assignment and training of SROs;
- certifying school safety coordinators;
- consulting with local school systems on safety evaluations;
- reviewing and commenting on school emergency plans; and
- reporting on life-threatening incidents that occur on public school grounds.

Each local school system must promptly inform MCSS of any critical, life-threatening incidents that occur on school grounds and invite the center to participate in a required after-action review of the incident. At the conclusion of the review, the local school system must file a report with MCSS, and the center must report to the Governor and General Assembly on lessons learned from the incident and any recommendations for improving school safety.

## *School Safety Coordinators*

Chapter 30 required each local school system to designate a school safety coordinator, who must be certified by MCSS and serve as the liaison between the local school system, local law enforcement, and MCSS.

**Background:** During the 2018-2019 school year, public schools suspended (out-of-school) 2,625 students for attacks on adults, or an average of 656 for each three-month reporting period under the bill. Assuming that not all attacks result in injuries, the number of injury reports that would be filed with MCSS is likely somewhat less.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Designated Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Maryland State Department of Education; Maryland Center for School Safety; Baltimore City Public Schools; Montgomery County Public Schools; Department of Legislative Services

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