

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2021 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 621
Ways and Means

(Prince George's County Delegation)

Prince George's County – Elementary School Students – Daily Physical Activity
(Student Health and Fitness Act) PG 504–21

This bill requires all public elementary school students in Prince George's County to be provided daily programs of physical activity totaling 150 minutes per week, including a *minimum* of 90 minutes per week of physical education. For any of the required minutes not spent in physical education, each elementary school must designate a physical activity leadership team to plan and coordinate opportunities for moderate to vigorous activity (including recess) to make up the remaining time. Physical activity must be consistent with individualized education programs, if applicable. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2021, but a local school may apply for an extension. A local school that is granted an extension must have a plan to ensure compliance by July 1, 2024.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The bill applies only to Prince George's County.

Local Effect: Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) costs increase to hire additional teachers for elementary schools. Depending on extensions granted, expenditures increase by up to \$5.4 million in FY 2022 and \$5.7 million by FY 2025; out-year costs increase based on inflation. Local retirement expenditures increase accordingly beginning as early as FY 2024. **This bill imposes a mandate on a unit of local government.**

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Every public school must have a program of physical education that is given in a planned and sequential manner to all students in order to develop their good health and physical fitness and improve their motor coordination and physical skills. The specific curriculum and course of study is set by each local board of education.

Maryland regulations require a physical education comprehensive program to provide a developmentally appropriate instructional program that advances student knowledge, confidence, skills, and motivation to enjoy a lifetime of healthful physical activity. As of January 2020, PGCPS provide a minimum of 40 and a maximum of 90 minutes per week in physical education.

Local Expenditures: PGCPS has indicated that while many of its elementary schools provide 90 minutes of physical education every other week, it is estimated that few if any provide 90 minutes *every* week. Many of its elementary schools alternate between 45 minutes one week and 90 minutes the next week, while others alternate between 60 minutes one week and 90 minutes the next week. In part, these schedules allow time for music classes every other week.

To provide 90 minutes of physical education every week, PGCPS estimates that 11 of its larger elementary schools will require 1 additional teaching position and each of its remaining 121 elementary schools will require an additional half position. This amounts to an additional 71.5 full-time equivalent positions.

Based upon starting first-quartile salaries for Prince George's County school teachers in [2019](#), and accounting for fringe benefits and inflation, as well as \$90,900 in costs for mileage, substitutes, and stipends, the total expenditure increase for PGCPS amounts to an estimated \$5.4 million for fiscal 2022 if no extensions are granted. The bill allows a local school in Prince George's County to apply for three-year extensions to meet the requirements. If extensions are granted for each school, the expenditure increase in fiscal 2025 amounts to \$5.7 million, based on the assumptions described above and inflation of the \$90,900 in additional costs, and \$5.8 million in fiscal 2026. However, extensions could enable local schools systems to make adjustments to their budgets and identify the most efficient ways to expand physical education programs.

Local school boards are responsible for the actual normal cost of pensions for qualifying personnel. PGCPS retirement expenditures increase beginning in fiscal 2024, or as late as fiscal 2027, depending on extensions granted.

Elementary school facilities are not expected to be a barrier to requiring 90 minutes per week of physical education. To provide elementary school students with additional time for physical activity, less time may be spent on other priorities, such as instruction in other subjects. It is assumed that this will not affect school finances, although the impact on students is unknown. Alternatively, PGCPS could lengthen the school day for some or all elementary school students. Any costs associated with lengthening the school day will depend on how the adjustment is implemented and cannot be precisely determined.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: HB 413 of 2020 and HB 196 of 2019 each received a hearing in the House Ways and Means Committee, but no further action was taken.

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland State Department of Education; Prince George's County Public Schools; Department of Legislative Services

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