

Department of Legislative Services
 Maryland General Assembly
 2021 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
 First Reader

House Bill 914 (Delegate Bhandari)
 Ways and Means

Education - Home and Hospital Teaching Program for Students - Report

This bill requires the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to (1) assess whether students in the Home and Hospital Teaching Program for Students receive adequate support and instructional time to successfully transition back to a classroom setting; (2) analyze whether local school systems have sufficient staffing to coordinate instructional services for students; (3) study whether transition plans for students returning to the classroom should be implemented and, if so, the viability of having school counselors lead and develop those plans; (4) assess whether any transition plans should be reviewed or evaluated by a licensed medical professional prior to implementation; and (5) make recommendations regarding any statutory or regulatory changes to the Home and Hospital Teaching Program for Students. MSDE must report its findings and recommendations to the Governor, the Maryland State Board of Education, and the General Assembly by December 31, 2021. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2021, and terminates June 30, 2022.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: General fund expenditures increase by \$166,000 in FY 2022 to conduct the evaluation. Revenues are not affected.

(in dollars)	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditure	166,000	0	0	0	0
Net Effect	(\$166,000)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Note:() = decrease; GF = general funds; FF = federal funds; SF = special funds; - = indeterminate increase; (-) = indeterminate decrease

Local Effect: Local school systems can respond to MSDE requests for information on home and hospital teaching with existing resources.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: The Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) establishes the minimum requirements for providing instructional services to public school students who are unable to participate in their school of enrollment due to a physical or emotional condition. These programs are generally known as home and hospital teaching programs. In implementing these programs, a local school system must comply with the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Americans with Disabilities Act, and § 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as appropriate. Concurrent delivery of instructional services and enrollment in a public school must be provided for a student whose physical or emotional condition requires the student to be absent from school on an intermittent basis. These conditions include, but are not limited to, kidney failure, cancer, asthma, cystic fibrosis, sickle cell anemia, depression, and bipolar disorder.

Instructional services must be provided to an identified student with disabilities in accordance with federal and State special education law and regulations, including COMAR provisions related to special education. The student and parents must be involved in the process and are entitled to all rights and due process procedures included within these laws and regulations.

Each local school system must make instructional services available to students who are unable to participate in their school of enrollment for those reasons set forth in COMAR. In making instructional services available, local school systems must consult with the parent, guardian, student, psychologist, physician, psychiatrist, and nurse practitioner, as appropriate. Instructional services must be available to all students during convalescence or treatment time in a medical institution or therapeutic treatment center and at the student's place of residence, or all of these. The local school system must provide for initial and recurring verification of a student's physical or emotional condition and, thus, need for services through the programs.

State Expenditures: MSDE anticipates hiring a program evaluator to conduct the required study at a cost of \$166,000 in fiscal 2022. The individual will be responsible for developing a program evaluation process, creating data collection and analysis tools, developing a methodology to implement the study, analyzing results, and making recommendations. The scope of the study would include all 24 home and hospital teaching programs operated by local school systems. The cost estimate for the study is based on a program evaluation conducted by a local university of a wellness and resilience program that involved three local school systems in Maryland.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: HB 522 of 2020 received a hearing in the House Ways and Means Committee, but no further action was taken. Its cross file, SB 572, received a hearing in the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee, but no further action was taken. HB 1137 of 2019 passed the House and received a hearing in the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee, but no further action was taken.

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland State Department of Education; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 15, 2021
md/hlb

Analysis by: Michael E. Sousane

Direct Inquiries to:
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510