

Department of Legislative Services  
 Maryland General Assembly  
 2022 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
 Third Reader

House Bill 531  
 Ways and Means

(Delegate J. Lewis)

Rules

Maryland Association of Environmental and Outdoor Education Grant -  
 Funding and Evaluation - Extension

This bill increases the mandated fiscal 2026 appropriation for the Maryland Association of Environmental and Outdoor Education (MAEOE) to increase the number of green schools in the State, and extends mandated State appropriations, in specified amounts, through fiscal 2028. A requirement for an annual evaluation by an independent contractor of the impact of the funds on increasing the number of green schools in the State is extended through calendar 2029. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2022.**

Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** General fund expenditures increase by \$64,300 in FY 2026, \$280,900 in FY 2027, and \$216,600 in FY 2028. The bill has no impact in FY 2023 through 2025 or beyond FY 2028. **This bill increases a mandated appropriation in FY 2026 and establishes mandated appropriations for FY 2027 and 2028.**

| (in dollars)   | FY 2023 | FY 2024 | FY 2025 | FY 2026    | FY 2027     |
|----------------|---------|---------|---------|------------|-------------|
| Revenues       | \$0     | \$0     | \$0     | \$0        | \$0         |
| GF Expenditure | 0       | 0       | 0       | 64,300     | 280,900     |
| Net Effect     | \$0     | \$0     | \$0     | (\$64,300) | (\$280,900) |

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

**Local Effect:** Statewide, local school systems realize a loss of grant funding totaling \$350 in FY 2026 and receive as much as \$116,250 in FY 2027 and \$116,600 in FY 2028.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

## Analysis

**Current Law:** Chapters 739 and 740 of 2019 require the Governor to include in the State budget specified funding for MAEOE, in fiscal 2021 through 2026, for the purpose of increasing the number of green schools in the State. An annual evaluation of the impact of this funding must be conducted in calendar 2022 through 2027.

The dollar amounts that may be used by MAEOE is specified under five particular categories to

- (1) support professional development, assist with student transportation to and from environmentally focused activities, or support school projects that incorporate specified environmental best practices;
- (2) increase the number of environmental educators in the State who will provide green schools training and assist schools with becoming green schools;
- (3) support statewide green school events;
- (4) conduct an annual evaluation by an independent contractor of the impact of the funds provided under the bill on increasing the number of green schools in the State; and
- (5) create an online application form for a school to apply for funding under the bill.

**Exhibit 1** shows funding under current law by year and category.

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**Exhibit 1**  
**Funding under Current Law by Fiscal Year and Category**

| <u>Category</u> | <u>FY 2021</u>   | <u>FY 2022</u>   | <u>FY 2023</u>   | <u>FY 2024</u>   | <u>FY 2025</u>   | <u>FY 2026</u>   |
|-----------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| 1               | \$115,000        | \$115,300        | \$115,600        | \$116,000        | \$116,250        | \$116,600        |
| 2               | 125,750          | 130,000          | 133,500          | 137,400          | 141,600          | 85,000           |
| 3               | 8,000            | 8,000            | 8,000            | 8,000            | 8,000            | 6,000            |
| 4               | 10,000           | 10,000           | 10,000           | 10,000           | 10,000           | 4,000            |
| 5               | 20,000           | 5,000            | 5,000            | 5,000            | 5,000            | 5,000            |
| <b>Total</b>    | <b>\$278,750</b> | <b>\$268,300</b> | <b>\$272,100</b> | <b>\$276,400</b> | <b>\$280,850</b> | <b>\$216,600</b> |

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**State Expenditures:** General fund expenditures increase by \$64,250 in fiscal 2026, \$280,850 in fiscal 2027, and \$216,600 in fiscal 2028. The increase in fiscal 2026 is attributable to alterations in funding for that year under the bill. Fiscal 2027 and 2028 expenditures are entirely new under the bill. **Exhibit 2** shows funding increases under the bill by fiscal year and funding category.

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**Exhibit 2**  
**Increased Funding under the Bill by Fiscal Year and Category**

| <u>Category</u> | <u>FY 2026</u>  | <u>FY 2027</u>   | <u>FY 2028</u>   |
|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| 1               | -\$350          | \$116,250        | \$116,600        |
| 2               | 56,600          | 141,600          | 85,000           |
| 3               | 2,000           | 8,000            | 6,000            |
| 4               | 6,000           | 10,000           | 4,000            |
| 5               | 0               | 5,000            | 5,000            |
| <b>Total</b>    | <b>\$64,250</b> | <b>\$280,850</b> | <b>\$216,600</b> |

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**Local Fiscal Effect:** Local school systems are the beneficiaries of grants under the first category of funding under the bill, as described above. Statewide, local school systems realize a loss of grant funding totaling \$350 in fiscal 2026 and receive as much as \$116,250 in fiscal 2027 and \$116,600 in fiscal 2028. Thus, local finances are not substantially altered in fiscal 2026. In fiscal 2027 and 2028, consistent with the purposes set forth under the bill, local school system expenditures for professional development, for student transportation to and from environmentally focused activities, and to support school projects that incorporate specified environmental best practices are either offset or increased by similar amounts.

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**Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Designated Cross File:** SB 383 (Senators King and Pinsky) - Budget and Taxation.

**Information Source(s):** Maryland State Department of Education; Department of Budget and Management; Maryland Department of the Environment; Department of Natural Resources; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 4, 2022  
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