

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2023 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
First Reader

House Bill 960

(Delegate Valderrama, *et al.*)

Ways and Means

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**Education - Public Schools - Asian American History Curriculum Requirement**

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This bill requires the State Board of Education (SBE) to develop curriculum content standards that include specified elements for a unit of instruction on Asian American history for public schools. Beginning in the 2024-2025 school year, each local board of education must implement the Asian American history curriculum content standards such that a unit of instruction is taught at least once, as specified, in elementary, middle, and high school. A local board may develop an online course to satisfy the requirements of the bill. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2023.**

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) can develop the content standards using existing resources. Revenues are not affected.

**Local Effect:** Local school system expenditures increase in FY 2024 and 2025 to train teachers and purchase resources and materials in alignment with the content standards by the 2024-2025 school year. Revenues are not affected. **This bill may impose a mandate on a unit of local government.**

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Analysis**

**Bill Summary:** The Asian American history curriculum content standards must enable students to respect the dignity of all races and all peoples. The standards must require age-appropriate instruction on the following topics:

- the events of Asian American history;
- Asian American history in Maryland and the mid-Atlantic region; and
- contributions made by Asian Americans, including those specified.

SBE may prepare and make available instructional materials, including the Public Broadcasting Service's instructional materials on Asian Americans, that may be used as a guide for the development of the standards.

Each local board of education must determine the appropriate amount of instructional time necessary to satisfy the requirement for a unit of instruction on Asian American history.

Each local superintendent must ensure compliance with the requirements of the bill. SBE may adopt regulations to carry out the bill.

**Current Law:** With the advice of the State Superintendent of Schools, SBE establishes basic policy and guidelines for the program of instruction for public schools. Subject to State law and the regulations, bylaws, policies, and guidelines established by SBE, each local board of education must establish the curriculum guides and courses of study for schools in its jurisdiction. Policies, rules, and regulations for the graduation of students from Maryland public schools are established by local boards of education and SBE.

The curriculum is often divided into units of study. There is no State definition for what constitutes a unit of study in terms of time or content. However, units generally range for two to six weeks, although they could be shorter.

**State Expenditures:** For a prior introduction of the bill, MSDE advised that it is in the process of revising the Maryland College and Career Readiness Standards for alignment with the grade 10 College and Career Readiness standards required by the Blueprint for Maryland's Future (Chapters 36 and 55 of 2021). In 2022, MSDE advised it can develop the content standards required by the bill using existing resources.

While MSDE noted that there is no timeframe given for the completion of the standards, the Department of Legislative Services advises that presumably the standards must be completed in time for local school systems to prepare to implement the standards for the 2024-2025 school year. For purposes of this estimate, it is assumed that the standards are completed six months after the July 1, 2023 effective date of the bill, which is January 1, 2024. Although six months is a much shorter period than the typical period (three years) it takes to revise content standards, the assumption allows approximately seven months for local school systems to implement the standards as discussed below.

**Local Expenditures:** By the 2024-2025 school year (fiscal 2025), each local school system must train teachers in the new curriculum and purchase resources and materials in

alignment with the Asian American content standards developed under the bill. Assuming that the new content standards are developed by January 1, 2024, the timeframe to complete these tasks is approximately seven months spanning portions of fiscal 2024 and 2025. Thus, local school system expenditures increase, potentially significantly, in fiscal 2024 and 2025. Anne Arundel County Public Schools advises it would need to develop curriculum (\$46,500) and purchase instructional materials (\$223,000) at an estimated cost of \$269,500 in fiscal 2024, with lower costs in the out years. Baltimore City Public Schools advises costs of \$300,00 in fiscal 2024 to purchase limited curriculum to support content strands into the core curriculum during the 2024-2025 school year. These costs could be higher or lower depending on the standards adopted.

It is assumed that local school systems will use the most cost-effective way to implement the bill's requirements. Under the bill, local school systems may meet the requirement by developing online courses. The costs to develop an online course for one unit are unknown; however, the development of a half-credit course in financial literacy cost MSDE \$250,000.

It is assumed that the content standards developed by MSDE will dictate the approximate length of the units required.

To the extent that local curriculum and materials already meet the requirements of the new English Language Arts content standards adopted by SBE by January 1, 2024, costs for those local school systems may be less. However, any cost savings cannot be estimated until the new content standards are adopted.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** Similar legislation has been introduced within the last three years. See HB 922 of 2022.

**Designated Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Baltimore City Public Schools; Anne Arundel County Public Schools; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 26, 2023  
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