

Department of Legislative Services
 Maryland General Assembly
 2023 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
 First Reader

House Bill 1167 (Delegates Fisher and T. Morgan)
 Ways and Means

Calvert County - Civic Education - Standards and Curriculum (Social Studies Literacy Act)

This bill requires, beginning in the 2025-2026 school year, the U.S. government course taught in high school in Calvert County must include a unit on comparative political ideologies as specified. The State Board of Education (SBE) must (1) adopt age-appropriate civic education standards that must be incorporated into the social studies curriculum at every grade level; (2) approve the curriculum to implement civic education standards established by the Calvert County Board of Education; and (3) curate oral history resources as specified. The Calvert County Board of Education must establish a curriculum for the civic education standards adopted by SBE and submit the civic education curriculum to SBE for approval. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2023.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: General fund expenditures increase by an estimated \$60,000 in FY 2024 to curate oral history resources that meet the requirements of the bill. Revenues are not affected.

(in dollars)	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditure	60,000	0	0	0	0
Net Effect	(\$60,000)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

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

Local Effect: To the extent that Calvert County Public Schools (CCPS) must revise its social studies curriculum to meet the requirements of the bill, CCPS expenditures may increase. Revenues are not affected. **This bill may impose a mandate on a unit of local government.**

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: The U.S. government course must include a unit on comparative political ideologies that discusses ideologies that conflict with the principles of freedom and democracy that are essential to the founding principles of the United States, including communism and totalitarianism.

The civics education curriculum must assist students in developing:

- an understanding of shared rights and responsibilities of residents of the State;
- an understanding of the fundamental principles of the United States;
- a sense of civic pride and desire to regularly participate as citizens with government at the local, State, and federal levels;
- an understanding of the process for effectively advocating before governmental bodies and officials; and
- an understanding of the civic-minded expectations of an upright and desirable citizenry that recognizes and accepts responsibility for preserving and defending the blessings of liberty inherited from prior generations and secured by the U.S. Constitution.

Current Law:

General Requirements for Instruction

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.

SBE and the State Superintendent of Schools must assist each local board of education to establish educational goals and objectives that conform to statewide educational objectives for subject areas, including reading, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies. With the assistance of its local board, each public school must survey current student achievement in reading, language, mathematics, science, social studies, and other areas to assess its needs.

Social Studies Instruction and Topics

According to regulations, each local school system must provide an instructional program in social studies each year for all students in prekindergarten through grade 8 and a program that enables students to meet graduation requirements and to select social studies electives in grades 9 through 12. These programs must at least meet the content standards in the regulations. In Maryland, among other required topics, regulations require that the social studies instructional program teach students about the peoples of the nation and the world. Specifically, students must inquire about the people of the United State and the world using a historically grounded, multidisciplinary approach in order to recognize multiple narratives and acknowledge the diversity and commonality of the human experience. Every five years, each local superintendent of schools must certify to the State Superintendent of Schools that the instructional programming for prekindergarten through grade 12 meets, at a minimum, all the requirements set forth in the regulations.

In accordance with the Regulatory Review and Evaluation Act, State Standards and Frameworks (*i.e.*, content standards) are reviewed by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and SBE every eight years.

Civics Literacy

Civic literacy often refers to the capacity of an informed citizen to participate fully and successfully in government, exercising the rights and obligations of citizenship. State regulations require each local school system to provide an instructional program in social studies each year for all students in grades prekindergarten to 8 and offer a social studies program in grades 9 to 12, which enables students to meet graduation requirements and to select social studies electives. The comprehensive instructional program must provide for the diversity of student needs, abilities, and interests at the early, middle, and high school learning years, and must include the content standards set forth in the College, Career, and Civic Life Framework for Social Studies. Under the civics portion of these standards, students must inquire about the historical development of the fundamental concepts and processes of authority, power, and influence with particular emphasis on civic reasoning in order to become informed, responsible citizens, engage in the political process, and contribute to society.

Unit of Study

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 from two to six weeks, although they could be shorter.

State Expenditures: MSDE advises that SBE has current, approved [Social Studies Standards](#) that include civics. Thus, it is assumed that SBE will not need to make any significant changes to the social studies curriculum. However, to the extent that changes are made, MSDE general fund expenditures may increase.

SBE generally does not approve or disapprove a local curriculum. Local school superintendents must periodically certify that their locally developed curriculum for certain topics, including in social studies, meets the State requirements. However, SBE can approve the CCPS curriculum created under the bill using existing resources.

The current social studies standards do not include curated oral history resources. The bill requires SBE to curate oral history resources to be used with the civic education curriculum that provide portraits in patriotism based on the personal stories of diverse individuals who have demonstrated civic-minded qualities, including first-person accounts of victims of the governing ideologies of other nations who can compare those ideologies with that of the United States. MSDE advises that contractual services are required to curate oral history resources; thus, general fund expenditures increase by an estimated \$60,000 in fiscal 2023, which reflects a cost of \$15,000 per grade level for four years of high school.

Local Expenditures: Calvert County did not respond to a request for information. To the extent that CCPS must revise its social studies curriculum to meet the requirements of the bill, CCPS expenditures may increase for training and instructional materials, including incorporating the oral histories into the curriculum.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has been introduced within the last three years. See HB 1190 of 2022.

Designated Cross File: None.

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

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Analysis by: Caroline L. Boice

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