

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2023 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 1168
Ways and Means

(Delegates Fisher and T. Morgan)

Calvert County - Public High Schools - Class Rank System (Calvert County
Merit Restoration Act)

This bill requires the Calvert County Board of Education to measure the academic achievement of students in a public high school using a class rank system beginning in the 2025-2026 school year. The class rank system must publicly recognize the student with the highest GPA in the graduating class as valedictorian and the second highest GPA in the graduating class as salutatorian. The class rank system is subject to a referendum of the qualified voters of Calvert County at the November 2024 general election and will take effect January 1, 2025, depending on the outcome of the referendum. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2023.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None.

Local Effect: Calvert County Public Schools can implement the class rank system with existing resources since the bill largely codifies current practice. The Calvert County Board of Elections can include the question on the November 2024 ballot with existing resources.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Calvert County Public Schools advises that the school system already maintains class rank information based on GPAs beginning at the end of a student's first marking period through the last marking period of a student's senior year. The school system uses that information to recognize "Graduates with Distinction" during the

graduation ceremony for each high school. “Graduates with Distinction” includes students with a weighted GPA of 3.9 and above. Such students are noted in the graduation program and wear a designated enhancement to the traditional cap and gown. Further, the school system advises that students with the top five GPAs in the class are introduced at graduation in order from number five to number one in the class. However, the school system uses the terms “first and second in the class,” not “valedictorian and salutatorian” to refer to students with the highest and second highest GPAs. Because the school system’s [graduation procedures](#) already incorporate a class rank system, the bill can be implemented with existing resources.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

Designated Cross File: None.

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

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km/hlb

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