

Department of Legislative Services  
 Maryland General Assembly  
 2024 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
 First Reader

House Bill 157 (Delegate Griffith)  
 Appropriations

Public Schools - Appropriations for School Safety Expenditures - Increase  
 (School Safety Enhancement Act of 2024)

This bill increases, from \$10.0 million to \$20.0 million beginning in fiscal 2026, the mandated appropriation to the Safe Schools Fund for grants to local school systems and/or law enforcement agencies to assist in placing school resources officers (SROs) in public schools or providing adequate law enforcement coverage for schools without SROs. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2024.**

Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** No effect in FY 2025. General fund expenditures for the Safe Schools Fund increase by \$10.0 million annually beginning in FY 2026; special fund revenues and expenditures increase commensurately. The Maryland Center for School Safety (MCSS) can implement the bill with existing resources. **This bill increases a mandated appropriation beginning in FY 2026.**

(\$ in millions)	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029
SF Revenue	\$0	\$10.0	\$10.0	\$10.0	\$10.0
GF Expenditure	\$0	\$10.0	\$10.0	\$10.0	\$10.0
SF Expenditure	\$0	\$10.0	\$10.0	\$10.0	\$10.0
Net Effect	\$0.0	(\$10.0)	(\$10.0)	(\$10.0)	(\$10.0)

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

**Local Effect:** Local revenues and expenditures increase by \$10.0 million annually beginning in FY 2026. The revenues supplant local funds being used for school safety, but otherwise do not affect total local expenditures.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

## **Analysis**

**Current Law:** Chapter 30 of 2018, the Safe to Learn Act, defines an SRO as (1) a law enforcement officer assigned to a school in accordance with a memorandum of understanding between a local law enforcement agency and a local school system or (2) a Baltimore City School Police Officer, as defined in current law.

Each local school system must file a report with MCSS that identifies (1) the public schools that have an SRO assigned and (2) if no SRO is assigned to a public school, the adequate local law enforcement coverage that will be provided to the school.

Annually, the Governor must include \$10.0 million for the Safe Schools Fund to provide grants to local school systems and law enforcement agencies to meet the SRO/law enforcement coverage requirements established by Chapter 30. Grants must be made based on the proportion of public schools in each jurisdiction.

**Local Fiscal Effect:** The bill increases the mandated appropriation for the Safe Schools Fund by \$10.0 million. As with the current mandate, the additional \$10.0 million must be distributed based on the number of schools in each local school system. Therefore, local revenues for school safety increase by a total of \$10.0 million; the estimated distribution of these funds is shown in **Exhibit 1**. Local expenditures increase commensurately.

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**Exhibit 1**  
**Estimated Distribution of Additional \$10.0 Million Mandated for School Safety**

<u>County</u>	<u># of Schools</u>	<u>% of Schools</u>	<u>Allocation</u>
Allegany	26	1.8%	\$183,099
Anne Arundel	126	8.9%	887,324
Baltimore City	154	10.8%	1,084,507
Baltimore	179	12.6%	1,260,563
Calvert	26	1.8%	183,099
Caroline	10	0.7%	70,423
Carroll	44	3.1%	309,859
Cecil	29	2.0%	204,225
Charles	39	2.7%	274,648
Dorchester	13	0.9%	91,549
Frederick	69	4.9%	485,915
Garrett	12	0.8%	84,507
Harford	55	3.9%	387,324
Howard	77	5.4%	542,254
Kent	5	0.4%	35,211
Montgomery	210	14.8%	1,478,873
Prince George's	200	14.1%	1,408,451
Queen Anne's	14	1.0%	98,592
St. Mary's	32	2.3%	225,352
Somerset	9	0.6%	63,380
Talbot	8	0.6%	56,338
Washington	44	3.1%	309,859
Wicomico	25	1.8%	176,056
Worcester	14	1.0%	98,592
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,420</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$10,000,000</b>

Source: Maryland State Department of Education; Department of Legislative Services

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**Additional Information**

**Recent Prior Introductions:** Similar legislation has been introduced within the last three years. See HB 738 of 2023 and HB 613 of 2022.

**Designated Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Maryland State Department of Education; Maryland Center for School Safety; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - January 18, 2024  
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