

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2007 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Bill 330 (Senator Kelley, *et al.*)
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

**Task Force to Study System Variables that Impact Student Achievement in
Underperforming Public Schools**

This bill establishes a task force to study education system variables that may impact student achievement in underperforming public schools, including educational leadership, class sizes, teacher quality, school facilities, and any other factors identified by the task force. The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and the Department of Legislative Services (DLS) must provide staff support for the task force. A final report with findings and recommendations is due by December 1, 2008.

The bill takes effect October 1, 2007 and terminates November 30, 2008.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Although there could be some expenses associated with the task force, the costs could be absorbed within the existing budgets of MSDE and DLS.

Local Effect: Local officials appointed to the task force could serve without impacting local budgets.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

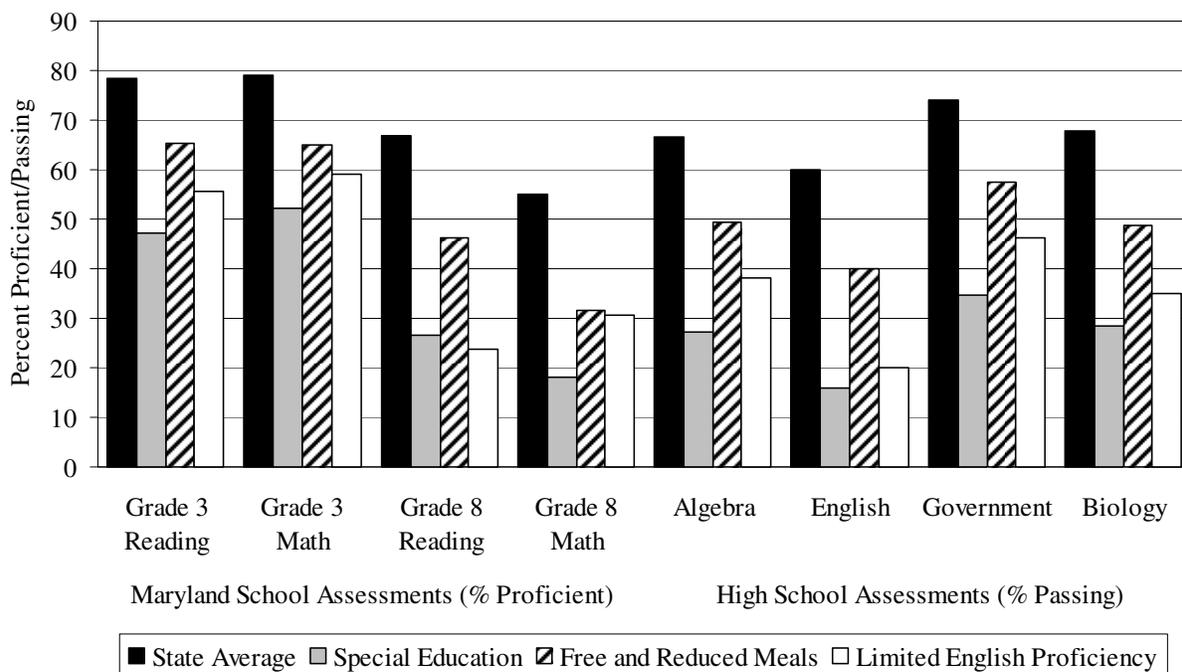
Current Law: As required by the Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Act of 2002, MSDE has contracted with a private entity, MGT of America, Inc., to study the impact of increased State aid on student achievement. MGT submitted an interim report in

December 2006 and is scheduled to submit a final report in December 2008. Among other requirements, the final report must include:

- a detailed description of how local school systems are using State education aid;
- a comparison of school systems that show significant improvements in student and school performance to school systems that do not; and
- a list of programs or factors that consistently produce positive results for students, schools, and school systems.

Background: As stated in the preamble to the bill, some populations of students continue to perform below average on State assessments. **Exhibit 1** compares the statewide average performance on the Maryland School Assessments and High School Assessments to the performance of special education students, students eligible for free and reduced price meals, and students with limited English proficiency. The exhibit shows that, in all cases, the at-risk student populations perform below the statewide averages.

Exhibit 1
Performance of Different Student Populations on State Assessments
2006



Source: Maryland State Department of Education

A total of 233 public schools in Maryland, approximately 17% of all public schools, have been designated for school improvement in the current school year due to an inability to meet State performance targets for at least two consecutive years. Schools in improvement are located in 14 of Maryland's 24 local school systems. They are subject to increased scrutiny from the State and are required to provide added services to students.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

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

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 26, 2007
mll/rhh

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