

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2008 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 1396
Ways and Means

(Delegate Valderrama, *et al.*)

Public High Schools - Safety Education Program - Self-Defense Training

This bill requires each public high school to include a self-defense training course in its program of safety education. Every student in a public high school must take the course.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2008.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The bill is directed at public high schools.

Local Effect: Local school expenditures would increase by an estimated \$13.0 million beginning in FY 2010 to implement mandatory self-defense courses in all public high schools. **This bill imposes a mandate on a unit of local government.**

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Each public school must have a program of safety education.

In general, the State Board of Education, with the advice of the State Superintendent of Schools, establishes basic policy and guidelines for the program of instruction for public schools. Subject to State law and the bylaws, policies, and guidelines established by the State Board of Education, each local board of education must establish the curriculum guides and courses of study for schools in its jurisdiction.

Background: In the 2006-2007 school year, there were 13,510 suspensions for fighting, 6,229 suspensions for physical attacks on students, 71 suspensions for sexual assault, and 19 suspensions for serious bodily injuries.

Local Expenditures: Local school expenditures could increase by an estimated \$13.0 million beginning in fiscal 2010 to hire teachers qualified to teach mandatory self-defense training courses. The information and assumptions used to develop this estimate are stated below.

- The required courses would be developed in the 2008-2009 school year and would be taught beginning in the 2009-2010 school year.
- In the 2007-2008 school year, there are approximately 67,300 students in each high school grade. It is assumed that this number of high school students would receive the required self-defense instruction each year.
- It is estimated that each teacher would have approximately 400 students per year. This assumes that the self-defense courses would be taught during one high school quarter and that a teacher could teach approximately 4 classes of 25 students or 5 classes of 20 students per semester. In total, 169 new teachers would be needed.
- The average cost per teacher for salary and benefits is estimated at \$77,200. The total cost for 169 teachers would be approximately \$13.0 million.

This estimate assumes no additional costs for instructional materials. To the extent that existing teachers are qualified to teach self-defense, costs for teachers could be somewhat less than the \$13.0 million estimate. Additional school system costs could also be incurred for curriculum development and technical assistance and support.

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 - March 17, 2008
mll/rhh

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