

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2010 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Revised

House Bill 978

(Harford County Delegation)

Ways and Means

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Harford County Board of Education - Student Member - Voting Rights

This bill gives limited voting rights to the student member of the Harford County Board of Education. The bill also alters the election procedures for the student member and the qualifications for office. Subject to the approval of the Superintendent of Harford County Public Schools, the student member may be reimbursed for reasonable travel and other expenses related to the performance of duties.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None.

Local Effect: Harford County Board of Education expenses increase minimally to reimburse the student member of the board for reasonable travel and other expenses related to the performance of duties. Expanding voting for the student member to middle school students can be handled with existing resources.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: The student member must vote on all matters except those relating to:

- budgetary matters;
- acquisition of real property and of land by condemnation;
- geographical attendance areas;
- school closings and reopenings;

- appointment and promotion of staff;
- appointment and salary of a county superintendent of schools;
- discipline of staff;
- collective bargaining for certificated or noncertificated employees; and
- appeals about rules of the board and the proper administration of the school system.

In addition, a student member may not participate in any proceeding of the board that is *quasi adjudicatory* or when it is functioning as an appeal body, including appeals regarding the rules of the board and the proper administration of the school system, the suspension or dismissal of teachers or principals, or the suspension or expulsion of a student.

The Harford County Regional Association of Student Councils is required to conduct a nominating convention to select three student member candidates for election. County middle school students, in addition to high school students, elect the student member. In addition to being a student government association representative at the student's high school, a student member of the board must be a legal resident and maintain compliance with academic eligibility requirements for participation in extracurricular activities. Further, a student member must be a rising twelfth grade student, rather than either an eleventh or twelfth grade student.

Current Law: The Harford County Board of Education consists of six elected members, three appointed members, the county superintendent of schools, who serves as an *ex officio* nonvoting member, and one nonvoting student member. The student member must be in grade 11 or 12, be a regularly enrolled public school system student in good standing, and be a student government association representative. The county's high school students elect the student member, who serves a one-year term. Unless invited to attend by an affirmative vote of a majority of the board, the student member may not attend an executive session.

Background: As shown in **Exhibit 1**, the majority of the 24 local school systems in the State have statutory provisions for the inclusion of student members on their school boards. Of the 18 local school systems with provisions for student members, 12 have nonvoting student members, 5 have student members with limited voting rights, and 1 has a student member with full voting rights.

Exhibit 1
Local Boards of Education
Statutory Authority for Student Membership and Voting Rights

County	Student Member(s)	Voting Rights
Allegany	1	Nonvoting
Anne Arundel	1	Full voting
Baltimore City	1	Limited voting
Baltimore	1	Limited voting
Calvert	1	Nonvoting
Caroline	0	
Carroll	0	
Cecil	1	Nonvoting
Charles	1	Nonvoting
Dorchester	2	Nonvoting
Frederick	1	Nonvoting
Garrett	1	Nonvoting
Harford	1	Nonvoting
Howard	1	Limited voting
Kent	0	
Montgomery	1	Limited voting
Prince George's	1	Limited voting
Queen Anne's	2	Nonvoting
St. Mary's	1	Nonvoting
Somerset	0	
Talbot	1	Nonvoting
Washington	0	
Wicomico	0	
Worcester	3	Nonvoting

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Harford County, Department of Legislative Services

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