

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2013 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 813
Ways and Means

(Delegate Kaiser, *et al.*)

Task Force to Study the Impact of Expanding Noncredit Courses for Students
with Developmental Disabilities

This bill establishes a Task Force to Study the Impact of Expanding Noncredit Courses for Students with Developmental Disabilities. The Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) is required to staff the task force. A report with findings and recommendations is due by January 1, 2014.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2013, and terminates June 30, 2014.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: MHEC can staff the task force and provide expense reimbursements to the public members using existing budgeted resources.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: The task force is charged with:

- studying the impact of expanding the availability of noncredit course offerings for students with developmental disabilities at public institutions of higher education in the State, including costs, distance-learning options, and logistics; and

- making recommendations regarding the expansion of noncredit course offerings for students with developmental disabilities at public institutions of higher education in the State.

Task force members may not receive compensation but are entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the standard State travel regulations, as provided in the State budget.

Background: An individual with a disability who is out of the workforce is exempt from paying tuition for a community college class that has at least 10 regularly enrolled students for continuing education instruction designed to lead to employment, including life skills instruction. These enrollments are counted for purposes of calculating State aid to community colleges. According to the Maryland Coalition of Inclusive Education, functional life skills are the variety of skills that are frequently demanded in domestic, vocational, and community environments. These life skills, which include soft skills such as communication, cooperation, problem solving, self-initiation, and responsibility, have been shown to be related to job stability and expand an individual's community participation.

In addition, an individual who is out of the workforce due to a disability may obtain a tuition waiver at a community college for up to 6 credits per semester or up to 12 credits if the individual is enrolled in a community college class as part of a degree or certificate program designed to lead to employment that has at least 10 regularly enrolled students.

Public schools in the State provide free and appropriate education to students with disabilities who are younger than age 21.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

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

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 18, 2013
ncs/rhh

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