

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2026 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 546
Ways and Means

(Delegate Wolek)

Primary and Secondary Education - Educator Professional Development -
Course on Well-Being and Flourishing

This bill requires the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), by July 1, 2027, to make available a continuing professional development course for all school personnel and administrators on educator well-being and flourishing that meets specified requirements. To fulfill this requirement, MSDE may develop a course, adapt an existing course, or make available an existing course developed by a third party. The course must consist of instruction on understanding the eight dimensions of well-being identified by the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, including social, environmental, physical, emotional, spiritual, occupational, intellectual, and financial well-being. The course may be offered synchronously or asynchronously and must be made available at a rate comparable to other professional development courses that offer the same number of professional development points (PDPs). **The bill takes effect July 1, 2026.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: MSDE can make available an existing course that meets the requirements of the bill using existing resources. However, if the existing course becomes unavailable, general fund expenditures may increase, potentially meaningfully, to develop, administer, and deliver the required course. Revenues are not affected.

Local Effect: Local school system finances are not affected, as the bill does not require local school systems to develop, provide, or mandate participation in the course.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: According to regulations, to renew an Initial Professional, Professional, or Advanced Professional license for successive five-year terms, educators must complete at least 90 PDPs as part of an individual professional development plan. The 90 PDPs must include content or pedagogy related to the educator's license, English as a Second Language, strategies for teaching students with disabilities, and culturally responsive teaching. Educators working in a Maryland school system must have their proposed plan approved by their supervisor. Certain specialties have additional requirements; for example, school counselors must complete one semester hour of coursework, or its equivalent, in topics such as depression, trauma, violence, youth suicide, and substance abuse. PDPs may be earned through college credit, continuing professional development credits, continuing education units, professional conferences, curriculum development, publication of a book or article, mentorship, micro-credentials, or other approved professional development activities. An educator who earns a National Board Certificate may present it as a substitute for PDP requirements when renewing a Maryland educator license.

State Expenditures: MSDE currently offers a [comprehensive, established alternative course](#), developed by the Georgetown University Center for Child and Human Development. This course covers critical areas such as mental health, well-being, social emotional learning, staff burnout, and related topics that align with the objectives outlined in the bill. Georgetown provides a certificate of completion and offers continuing education credits for completion. MSDE advises that it can continue to make this course available in alignment with the bill's requirements using existing resources and without additional cost.

However, if this course becomes unavailable, or no longer aligned with statutory requirements, general fund expenditures may increase. If MSDE elects to develop a course internally, expenditures may include staff or consultant time for instructional design, curriculum development, and content creation; development of enrollment and tracking systems for PDPs; and administrative oversight across multiple divisions, including Educator Effectiveness, Student Support and Federal Programs, and Information Technology. If MSDE instead adapts or licenses a third-party course, expenditures could include procurement, licensing fees, contractual services, and integration into existing professional development systems.

The magnitude of any expenditure increase depends on the implementation strategy selected by MSDE and whether synchronous delivery requiring compensated staff time is utilized. The bill does not require educators to complete the course; rather, it requires MSDE to make the course available.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has been introduced within the last three years. See SB 350 and HB 457 of 2025.

Designated Cross File: SB 726 (Senator Feldman) - Education, Energy, and the Environment.

Information Source(s): Maryland State Department of Education; Montgomery County Public Schools; Prince George's County Public Schools; Department of Legislative Services

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Analysis by: Caroline L. Boice

Direct Inquiries to:
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510