

Department of Legislative Services
 Maryland General Assembly
 2019 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
 First Reader

House Bill 132 (Delegate Reznik, *et al.*)
 Ways and Means

Education - Robotics Grant Program - Alterations

This bill makes nonprofit organizations and community clubs eligible to receive funding through the Robotics Grant Program to fund either proposed or existing robotics programs, regardless of whether the entities have any association with a public school. The Governor is required to increase funding for the program in the annual State budget from \$250,000 to \$500,000 beginning in fiscal 2021. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2019.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: General fund expenditures increase by \$250,000 annually beginning as early as FY 2020 at the Governor’s discretion. **This bill increases a mandated appropriation beginning in FY 2021.**

(in dollars)	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditure	250,000	250,000	250,000	250,000	250,000
Net Effect	(\$250,000)	(\$250,000)	(\$250,000)	(\$250,000)	(\$250,000)

Note:() = decrease; GF = general funds; FF = federal funds; SF = special funds; - = indeterminate increase; (-) = indeterminate decrease

Local Effect: Local school systems receive a substantial portion of an additional \$250,000 in grant funding annually beginning as soon as FY 2020.

Small Business Effect: None. However, nonprofit organizations and community clubs may benefit moderately.

Analysis

Current Law: Chapters 681 and 682 of 2016 established the Robotics Grant Program. The program is intended to increase the number of robotics programs in the State. A school is eligible to receive a grant through the program if the school is proposing a new robotics program or club or has an existing robotics program or club. An existing nonprofit robotics club is eligible to receive a grant only if it is associated with a public school. The Governor must appropriate at least \$250,000 in the annual State budget for the program.

Background: According to data provided by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) on the Robotics Grant Program, 25 of 36 applications received grant awards in fiscal 2018 and 29 of 31 applications received grant awards in fiscal 2019. In both years, about 72% of grants were received by public schools alone, while about 28% of grants were received by partnerships between public schools and nonprofit entities. Individual grants averaged \$10,000 in fiscal 2018 and \$8,500 in fiscal 2019. Over the two-year period, about half of grantees received full funding of the amount requested in their applications.

State Expenditures: Mandated general fund expenditures increase by \$250,000 annually beginning in fiscal 2021. At the Governor's discretion, funding may be added to the fiscal 2020 budget.

Although MSDE advises that an additional half position will be required to administer the program, the Department of Legislative Services finds that current resources will be sufficient for handling additional grant applications and awardees under this program, particularly in light of the number of grant applications and award amounts over the past two years.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: SB 180 (Senator King) - Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs.

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

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - January 29, 2019
an/rhh

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