

BOARD OF EDUCATION OF ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY

2644 Riva Road • Annapolis • Maryland • 21401

BILL: HB1488 PUBLIC SCHOOLS - SCHOOL DISCIPLINE - TRAINING PRACTICES

HEARING DATE: MARCH 1, 2018

COMMITTEE: WAYS AND MEANS

POSITION: OPPOSE

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The Board of Education of Anne Arundel County opposes **HB1488 PUBLIC SCHOOLS - SCHOOL DISCIPLINE - TRAINING PRACTICES**. This bill would require that the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) develop and implement standardized training practices on student discipline for all public school security personnel by July 1, 2019. By July 1, 2020, local school systems would be required to provide training to all school security personnel in the public schools on the standardized training practices developed by MSDE.

Safety in public schools remains increasingly important to local boards of education as school-related security incidents and threats in Maryland and throughout the nation have increased over the years. As a result, it is essential for educational leaders to be included in the continued development of a comprehensive security plan. The pursuit of a safe school environment must be tempered by a balanced emphasis on the protection of individual student rights. While the Board appreciates intent of this legislation to promote high quality training for school security staff, including school resource officers (SROs), we believe that such decisions should remain at the local level. SROs are integral in keeping our schools and students safe. Each school system has unique needs and while well intended, we do not believe that legislation, such as HB1488, which incorporate a “one size fits all” philosophy to the broad issues of school violence are the answer.

The Board believes that safety in public schools is the joint responsibility of local boards of education, school administrators and staff, students, parents and guardians, law enforcement and other public safety agencies, human services agencies, and the community in general. As such, we will continue to urge federal, State, and local governments to provide adequate and equitable funding for local public school safety programs, alternative education programs, as well as behavioral health and public safety services, which are necessary to maintaining safe schools and access to a quality education for our students.

Accordingly, the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County respectfully requests an **UNFAVORABLE** committee report on HB1488.