



## HB439 PUBLIC SCHOOLS - SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS - PROHIBITED CONDUCT

March 27, 2019

EDUCATION, HEALTH, AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

### SUPPORT

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The Board of Education of Anne Arundel County supports **HB439**. This bill prohibits a school administrator or school safety coordinator from directing a school resource officer (SRO) to enforce discipline-related school policies, rules, regulations, or procedures. It also bars an SRO from unilaterally enforcing discipline-related school policies, rules, regulations, or procedures, and requires that training provided to them reflect that prohibition.

Currently, School Resource Officers (SROs) do not make determinations regarding student discipline. AACPS has policies and procedures in place regarding such interactions with SROs and law enforcement. If there has been a criminal law violated, adjudication is referred to law enforcement to address the criminal aspect of the behavior and a school administrator makes a disciplinary determination in pursuant to our policies, procedures, and the Code of Student Conduct. In accordance with a student's due process rights and current policies and procedures, it is the school administrator who makes the final school determination regarding student discipline. Once such a determination is made, AACPS policy affords a student appeal rights.

We appreciate the amendments to further clarify the prohibited conduct in a manner that cannot be interpreted in an overly broad manner. Regular conversation and rapport among students, administrators, staff, SROs and other law enforcement are essential to ensure a more holistic, contextual view of student behavior. These interactions help to facilitate ongoing relationships that create safer school climates among student, administrators, staff, SROs and law enforcement. The amended language is clearer and does not hinder these relationships or negatively impact a school administrator's ability to request assistance during criminal investigations, for example.

Accordingly, the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County respectfully requests a **FAVORABLE** committee report on HB439.