

ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

2644 Riva Road, Annapolis, Maryland 21401

TITLE: Commission on Office Discipline Referrals in Anne Arundel County Public Schools

BILL NUMBER: HB 1368

POSITION: OPPOSE

HEARING DATE: February 19, 2016 – Anne Arundel County Delegation

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The Anne Arundel County Board of Education **OPPOSES** House Bill 1368. This Bill establishes a Commission on Office Discipline Referrals in Anne Arundel County Public Schools. The Commission consists of the following members: 2 members appointed by the President of the County Board; 2 members appointed by the President of the Teachers Association of Anne Arundel County (1 middle school teacher and one high school teacher); 2 members appointed by the President of the Association of Educational Leaders (1 middle school administrator and 1 high school administrator); 2 members appointed by the President of the Anne Arundel County Council of PTAs; 2 members appointed by the Anne Arundel County Executive; and 2 members appointed by the Anne Arundel County Council. The term of the members are 3 years and they shall be staggered. The Anne Arundel County Board of Education shall provide staff for the Commission. Beginning with the 2016-17 school year, the Commission shall track office discipline referrals made in county schools. On or before September 1, 2017, and each year thereafter, the county Board shall submit to the Commission information of office discipline referrals made during the preceding school year. The information shall be sorted by grade and type of infraction and shall include: 1. The total number of referrals for each category; 2. The number of referrals involving repeat offenders; 3. The measures taken in response to the referrals; and 4. The outcomes of the measures taken in response to the referrals; and may not include any student identity information. On or before December 31, 2018, the Commission shall: 1. Review the discipline guidelines established by the State Board and the Discipline policies and regulations established by the county board; 2. Review the information required by this Bill that is submitted by the school system; 3. Develop specific guidelines regarding the implementation of additional mitigation measures, including measures to address multiple incidents involving the same individuals; 4. Determine whether any other changes to existing standards, policies, or procedures are needed; and develop recommendations regarding any necessary changes. On an ongoing basis, the Commission shall continue to track office discipline referrals, monitor outcomes, and recommend changes to the County Board's standards, policies, and procedures. On or before December 31, 2018, and each year thereafter, the Commission shall submit a report on its findings and recommendations to the County Board, the Teacher's Association of Anne Arundel County, the County Executive, the County Council and the members of the Anne Arundel County Delegation.

This Bill is an unnecessary unfunded mandate. Staff, including administrators, who process referrals daily support an annual review of the Student Code of Conduct. The Maryland State Board of Education recently went through major revisions to update the Regulations that pertain to student discipline. Such revisions were adopted after the State Board of Education received recommendations from the School Discipline Regulations Workgroup and public comment during a 30-day open comment period. Subsequently, we updated our Board policies and

regulations related to student discipline. During that process there was extensive vetting of the policies and regulations including a 30-day public comment period. Our policies and regulations properly follow the Regulations set forth by the state on student discipline issues.

Additionally, our Strategic Plan currently dictates that we monitor and report annually on our progress as it relates to office discipline referrals. Our Office of Safe and Orderly Schools sends monthly reports to the Executive Team for its review regarding extended suspensions and expulsions. Data regarding discipline broken down by school, demographic categories, and offense is annually sent to the Maryland State Department of Education and is publicly posted on that agency's website. Per state requirements, student offenses are tracked in our student data system and an educator has access to information regarding a student's prior offenses when determining appropriate discipline for a student infraction.

Accordingly, the Anne Arundel County Board of Education urges the Anne Arundel County Delegation to issue an **UNFAVORABLE** Report on House Bill 1368.