



621 Ridgely Avenue, Suite 300, Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-5414 · 800-841-8197 · Fax: 410-841-6580 · MABE.org

BILL: House Bill 1136
TITLE: County Boards of Education - Student Hearing and Vision Screenings - Reporting Requirements
DATE: March 2, 2018
POSITION: OPPOSE
COMMITTEE: Ways and Means Committee
CONTACT: John R. Woolums, Esq.

The Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE), representing all of the state's local boards of education, opposes House Bill 1136.

Local boards of education support and promote policies intended to ensure the highest level of student health and safety. MABE appreciates the intent of this legislation to guarantee that students receive recommended services after failing a hearing or vision screening. MABE does not oppose the concept at the core of this legislation regarding the value of identifying the numbers of students failing either the hearing or vision screenings conducted in public schools. However, while the bill recognizes that local health departments and school systems share responsibility for conducting these screenings, the bill places all of the responsibility for responding to screening outcomes on local school systems.

This bill would mandate that “each county board shall develop a written strategy with quantifiable goals to increase the number of students receiving recommended services after failing a hearing or vision screening.” MABE’s opposition to this bill is grounded in the fact that school systems have no role in the provision of medical services to students, or authority under this bill or other statutes to ensure the delivery of health care services to students. Therefore, it is not reasonable to impose the burden either to set goals for increase the number of students receiving such services, or to have school systems report annually on their progress in this area.

For these reasons, MABE requests an unfavorable report on House Bill 1136.