

**BILL:** House Bill 214  
**TITLE:** Juveniles – Reportable Offenses  
**POSITION:** SUPPORT  
**DATE:** February 2, 2022  
**COMMITTEE:** Judiciary  
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The Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) supports House Bill 214 because it would accomplish two critically important objectives for all school systems: 1. Better inform school systems about the circumstances and therefore educational and behavioral health needs of students, and 2. Enhance school safety by requiring clear communication from the Department of Juvenile Services (DJS) to school systems regarding students in transitioning back into the school setting.

The reportable offense statute ensures that law enforcement agencies and State’s Attorney’s offices communicate with school systems regarding the arrest of students for certain crimes and the disposition of such charges. Reportable offenses include an extensive list of crimes of violence, sexual offenses, and weapon and drug offenses. MABE supports this bill because it addresses a troubling gap in the exchange of information called for under the reportable offense statute.

MABE believes that passage of House Bill 214 will help ensure that school administrators are provided with the appropriate information from DJS regarding a student’s reportable arrest record. This information may play a pivotal role in assisting the school system in meeting the educational and behavioral needs of the student transferred from DJS, as well as assisting the school system in making school assignment, transportation and other operational decisions in the best interests of the education and safety of all students.

Under current law, upon receipt of information of an arrest of a student for a reportable offense, the superintendent must provide the principal of the school in which the student is enrolled with the arrest information, including the charges. The reportable offense statute also requires that school superintendents respond to notices of a reportable offence by providing appropriate educational programming and related services to the student committing the offense and to maintain a safe school environment. State Board of Education regulations adopted in accordance with the statute further require that the superintendent promptly notify the school principal, who must in turn meet with staff to immediately develop a plan that addresses the student’s educational needs while ensuring school safety (COMAR 13A.08.01.17).

However, once a student has been placed under the care and supervision of DJS, and enrolled in a local school system (which may be a different school system than the student’s school when the offence occurred), DJS is not required to forward information regarding the offence. The advantages to the school system receiving a student from the custody of DJS of having this information are clear, not only from a school safety standpoint but also as it relates to developing a fully informed plan for educating and serving the student based on their unique traumatic experiences.

For these reasons, MABE requests a favorable report on House Bill 214.