

**MICHELE GUYTON**  
*Legislative District 42B*  
Baltimore County

Ways and Means Committee

Education Subcommittee

Finance Resources Subcommittee



The Maryland House of Delegates  
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**THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES**  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**Support HB 986 - State Child Welfare System – Reporting**

Dear Madame Chair and Members of the Appropriations Committee,

Thank you for your consideration of HB 986 – State Child Welfare System – Reporting. Maryland's child welfare system exists to protect and care for Maryland's children in a manner that keeps them safe, healthy, and promotes their well-being. The system should act in a child's best interests by providing the services and interventions best matched with that child's specific needs, including their educational needs.

In order to ensure accountability, transparency and confidence in the child welfare system, it is important that families, advocates, the general public and particularly policy-makers, have easily accessible and transparent data. This data should include outcomes and experiences of the children involved in the child welfare system and in the educational system. Currently the Department of Human Resources (DHR) releases monthly data and a yearly report with data of children involved with the child welfare system but, HB986 will help fill some of the important gaps in the data already provided by DHR as they relate specifically to educational progress.

HB 986 will require educational outcome data not currently provided in DHS annual Child Welfare Performance Indicators Report. To help facilitate data sharing between MSDE and DHS, this bill requires MSDE to report and make publicly available the educational outcomes for youth in foster care to DHS, the General Assembly and members of the general public.

Indicators that MSDE will be required to report on include: the stability of school placements, the placements of sibling groups, the number of youth with disabilities receiving services, the number who have been retained and/or withdrawn from school, rates of absenteeism, and school disciplinary data. This data must be disaggregated by race and ethnicity to help ensure that there are no racial disparities in outcomes for Maryland's families involved with the child welfare system.

I request a favorable report on this important legislation to help improve educational outcomes for youth in foster care.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michele Guyton".

Delegate Michele Guyton