



MARYLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL HEALTH NURSES

Bill: House Bill 1375
Title: Public School Students – Vision Services and the Vision for Maryland Program
Date: March 6, 2020

Dear Delegate Hill,

MASHN has reviewed the latest draft of HB 1375 and we have the following concerns with the new matters addressed.

HB 1375 authorizes additional screening and services but does not seem to include any appropriated funding.

1. Additional screening concerns:
 - Adding another grade and a large group of other students many of whom are difficult to screen using traditional methods.
 - At times, wall charts and audiometers provide “unable” results for special education students and this ineffective screening takes significant time.
 - The bill adds that all students with an IEP or 504 and also if a student has a change in the medical history that affects them for more than 2 weeks need to be screened. What is the evidence to support this practice?
2. Services – requires that County Boards ensure students who were referred receive an eye examination and eyeglasses if recommended. Coordination MAY be done with the Vision for Maryland Program created by the bill or with other programs. Services are required for all schools, no matter the FARMS rate, which seems fiscally irresponsible.

We support having a new position at MSDE, however, we are concerned this new health specialist will be unable to ensure that students receive necessary services. Will this be one person for the entire state?

Thank you for reaching out to school nurses. We hope to continue to collaborate for a viable solution.