

INFORMATIONAL

Senate Bill 906

Education – Artificial Intelligence – Guidelines, Professional Development, and Task Force

Senate Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment

March 7, 2025

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The Maryland State Education Association offers this informational testimony on Senate Bill 906, which would require the State Department of Education, in consultation with the State Board of Education and the Task Force on Artificial Intelligence in K-12 Education, to develop or update guidance on artificial intelligence for county boards of education. It would also require the Department, in consultation with the Department of Information Technology, to develop and update annually a list of approved artificial intelligence tools and require each county board to conduct an annual inventory of systems that employ artificial intelligence.

MSEA represents 75,000 educators and school employees who work in Maryland's public schools, teaching and preparing our almost 900,000 students so they can pursue their dreams. MSEA also represents 39 local affiliates in every county across the state of Maryland, and our parent affiliate is the 3-million-member National Education Association (NEA).

As educators continue to grapple with the implications of a rapidly changing Artificial Intelligence (AI) landscape, we appreciate efforts to ensure that any use of AI in public schools is equitable, research-based, and developed with educator voices at the table. Underscoring the timeliness of this issue is a resolution passed by the National Education Association in 2023 and updated in 2024 regarding the use AI in public education:

B-71. Artificial Intelligence

The National Education Association believes that the development and expanding use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies will continue to impact students, educators, public education, and the greater community. The Association also

believes that the use of AI in public education should align with the following principles:

- a. AI tools should support the needs of students and educators.
- b. The implementation of AI must be equitable, accessible, and inclusive to ensure that no community is disadvantaged or excluded.
- c. AI tools and their implementation must be free of cultural, racial, and gender biases, and they should not perpetuate or amplify existing biases or discrimination.
- d. Educators should be involved in the development of best practices for pedagogical applications of AI.
- e. The use of AI in public education should be transparent, including its applications, what data is collected, and how that data is used.
- f. AI should not compromise the privacy of educators, students, or their families.
- g. Educators and students should be provided guidance and training on the ethical use of AI tools.
- h. Evaluation of AI implementation should be ongoing to ensure it supports the needs of students and educators, and aligns with ethical standards and practices.

The Association further believes that AI tools should not be used to replace educators nor their professional judgment.

This bill highlights the role of student and educator input in developing best practices and includes educator representatives on the bodies that will develop recommendations. We commend this inclusion and believe it will strengthen any resulting recommendations. While we agree that it is important to make educators and students aware of the uses and risks of AI, we would urge caution when adopting new tools to ensure that all parties are prepared to use them safely, fairly, and without bias. We appreciate that this bill highlights professional development and will advocate that any such trainings for educators are paid or credit eligible.

Further, we recognize the value of gathering detailed data on which AI tools are currently in use in schools. As we monitor this evolving space, we will continue to urge alignment with the NEA resolution above and any forthcoming guidance on maximizing the benefits of AI for education while mitigating potential risks, harms, or overreaches.