

Maryland Association of School Health Nurses



Committee: House Ways and Means Committee

Bill Number: House Bill 689 – Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Use of Reimbursement Funds by Schools

Hearing Date: February 25, 2025

Position: Support with Amendment

The Maryland Association of School Health Nurses supports *House Bill 689 – Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Use or Reimbursement Funds by Schools*. The bill's underlying intention is to ensure schools direct new resources from Medicaid billing for school health services to address the shortage of school health providers. We would ask for some clarifying amendments.

MASHN has been deeply concerned about the shortage of school nurses and other school health professionals. On average statewide, there is only one nurse per 848 students (see attached). States have been struggling to identify additional resources to bolster their school health workforce. In 2023, the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services opened the door to a potentially game changing opportunity. Under new federal guidance, schools can draw down more federal matching funds for school health services.ⁱ Even before this new guidance, some states had developed innovative pathways for reimbursement for school nursing services.ⁱⁱ

We would request two amendments which we believe align with the intent of the bill:

Amendment 1: Clarifying which practitioners may be reimbursed. Federal law and regulations already delineate who may bill for school health services. The practitioner must be authorized to practice either by a health occupation board or education agency. We recommend aligning the bill's language to reflect federal guidance:

On page 1 in lines 21-23:

(2) "PROVIDER" MEANS A ~~SCHOOL AUDIOLOGIST, SCHOOL~~
~~PSYCHOLOGIST, SCHOOL SPEECH PATHOLOGIST, AND ANY OTHER HEALTH CARE~~
~~PRACTITIONER WHO PROVIDES SERVICES TO A STUDENT IN A SCHOOL SETTING.~~
PRACTITIONER WHO IS AUTHORIZED TO PRACTICE IN A SCHOOL SETTING UNDER THE HEALTH
OCCUPATIONS ARTICLE OR EDUCATION ARTICLE INCLUDING

- (i) nurses;
- (ii) licensed clinical social workers;
- (iii) professional counselors;
- (iv) marriage and family therapists;
- (v) occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants;
- (vi) speech language pathologists;
- (vii) physical therapists;
- (viii) school counselors; and
- (ix) school psychologists.

Amendment 2: Clarifying how funding may be spent. As we understand the bill's intention, new resources from Medicaid billing for school health must be directed towards the school health workforce. We would recommend a change in language to recognize that school health professionals are paid through salaries rather than stipend arrangements as well as that educational opportunities are not typically labeled as internships:

On page 2 in lines 8-15

- (1) ADDITIONAL POSITIONS FOR PROVIDERS;*
- (2) ~~PAID INTERNSHIPS FOR STUDENTS SEEKING TO BECOME~~*
~~PROVIDERS;~~ EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS IN ACCREDITED HEALTH
PROFESSIONAL EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS TO WORK UNDER A PROVIDER AS PERMITTED
UNDER THE HEALTH OCCUPATIONS ARTICLE OR THE EDUCATION ARTICLE;
- (3) ~~STIPENDS~~ SALARY INITIATIVES FOR PROVIDERS THAT ARE DESIGNED TO ADDRESS*
PROBLEMS IN PROVIDER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION; AND
- (4) ~~STIPENDS~~ SALARY INITIATIVES FOR PROVIDERS WORKING IN LOW-PERFORMING*
SCHOOLS THAT ARE DESIGNED TO ADDRESS PROBLEMS IN PROVIDER RECRUITMENT
AND RETENTION.

We urge a favorable report on this bill with our proposed clarifying amendments. If we can provide any further information, please contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net or (443) 926-3443.

ⁱ <https://www.cms.gov/newsroom/fact-sheets/delivering-service-school-based-settings-comprehensive-guide-medicaid-services-and-administrative>

ⁱⁱ <https://www.networkforphl.org/resources/medicaid-reimbursement-for-school-nursing-services-2/>

Employer (2022)	School Nurses	Licensed Practical Nurses	Certified Nursing Assistant	Other Health Services	Enrollment (2018-19)	Schools Count	Students Per Nurse	Nurses Per School
Allegany	22	1	0	6	8539	26	388	0.85
Anne Arundel	77	21	135.5	7	83300	124	1082	0.62
Baltimore	173	0	40	0	113814	174	658	0.99
Baltimore City	50	3	127	1	79297	167	1585.94	0.30
Calvert	18	7	0	2	15936	25	885.33	0.72
Caroline	8	2	7	0	5829	10	728.63	0.80
Carroll	48	3	0	3	25179	44	524.56	1.09
Cecil	29	0	0	0	15307	29	527.83	1.00
Charles	35	9	0	0	27108	38	774.51	0.92
Dorchester	12	4	1*	1*	4785	13	398.75	0.92
Frederick	26	8	56	0	42713	68	1642.81	0.38
Garrett	0	11	0	0	3842	12	NA	NA
Harford	61	5	0	0	37826	54	620.10	1.13
Howard	59	0	62	0	57907	77	981.47	0.77
Kent	2	0	4	1	1912	5	956.00	0.40
Montgomery	118	0	212	59	162680	208	1378.64	0.57
Prince George's	198	21	0	2	132667	208	670.04	0.95
Queen Anne's	14	2	0	0	7749	14	553.50	1.00
SEED School	1	1	0	1	404	1	404.00	1.00
Somerset	6	4	1	1	2930	9	488.33	0.67
St. Mary's	33	3	0	0	17999	30	545.42	1.10
Talbot	6	0	6	1	4674	8	779.00	0.75
Washington Hospital	16	10	26	1	22681	45	1417.56	0.36
Wicomico	28	0	9	2	14949	25	533.89	1.12
Worcester	17	0	0	0	6810	14	400.59	1.21
Statewide	1057	115	685.5	87	896837	1428	848.47	0.74

Notes * 1 person certified as CNA and CMT

Data Source and Years: Nursing data from 2018-2019 MSDE Survey; Enrollment and school count data from 2018-2019 MdReportCard Enrollment Data; the local employer is current year (2022)