

Subject: Favorable SB68: Restorative Practices in Schools

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From: National Federation of the Blind of Maryland

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To: Senate Education and Environment Committee

The Members of the National Federation of the Blind of Maryland urge the House Ways and Means Committee to give SB68 a favorable report.

SB68 calls upon the State Department of Education to develop a restorative practice plan. This plan will offer alternatives to suspensions and other disciplinary procedures. A school that uses restorative practices will emphasize conflict resolution and other opportunities to help a student make better choices about behavior. Statistics show that students with disabilities make up a large part of suspensions and expulsions in a school. The restorative practices plan is the beginning of changing these statistics. All students need a positive environment that emphasizes discussion of a problem and meaningful conflict resolution and a rewards system when their behavior improves.

Please vote Yes on SB68. Give students the opportunity to get an equitable education. Because of this bill, the school administration can be creative in solving truancy and other difficult problems.