

# **EDUCATION ADVOCACY COALITION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

HOUSE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

## **House Bill 856– Local School Systems – Educator Screening – Educator Identification Clearinghouse**

February 25, 2026

**Position: Support**

The Education Advocacy Coalition for Students with Disabilities (EAC) is a coalition of nearly 50 organizations and individuals concerned with education policy for students with disabilities in Maryland. The EAC supports House Bill 856 because it requires the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to register each local school system as an associate member of a national membership organization that provides access to the Educator Identification Clearinghouse. This bill aims to protect all children served by the Maryland professional education community by ensuring all Maryland educators are safe to be in the classroom.

The Education Identification Clearinghouse is a secure, searchable national database that provides an immediate alert regarding individuals who have had their professional educator license or certificate annulled, denied, suspended, revoked, or otherwise invalidated. It is a national collection point for professional educator discipline actions taken by the fifty states, the District of Columbia, U.S. Department of Defense Educational Opportunity schools, and Guam.

Educator positions requiring a license in Maryland include all K-12 public school teachers, specialists (school counselors, school psychologists, reading specialists, library media specialists, reading teachers, and pupil personnel workers), and administrators (superintendents, principals, assistant principals, and supervisors) in public schools, special education nonpublic schools, and state institutions.

Although the safety of all students is paramount, HB856 is particularly important to protect students with disabilities who are especially vulnerable to abuse and neglect in school. It has been virtually impossible to ensure that a staff member who has faced discipline in one state is not able to be hired in another state. Some years ago, a teacher in Texas lost her teaching license and then moved to another state where, after obtaining a new teaching position, she was responsible for the death of a student with disabilities in her classroom. HB856 will help to prevent that kind of tragedy in Maryland.

For these reasons, the EAC supports House Bill 856.

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Respectfully submitted,

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