CHAPTER ______

AN ACT concerning

Public Schools – Self-Contained Special Education Classroom Video Recording Devices Pilot Program

FOR the purpose of requiring each county board of education, beginning in a certain school year, to install establishing the Self-Contained Special Education Classroom Video Recording Pilot Program; providing for the administration of, funding for, and participation in the Pilot Program; requiring certain public schools to allow the installation of a video recording device in each one self-contained special education classroom in the school; providing for the installation, operation, notification, and use of a video recording device and the viewing, use, and confidentiality of system recordings; requiring the school administration principal of a school participating in the Pilot Program to notify the appropriate law enforcement agency on receipt of a complaint of alleged neglect or abuse of a student under certain circumstances; requiring a school administrator or other an employee of a school to report observed actions that could be considered the abuse or neglect of a certain student under certain circumstances; requiring each county board certain county boards of education to collect certain data regarding video recording devices and system recordings for certain school years; requiring the State Department of Education to evaluate the use of video recording devices in self-contained special education classrooms and make a certain determination report on the evaluation to the Governor and the General Assembly; and generally relating to the use of video recording devices in self-contained special education classrooms

Self-Contained Special Education Classroom Video Recording Pilot Program.

BY adding to

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.
[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.
Underlining indicates amendments to bill.
Strike out indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.
SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article – Education

7–450.

(A) (1) IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS INDICATED.

(2) “DIGITAL EVIDENCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM” MEANS A CLOUD-BASED STORAGE SYSTEM USED TO STORE ALL RECORDINGS FROM A VIDEO RECORDING DEVICE LOCATED IN A SELF-CONTAINED SPECIAL EDUCATION CLASSROOM.

(3) “DIVISION” MEANS THE DIVISION OF EARLY INTERVENTION AND SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT.

(4) “EXCLUSION AREA PILOT PROGRAM” MEANS A SUPERVISED AREA TO WHICH A STUDENT WHO RECEIVES INSTRUCTION IN A SELF-CONTAINED SPECIAL EDUCATION CLASSROOM IS TAKEN FOR A LIMITED PERIOD OF TIME TO REGAIN SELF-CONTROL THE SELF-CONTAINED SPECIAL EDUCATION CLASSROOM VIDEO RECORDING PILOT PROGRAM.

(5) “SELF-CONTAINED SPECIAL EDUCATION CLASSROOM” MEANS A CLASSROOM IN A PUBLIC SCHOOL IN WHICH ALL OF THE REGULARLY ATTENDING STUDENTS HAVE A DISABILITY AND ARE PROVIDED SPECIAL EDUCATION INSTRUCTION IN THAT CLASSROOM FOR AT LEAST 50% OF THE INSTRUCTIONAL DAY, INCLUDING STUDENTS WHO ARE CLASSIFIED PRIMARILY AS CERTIFICATE TRACK AND CANNOT RELY ON SPEECH ALONE TO BE HEARD AND UNDERSTOOD.

(6) “SPECIAL EDUCATION” HAS THE MEANING STATED IN § 8–401 OF THIS ARTICLE.
“(7) “System recording” means all video captured and uploaded from a video recording device located in a self-contained special education classroom.

(B) (1) (I) Each county board shall install at least one video recording device in each self-contained special education classroom in accordance with paragraph (2) of this subsection.

(2) The installation shall be done at the discretion of the Division on the following schedule:

(I) Beginning in the 2022–2023 school year, installation in at least 50% of the self-contained special education classrooms within the local school system; and

(II) Beginning in the 2023–2024 school year, installation in 100% of the self-contained special education classrooms within the local school system. There is a self-contained special education classroom video recording pilot program in the Department.

(II) The pilot program shall be administered by the Division.

(III) The Division shall select five local school systems in the state with attention to geographic diversity and where, in the judgment of the Division, video monitoring of self-contained special education classrooms is most acutely necessary.

(2) (I) Subject to subparagraph (II) of this paragraph, the county superintendent of each local school system selected in accordance with paragraph (1) of this subsection shall choose one public elementary school and one public high school within the local school system to install a video recording device in one self-contained special education classroom in each school.

(II) The county superintendent shall choose self-contained special education classrooms that have among the highest numbers of attendance in any self-contained special education classrooms in the local school system.

(III) Beginning with the 2023–2024 school year, the Division shall install at least one video recording device in each
SELF–CONTAINED SPECIAL EDUCATION CLASSROOM SELECTED IN ACCORDANCE
WITH THIS SUBSECTION.

(3) A VIDEO RECORDING DEVICE UNDER THIS SUBSECTION SHALL RECORD:

(I) EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH (4) OF THIS
SUBSECTION, ALL AREAS OF THE SELF–CONTAINED SPECIAL EDUCATION
CLASSROOM, INCLUDING ALL EXCLUSION AREAS; AND

(II) DURING SCHOOL HOURS AND AT ANY TIME THE
SELF–CONTAINED SPECIAL EDUCATION CLASSROOM OR EXCLUSION AREA IS IN USE.

(4) A VIDEO RECORDING DEVICE UNDER THIS SECTION MAY NOT
RECORD INSIDE BATHROOM AREAS OR IN AREAS THAT STUDENTS USE TO CHANGE
CLOTHING.

(C) EACH COUNTY BOARD PUBLIC SCHOOL PARTICIPATING IN THE PILOT
PROGRAM SHALL PROVIDE NOTICE OF THE USE OF A VIDEO RECORDING DEVICE IN
A SELF–CONTAINED SPECIAL EDUCATION CLASSROOM BY:

(1) POSTING A SIGN IN A CONSPICUOUS LOCATION OUTSIDE EACH
SELF–CONTAINED SPECIAL EDUCATION CLASSROOM WHERE A VIDEO RECORDING
DEVICE IS USED;

(2) PROVIDING WRITTEN NOTICE TO THE PARENT OR LEGAL
GUARDIAN OF EACH STUDENT WHO RECEIVES INSTRUCTION IN A SELF–CONTAINED
SPECIAL EDUCATION CLASSROOM; AND

(3) PROVIDING WRITTEN NOTICE IN THE STUDENT HANDBOOK OF
THE USE OF VIDEO RECORDING DEVICES; AND

(4) PROVIDING WRITTEN NOTICE AT LEAST 2 WEEKS IN ADVANCE OF
THE ACTIVATION OF THE VIDEO RECORDING DEVICE TO ALL SCHOOL PERSONNEL
WHO PROVIDE INSTRUCTION OR OTHERWISE SUPPORT THE STUDENTS IN THE
SELF–CONTAINED SPECIAL EDUCATION CLASSROOM.

(D) (1) ALL SYSTEM RECORDINGS SHALL BE UPLOADED TO A DIGITAL
EVIDENCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM ADMINISTERED BY A COUNTY BOARD
PARTICIPATING IN THE PILOT PROGRAM AND SHALL REMAIN THE PROPERTY OF
THE COUNTY BOARD.

(2) UNLESS A COUNTY BOARD RECEIVES A REQUEST TO VIEW OR
STORE A PARTICULAR VIDEO RECORDING, THE COUNTY BOARD SHALL STORE A
VIDEO RECORDING MADE UNDER THIS SECTION FOR AT LEAST 3 MONTHS AND NOT MORE THAN 6 MONTHS AFTER THE DATE OF THE RECORDING.

(3) If a request is made under paragraph (2) of this subsection, the county board shall store the video recording until the reason for the request is resolved.

(4) If a video recording is to be used as evidence to support or refute a complaint against an employee or a contractor, the county board shall retain the portion of the video recording related to the complaint for at least 1 year after the date the complaint is made.

(E) (1) If a person discovers that the operation of a video recording device has been interrupted, the person shall submit a written report to the principal of the school that includes a description of:

(i) How the interruption was discovered and the;

(ii) The length of the interruption; and

(iii) The reason for the interruption, if known.

(2) The county board shall maintain a report submitted under paragraph (1) of this subsection for 1 year after the date of the submission of the report.

(F) (1) Except as provided in subsections (G) and (L) of this section and paragraph (2) of this subsection, a video recording made in accordance with this section is confidential and may not be viewed, shared, or disseminated in any manner.

(2) The following persons may view a video recording made under this section:

(i) A member of the school administration;

(ii) A supervisor from the administration of the school system;

(iii) A representative from Child Protective Services;

and

(iv) A law enforcement agency.
(G) (1) The school administration principal of a school participating in the Pilot Program shall notify the appropriate law enforcement agency in accordance with § 5–704 of the Family Law Article on receipt of a complaint of alleged neglect or abuse of a student that occurred in a self-contained special education classroom while a video recording device was recording.

(2) The school administration and a representative from the superintendent’s office principal and the county superintendent shall review the video recording with the appropriate law enforcement agency within 3 days after the date the complaint or report was made.

(3) At the conclusion of an investigation conducted by a law enforcement agency related to a complaint notification received under paragraph (1) of this subsection, and on request of the student, parent, or legal guardian of the student to whom the video recording directly relates, the superintendent’s office shall allow the student, parent, or legal guardian to inspect and review the video recording a party directly involved in the complaint, including a student who was allegedly neglected or abused, the parent or guardian of a student who was allegedly neglected or abused, or a member of the school staff who was alleged to have neglected or abused a student, shall be allowed, on request, to inspect and review the video recording by the county superintendent.

(H) (1) If a school administrator or other an employee of a school participating in the Pilot Program observes an action that could be considered the abuse or neglect of a student in a self-contained special education classroom or exclusion area, the school administrator or employee shall report the action, in accordance with any applicable child abuse and neglect reporting guidelines, report the action to the principal of the school and any other required parties.

(2) On receiving a report under paragraph (1) of this subsection, a principal shall notify:

(i) A parent or legal guardian of the student who is the subject of the report within 24 hours after receiving the report; and
(II) A school employee who is involved with the alleged abuse or neglect.

(I) A county board shall make a reasonable attempt to conceal the identity of any student who appears in a video recording made under this section who is not involved in the incident for which the video recording is being viewed.

(J) The department, a county board, a school, or a principal may not use a video recording device installed in accordance with this section to monitor the professional performance of school employees.

(K) The department, a county board, a school, or a principal may not use a video recording made in accordance with this section:

(1) as evidence in a complaint against a student or school employee that is not related to a criminal complaint; or

(2) in the observation or evaluation of a student for student placement decisions.

(L) Nothing in this section precludes the use of a video recording in accordance with a disciplinary action or an investigation of abuse or neglect within the school system.

(M) A county board may solicit and accept gifts, grants, and donations from any person to be used toward the installation and operation of a video recording device under this section.

(N) All video recording devices under this section shall comply with federal fire and safety standards.

(O) (N) (1) Beginning in the 2022–2023 school year through the 2025–2026 school year, each county board in the 2023–2024 school year and the 2024–2025 school year, each county board participating in the Pilot Program shall collect data on:

(i) the number of video recording devices installed in self-contained special education classrooms, aggregated by school level;

(ii) the number of complaints resulting in the viewing of a video recording made under this section, aggregated by school level;
(III) The identity of the person that made a request to view a video recording;

(iv) The reason for the request to view a video recording; and

(v) The resolution of the complaint that was the subject of the video recording; and

(vi) The cost to each county board to maintain and monitor video recordings under the Pilot Program.

(2) (1) On or before July 1, 2023, and on or before each July 1 thereafter through and including July 1, 2026, each county board on or before July 1, 2024, and on or before July 1, 2025, each county board participating in the Pilot Program shall submit a report to the Department on the data collected under paragraph (1) of this subsection for the immediately preceding school year.

(ii) For comparison purposes, each county board participating in the Pilot Program shall include in the reports submitted under this paragraph information collected during the 2022–2023 school year on:

1. The number of complaints of abuse or neglect in the same self-contained special education classrooms in which video recording devices are installed beginning in the 2023–2024 school year; and

2. The resolution of those complaints.

(3) On receipt of the final report the reports due July 1, 2025, under paragraph (2) of this subsection, the Department shall evaluate the use of video recording devices in self-contained special education classrooms and determine whether to use the devices in other special education classrooms by comparing the results of schools participating in the Pilot Program with other schools in the county, including the following for both participating public schools and other public schools:

(i) The proportion of complaints received about suspected abuse and neglect relative to the total population of students in self-contained special education classrooms;
(II) **The proportion of complaints described under**

item (I) of this paragraph sustained relative to the total population of

students in self-contained special education classrooms; and

(III) **The race, ethnicity, and gender of any students in**

a self-contained special education classroom who are the subjects of

a complaint under item (I) of this paragraph.

(4) **On or before January 1, 2026, the Department shall**

report the results of its evaluation of the use of video recording

devices in self-contained special education classrooms to the

Governor and, in accordance with § 2–1257 of the State Government

Article, the General Assembly.

(P) (O) (1) **The Department shall adopt regulations to carry**

out the provisions of this section. The State shall reimburse each

county board that participates in the Pilot Program for any costs

associated with participation.

(2) **Each county board shall submit to the Department a**

request for reimbursement for the costs associated with installing,

monitoring, and storing video collected by video recording devices

installed in self-contained special education classrooms.

(3) **In each of fiscal years 2024 and 2025, the Governor shall**

include in the annual budget bill an appropriation of $100,000 to the

Department to be used to:

(I) **Reimburse each county board for the costs**

reported under paragraph (2) of this subsection; and

(II) **Otherwise administer the Pilot Program.**

8–401.

(a) (1) In this subtitle the following words have the meanings indicated.

(5) “Special education” means specially designed instruction, at no cost to

parents, to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability, including:

(i) Instruction in the classroom, in the home, in hospitals and

institutions, and in other settings; and

(ii) Instruction in physical education.
SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July 1, 2022. It shall remain effective for a period of 4 years and, at the end of June 30, 2026, this Act, with no further action required by the General Assembly, shall be abrogated and of no further force and effect.

Approved:

__________________________________________________________
Governor.

__________________________________________________________
Speaker of the House of Delegates.

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President of the Senate.