



The Arc Maryland  
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**Senate Bill 58- Public Schools- Student Discipline Regulations  
Position: Oppose  
Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee  
January 22, 2020**

The Arc Maryland is the largest statewide advocacy organization dedicated to the rights and quality of life of children and adults with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities. Some children with certain types of disabilities have difficulty with sensory perception and self-regulation. They may be sensitive to noise, temperature, texture and other internal and external stimuli. Some may react to these stressor stimuli and in doing so, may inadvertently and unintentionally inflict injury to themselves and sometimes others.

SB58 addresses discipline through a “one-size fits all” approach which is not appropriate for children with developmental disabilities who have behavioral support needs. SB58 proposes to mandate specific actions- an apology to the individual who was harmed, restitution, a conference between the parent or guardian of the individual who violated behavioral expectations and rules, and modification of the student’s schedule to minimize contact with the individual harmed. This approach is contraindicative to our state’s commitment to restorative discipline approaches and school administration access to continuum of interventions appropriate to the situation.

Restorative practice approaches are customizable, appropriate to the situation, and recognize that not all incidents can be ameliorated through a single discipline protocol or action. Restorative practices include comprehensive and multifaceted approaches designed to build and repair relationships between students and teachers, students and students, and the entire school community. Interventions available through restorative practice include, but are not limited to, restorative conferences, mediation, trauma-informed education, and positive behavioral interventions and support.

While we are committed to the health and safety of all children, we do not believe the discipline formula prescribed through this bill will have the intended effect of protecting students and resolving incidents. For these reasons, The Arc Maryland opposes SB 58.

Respectfully submitted;

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ande Kolp', written over a white background.

Ande Kolp



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