



To: Chair Clippinger and members of the Judiciary Committee
From: Jamesha Caldwell, Education Policy Legislative Intern
Re: **HB 1546: Education - Reportable Offenses - Alterations**
Date: February 27, 2020
Position: Support

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on House Bill 1546: Education - Reportable Offenses - Alterations. Advocates for Children and Youth (ACY) supports this bill.

Under current Maryland law, superintendents and school principals do not have guidance regarding the transmission of student information related to reportable offenses. This creates a system in which school leaders have the ability to transmit a student's information to another public and/or nonpublic school system without clear uniform procedures. **The lack of regulation has significant ramifications for students** who have been involved with the justice system.

Maryland requires law enforcement to 'notify the local superintendent or nonpublic school principal of the arrest and charges placed against a student'¹. In turn, the Maryland State Department of Education authorized the sharing of student records. These practices disadvantage students who have been involved in the justice system and subject them to disparate treatment by the school community.

Under current law, students with reportable offenses on their record are not protected from unfair treatment or outright discrimination in school. The lack of clear guidance on the transmission of student information and the lack of accountability for the consequences of sharing such information creates a gap in the intent of current law and the actual practices employed by school leaders.

HB1546 would ensure that Maryland education and juvenile-based administrations are **adopting procedures and regulations** for reportable offenses. In doing so, this will ensure that students who have been involved with the justice system are protected and treated fairly when they return to school. For the reasons above, **ACY urges a favorable report on this bill.**

¹ O'Meally, J.E., Bresler, J.S., Bounds, S.C, Woolums, J.R., & Eisenberg, R.S. (2019). *Maryland School Law Deskbook*. LexisNexis.