



Kennedy Krieger Institute

Bradley L. Schlaggar, MD, PhD

President and CEO

Zanvyl Krieger Faculty Endowed Chair

*A comprehensive resource
for children with disabilities*

March 19, 2021

The Honorable Guy Guzzone
Chair, Senate Budget and Taxation
3 West Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: SB958 - Nonpublic Special Education Schools - State Contribution - Increase

Dear Chairman Guzzone:

On behalf of Kennedy Krieger Institute, we thank the committee for the opportunity to share information on Senate Bill 958. In addition, we thank the Governor and the Maryland legislature for their ongoing support for nonpublic special education.

Kennedy Krieger is proud to serve the state of Maryland through our nonpublic schools, currently providing educational and related clinical services for over 500 publically funded students with intellectual and developmental disabilities, often in the setting of medical complexity. This year, as is typically the case, our students come from over half of the school districts in Maryland. We employ nearly an equal number of highly trained teachers, related-service clinicians, and support staff. We have long-standing partnerships with the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and the Local School Systems based upon our specialized expertise and commitment to children with disabilities.

Our schools are able to provide exemplary service for students with significant special education needs, as well as related clinical and behavioral supports, in large part because of our highly skilled and educated workforce of teachers and support staff who are completely dedicated to the children we serve. Unfortunately, because of the sizeable salary disparities between public and nonpublic school teachers, our educators annually face the decision to remain with our program, or seek higher wages with the public school systems.

Kennedy Krieger is grateful for the legislature's budget narrative during the 2020 legislative session that formed a Salary Parity workgroup at the MSDE. As a member of the Maryland Association of Nonpublic Special Education Facilities (MANSEF) and with an ongoing collaborative partnership with MSDE, Kennedy Krieger was honored to participate in the workgroup. The group, composed of representation from the Local School Systems, Nonpublic Schools, MSDE and Legislative Services, reviewed survey data compiled in two separate studies. Both studies found a gap of between \$3,600 and

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\$23,600 (7.3% and 25.8%, respectively) when comparing annual salaries between a nonpublic educator and a public school educator.

SB958 ensures that nonpublic schools can maintain the professional talent necessary to provide the level of service and care needed by our student population. It will also ensure correct compensation for professionals and staff commensurate with their level of education and training to their public school peers.

Once again, Kennedy Krieger thanks the committee members for their thoughtful consideration of Senate Bill 958 and for their commitment to all Maryland students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bradley L. Schlaggar".

Bradley L. Schlaggar, MD, PhD
President and CEO