

Education Advocacy Coalition

for Students with Disabilities

House Ways and Means Committee

**HB 1296: Public School Students—Daily Physical Activity
(Student Health and Fitness Act)**

March 3, 2021

Position: Support

The Education Advocacy Coalition for Students with Disabilities (EAC), a coalition of more than 30 organizations and individuals concerned with education policy for students with disabilities in Maryland, supports House Bill 1296, which would require physical education and recess for all students in Maryland schools, including those with disabilities whose education is provided in accordance with an individualized education program (IEP).

Research indicates that regular physical activity, included in the school curriculum, produces physical, psychological and intellectual benefits. This is equally true for students with disabilities.

More than 100,000 students with disabilities are educated in Maryland's public schools. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the primary federal law governing the education of students with disabilities, requires the provision of a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment in which the student's needs can be met. Physical education, adapted if necessary, is required for children and youth aged three to 21 who require special education services.

We are pleased that HB 1296 requires physical activity to be developmentally appropriate and that the bill addresses the needs of all students, including those with disabilities. The EAC is pleased to support HB 1296.

For more information or if questions, please contact Leslie Seid Margolis, Chairperson, at lesliem@disabilityrightsmd.org or 410-370-5730.

Respectfully submitted,

Selene Almazan, Selene Almazan Law, LLC

Rene Averitt-Sanzone, The Parents' Place of Maryland

Linda Barton, Ms.Ed, Education Consultant

Elizabeth Benevides, Howard County Autism Society

Ellen A. Callegary, Law Offices of Ellen A. Callegary, P.A.

Michelle Davis, ABCs for Life Success

SarahRuth Davis, Parent Advocacy Consortium

Jennifer Engel Fisher, Weinfeld Education Group
Lisa Frank, Andrea Bennett and Jen Ritchotte, Special Kids Company
Shamoyia Gardiner, Maryland Alliance for Racial Equity in Education
Ann Geddes, Maryland Coalition of Families
Kalman Hettleman, Independent Advocate
Morgan Horvath, Abilities Network
Nicole Joseph, Law Offices of Nicole Joseph
Rachel London, Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council
Leslie Seid Margolis, Disability Rights Maryland
Mark B. Martin, Law Offices of Mark B. Martin, P.A.
Ellen O'Neill, Atlantic Seaboard Dyslexia Education Center
Rebecca Rienzi, Pathfinders for Autism
Lori Scott, The Arc Maryland
Karleen Spitulnik and Winifred Winston, Decoding Dyslexia Maryland
Ronneta Stanley, M.Ed., Loud Voices Together
Wayne Steedman, Steedman Law Group
Guy Stephens, Alliance Against Seclusion and Restraint
Maureen van Stone, Mallory Finn Legg, Alyssa Thorn, Project HEAL at Kennedy Krieger Institute
Jessica Williams, M.Ed., Education Due Process Solutions, LLP