



Delegate Anne R. Kaiser, Chair
Delegate Alonzo T. Washington, Vice Chair
Ways and Means Committee
House Office Building, Room 131
Annapolis, MD 21401

Bill: House Bill 401 – Public Schools – Pregnant and Parenting Students – Policies and Reports

Position: Support

Dear Chairman Kaiser, Vice Chair Washington, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing on behalf of the Maryland School Psychologists' Association (MSPA), a professional organization representing about 500 school psychologists in Maryland. We advocate for the social-emotional, behavioral, and academic wellbeing of students and families across the state.

School psychologists provide comprehensive services to Maryland's students. We work closely with families, teachers, nurses and health techs, and community providers to support students' continuous to access to education while pregnant or parenting. Despite motivation to achieve academic goals, pregnant and parenting students are often stigmatized in schools. They face other barriers including financial challenges and access to childcare. The policies proposed in House Bill 401 are crucial to improving outcomes for these vulnerable students. The bill would provide necessary accommodations for these students, such as private locations to nurse or pump. In addition, the bill requires the creation of model policies for schools to better support students navigating parenthood in order to achieve more successful outcomes. MSPA supports this bill as a means of creating a consistent and systematic method of supporting these students, who are less likely to obtain a high school diploma and are more at-risk of experiencing long-term adverse outcomes as compared to their peers.

MSPA is in strong support of House Bill 401 and we respectfully urge a favorable vote. If we can provide any additional information or be of any assistance, please feel free to contact us at legislative@mSPAonline.org.

Respectfully submitted,

Kyle Potter, Ph.D., NCSP
Chair, Legislative Committee
Maryland School Psychologists' Association