

Darria Boyd
9322 Breamore Ct.
Laurel, MD 20723
301-980-2540

House Bill 715 Public Schools-Self Contained Special Education Classrooms- Use of Video Recording Devices

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My name is Darria Boyd and I am a parent and advocate of two children with Autism that are students in the State of Maryland public school system.

I am in support of House Bill 715 (**Self Contained Special Education Classrooms- Use of Video Recording Devices**). Having video recordings in Special Education (Self-Contained) classrooms can help rectify situations that may happen. Many students in these classrooms cannot communicate effectively which prohibits them the opportunity to advocate appropriately. As a parent of two children that have cognitive disabilities and cannot communicate effectively, video recordings can be a useful tool if need be to capture all sides to an incident and/or story.

My family has experienced incidents that have been student-to-student situations. My daughter has been involved in two incidents where another student victimized her in her self-contained classroom. The first incident she was attacked from behind while sitting at her desk and was scratched severely in multiple locations on her face under a substitute teacher's supervision. Majority of substitute teachers are not trained to step into self-contained classrooms where challenging behaviors can occur and incidents can happen very quickly. The second incident she was hit right above her right eye by a hard object thrown in her direction causing her to receive stiches. These unfortunate situations can and will happen so the more information we have the better as parents we will fill sending our loved ones to school. I am not upset with her classmate; however, these cameras can provide the opportunity to go back and actually review an incident as it exactly occurred. What could have been done better to prevent this situation? This can be a positive tool that can be instrumental in making the appropriate and right decisions and training opportunities for staff/administration to learn from which can be a driving force to implement new and better effective strategies.

Having this bill passed will be a voice for our students, teachers, and families. Also, cameras do not negatively impact the daily lives of students and teachers yet will enhance positive **safety** measures. The ultimate goal is to have our students learn in an inspiring safe environment and our teachers work in a safe environment. **These cameras can help everyone be better and help bridge the gap for all of us to work together and respect each other.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Darria Boyd
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Laurel, MD 20723