



## SB300 SPECIAL EDUCATION – LEARNING CONTINUITY PLAN – REQUIREMENT

January 27, 2021

EDUCATION, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

### OPPOSE

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Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) opposes **SB300 Special Education – Learning Continuity Plan – Requirement**. This bill requires an individualized education program to include a learning continuity plan to be implemented for students with disabilities during emergency conditions beginning October 1, 2021. A continuity of learning plan is also required for students with a 504 plan. The bill dictates when the learning continuity plan must be developed and also makes a local school system responsible for providing internet services and electronic devices for these students.

AACPS believes that all students are entitled to challenging instruction from highly qualified professionals that addresses their unique learning needs and differences.

The Individualized Education Plan is already considered to be a cumbersome document by most parents. Adding a minimum of two pages to this tool just in case of an emergency seems unreasonable. To plan for a student's needs without knowing the nature of the emergency event, how the student may react to the specific event, or the family's particular needs related to the event would be difficult and not individualized. In the Spring of 2019, AACPS quickly put Individualized Continuity of Learning Plans in place that were individualized to the student and incorporated direct input from families. Based on a student's rate of change, these plans may need to be updated several times a year.

Additionally, while AACPS is committed to doing everything possible to ensure that students and families have access to effective internet services and has been very successful in partnering with internet providers during the COVID-19 pandemic, the school system has no control over the availability of internet in certain areas of the County or the speed of internet services available to our students. Likewise, while AACPS has been very successful at distributing computer devices to students, we have learned that some of the supply and demand issues during a worldwide pandemic impacted our ability to move forward with distribution as planned. Therefore, we have concerns with the bill's provisions which would hold school systems accountable for these two mandates.

This proposal could negatively impact the individualization of services to children because it is based on too many unknowns which prevents the development of a meaningful, student-centered plan.

Accordingly, AACPS respectfully requests an **UNFAVORABLE** committee report on SB300.