

# **GCCC Testimony SB 848 GCPS Virtual Learning 3-2-22**

Uploaded by: Holly Lane

Position: FAV



Testimony offered on behalf of:  
THE GARRETT COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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FAVORABLE:  
SB 848 – Garrett County and Allegany County – Public Schools  
– Virtual Education Days Pilot Programs

Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee  
March 2, 2022

On behalf of the Garrett County Chamber of Commerce, representing 500 member organizations in Western Maryland, I write to express our support of **SB 848 – Garrett County and Allegany County – Public Schools – Virtual Education Days Pilot Programs.**

Garrett County experiences an average of 120 inches of snow fall per year which often results in a number of school days being canceled or snow days for the schools. SB 848 would allow for the Garrett County Public Schools (GCPS) to provide virtual education in lieu of snow days, thereby avoiding less interruption to learning and eliminating the need for make-up days.

The pandemic has proven that virtual learning is a viable option and this would provide a much-needed alternative to GCPS having to account for an unknown number of snow days and inclement weather.

The Chamber respectfully requests a **FAVORABLE REPORT on SB 848.**

Sincerely,

*Holly Lane*

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# **SB 848 - OPPOSE - Garrett County and Allegany Coun**

Uploaded by: Mohammed Choudhury

Position: UNF



Senate Bill 848 - Garrett County and Allegany County – Public Schools – Virtual Education Days Pilot Program  
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs  
March 2, 2022

Sixteen local school systems (Allegany, [Anne Arundel](#), [Baltimore County](#), [Carroll](#), Cecil, Dorchester, [Garrett](#), [Kent](#), [Montgomery](#), Prince George's, Queen Anne's, [Somerset](#), [Talbot](#), Washington, [Wicomico](#), and [Worcester](#)) submitted plans to MSDE. This statewide approach will protect high quality learning opportunities for students.

Research from across the country has made it clear that for the vast majority of students virtual learning is not an effective form of instruction. Ensuring that consistent and comprehensive guardrails are in place for virtual education days is crucial to ensure the virtual days during inclement weather does not adversely affect the learning of the majority of students.

We respectfully request that you consider this information as you deliberate **Senate Bill 848**. Please contact Ary Amerikaner, at 410-767-0090, or [ary.amerikaner@maryland.gov](mailto:ary.amerikaner@maryland.gov), for any additional information.

# **SB848 ACEA Testimony.pdf**

Uploaded by: Samantha Zwerling

Position: UNF



**Testimony Submitted on Behalf of the Allegany County Education Association**

**On**

**Garrett County and Allegany County – Public Schools – Virtual Education Days Pilot Program**

**Senate Bill 848**

**Education, Health, & Environmental Affairs**

**March 2, 2022**

The Allegany County Education Association (ACEA) views Senate Bill 848 unfavorably. Though ACEA leadership understands the intent of this bill, it is problematic on multiple levels. It would not be advantageous for educators or students. While the amendments make this bill a pilot program, ACEA still opposes the bill for the reasons outlined below.

Allegany County Education Association is a member driven organization of education employees from a wide variety of career classifications. We are the teachers, instructional assistants, secretaries, and Technicians, that make Allegany County Public Schools function for our students and communities on a day to day basis. ACEA is an affiliate of the Maryland State Education Association and the National Education Association.

ACEA urges an unfavorable report on SB 848. First, as the pandemic has demonstrated, there is no substitute for the in-person expertise of our members. To the greatest extent possible, students must have the benefit of that expertise and the replacement of it with virtual instruction must be reserved for the most serious of circumstances. Periodic inclement weather does not meet that standard. In addition, Allegany County still has areas with limited internet access, as well as the willingness of some to acquiesce to this form of instruction.

Further, ACEA is concerned about the potential impacts of this kind of policy to Education Support Professionals. This kind of policy could have financial ramifications for these members of the school community, which include food and nutrition staff, and bus drivers in addition to those we represent. If a school is closed for a virtual education day, these professionals could lose compensation for that day. These are often the lowest paid employees in the system, and are less likely to make up for a lost day's pay.

Finally, ACEA does not think this bill is necessary. Other systems are doing this, or thinking about doing this without state legislation<sup>1</sup>.

**ACEA appreciates your consideration of this testimony and urges an unfavorable report on Senate Bill 848.**

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<sup>1</sup> <https://news.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/quicknotes/mcps-to-consider-virtual-learning-on-bad-weather-days-2/> (Accessed March 2, 2022)