

# Education Advocacy Coalition

for Students with Disabilities

**House Ways and Means Committee**

**HB 989: Public School Students—Daily Physical Activity  
(Student Health and Fitness Act)**

**February 25, 2022**

**Position: Support**

The Education Advocacy Coalition for Students with Disabilities (EAC), a coalition of approximately 40 organizations and individuals concerned with education policy for students with disabilities in Maryland, supports House Bill 989, 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 989 requires physical activity to be developmentally appropriate and that the bill addresses the needs of all students, including those with disabilities. We also appreciate that the bill prohibits routine denial of recess as a means of discipline. The EAC is pleased to support HB 989.

For more information or if questions, please contact Leslie Seid Margolis, Chairperson, at [lesliem@disabilityrightsmd.org](mailto: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.  
Rich Ceruolo, Parent Advocacy Consortium  
Michelle Davis, ABCs for Life Success

(over)

Jennifer Engel Fisher, Weinfeld Education Group, LLC  
Lisa Frank, Andrea Bennett and Jen Ritchotte, Special Kids Company  
Ann Geddes, Maryland Coalition of Families  
Beth Ann Hancock, Charting the Course  
Kalman Hettleman, Independent Advocate  
Morgan Durand Horvath, M.Ed., Abilities Network  
Rosemary Kitzinger and Marjorie Guldan, Bright Futures, LLC  
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  
Ronza Othman, National Federation of the Blind of Maryland  
Maria Ott, Attorney  
Rebecca Rienzi, Pathfinders for Autism  
Lori Scott, The Arc Maryland  
Ronnetta Stanley, M.Ed., Loud Voices Together  
Wayne Steedman, Steedman Law Group  
Guy Stephens, Alliance Against Seclusion and Restraint  
Maureen van Stone, Mallory Legg, and Alyssa Thorn, Project HEAL at Kennedy Krieger Institute  
Winifred Winston, Decoding Dyslexia Maryland  
Liz Zogby, Maryland Down Syndrome Advocacy Coalition