



Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council

CREATING CHANGE • IMPROVING LIVES

House Ways and Means Committee

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

February 25, 2022

Position: Support

The Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council (DD Council) is a statewide public policy organization that creates changes to make it possible for people with developmental disabilities to live the lives they want with the support they need. The DD Council studies and analyzes legislation, programs, and policies relative to their impact on individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. It is from that perspective, we support HB 989.

WHY is this legislation important?

- The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires the provision of a free, appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment in which a student's needs can be met.
- Research indicates that regular physical activity, included in children's school curricula, produces physical, psychological and intellectual benefits. This is equally true for students with disabilities.
- Adequate accommodations and supports are essential to the success of the over 100,000 students with disabilities educated in Maryland's public schools.
- Accommodations and supports in physical education make achieving full participation in school life more possible for students with disabilities.

WHAT does this legislation do?

- Sets a goal all students engage in at least 150 minutes of physical activity per week.
- Requires the Commission of School Construction to assess the accessibility of outdoor and indoor school recreation spaces for students with disabilities.
- Requires physical education to be adapted, if necessary, so that a student with a disability can participate in the activities alongside their peers without disabilities. Any specific needs should be addressed by a student's individualized education program (IEP).

HB 989 ensures that all physical activity is developmentally appropriate and addresses the needs of all students, including students with disabilities.

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