

A DiLustro testimony to support SB0311.pdf

Uploaded by: Adrienne DiLustro

Position: FAV

Adrienne DiLustro
7327 Hitchcock Lane
Windsor Mill, MD 21244

February 7, 2023

Senator Craig Zucker
James Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Mr. Zucker,

As an employee of a nonpublic special education school in Maryland, I urge you to vote YES to bill SB0311, the Nonpublic Education - Special Education Placements - Renaming and Teacher Salaries (Teacher Pay Parity Act) in order to support Maryland students with the greatest special needs and appropriately compensate special educators across our state. These schools serve more than 3,500 students in need of specialized services not available in public schools. Our schools, particularly members of the Maryland Association of Nonpublic Special Education Facilities (MANSEF), provide critical, high-quality services, customized to meet the needs of our students, and are an important part of the state's educational continuum.

I work at the Kennedy Krieger School, LEAP program, in Baltimore City, and we serve students ages 5-21 on the autism spectrum. The Kennedy Krieger School LEAP Program serves students on the severe end of the autism spectrum who struggle with behavioral challenges and additional learning difficulties. Our school is an intensive, 12-month program that focuses on providing a highly structured and safe environment that helps students to participate in and derive benefit from educational programming. Our program is successful when it is richly staffed with certified professionals and highly qualified paraprofessionals. We have a 1:1 staffing ratio and it is integral for our students to have high staffing numbers to remain safe and to make educational progress. But, I'd like to tell you more about the unique profiles of our students and staff.

Often, our students demonstrate challenging behaviors such as aggression/physical assault, self-injury, and property destruction at a crisis level, requiring multiple school staff members to respond. On a daily basis, the staff members in our schools must manage these crises directly and in a hands-on fashion while performing our educational roles, which is both physically and mentally strenuous. I have personally received multiple concussions and broken bones while working in my role as a certified special educator in recent years. On top of the already strenuous workload of the average teacher or school employee to meet and strive to go beyond MSDE educational standards, our staff members must manage these crises, along with healthcare and personal care management of our students each day. You will not meet more hardworking and dedicated personnel than those serving our students with significant special needs.

Teacher salary parity is critical to retaining employees and staff members who have dedicated their careers to serving students with such significant needs here in Maryland. Appropriately compensating these school staff members will not only benefit the academic experiences of the students we serve, by increasing teacher retention, but will also improve the livelihoods of these hard-working educators and their families. Following the pandemic and current recession, it has been challenging for special educators to manage rising costs of living with the decreasingly competitive wages in our field. A December, 2021 MSDE salary parity study revealed that teachers and employees in our MANSEF schools receive significantly lower pay (between 23% and 40% less) than that of our colleagues working in public school systems. It is a constant challenge to retain highly qualified and dedicated teachers, therapists, and administrators in this climate, and the potential for further disparity in compensation will almost certainly result in many more personnel leaving our schools or the educational field completely. If Maryland is unable to adequately retain special educators, it would be detrimental to the success of Maryland students with significant special needs, and would have drastic effects on the families of these educators.

I urge you consider the needs of students with disabilities and their families, as well as the most hardworking educators. Our schools give these young people the educational and therapeutic services they need to function as independent and productive adults. Teachers and school staff members in these schools deserve appropriate compensation for the important and challenging work that we perform.

Sincerely,

Adrienne DiLustro

MANSEF Written Testimony SB 311.pdf

Uploaded by: Ally Alejandro

Position: FAV



SUPPORT

Senate Bill 311:

Nonpublic Educational Programs – Children with Disabilities – Cost of Teacher Salaries

OFFERED ON BEHALF OF

The Maryland Association of Nonpublic Special Education Facilities
(MANSEF)

BEFORE THE

Senate Budget and Tax

February 8, 2023

The Maryland Association of Nonpublic Special Education Facilities (MANSEF) offers this testimony in SUPPORT of Senate Bill 311 on behalf of the 70 special education schools across Maryland currently serving approximately 3500 publicly funded school children. Our member schools employ over 1500 teachers, clinicians and administrators.

Senate Bill 311 will align teacher salaries for those working in the special education schools to those of their public school counterparts. Retaining skilled teachers continues to be a challenge and we cannot keep pace to competitively compensate our staff.

MSDE conducted a salary parity study in December 2021. The results of this study showed average teacher salaries in public schools and special education schools differed greatly. After accounting for differences in teachers' total paid hours, teachers' wages in public schools and special education schools differed by between 23.3% and 40.7%. One specific recommendation from this study is to allow the special education schools to provide their teachers with a salary equivalent to the local school salaries.

Additionally, the Blueprint for Maryland's Future Act provides that public school teacher salaries will continue to increase over the next few years; thereby, the pay gap between public and special education school teachers will become even wider pulling crucial resources away from students most in need. MANSEF asks that our members schools have the ability to align teacher salaries to that of the local school system where the special education school is located. This increase will be phased in over a 3-year period.

SB 311 also proposes to amend the term "nonpublic" which we believe reflects the intent of The *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA). The term "nonpublic" is not mentioned in

IDEA which mandates a “continuum of alternative placements to meet the needs of children with disabilities for special education and related services.” Therefore, the MANSEF special education schools are an extension of the public schools and fulfill an essential function in meeting students’ particular educational needs.

The MANSEF schools are uniquely equipped to provide the specific, multidisciplinary, frequently intensive resources students with special needs require. The scope and depth of staff expertise afford specialized, integrated programming that goes beyond academic education and encompass the social and emotional well-being of each student. In addition to the skilled, highly trained teachers, special education schools are staffed to provide other critical services such as behavior programs, crisis management and wrap-around supports.

Because our teacher salaries are far behind the public schools, the gap between public and special education school teacher salaries continues to grow. Our teachers are to be valued, recognized and appreciated. The current workforce shortage must be addressed for us to continue to meet the high expectations of IDEA. It is for these reasons that MANSEF respectfully requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 311.

Dorie Flynn
Executive Director
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TeacherPayParityAct testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Amy Dykes

Position: FAV

My name is Amy Dykes and I am here to speak in favor of SB 311 – the Teacher Pay Parity Act.

I am a teacher at Kennedy Krieger High School in Baltimore. My career in the field of special education began in 2012. After graduating from Towson University with a dual degree in elementary and special education, I became a special educator with Harford County Public Schools.

However, I was not satisfied in the public setting. I believed that I could offer so much more to students with disabilities, if only I worked in an environment with better, more practical resources. I decided to submit my resignation and pursue a teaching position at a nonpublic special education school. The 2022-23 school year now marks my 7th year at Kennedy Krieger.

All of our students are publicly funded and placed by their Local School System (LSS) when local IEP teams agree that the public setting cannot appropriately program for the student's level of need. Our students not only have learning difficulties, but they have social and emotional needs and some have intense behavioral challenges. Each student, however, is so unique and wonderful, and we celebrate their progress, no matter how seemingly small, every darn day. I cannot begin to describe the joy I feel when I hear parents tell me how grateful they are to see their years of endless advocacy rewarded with a placement in a nonpublic program. It is frustrating to know that while I'm working with very complex students, I am being paid less than my public school peers. It has been well established that there is a significant salary disparity between nonpublic teachers and public school teachers.

I want to thank the legislature for recognizing this unfair disparity and providing funding in FY 22 and in FY 23 to supplement our salaries. I urge you to continue your support by voting in favor of this year's bill, SB 311.

This bill and proposed funding will serve to make a direct impact in the lives of students with disabilities across the state of Maryland. This bill will ensure that highly qualified special educators continue their positions at non-public placements in the state of Maryland and do not leave their students because of the very real issues we face in pay parity.

Thank you for your consideration and commitment to support the teachers who are serving Maryland's most complex students by casting a vote in favor of SB311.

SB 311_favorable_Vaughan-Roland.pdf

Uploaded by: Amy Vaughan-Roland

Position: FAV

SB 311

The Teacher Pay Parity Act

Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

February 8, 2023

Favorable

Catholic Charities of Baltimore supports SB 311 The Teacher Pay Parity Act which would bring parity between the salaries of public-school teachers and teachers at special education placements.

Inspired by the Gospel to love, serve and teach, Catholic Charities provides care and services to improve the lives of Marylanders in need. For 100 years, Catholic Charities has accompanied Marylanders as they age with dignity, obtain empowering careers, heal from trauma and addiction, achieve economic independence, prepare for educational success and feel welcome as immigrant neighbors.

One of the ways we work with children to obtain educational success, it through the Villa Maria School. Located in Timonium, Villa Maria School serves as a special education placement for public school students who are not succeeding in the classroom due to emotional, behavioral and learning challenges. Funded with state and local dollars, our school offers a vibrant therapeutic and special education community where children can learn, grow, and heal.

There are 3,000 Maryland students who need MORE than traditional public schools can offer. They need MORE service hours, MORE behavioral interventions, MORE intensive therapies, and MORE differentiated instruction. They then come to special education placements, like our Villa Maria School, where our educators provide them with MORE. To meet the needs of these learners, our teachers attend MORE trainings, obtain MORE certifications, and prepare MORE lessons, all while being paid substantially less than our public-school colleagues.

It is estimated that a special needs placement educator works over 31 MORE days a year than the public-school educator while being paid 20-40% less than public school teachers with similar credentials and experience. We deliver MORE for some of Maryland's neediest and underrepresented students, yet we are paid LESS. This is resulting in a workforce shortage across the state. Students still need special needs placements, but we cannot compete with public school salaries and hire enough teachers.

SB 311 would correct this inequity and bring salary parity between public school teachers and teachers at special education placements.

For the reasons listed above, Catholic Charities of Baltimore appreciates your consideration, and urges the committee to issue a favorable report for SB 311.

Submitted By:

Dr. Amy Vaughan-Roland, Villa Maria School

senate speech.pdf

Uploaded by: Brooke Hess

Position: FAV

Hi, my name is Brooke Hess and I have worked at Ivymount for over 6 years. I starting working at a special education placement program after holding multiple special education positions and student teaching in 2 Maryland public schools. As a certified special educator, people would ask me "Why do you work at at Ivymount, a school that could not pay near as much as a public school, have nowhere close to the same benefits while you even hold 2 special ed and 3 general education certifications and endorsements?" I would answer "because I love our students! Across my High School Chemistry class, my High School Algebra 2 class, and beyond, my students have brought me immeasurable joy and pride that I could not put into words AND within their least restricted environment.

However throughout my years at Ivymount, I have seen one teacher after another come to work there only to leave after their first or second year because the salary that special education placement program schools can pay is not able to compete with public school salaries. Thats not even considering the fact that some special education placement programs are 11 or 12 month programs. That means our teachers don't get a comparable public school salary OR summers off!? This leaves our students with a revolving door of staff who are qualified or staff who stay with less qualified backgrounds. How is that providing an APPROPRIATE education to our special ed students?

Our teachers show up every single day for our students like other special education placement program teachers and continue to provide incredible, specialized education and support that our students deserve. BUT just imagine the progress our students would make in achieving a high school diploma (yes, the same earned in typical high schools) or the progress made across their vocational classes that would allow them to obtain and keep a job IF we had the salary parity to retain highly qualified and certified teachers. Parents and caregivers spend years finding appropriate placements for their students. Our special education placement programs provide a level of support that public schools are not able to provide within their least restrictive environment. We then owe it to these parents, caregivers, but most importantly our students to retain the most qualified individuals for these students to reach their maximum potential.

SB 311 Favorable Testimony, Mahoney.pdf

Uploaded by: Brooke Mahoney

Position: FAV

2/7/2023

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Brooke Mahoney, but my students call me Mrs. Brooke. I am 28 years old and have been a special education teacher at a non-public school in Maryland, called the Trellis School, for five years. I am the fourth grade teacher in our school and absolutely love what I do. In the pursuit of my own education, I recently completed my master's degree in special education. The students in my classroom are each so beautifully unique. They are each significantly impacted by their disabilities and require 1:1 instruction their entire school day. We are first and foremost a communication-based program. We believe that functional communication is critical to a successful life for our students. Our school days are chaotic, stressful, joyful, and heartwarming, all wrapped up into one experience. Our students deserve the best and I give them my whole self in everything I do.

I am a young married woman with ambitions to grow my own family, to own a house, and to build a financial future for myself and my family. However, I continue to find myself draining my savings frequently just to pay the bills, get gas, and groceries. My student debt payments are due to begin again this month for my bachelor's degree and my master's degree student debt payments will begin this summer. I am terrified at the upcoming reality that my finances will continue to dwindle despite my hard work, commitment to my career, and my commitment to my education. To supplement my income, like many other fellow teachers and staff members in my school, I do additional work on the weekends.

I am so incredibly passionate about helping my children grow into their potential, but am burdened with continuous financial stress and uncertainty. I am in favor of SB 311 so special education teachers like myself can continue our careers with a fair pay that is reflective of the living expenses and debts imposed on our generation. The field of special education is desperate to maintain staff that is compassionate and dedicated to children with disabilities. Current wages constantly discourage others from entering or remaining in special education careers. A massive burden will be relieved from my shoulders, personally, if I can have financial security and continue to pursue my career without doubt. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Brooke Mahoney

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301-928-6398

Testimony Non Public.pdf

Uploaded by: Charles Durgin

Position: FAV

**Nonpublic Education - Special Education Placements
Teacher Salaries (Teacher Pay Parity Act)**

February 7, 2023

Dear Legislative Leaders,

Please pass legislation that will enable parity in teacher pay in non-public special educational settings. This is some of the most difficult work, serving some of the most challenging clinical and educational situations, in the State of Maryland and beyond.

We need to attract and keep good people that can take on these high-demand service challenges. Without question, equity in salaries is a significant factor in achieving stability in this service sector.

Failure to pass this bill will limit what we can give to those in significant need – students, families, and communities. It is also important to stress that supporting this service sector will also limit placements into inappropriate settings and reduce crisis situations, such as repeated psychiatric hospitalizations, emergency visits to the Emergency Room, entry into the prison system, homelessness, to name a few.

Respectfully Submitted,

Charles J. Durgin, MS, MEd

Adult and Community Service Coordinator

Kennedy Krieger Institute

Baltimore, MD

Adjunct Professor, Graduate School of Education and Human Development

The George Washington University

Washington, DC

MANSEF Written Testimony SB 311.pdf

Uploaded by: Dorie Flynn

Position: FAV



SUPPORT

Senate Bill 311:

Nonpublic Educational Programs – Children with Disabilities – Cost of Teacher Salaries

OFFERED ON BEHALF OF

The Maryland Association of Nonpublic Special Education Facilities
(MANSEF)

BEFORE THE

Senate Budget and Tax

February 8, 2023

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SB0311 Support.pdf

Uploaded by: Dylan Manning

Position: FAV

Dylan Manning

Special Educator, Kennedy Krieger High School

February 7, 2023

Dear Senate Budget and Tax Committee,

I am writing to express my support for the Senate Bill SB0311. I believe strongly that more investment is needed to attract and maintain talent in the Special Education field. I'm sure it comes as no surprise to you that the teaching field in general has been damaged heavily by the pandemic. As much as ever, schools are struggling to maintain full staffing of qualified and motivated individuals. However, this is felt doubly so for the Special Education non-public schools.

While students across all demographics suffered loss of education and regression due to the pandemic, our students with special needs will have to work extra hard to make up for time lost. The routines, skill maintenance, and socialization that they relied on from our schools were unable to replicate fully via virtual education; so their needs are as great as ever.

As our students require extra work and added attention to make up for lost time, we are dealing with the brunt of loss of staff. I have personally heard of teachers leaving for public schools offering more money, as well as otherwise qualified teachers declining to come over to non-public schools due to pay discrepancy. It is impossible for us to meet the needs of our students if we are not able to staff our school adequately with experienced teachers. We can't do this without a competitive wage.

I do not want to take anything away from the public schools, for they need teachers as much as we do. More investment should go into education in general. However, I do not think it is fair for there to be such a large discrepancy in pay between the two. In times of labor shortages, it is understandable that those with the lowest pay and fewest benefits are going to be impacted the most. At a time when our students require more attention and have greater needs, we are faced with a disproportionate scarcity of staffing.

I appreciate all of your work. Thank you for helping make Maryland one of the greatest states in the country. I write humbly, but passionately, in support of SB0311. I hope that you will take my opinion into consideration and help us meet the needs of some of the most vulnerable students in the education system.

Sincerely,

Dylan Manning

Special Educator

Manningd@kennedykrieger.org

General Assembly.pdf

Uploaded by: Elizabeth Bugg

Position: FAV

I am writing to urge you to vote for SB 311, Teacher Pay Parity Act. After a ten year career in medical research, including four years at the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, Department of Developmental Genetics, I left research to raise my family and became a teacher. I spent my first ten years as a high school science special education teacher at Perry Hall High School in Baltimore County. Special education became a passion because I saw the educational struggles of my nephew who has ADD and other learning disabilities. I realized that special education students are intelligent, capable students who can learn if given teachers with the proper training and the right learning environment.

After ten years I was overwhelmed by the relentless demands of trying to serve my students with insufficient resources in an environment that didn't meet their needs. I saw their daily struggles and frustrations. Unfortunately, too many internalized their learning struggles and adopted the attitude of 'I'm stupid and a failure'. I used to tell my husband that I spent the entire day putting band-aids on gunshot wounds in addition to trying to teach a curriculum.

When the opportunity came to take my skills and experience to a nonpublic/special education placement school, I leapt at the opportunity. This is my fourth year as a high school special educator at Baltimore Lab School. In spite of serving the most challenging public school students, I had to take a 25% pay cut when I left Baltimore County Public Schools. Financially it was a blow. I couldn't have done it if I didn't have a husband who worked in computer science and made a salary commensurate with his education and experience. I have a bachelor's degree in biology, 2 Master level degrees (Applied Molecular Biology and MAT), 10 years of research lab experience, 3 years of college adjunct teaching, 10 years of public school teaching and 4 years of nonpublic/special education placement school teaching and I make less money than some new college graduates. If I had stayed in the public school system I would be making significantly more money.

Everyday I know I am making a difference in the lives of my students, but it is hard work. Each student has individual educational needs. Due to my years of experience I have an extensive understanding of the content and various strategies to deliver that content. That allows me to constantly pivot and modify my lessons as needed. That is the kind of ability that can't be taught and that only comes with experience. I have seen many talented,experienced teachers make the tough decision to leave a nonpublic/special education placement school for a public school because they need more money. Not a single one wanted to leave, but they had to face the reality of their family's financial situation. The loss of experienced teachers is a blow to any school, but it hits special education students particularly hard. Although new teachers bring much energy and enthusiasm to the classroom, their lack of experience prevents them from delivering the same quality of instruction as a teacher with more classroom experience.

I know these schools make a difference and your support of this bill will save money in the long run. Students who leave our school have the education, confidence and real life skills to succeed in the world. They will make a positive contribution to society instead of relying on government aid. We recently had an alumni event that was attended by approximately 30 former students. Every student was gainfully employed or in a four year or two year college. I guarantee if you took a sample of 30 self-contained special education students from a public school you would not see the same results.

By voting for this bill you will allow nonpublic/special education placement schools to retain their qualified and experienced teachers and attract experienced public school teachers. nonpublic/special education placement schools serve a vital role in preparing students with learning differences for real world success. Please feel free to visit Baltimore Lab School at any time to see our programs and students for yourself. Our website also offers a glimpse of our students and learning programs. [Baltimore Lab School](http://BaltimoreLabSchool.org)

Elizabeth Bugg
beth.bugg@baltimorelabschool.org

Senate Budget and Tax Committee. email letter.pdf

Uploaded by: Elizabeth Miesner

Position: FAV

February 06, 2023

To: Senate Budget and Tax Committee.

RE: Senate Bill 311- Nonpublic Education - Special Education Placements - Renaming and Teacher Salaries (Teacher Pay Parity Act), By: Senators Zucker, Elfreth, Guzzone, King, and Salling, Introduced and read first time: January 27, 2023 and Assigned to: Budget and Taxation

Dear Senate Budget and Tax Committee,

My name is Elizabeth Miesner and I am Special Education Teacher, I work at non-public school, which is currently located in Hagerstown, MD. Before coming to my current place of employment, I worked in public school for a year, prior to that I worked in non-public school located Jefferson, MD (right outside of Frederick Maryland) for about four years. So, I have experience both school environments and the pay difference. When I work for the non-public school in Jefferson, MD I took on a position as Special Education Teacher, I got paid salary based, broken down it was about \$19.00 per hour (give or take). So every two week I made about \$1,520 before taxes, so I brought home about \$1,142.00 after taxes. That was to start with me having my BS degree working starting to work on Master's degree in Special Education.

When that non-public school closed back in 2020, I then was referred (including my co-workers) to Frederick county's public school system. I applied and they offered me a job and I did accepted. The job position was for a Special Education Teacher, within the public school system. I was paid salary, and broken down was about \$23.00 an hour, I was paid give or take about \$2,000 twice a month, after taxes and insurance was take out from my gross pay, and I still brought home about \$1,500 give or take. That starting pay with the public school system was to start, and with me still only have my BS degree and working on Master's degree in Special Education. I am sure if I had stayed; my pay would have gone up couple thousand based on my education and experience as teacher. With two-year teaching experience alone, I could have started out at \$53,000 a year with Frederick County public schools. Starting out with FCPS, with one-year teaching experience and BS degree, one would start at about \$48,000 a year. That alone was and is more than non-public school teachers start pay. I get those numbers from me previous employment, and what was shared with me at the time I was hired and talking over my pay.

Then at the end of that school year with the public school system, I left because there was not position for me the following school. In addition, I had realized I found my passion (calling) to work in non-public school with student whom require special education services outside of public school. I always questioned why the pay was so different between the two, public school and non-public school that is.

So when came to my currently place of employment, I am again salary base, my starting pay was about \$1,495.56 every two weeks before taxes. After taxes, I took home \$1,052.04 every two weeks. That was with BS degree and me working on Master's and now having two years of teaching experience. For me Starting out at nonpublic school with same credentials and now

having the two years of teaching experience, starting salary pay for me was about \$35,893.44 a year. That big different, and it sure does make big difference to make bank account.

When I finished my Master's degree May 2022, I got small pay increase, before taxes about \$1,895.56. Now we take out taxes, I currently bring home about \$1,354.98 every two weeks. That is still less than the starting pay with public school system, to which I mention earlier.

Non-public school teachers should be paid more than they are currently getting Paid. Why?

Well For one reason the cost of living has increased, and for me personal my current house payment (monthly bases) is more than one of my pay checks. People are struggle to pay their bills, and for the years that I have worked in non-public school, the turnover rate is so high because people find better paying jobs outside of on-public school system. Gas station cashiers and supervisor are making \$15 hour an up that is without spending thousands of dollars on an education.

Second, non-public school teachers should be paid the same as public school teacher because as the job requirements, MSDE requirements, experience and so on are accounted for in the same way. In addition, something to take in to consideration as well is that non-public school teachers encounter behavioral, mental and emotional issues outside of typical student. In addition, not to mention changing of pull-ups for the student who are not potty-trained, and the aggressive behaviors that are displayed on daily bases that non-public school teacher do encounter. Which is part of why the student who attend non-public school like that one I work in, they are not able to attend public school, which managing those behaviors alone is a job by itself.

To take on such a teaching position, is not for everyone. Nevertheless, for those who do take on a teaching position such as, Kudos to them (and myself), because it is not an easy job, and pay to some is no longer worth it anymore. Which again leads to bad attitude and those seeking other jobs with better pay and potential having to deal with a little less stress. While you have some who still choose to teach in non-public school for more than just a paycheck. We that choose that, we also need an equal pay to other teachers not working non-public school. We still need and want to live off our paycheck, not just survive from pay to pay check.

The struggle is real, and I know I need to make more in order to live, take care of my family. I am tired of surviving paycheck to pay check. I am tired of having just enough to hopefully pay my bills, get groceries and put gas in my car, and hope to have enough money to get to the next paycheck. As a parent, it does hurt to say no a lot to your child because money is the root most issue(s). It is not cool to put hours and money into getting education to then provide education to others, to work hard all week... and to what only to have the bare minimum to show for it, all because of what a person, like myself gets paid as non-public school teacher. Yet, we have to put so much to become a teacher. It makes no sense and it not fair to me, or to those in the same position as me.

A third thing, non-public school teachers including myself deserve to be equal to their public school counterparts and compensated for what we do. After all, aside of cost of living going up and many of us struggle paycheck to pay heck, I and long with many other have about Student

loans, maybe personal loans and not to mention the out of pocket cost to become a teacher. I have about \$100,000 in student loans, out pocket cost myself, and still have more to go. We as teacher have to put out that money to continue to keep a teaching license, and to keep up with MSDE requirements. Putting in the time, effort, schooling, etc. Teachers all around should having higher starting pay and pay raises as time goes on. In addition, teacher of a non-public school so have equal and higher starting pay just as our count parts.

These are just three out of many reasons why I would like for you to support and vote for Senate Bill 311 bill: Nonpublic Education - Special Education Placements - Renaming and Teacher Salaries (Teacher Pay Parity Act)

Thanks so much,

Elizabeth Miesner

SB311_TeacherParity_KennedyKrieger_Support.pdf

Uploaded by: Emily Arneson

Position: FAV



DATE: February 8, 2023 **COMMITTEE:** Senate Budget and Taxation
BILL NO: Senate Bill 311
BILL TITLE: Nonpublic Education - Special Education Placements - Renaming and Teacher Salaries
(Teacher Pay Parity Act)
POSITION: Support

Kennedy Krieger Institute supports Senate Bill 311 - Nonpublic Education - Special Education Placements - Renaming and Teacher Salaries (Teacher Pay Parity Act).

Bill Summary:

Senate Bill 311 changes the terminology of “nonpublic educational program” to “special education placement.” Additionally, the legislation requires the State and certain counties to pay the costs of salaries and bonuses for teachers at special education placements.

Background:

Kennedy Krieger Institute is home to four (soon-to-be five) nonpublic schools serving nearly 500 publicly funded students from throughout Maryland. Our schools are committed to providing comprehensive, innovative special education and related services for children, adolescents, and young adults with a wide range of learning, social, emotional, behavioral, physical, neurological and developmental disabilities. The Institute provides an education to public school students, funded by their local educational agencies to receive instruction in our programs.

Child and adolescent students are referred to, and placed in, our school programs by the local school’s IEP team, which includes the student’s parents or guardians, when it is determined that the local school/system is unable to meet the needs of the student.

To serve students with complex medical, developmental, and behavioral needs, our staffing model requires that we employ nearly an equal number of highly trained teachers, related-service clinicians, and support staff. We have long-standing partnerships with the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and the local education agencies based upon our specialized expertise and commitment to the population of children we serve.

Rationale:

Senate Bill 311 seeks to support nonpublic schools teacher salaries to ensure that their compensation accurately matches their level of professional training and talent and is commensurate with that of their public school peers

The ability of our schools to provide exemplary service for students with significant special education needs, as well as related clinical and behavioral supports is, in large part, because of our highly skilled and educated workforce of teachers and support staff who dedicate themselves to the children and families we serve. Unfortunately, because of the sizeable salary disparities between public and nonpublic schoolteachers, our educators annually face the decision to remain with our program or seek significantly higher wages with the public school systems. Kennedy Krieger Schools has seen a frankly unsustainable turnover of 20%, per school year over 10 years, of our special education teachers. This high turnover predates the added challenges imposed by workforce shortages among school teachers in Maryland and elsewhere.

In 2020, the Maryland General Assembly passed budget narrative that formed a Salary Parity Workgroup at MSDE. As a member of the Maryland Association of Nonpublic Special Education Facilities (MANSEF) and with an ongoing collaborative partnership with MSDE, Kennedy Krieger was honored to participate in the workgroup. The workgroup, composed of representation from the Local School Systems, Nonpublic Schools,

MSDE and Legislative Services, reviewed survey data compiled from two separate studies. Both studies found a gap when comparing annual salaries between a nonpublic educator and a public school educator. Depending on the jurisdiction of comparison the gap was between \$3,600 and \$23,600 (7.3% and 25.8%, respectively).

As recently as 25 years ago, when Kennedy Krieger School had only one program and there were fewer nonpublic school options, Maryland's students with complex disabilities were often separated from their families and sent out of state to residential facilities, at significantly greater expense to Maryland as well as extraordinary distress to children and their families. Nonpublic schools were established in Maryland to assure that these students are able to continue living with their families while attending school.

Kennedy Krieger appreciates the supplemental funds provided by the legislature in FY22 and FY23 for teacher salaries and the legislative commitment to support a long-term, systemic approach to achieving parity. Through that, Maryland can continue to support the workforce necessary to provide free appropriate public education to all Maryland students seeking public education.

Kennedy Krieger Institute requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 311.

SB 311 Written Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Evan Parker

Position: FAV

2/7/2023

To Whom It May Concern regarding SB 311,

My name is Evan Parker and I represent the Baltimore Lab School, a nonpublic special education school in Baltimore City. I am writing today to ask for a favorable vote for Senate Bill 311. This bill is important to my school.

Maryland is fortunate to have a strong history of maintaining a full continuum of placement options for students with special needs under IDEA. It is a robust system and one that is envied across the country. When the local public school systems are unable to implement a child's IEP, they rely on Baltimore Lab School. We are serving 100 publicly funded students from 7 different Local School Systems. In order to support the high expectations for our publicly funded students, it is imperative that we adequately compensate our teachers similarly to that of their public school counterparts.

There has been a long-standing issue that the teachers working in our nonpublic special education schools do not have parity with their public school counterparts and this bill will help to provide a means to correct this.

On a personal note, I am the parent of 5 children in the Maryland school system, one of which is diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Though she is served at this time at her local public school here in Baltimore City, we are well aware that there may come a time she cannot be served at this school and may need alternatives. In Baltimore, for instance, the alternatives for students on a non-public basis that are not behavior based are very, very limited. My school, for instance, is one of the only MANSEF schools that is for arts, language, and learning disabilities versus a school linked to disabilities for behavior. Perhaps, if we had stronger legislation such as SB311, that would pave the way for more schools that afford students a non-public option in the event their local school cannot serve them, as is their right under ADA and IDEA. It is my hope, that as a teacher working at one of these schools that my child or any child who does not have a behavior-based disability, can find such an option and at that option, there are teachers paid with parity. Compared to the teacher counterparts in the public system, especially considering this non-public option is supporting the failures of that public model; the teachers at non-publics serve the students with the most needs and should represent parity in pay that honors this fact.

Thank you for all you are doing to ensure our Maryland students have all the resources necessary to receive the very best education. Please support our hard-working teachers and vote favorably on Senate Bill 958. If you have any question, I can be reached at 443-255-3259.

Thank you,

Evan Parker

Sheppard Pratt written testimony SB311 _ HB448 Non

Uploaded by: Jeffrey Grossi

Position: FAV



Sheppard Pratt

Written Testimony

Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
House Ways and Means Committee

SB311 / HB448 Nonpublic Education – Special Education Placements – Renaming and Teacher Salaries (Teacher Pay Parity Act)

February 7, 2023

Position: SUPPORT

Sheppard Pratt thanks the Maryland General Assembly for your longstanding leadership and support of mental and behavioral health providers in Maryland. This testimony outlines the Sheppard Pratt **support of SB311 / HB448 Nonpublic Education - Special Education Placements – Renaming and Teacher Salaries (Teacher Pay Parity Act)**. It is our hope that the Maryland General Assembly vote a favorable report on this legislation.

Sheppard Pratt operates 12 nonpublic special education schools across the state of Maryland. We serve about 525 students across six different counties throughout the State. These comprise the most vulnerable and complex populations of students in the State including those diagnosed with Emotional Disabilities, Autism Spectrum Disorder, and Intellectual Disabilities. Many of the students served in Sheppard Pratt Schools also have co-occurring disorders. Therefore, these students have significant learning and behavioral needs. Due to their intense behavioral, therapeutic and educational challenges, these students' needs and the support they require to be successful in school supersede what can be provided in a public school setting. These students require specially designed instruction in highly specialized settings unique to nonpublic special education schools.

Sheppard Pratt Schools and other nonpublic schools in the State serve publicly funded students. Since the term, nonpublic, infers the opposite, the term special education placement, is a more appropriate name for this continuum of education and placement. The bill is suggesting a renaming of nonpublic schools to special education placement schools to provide greater clarity to the types of services provided and to whom they are provided.

To effectively meet the highly specialized needs of the students served in Sheppard Pratt Schools, we must have the capacity to employ highly qualified and experienced special and general education teachers. The current disparity between public and nonpublic teacher salaries does not allow for Sheppard Pratt to pay their special and general educators a salary that aligns with their public school counterparts.

Sheppard Pratt is the largest provider of nonpublic special education in the State of Maryland. We employ approximately 650 staff members. Currently, our special education and general education teachers are paid between 9 to 26 percent less than their public school counterparts with the gap widening as teachers become more credentialed and experienced. This pay gap is evidenced by our annual teacher turnover



Sheppard Pratt

and vacant teacher positions. At Sheppard Pratt Schools, the annualized turnover rate was 45 percent of our teaching staff. We have continued to struggle to fill teacher vacancies frequently existing throughout the year.

Nonpublic schools are vital to the fulfillment of IDEA, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. IDEA mandates a “continuum of alternative placements to meet the needs of children with disabilities for special education and related services.” Our nonpublic schools are one component in that continuum and fulfill a unique and essential role in meeting students’ particular educational needs and serve an important role for Maryland to comply with the federal law regarding education for special needs students.

Our nonpublic schools are uniquely equipped to provide the specific, multidisciplinary, frequently intensive resources students with special needs require. The scope and depth of staff expertise afford specialized, integrated programming that goes beyond academic education and encompass the social and emotional well-being of each student. In addition to the skilled, highly trained teachers, nonpublic schools are staffed to provide other critical services such as behavior programs, crisis management and medical attention.

If this bill passes, it will allow Sheppard Pratt Schools to pay their teachers a salary aligned to the public school system in which the school is located over a three-year phase in period. This bill will improve the retention and recruitment of teachers in all 12 of our nonpublic educational settings.

Consequently, Sheppard Pratt is concerned that if the bill were not to pass, teacher salary parity gaps will only worsen, and our schools will continue to experience a high turnover rate and continued challenges with recruitment and retention. Thus, threatening the education continuity of this already vulnerable population of students.

Sheppard Pratt urges you to vote a favorable report on **SB311 / HB448 Nonpublic Education – Special Education Placements – Renaming and Teacher Salaries (Teacher Pay Parity Act)**

About Sheppard Pratt

Sheppard Pratt is the nation’s largest private, nonprofit provider of mental health, substance use, developmental disability, special education, and social services in the country. A nationwide resource, Sheppard Pratt provides services across a comprehensive continuum of care, spanning both hospital- and community-based resources. Since its founding in 1853, Sheppard Pratt has been innovating the field through research, best practice implementation, and a focus on improving the quality of mental health care on a global level. Sheppard Pratt has been consistently ranked as a top national psychiatric hospital by *U.S. News & World Report* for nearly 30 years.

MANSEF testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Jill Hornstein

Position: FAV

SUPPORT

SB0311 Nonpublic Education - Special Education Placements - Renaming and Teacher Salaries (Teacher Pay Parity Act)

What do we do now? Is there a school that will help Jeffrey? Will I have to homeschool him? Can Jeffrey learn? How do we help with all these deficits that I don't even understand? Those questions and more went through my head as the psychiatrist doing the psychoeducational testing explained that the testing showed my son was autistic. I was devastated. Educators did not tell us what our next steps should be. My husband and I were adrift to find answers alone.

My son was very lucky when we found Baltimore Lab School (BLS). Before entering this confusing world of having a child with special needs, I did not know that MANSEF schools like BLS existed to serve children whose needs cannot be met within the public school system.

I was immediately blown away by the way in which BLS embraced and seemed to easily understand what supports to put in place to teach and help Jeffrey. Throughout the past 6 years, they have always been undeterred, creative and flexible in providing him exactly what he needs to become a productive member of their school community. The staff at BLS has also helped my husband and I to acknowledge and celebrate even the tiniest victories throughout all of the challenges.

I am grateful every single day that he has a safe, welcoming, supportive, and appropriate learning environment where he has truly gifted teachers, counselors, administrators, OTs, and speech therapists. They have made all the difference in the world for Jeffrey and our whole family.

My hope is that schools like BLS will continue to meet these needs for future families and children. Without SB0311 which would bring salary parity of these hard-working teachers to that of their public-school counterparts, BLS and other MANSEF schools are facing extreme staffing shortages and possibly worse. For a better future for Jeffrey and to make sure schools like BLS are able to continue this invaluable work for years to come, please vote to support SB0311.

Thank you.

Jill Hornstein
443-691-3310
JillShari@aol.com

MANSEF Written Testimony SB 311.pdf

Uploaded by: Joshua Martinez

Position: FAV



SUPPORT

Senate Bill 311:

Nonpublic Educational Programs – Children with Disabilities – Cost of Teacher Salaries

OFFERED ON BEHALF OF

The Maryland Association of Nonpublic Special Education Facilities
(MANSEF)

BEFORE THE

Senate Budget and Tax

February 8, 2023

The Maryland Association of Nonpublic Special Education Facilities (MANSEF) offers this testimony in SUPPORT of Senate Bill 311 on behalf of the 70 special education schools across Maryland currently serving approximately 3500 publicly funded school children. Our member schools employ over 1500 teachers, clinicians and administrators.

Senate Bill 311 will align teacher salaries for those working in the special education schools to those of their public school counterparts. Retaining skilled teachers continues to be a challenge and we cannot keep pace to competitively compensate our staff.

MSDE conducted a salary parity study in December 2021. The results of this study showed average teacher salaries in public schools and special education schools differed greatly. After accounting for differences in teachers' total paid hours, teachers' wages in public schools and special education schools differed by between 23.3% and 40.7%. One specific recommendation from this study is to allow the special education schools to provide their teachers with a salary equivalent to the local school salaries.

Additionally, the Blueprint for Maryland's Future Act provides that public school teacher salaries will continue to increase over the next few years; thereby, the pay gap between public and special education school teachers will become even wider pulling crucial resources away from students most in need. MANSEF asks that our members schools have the ability to align teacher salaries to that of the local school system where the special education school is located. This increase will be phased in over a 3-year period.

SB 311 also proposes to amend the term "nonpublic" which we believe reflects the intent of The *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA). The term "nonpublic" is not mentioned in

IDEA which mandates a “continuum of alternative placements to meet the needs of children with disabilities for special education and related services.” Therefore, the MANSEF special education schools are an extension of the public schools and fulfill an essential function in meeting students’ particular educational needs.

The MANSEF schools are uniquely equipped to provide the specific, multidisciplinary, frequently intensive resources students with special needs require. The scope and depth of staff expertise afford specialized, integrated programming that goes beyond academic education and encompass the social and emotional well-being of each student. In addition to the skilled, highly trained teachers, special education schools are staffed to provide other critical services such as behavior programs, crisis management and wrap-around supports.

Because our teacher salaries are far behind the public schools, the gap between public and special education school teacher salaries continues to grow. Our teachers are to be valued, recognized and appreciated. The current workforce shortage must be addressed for us to continue to meet the high expectations of IDEA. It is for these reasons that MANSEF respectfully requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 311.

Dorie Flynn
Executive Director
MANSEF
410-938-4413
mansef@aol.com

Murray Testimony in Support of SB311.pdf

Uploaded by: Judy Murray

Position: FAV

February 7, 2023

From: Judy Murray 27 Montauk Ct. Parkville, MD. Jlondon11@comast.net

To: Senate Budget and Taxation Committee: Public Hearing February 8, 2023
Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 311 (the Teacher Pay Parity Act)

I am writing in support of SB 311, to provide pay parity to special education teachers in nonpublic schools in Maryland.

- Maryland nonpublic schools serve students whose educational needs cannot be met in public schools due to one or more learning challenges.
- Special education schools assist the State in meeting its obligations under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), to offer a full continuum of placements for children with special needs to address their multi-faceted learning challenges.
- Teacher pay-parity is key to attracting and retaining the most qualified teachers in our special education schools.

Our Story:

Our grandson is 15 and in his second year at Baltimore Lab School, a MANSEF school, located in Baltimore City, where he is excelling in his classes and taken on a leadership role in many after school clubs. He received a Baltimore County public school placement at Baltimore Lab School in 9th grade after struggling in elementary and middle school.

- Public school teachers with classrooms of 30 kids, despite their best intentions, were unable to consistently implement supports in his IEP. “Pull-outs” from general education classes into small study groups were stigmatizing and ineffective.
- Despite having a 504 plan in 2-4th grade and an IEP plan in 5-8th grade, the skill-divide between he and his peers became increasing evident as he advanced through elementary and middle public school. Multiple learning challenges impact his learning and skill development.

The Baltimore Lab School / The “MANSEF” Difference

- Small class sizes at Baltimore Lab School enable the BLS teachers to implement IEP that achieve learning goals without employing a one-size-fits all teaching style.
- Teachers provide intensive instruction to students to strengthen areas of weakness.
- Extra-curricular activities build community and improve social skills.

While learning disabilities do not disappear, life outcomes improve when students receive the accommodations they need, learn how to advocate for themselves and refuse to give up in the face of obstacles.

If you would like more information about Maryland's special education schools, please contact MANSEF (Maryland Association of Nonpublic Special Education Facilities) at 410-938-4413.

Speech for MGA Feb 8 and 15 2023.pdf

Uploaded by: Katri Lein

Position: FAV

Good afternoon Honored Legislators,

My name is Katri Lein, I am a teacher for Arrow Child and Family Ministries at Arrow Center for Education – Riverside. I am asking for support of the Senate Bill 311/House Bill 448, Thank you for giving time to address this important issue today.

I have taught as a general educator and as a special educator in a wide variety of school settings, public, non-public, and private. I have taught all grade levels from Pre-K to High School.

I have seen the work that teachers put in and here is no way to quantify in 2 minutes how much they do for a disturbingly small salary. I have experienced the learning curve of a special educator trying to grasp the language of the Individual Education Program, or IEP. I have worked the endless hours required to write, implement, and track the progress of those same IEPs. I have accepted the risks of teaching in a non-public school setting. I have felt often overwhelming, pressure of this work and becoming rich is certainly *not* reason I continue. I do what I do to make a change in the lives of students who are often 'left behind'. I have seen the incredible positive changes that come from our efforts, in spite of being left behind ourselves in terms of salary.

Teachers in Special Education Schools, aka Non-public schools, accomplish all of the things that teachers in the public school do and more. The majority of our students receive placement with us, at least in part, because they exhibit big behaviors, ones that create an unsafe environment for other students and staff. Each of these students require an extra level of care and therapeutic programming which we provide.

As non-public school teachers, we receive extra trainings, such as crisis management and trauma-informed practices. Why? To be able to respond to those big crisis behaviors when students kick, hit, and try to destroy anything around them. All teachers run the risk of physical or emotional harm at the hands of their students, we run that risk every day, every hour.

It is not surprising that there is a shortage of teachers in non-public schools when we do so much more and are paid so much less. It is impossible for you to know, unless you have lived it, how much Teachers in non-public schools experience. It is equally impossible to show appreciation for all the things that they do. But you should at least try.

We do the work that public school teachers do, and more.

We take the risks that public school teachers take, and more.

We deserve to be paid at the rate that public school teachers are paid, and more.

Thank you for your time.

Testimony in favor of SB0311 for the Budget Commit

Uploaded by: Laura McGinley

Position: FAV

February 7, 2023

To the Senate Budget and Tax Committee – 2023: Senator Guy Guzzone, Senator Jim Rosapepe, Senator Jack Bailey, Senator Joanne Benson, Senator Paul Cordeman, Senator Sarah Elfreth, Senator Shelley Hettleman, Senator Michael Jackson, Senator J.B. Jennings, Senator Nancy King, Senator Cory McCray, Senator Johnny Ray Salling, and Senator Craig Zucker

Hi-

Please support SB 311.

Here's an excerpt from the bill:

“A SPECIAL EDUCATION PLACEMENT SHALL PROVIDE ITS TEACHERS A SALARY THAT IS EQUIVALENT TO THE LOCAL SCHOOL SALARIES...”

I'm the Administrative Assistant at the Sheppard Pratt School in Gaithersburg, Maryland located at 610 East Diamond Ave. Suite E Gaithersburg, Maryland 20877.

Our Special Education teachers deserve a raise and salary parity with local public school salaries for Special Education teachers and teachers.

Thank you.

-Laura Catherine McGinley

Mount Saint Mary's College and Seminary (now University)
Emmitsburg, Maryland
Class of 1994

Ivymount.pdf

Uploaded by: Leslie Nelson

Position: FAV

February 7, 2023

This year my son started at Ivymount School after years of struggles in the public option. In only a few months, he has found a place at Ivymount where we have seen the most progress from him out of any school year thus far. The teachers truly understand him and socially he feels known. The teachers are truly remarkable and needed for groups of students not able to be served in the public setting. For these reasons I hope you highly consider the nonpublic teacher salary bill.

Best,

Leslie Nelson

7408 Arden Road

Cabin John, MD 20818

Pay Parity.pdf

Uploaded by: Madeline Hart

Position: FAV

February 7, 2023

To Whom it May Concern,

I am a Non-Public School Employee working at a lower salary than my public-school peers. I am very passionate about my job, which is very important at a specialized school for students with Special Needs. Unfortunately, being a single mother, and commuting to Rockville to work at Ivymount, is difficult on a nonpublic school salary. Many teachers recently are leaving their teaching positions for higher salaries in other areas. This means many passionate and trained educators are leaving jobs where passionate and highly trained people are most needed. Pay parity would keep highly qualified educators in non-public schools and would decrease turnover.

Please keep educators and students in mind when making the decisions that affect our community.

Sincerely,

Madeline Hart

The Ivymount School

Hajjar - Testimony - SB 311.pdf

Uploaded by: Mark Hajjar

Position: FAV

February 7, 2023

Testimony for SB311

Good afternoon,

I have been working in a non-public school since September 2008. In that time, I have been a teacher, a program coordinator, IEP coordinator, assistant principal, and now education director.

I have been surrounded by some of the most intelligent, talented, passionate, dedicated, and professional individuals. These individuals give their all for a population of students that the public school system has determined need a level of care they cannot provide. And our staff do it for a fraction of what their counterparts make in the public school system. Too many times, the better pay it too much for them to pass up and we are left to find the next individual to promote and train to meet our students' needs.

I never fault the staff that leave for better pay. I know we are asking them to work in a 12-month school for less money. I'm honestly amazed at how many teachers do stay, forsaking better pay because of their dedication to our students and our mission to improve the lives of the students. We shouldn't have to ask the staff to make this sacrifice. They hold the same certifications and meet the same requirements as public-school teachers. Our teachers deserve equal pay, and our students deserve highly qualified and experienced teachers. Thank you for your consideration of my testimony.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Hajjar". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "M" and "H".

Mark Hajjar
Education Director
Shepard Pratt School, located in Rockville, MD.

Support Senate Bill 311.pdf

Uploaded by: Michelle Medeiros

Position: FAV

Support Senate Bill 311: Nonpublic Educational Programs- Children with Disabilities- Cost of Teacher Salaries

Offered on behalf of The Maryland Association of Nonpublic Education Facilities (MANSEF)

Dear Esteemed Representatives,

It is with an enthusiastic voice that I implore you to support Senate Bill 311 to align teacher salaries for our amazing teachers, staff and other support personnel who work at the Baltimore Lab School (BLS) and other similar nonpublic special education schools. The staff go above and beyond to support our children who have multi-layer complexities when it comes to their education. Personally, my son would be absolutely lost in his academic journey had he not been at BLS since first grade. To learn that his teachers make less than their public school counterparts was devastating. I owe my son's productive future to their tireless efforts. Without their continuity and dedication in his life, I don't know where we would be. Please support Bill 311 to close the pay gap and end the disparity in pay.

Regards,

Michelle Medeiros

Michelle Medeiros

(Eternally grateful mother of a BLS student)

2023_SB0311_MSDETestimony_Support_WRITTEN_FINAL.pd

Uploaded by: Mohammed Choudhury

Position: FAV



Mohammed Choudhury
State Superintendent of Schools

| | | | |
|------------------|--|-------------------|---------------------|
| BILL: | Senate Bill (SB) 311 | DATE: | February 8, 2023 |
| SUBJECT: | Nonpublic Education - Special Education Placements - Renaming and Teacher Salaries (Teacher Pay Parity Act) | COMMITTEE: | Budget and Taxation |
| POSITION: | Support | | |
| CONTACT: | Justin Dayhoff 410-767-0090 Justin.dayhoff@maryland.gov | | |

Explanation

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) respectfully submits this testimony in **support of Senate Bill 311** – Nonpublic Education - Special Education Placements - Renaming and Teacher Salaries (Teacher Pay Parity Act). Education research points to a host of factors in-school and, largely out-of-school, that contribute to a student’s success. The evidence on classroom-level impact is clear – the biggest school-based factor influencing a student’s outcomes is their teacher.

In Maryland, special education continues to be a critical shortage area. The Maryland State Department of Education’s July 2022 presentation to the State Board of Education - Maryland’s Teacher Workforce: Supply, Demand, and Diversity, provides clear evidence to support the need for bolstering recruitment and retention for special education teachers. ¹ Last school year, 23% (or 447) of the 1,992 teacher vacancies Statewide were in special education. In our Nonpublic education settings - those schools that often enroll and serve our State’s highest-needs children - special education teachers are often paid less than their counterparts who work directly in local education agency-operated public schools.

This combination of challenges leads to high vacancy rates and high turnover that disproportionately affect students with disabilities. These children are some of the most vulnerable students in our schools and we have a lot of work to do in Maryland to accelerate our outcomes for students with disabilities. Maryland should do everything possible to ensure that we have well-compensated, high-quality special education teachers in all of our State’s special education settings.

Senate Bill 311 would ensure that special education teachers in Nonpublic special education settings receive pay that is comparable to their counterparts who hold the same credentials and licensure in their local education agencies. A free and appropriate public education for all calls for nothing less.

MSDE respectfully requests a **favorable report on Senate Bill 311** from the Committee. Please contact Justin Dayhoff at 410-767-0439 or justin.dayhoff@maryland.gov for any additional information.

¹<https://marylandpublicschools.org/stateboard/Documents/2022/0726/TabGBlueprintAndDataDeepDiveTeacherPipelineAndDiversity.pdf>

SB0311 _FAV_Linwood - NonPublic Ed. - Spec. Ed. PI

Uploaded by: Pam Kasemeyer

Position: FAV



TO: The Honorable Guy Guzzone, Chair
Members, Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
The Honorable Craig J. Zucker

FROM: Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
Andrew G. Vetter
410-244-7000

DATE: February 8, 2023

RE: **SUPPORT** – Senate Bill 311 – *Nonpublic Education – Special Education Placements – Renaming and Teacher Salaries (Teacher Pay Parity Act)*

For more than 60 years, Linwood Center has been providing life-changing programs and services for children and adults living with autism and related developmental disabilities. Linwood currently supports children and adults on the autism spectrum from jurisdictions throughout the State of Maryland. Linwood is among the relatively few programs in the United States and in the State of Maryland that provides comprehensive education and residential programs throughout the lifespan under one service umbrella. Linwood offers program continuity from childhood into adulthood, developing lifelong relationships with individuals living with autism from elementary school through retirement and old age. Linwood's accredited nonpublic special education program and licensed residential programs provide intensive positive behavioral supports and long-term educational and vocational services to Maryland's autism community. Linwood respectfully offers its **support** for Bill 311.

Senate Bill 311 provides a permanent solution to the challenges that Linwood and other special education schools face in recruiting and retaining qualified teachers, due to the lack of salary parity requirements in the current budget framework. It is not uncommon for a teacher to gain valuable experience teaching at Linwood only to have them leave for a better paying position in a public school system.

The need to establish teacher parity is even more critical, given the continued increase in public school teacher salaries that is expected as a result of the passage of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. The expected increases will exacerbate an already challenging environment for teacher recruitment and retention and will further widen the pay gap between teachers in public schools and teachers in special education schools. Furthermore, the current teacher workforce challenges must be addressed if Maryland is to continue to meet the expectations and requirements of the Federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which mandates a "continuum of alternative placements to meet the needs of children with disabilities for special education and related services."

Senate Bill 311 will help to align teacher salaries for a special education school to the salaries of their counterparts who teach in the local school system where the special education school is located. The proposed increase in salaries for special education schools is phased in over three years. Senate Bill 311

also amends the term “non-public” from the statutory reference to special education schools. The amended name clarifies that the special education schools impacted by this legislation are an extension of the public schools and fulfill an essential function in meeting the particular educational needs of public school students, thereby enabling Maryland to meet the expectations and requirements of IDEA.

Passage of Senate Bill 311 will provide a simple and justified framework to provide parity in teacher salaries between public and special education schools, which not only helps to address the current recruitment and retention challenges of special education schools but also enhances Maryland’s educational framework and its compliance with IDEA. A favorable report is requested.

MANSEF Written Testimony SB 311.pdf

Uploaded by: Pierre Joly

Position: FAV



SUPPORT

Senate Bill 311:

Nonpublic Educational Programs – Children with Disabilities – Cost of Teacher Salaries

OFFERED ON BEHALF OF

The Maryland Association of Nonpublic Special Education Facilities
(MANSEF)

BEFORE THE

Senate Budget and Tax

February 8, 2023

The Maryland Association of Nonpublic Special Education Facilities (MANSEF) offers this testimony in SUPPORT of Senate Bill 311 on behalf of the 70 special education schools across Maryland currently serving approximately 3500 publicly funded school children. Our member schools employ over 1500 teachers, clinicians and administrators.

Senate Bill 311 will align teacher salaries for those working in the special education schools to those of their public school counterparts. Retaining skilled teachers continues to be a challenge and we cannot keep pace to competitively compensate our staff.

MSDE conducted a salary parity study in December 2021. The results of this study showed average teacher salaries in public schools and special education schools differed greatly. After accounting for differences in teachers' total paid hours, teachers' wages in public schools and special education schools differed by between 23.3% and 40.7%. One specific recommendation from this study is to allow the special education schools to provide their teachers with a salary equivalent to the local school salaries.

Additionally, the Blueprint for Maryland's Future Act provides that public school teacher salaries will continue to increase over the next few years; thereby, the pay gap between public and special education school teachers will become even wider pulling crucial resources away from students most in need. MANSEF asks that our members schools have the ability to align teacher salaries to that of the local school system where the special education school is located. This increase will be phased in over a 3-year period.

SB 311 also proposes to amend the term "nonpublic" which we believe reflects the intent of The *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA). The term "nonpublic" is not mentioned in

IDEA which mandates a “continuum of alternative placements to meet the needs of children with disabilities for special education and related services.” Therefore, the MANSEF special education schools are an extension of the public schools and fulfill an essential function in meeting students’ particular educational needs.

The MANSEF schools are uniquely equipped to provide the specific, multidisciplinary, frequently intensive resources students with special needs require. The scope and depth of staff expertise afford specialized, integrated programming that goes beyond academic education and encompass the social and emotional well-being of each student. In addition to the skilled, highly trained teachers, special education schools are staffed to provide other critical services such as behavior programs, crisis management and wrap-around supports.

Because our teacher salaries are far behind the public schools, the gap between public and special education school teacher salaries continues to grow. Our teachers are to be valued, recognized and appreciated. The current workforce shortage must be addressed for us to continue to meet the high expectations of IDEA. It is for these reasons that MANSEF respectfully requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 311.

Dorie Flynn
Executive Director
MANSEF
410-938-4413
mansef@aol.com

RChangTestimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Rachel Chang

Position: FAV

Rachel Chang

Sheppard Pratt Rockville

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I was a paraeducator from 2004-2015 for the public school system. I went to school to get my bachelor's degree and subsequently my master's degree in Special Education in hopes of being a teacher in the public schools that I had supported previously. I became a teacher in the public school system in 2016 and stayed til midyear of 2021-2022. I left for many reasons, but one of the reasons that prolonged my choice to leave was leaving the pay I was given through the public schools.

I had to make a compromise, but it has impacted my family financially. I love what I do and I appreciate that work rarely feels like work, but when my family has to compromise on basic needs to make ends meet, sometimes I know I will have to find a job that feels like work.

My colleagues and I make a great team and we all have the students' best interests in mind. I feel well supported by the staff and I appreciate that the parents are active members of their student's education. I didn't feel this kind of teamwork and support in the public school system and this is so very valuable- and should be acknowledged as such.

Please consider the work of heart we put into supporting students with special needs. We are doing the same work, if not more, as our public school counterparts. Some days I am a behavior specialist, a teacher, a counselor, a friend, and a bonus parent.

SB311_Zucker_FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Senator Craig Zucker

Position: FAV

CRAIG J. ZUCKER
Legislative District 14
Montgomery County



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Budget and Taxation Committee
Chair, Capital Budget Subcommittee

Chair, Senate Democratic Caucus

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony of Senator Craig J. Zucker
Senate Bill 311 - Nonpublic Education - Special Education Placements - Renaming
and Teacher Salaries (Teacher Pay Parity Act)
Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
February 8, 2023
1:00pm
Position: SUPPORT

Good afternoon, Chairman Guzzone, Vice Chairman Rosapepe, and distinguished members of the committee. It is my pleasure to testify today in **support** of **Senate Bill 311 - Nonpublic Education - Special Education Placements - Renaming and Teacher Salaries (Teacher Pay Parity Act)**.

Senate Bill 311 renames the “nonpublic educational program” to be the “special education placement program” and aligns teacher salaries for those working in special education schools to be competitive to those of their public school counterparts. MSDE published a salary parity study in December of 2021 which found the average teacher salary in public schools and special education schools differed between 23.3% to 40.7%.

These special education schools and programs are an extension of public schools and fulfill an essential function in meeting particular education needs. However, with the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future providing public school teacher salaries to grow, the pay gap between them and special education teachers will become even wider. By beginning to align the pay disparity, special education programs will be able to competitively compensate their staff, provide students with the resources they need, and help to retain their skilled staff.

For these reasons, I urge a favorable report on Senate Bill 311. Thank you for your kind consideration.

Parent testimony - Support for SB311.pdf

Uploaded by: Tracey Wright

Position: FAV

Tracey Wright
1804 Alcan Dr
Silver Spring, MD 20902
February 7, 2023

Maryland Senate
Re: SB 311

To the Senate Budget and Tax Committee,

I am writing this testimony in SUPPORT of Senate Bill 311 as the parent of a young adult and MCPS student with significant special needs. It is a travesty that teachers and therapists working in non-public special education schools are paid 20% to 40% less than those in public schools. Their work is no less valuable. Further, the fact that students are referred to non-public schools because the public system cannot meet their needs, demonstrates exactly why these staff should be paid on par with special ed teachers at public schools. They are working with students who have the most significant needs and complex disorders.

My son has autism, learning disorder, OCD, and ADHD. He reads at a 2nd grade level and his math skills are at the 5th grade level. In sixth grade he was placed in a non-public special education school after several years of the public school not being able to meet his needs. He has required 1:1 support since and will finish this year with a Certificate of Completion.

The non-public special education school placement at Kennedy Krieger School was life-changing for him and for our family because for the first time, he began receiving specialized academic, behavior, speech, and mental health services. The teachers and therapists are highly trained and each day they perform a challenging task to educate neurodivergent students like my son, who has required years to learn basic concepts and who needs intensive positive behavior management to get through daily periods of extreme dysregulation. **Non-public special education teachers must be compensated fairly so they can be retained by their schools and continue to provide supports critical to families like mine.**

Sincerely,

Tracey Wright
Parent

SB311_SummitSchool_FWA.pdf

Uploaded by: Therese Hessler

Position: FWA



February 8, 2023

**Senate Bill 311 – Nonpublic Education – Special Education Placements – Renaming and Teacher Salaries (Teacher Pay Parity Act)
Senate Budget & Committee**

Position: FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS

The Summit School is one of the few schools in Maryland exclusively serving students with dyslexia and other learning differences in grades 1-8. Literacy is infused throughout the program and students receive explicit instruction in every subject. Our school is widely recognized for academic excellence and researched-based methodologies. Summit's excellent reputation attracts students from nine surrounding counties, some of whom commute up to two hours to attend school.

As drafted, Senate Bill 311 would require the State and certain counties to pay for costs of salaries and bonuses for teachers at special education placements in a certain amount and proportion; and generally relating to special education placements for children with disabilities and salaries for teachers at special education placements. Unfortunately, in its current posture, teachers at The Summit School would not have access to the proposed pay parity even though they have public placement students.

Pay parity discriminates against schools who, even though they are Type 1 like The Summit School, have very few funded students. Raising the day rate for five students does not provide the revenue to increase all teachers' pay in line with the county salary scale. An alternate to pay parity should be considered for these Type 1 schools because as a Type I, Special Education School, certified by the state of Maryland, we have to abide by:

- a. COMAR 13A.09.10 Code of Maryland Regulations for Educational Programs in Nonpublic Schools and Child Care and Treatment Facilities and COMAR 13A.08.04 Student Behavior Interventions. These regulations are the same regulations required of schools that are in a position to benefit from pay parity.
- b. Highly trained teachers and staff at The Summit School serve a unique role to maximize students' strengths and support areas of weakness and must have the same credentials required of teachers in other Type 1 schools.

The Summit School serves only a small fraction of students who could benefit from research-based, explicit instruction tailored to meet the needs of bright students who learn differently. The expertise of our teachers and staff allows our students to excel and grow in their communities. After graduating from Summit, our students have a 98% graduation rate which is 84% above the national average graduation rate for all students (71% is the national average graduation rate for students who have been classified with a specific learning disability.) Unfortunately, without pay parity from the State, the only option The Summit School would have would be to raise tuition causing many possible students with learning differences not to get the education they need to excel.

It is for these reasons we politely ask the committee considers amending Senate Bill 311 to include pay parity for all Type 1 schools with funded students, regardless of the number.

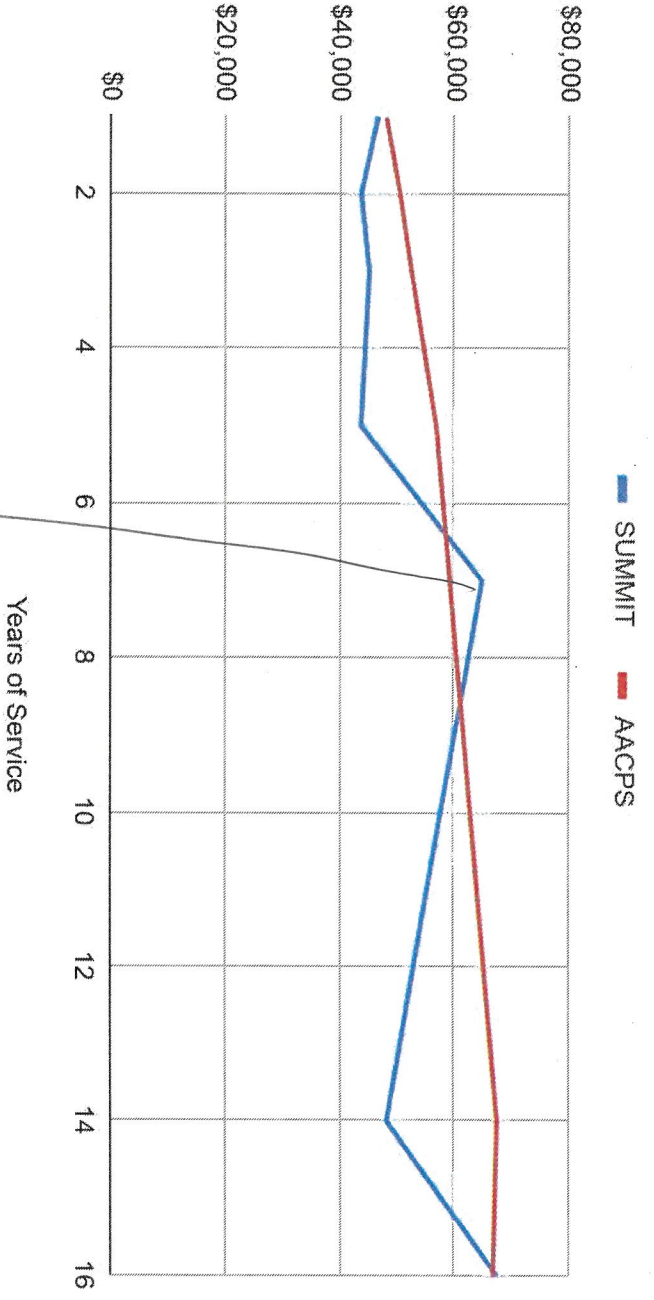
For more information call or email:

Therese M. Hessler | 301-503-2576 | therese@ashlargr.com

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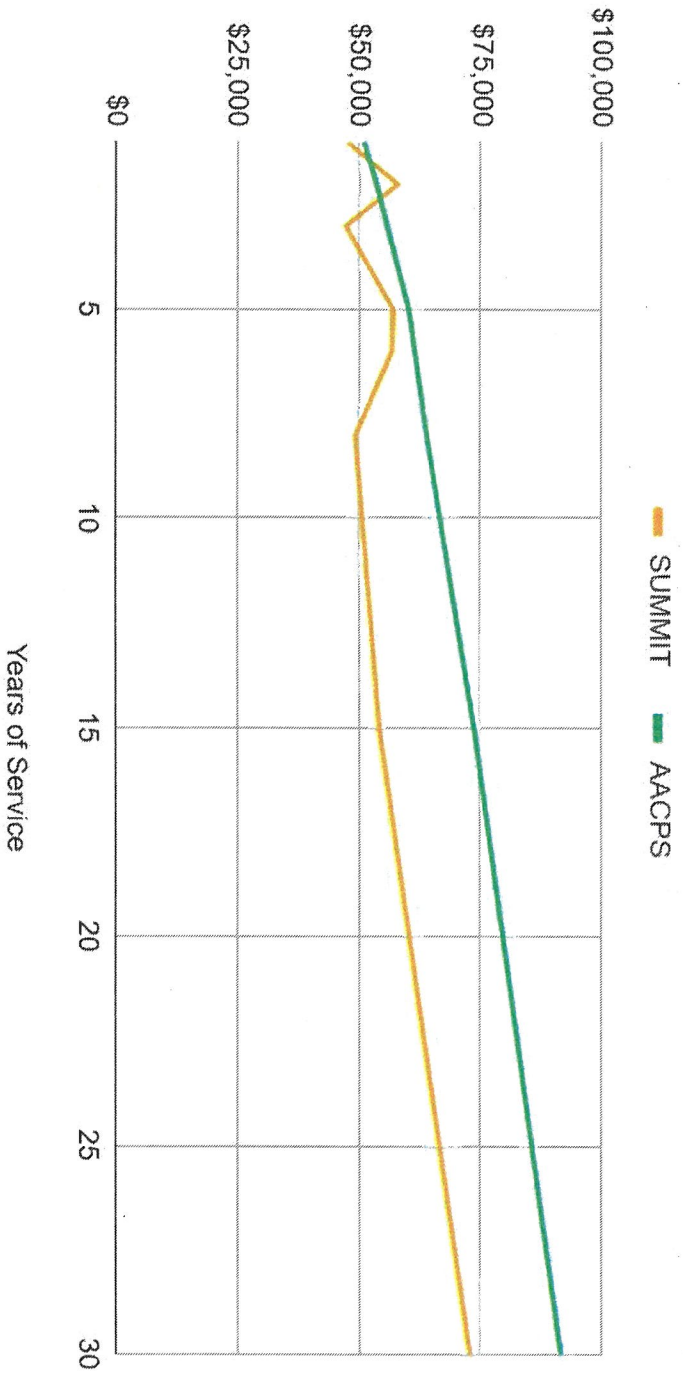
Teacher Pay: Summit vs AACPS (Bachelor's Degree) 21-22 school year



←
Overly high salary to
provide good
program
retention

2

Teacher Pay: Summit vs AACPS (Master's Degree) 21-22 school year



Summit vs AACPS

Teacher Pay at Summit averages

13.67% lower

than AACPS

for same tenure and education level

Summit vs AACPS

Discrepancy grows with teacher tenure

4

| Years of Service with a Masters Degree | % of pay difference bt Summit and AACPS |
|--|---|
| 1 | -2.8% |
| 2 | -15.2% |
| 3 | -16.0% |
| 5 | -29.7% |
| 7 | 8.7% |
| 14 | -39.5% |
| 16 | 1.0% |

| Years of Service with a Masters Degree | % of pay difference bt Summit and AACPS |
|--|---|
| 1 | -6.9% |
| 2 | 7.4% |
| 3 | -17.7% |
| 5 | -5.7% |
| 6 | -8.5% |
| 8 | -29.8% |
| 15 | -35.6% |
| 30 | -25.7% |

AACPS Planned Compensation Increases

AACPS will increase teacher pay at least 3% for 22/23 school year

(5)

AACPS has proposed to increase teacher pay 10% to match Blueprint, but will only fund that increase with funding from the state.

Summit Planned Increases

6

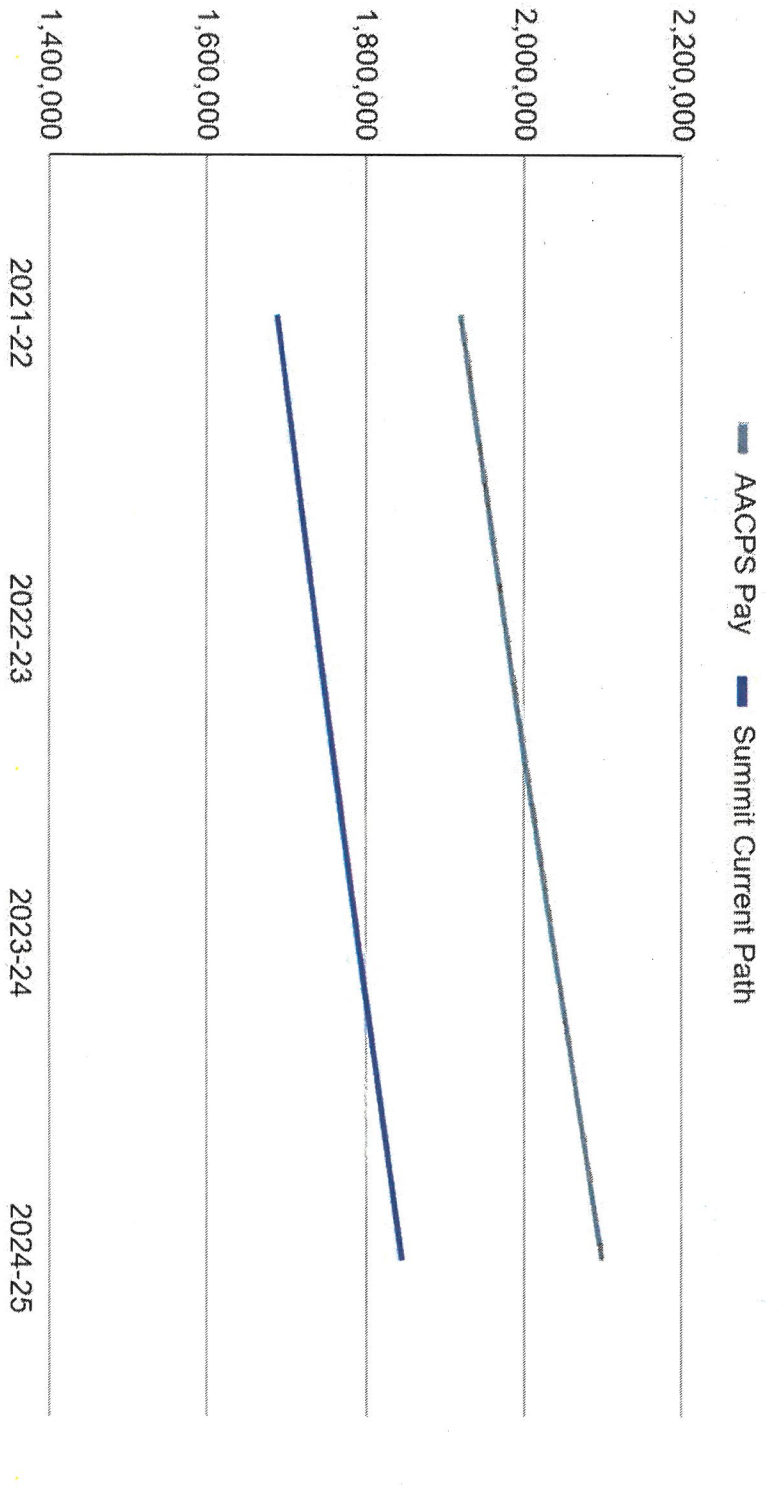
Summit Board approved 3% Tuition increase for 22/23 school year.

Can provide 3% increase in teacher pay supported by tuition increase.

This will keep Summit 13.67% below the public school pay.

and 3% ↑ for 23-24 school year

AACPS Pay and Summit Current Path



SB 311_ Nonpublic Education - Special Education PI

Uploaded by: Alexa Thomas

Position: UNF



PSSAM
Public School Superintendents' Association
OF MARYLAND

Mary Pat Fannon, Executive Director
1217 S. Potomac Street
Baltimore, MD 21224
410-935-7281
marypat.fannon@pssam.org

BILL: SB 311

TITLE: Nonpublic Education - Special Education Placements - Renaming and Teacher Salaries (Teacher Pay Parity Act)

DATE: February 8, 2023

POSITION: Oppose

COMMITTEE: Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

CONTACT: Mary Pat Fannon, Executive Director, PSSAM

This bill requires a nonpublic educational program for students with disabilities to provide its teachers a salary that is equivalent to public school teachers of similar training and experience in the same county. If the costs to do so are not met by the existing State and local cost sharing mechanism in current law for nonpublic placements, such additional funding is to be paid for by the State and the local school system in the same proportion as provided by that mechanism. Funding for other components of a nonpublic educational program may not be reduced to provide for required nonpublic teacher salary increases.

The Public School Superintendents' Association of Maryland (PSSAM), **opposes** SB 311.

The state's twenty-four local school systems are working hard to implement the Blueprint for Maryland's Future legislation, which includes a significant increase in teacher compensation to bring the teaching profession on par with professions that require similar education standards. These provisions include a 10% increase in salaries by FY '24 over FY '19 to close the gap of average teacher salaries in peer states. The Blueprint also calls for a \$60,000 starting salary for all teachers by FY '27. These are ambitious goals and each system is working with fidelity to meet these requirements. These provisions are already putting pressure on local systems to provide equal increases to personnel that are not specifically identified in the Blueprint, yet are integral staff in our systems, including psychologists, social workers, reading specialists, and more.

This bill would add an unfunded mandate for local school systems to pay for costs they have no control over. We recognize that the vast majority of students at these nonpublic schools are special education students that could not be accommodated in their zoned school. However, the legislation would hold LEAs responsible for ensuring salary parity between public and private school teacher salaries without any local control over these schools; teachers in nonpublic placements are not part of the bargaining process. We appreciate and support our nonpublic education providers, but as last year's fiscal note indicates, this bill creates a potential decrease in public school funding since school districts are responsible for paying a percentage of the tuition of these nonpublic placements.

For the reasons stated above, PSSAM **opposes** SB 311 and requests an unfavorable committee report.