

**SUPPORT WITH AMEMDMENTS**

**House Bill 448:**

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**

**March 28, 2023**

The Maryland Association of Nonpublic Special Education Facilities (MANSEF) offers this testimony in SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS of HB 448 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.

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 affords specialized, integrated programming that goes beyond academic education and encompasses 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.

The intent of HB 448 is to align teacher salaries for those working in the special education schools to those of their public school counterparts. And our goal is to address the inequity of pay through additional clarifying language to determine annual salaries as compared to the local school system. We recommend that the special placement schools use the LEA's current, published salary schedule of where the nonpublic special education school is located and that the funding be based upon the MSDE established per diem methodology process from the referring LEA.

It is important to note that President Joe Biden is calling for major investments in special education as part his budget proposal which was released on March 9, 2023. President Biden is seeking \$16.8 billion — a \$2.1 billion increase — in spending on special education services for students with disabilities in pre-K through high school which will directly passed on to States

and counties. He also wants an extra \$392 million for early intervention for infants and toddlers and an added \$150 million to recruit and retain special educators.

Other States, such as Oregon, are proposing that all special education teachers and special education aides receive a 20% premium pay over their public education counterparts under a bill being considered by their legislature. These jobs continue to be some of the most demanding and hardest to fill in urban and rural areas alike, and families of special education students have said repeatedly that their children are suffering due to educator turnover and the shortage of special education employees. (Disability Scoop March 7, 2023).

Retaining skilled teachers continues to be a challenge and we cannot keep pace to competitively compensate our staff.

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