

SB 799.Cyber Safety Guide.pdf

Uploaded by: John Woolums

Position: FAV

BILL: Senate Bill 799
TITLE: Public Schools - Cyber Safety Guide - Development, Usage, and Reporting
DATE: March 14, 2023
POSITION: SUPPORT
COMMITTEE: Education, Energy, and the Environment
CONTACT: John R. Woolums, Esq.

The Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) supports Senate Bill 799 which calls for the development and use of an cyber safety guide as an educational resource for parents, educators, and students to promote the appropriate use of the internet and social media.

This bill addresses a very important issue, and one highlighted by the unprecedented utilization by all students of online learning throughout the school closures necessitated by the COVID-19 pandemic. MABE supports the joint efforts of the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), Maryland Department of Health (MDH), Maryland Center for School Safety, and Department of Information Technology (DoIT) to develop resources for use in instruction and professional development regarding safe internet, social media, and technology usage.

The cyber safety guide is intended to provide best practices and age-appropriate information on critically important issues arising in the context on internet and social media. MABE agrees that the cyber safety guide envisioned by this legislation would be a valuable resource. Students, parents, and school personnel would benefit from such a guide to promote responsible decision-making when using the internet and social media. Key among these issues are the needs to heighten awareness of the impacts of student online activities on the student's digital footprint. Other issues include the impacts of technology usage on student physical and mental health; impacts arising from online content that constitutes cyberbullying and hate speech.

MABE not only appreciates the value of the State's investment in developing the types of cyber safety resource proposed under Senate Bill 799, but also the discretion provided to local school systems regarding the use of the cyber safety guide in schools and classrooms. As this committee knows, MABE opposes efforts by the General Assembly to legislate curriculum, firmly believing that this role belongs to local boards of education in conjunction with the State Board. In the context of recognizing the essential role of the state legislature in enacting laws which establish the framework for key elements of the State's approach to public education, MABE continues to support local decision-making authority in developing and implementing curriculum and courses of instruction. MABE certainly anticipates that the development and distribution of the cyber safety guide will lead to its broad usage in school systems and households across the State.

For these reasons, MABE requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 799.

(NCF) SB799 Letter (SUPPORT) Session 2023FNL.pdf

Uploaded by: Laura Nelson

Position: FAV



Senator Brian Feldman, *Chair*
Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
2 West
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: ***Senate Bill 799: Public Schools - Cyber Safety Guide - Development, Usage, and Reporting***
 - SUPPORT

March 14, 2023

Dear Chairman Feldman and members of the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee:

As President & Chief Executive Officer of the National Cryptologic Foundation (NCF) and member of the Maryland Cybersecurity Council on the Workforce Development Sub-committee, I write this letter in support of Senate Bill 799, entitled: "*Public Schools - Cyber Safety Guide - Development, Usage, and Reporting.*"

This bill requires the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), the Behavioral Health Administration within the Maryland Department of Health, the Maryland Center for School Safety (center), and the Department of Information Technology, by July 1, 2024, to jointly develop and publish a cyber safety guide for students, parents, and employees and to implement it in public schools beginning in the 2024-2025 school year.

NCF's mission is to strengthen trust in the digital ecosystem to ensure democracy and freedom. We educate and engage our citizens, especially our youth, to be cyber-smart individuals, develop pathways for our future cyber workforce, and engage and convene partners to address emerging cyber issues.

Over the past two years, our children have been online more than ever as they have adapted to remote learning. Our public school systems and families were forced to adjust quickly to a new normal without having the luxury of time to plan thoroughly and ensure that all were operating in a safe environment. Parents and children found themselves working, learning, and socializing online. While the Internet can provide a wide range of fun and educational activities, inherent risks must be understood, especially as kids surpass their parents in tech savviness. Protecting our children's digital identity and ensuring a safe environment for learning is critical.

Developing a Cyber Safety Guide will equip today's students to understand the interconnected world around us better. This can include:

- **What is cybersecurity? We all hear this term used, but what does it really mean?**

Taking good care of all online data makes the Internet useful, important, and necessary in our lives. This involves everyone acting in various roles as individuals, schools, companies, or the government. As we consider taking care of ourselves and our own “healthcare,” we ensure that we eat healthily, exercise, and, when necessary, seek help from healthcare professionals. In the same way, we must take steps to ensure our cyber health through “data care,” ensuring that our data is secure, appropriately accessible, and reliably accurate.

- **Why is cybersecurity or “data care” important to students?**

Every time you go online, data is transmitted back and forth between an individual and many data-gathering technologies. Consider the mobile phone and its various uses (talking, texting, video chatting, playing games, streaming content, using apps, spending and accepting money, and using online accounts) while transmitting background data such as geolocation or other identification information.

These are all connected to us individually. What could go wrong? You might click on a link in an email that you think is safe but turns out to be phishing malware and opens a webpage that downloads a virus to your phone. Someone could hack into one of your accounts, running up charges or draining your funds. Someone might use the credentials of a teacher or principal to create chaos through a false bomb scare that is texted to all students. Children must understand the benefits and pitfalls of operating in an interconnected online environment.

- **Other considerations for a student’s online presence?**

- **Think before you post** - Our online actions can have long-lasting effects that need to be considered. In today’s era of social media, adults and children post their activities with photos, memes, likes, and dislikes. Our children must understand that once something is posted online, it becomes somewhat permanent. Potential employers or college admissions boards may view a seemingly harmless post unfavorably. Understanding the privacy settings of the applications must be a priority for adults and children.
- **Stranger danger** - We teach our children to be wary of strangers; the same applies to online behavior. Our children must understand how to spot red flags online communication with strangers. Of course, the best response is no response, but they must understand the dangers and consequences.
- **Cyberbullying** – Bullying of any type can have severe consequences for our children. Cyberbullying (posting mean comments, spreading rumors, threatening or impersonating someone) can have broad psychological implications. Children must feel comfortable speaking with a parent or another trusted adult if they are being harassed. Likewise, those who bully must understand the consequences of their actions.

The cyber safety guide will provide students, parents, and teachers with the necessary tools and guidance for safe Internet, social media, and technology use. Our children must be prepared to live in a world of interconnected phones, computers, and “things” and understand how to best protect themselves and ensure their privacy and security.

It is for these reasons; I am in full support of SB799. This legislation was introduced last year and I continue to strongly urge this committee to give this legislation a **FAVORABLE** report and to enact this important piece of legislation. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Laura Nelson

President & Chief Executive Officer
National Cryptologic Foundation

SB0799 FWA.pdf

Uploaded by: Peggy Williams

Position: FWA

SB0799 FWA

Public Schools – Cyber Safety Guide – Development, Usage, and Reporting

Dear Committee Members:

I support this bill with the following amendments:

- 1) Delete the language about false information and/or instead recommend that they do their own research or consult their parents. My concern is who is defining what information is false?
- 2) Include parental input into the cyber safety guide, not just the “professionals.” Parents know their children and have a good sense for what is influencing them negatively and positively.

Thank you.

Peggy Williams
Severna Park
D31

SB0799 Howard Co BOE Testimony 031423 for EEE - Cy

Uploaded by: Staff Howard County

Position: FWA



Board of Education of Howard County
Testimony Submitted to the Maryland Senate,
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
March 14, 2023

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of Howard County

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Secretary/Treasurer*

SB0799: FAVORABLE W/AMENDMENTS
Public Schools - Cyber Safety Guide - Development, Usage, and Reporting

The Board of Education of Howard County (the Board) supports **SB0799 Public Schools - Cyber Safety Guide - Development, Usage, and Reporting** as a tool available to local school systems to address cyber safety.

Differing from prior versions of this bill that included training courses for students, parents, and employees, SB0799 focuses solely on the creation of a cyber safety guide by the Maryland State Department of Education, the Behavioral Health Administration within the Maryland Department of Health, the Maryland Center for School Safety (the Center) and the Department of Information Technology that would be made available to local schools. To be developed in consultation with professionals who specialize in child development and child psychology, the guide would be required to address such topics as responsible internet use, cyberbullying, identity theft, and the impacts of social media and technology on behavioral and physical health.

Availability of a cyber safety guide as called for in SB0799 would be a welcome venture that has the potential to positively impact instruction in the classroom, as well as general cybersecurity knowledge in the community. This resource would bring a collective and cross-professional perspective that could be referenced by teachers, parents, or staff in the course of existing school system operations. At the elementary level, current instructional technology courses in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) include a Digital Citizen component that enables students to recognize the rights, responsibilities, and opportunities of living, learning, and working in an interconnected digital world, and how to act in ways that are safe, legal, and ethical. At the secondary level, curriculum throughout a variety of subjects include these same digital citizenship skills. HCPSS Information Technology staff have also included the implementation of a security awareness training platform for staff as part of the Information Technology Strategic plan.

To strengthen the potential benefit of a cyber safety guide, HCPSS staff and the Board suggests that development requirements for the guide include the use of relevant scientific research, content tailored to specific audiences, as well as regular updates to ensure content does not become outdated due to the ever-changing world of technology.

With the above additions, we urge a FAVORABLE report of SB0799 from this Committee.