

Bill:	Senate Bill 938	Date:	March 15, 2023
Title:	Primary and Secondary Education - School Safety and Student Well-Being - Examination of Policies	Committee:	Education, Energy, and the Environment
Position:	Favorable with amendments	Contact:	Kim Buckheit kimberly.buckheit1@maryland.gov 443-902-0622

On behalf of the Maryland Center for School Safety (MCSS), thank you for the opportunity to submit this letter of support with amendments to Senate Bill 938.

Safe Schools Fund Grant

Senate Bill 938 would expand the purpose of the safe schools fund grant to include conflict resolution and mediation services. Additionally, beginning in FY25, the bill allows school systems access to grant funds for any of the listed uses under 7-1512 section (G). This flexibility would allow systems that currently do not apply for the SROs grant access to these funds for other school safety efforts. MCSS supports both of these changes.

It is important to note that the increased flexibility and combining of all the uses of the funding will require local jurisdictions to coordinate school safety priorities across local agencies, which may prove challenging initially but should increase overall effectiveness.

To provide better clarity, MCSS recommends the following amendments to the bill language beginning on page 8.

Amendment No. 1

On page 8, lines 25-29 strike. *The language included in (ii) is unnecessary, see Amendment No. 2.*

Amendment No. 2

On page 9, strike and replace lines 4-5, with; "IN AWARDING GRANTS FROM THE FUND FOR THE PURPOSES DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (G) OF THIS SECTION, THE SUBCABINET SHALL ALLOCATE GRANTS TO EACH LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM BASED ON THE NUMBER OF SCHOOLS IN EACH SCHOOL SYSTEM IN PROPORTION TO THE TOTAL NUMBER OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN THE STATE IN THE PRIOR YEAR." *This change will ensure that funds are allocated to jurisdictions using the same formula regardless of use, including the language stricken in Amendment 1. This change becomes 7-1512(G)(2)(ii)2.*

Amendment No. 3

On page 9, lines 9-13 strike. *Amendment No. 2 makes this language unnecessary.*

For these reasons, MCSS respectfully requests that with these amendments, the committee give Senate Bill 938 a favorable report.