Mohammed Choudhury
State Superintendent of Schools

BILL:	House Bill (HB) 0448	**DATE:**	February 15, 2023
SUBJECT:	Nonpublic Education - Special Education Placements - Renaming and Teacher Salaries (Teacher Pay Parity Act)	**COMMITTEE:**	Ways and Means
POSITION:	Support		
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Explanation

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) respectfully submits this testimony in **support of House Bill 448** – 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 eduation agency-operated public schools.

This combination of challenges leads to high vacancy rates and high turnover that disporporationately 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 everyting possible to ensure that we have well-compensated, high-quality special education teachers in all of our State's special education setttings.

House Bill 448 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 House Bill 448** 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