

Committee: House Ways and Means Committee

Bill Number: HB 69 – Education – Student Behavior – Parents and Guardians Notice and Required Counseling

Hearing Date: February 1, 2023

Position: Unfavorable

The Maryland School Counselor Association opposes *House Bill 69 – Education – Student Behavioral – Parents and Guardians Notice and Required Counseling*. The bill requires schools to notify parents about violent and disruptive behavior and parents to seek and participate in counseling with the student.

We are concerned about the consequences of this bill on the wellbeing of students and their families:

- The term “violent and disruptive behavior” is not defined. Thus implementation of the bill would be subjective and create a disproportionate impact on students of color or from other marginalized communities;
- The bill would require family counseling, even in situations where a parent is abusive. Thus, the bill could jeopardize the wellbeing and safety of students; and
- Families may not be able to meet the requirement of obtaining counseling if there are not enough behavioral health providers in their community. Finding a provider is even more challenging without insurance coverage. Thus, families with the fewest community resources would be at most risk of the penalties imposed by the bill.

We ask for an unfavorable report on this legislation. If we can provide any additional information, please contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net.