

MICHELE GUYTON
Legislative District 42B
Baltimore County

Ways and Means Committee
Early Childhood Subcommittee
Education Subcommittee



The Maryland House of Delegates
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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 8, 2023

FAVORABLE

**HB265 Public Schools- Standardized Behavioral Health Screenings for Students –
Development and Implementation**

Dear Madame Chair and Members of the Ways and Means Committee,

I am writing to request a favorable report on HB265—designed to add additional members as an advisory panel to the Maryland Consortium on Coordinated Community Supports. These members will assist the Consortium in their task to develop standardized guidelines for county boards regarding information to be collected during school registration for each student. Currently each of our 24 systems already requires a version of a “student questionnaire” that is filled out by parents or guardians at the beginning of the school year. The extent and type of information collected by counties differs dramatically and affects the allocation of resources and the services that may be provided for students. The Consortium on Coordinated Community Supports was established through the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future to remedy this situation. This bill simply puts into place a behavioral health advisory group to advise the Consortium when making recommendations about topics to be included in school questionnaires. The local boards still have autonomy to create their own specific questions if they choose to do so.

There have been many different advocacy groups requesting that we collect information about specific subjects through a variety of bills every year. This bill attempts to consolidate those in one advisory group for consistency and expediency. In addition, the members being added through this legislation are subject experts in various disabilities that may mask behavioral health issues or be masked by them. By expanding the expertise on the Consortium, we will capture more accurate data on the supports needed to address the challenges of our students.

This bill passed the House last session but did not make it out of the Senate. Thank you for your consideration of HB265.

Sincerely,

Delegate Michele Guyton D24B

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Delegate Michele Guyton".