



HB448 NONPUBLIC EDUCATION – PLACEMENT OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES – TEACHER SALARIES (TEACHER PAY PARITY ACT)

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BUDGET AND TAXATION

OPPOSE

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Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) opposes **HB448 Nonpublic Education – Placement of Children with Disabilities – Teacher Salaries (Teacher Pay Parity Act)**. This bill requires that a child with disabilities who needs special education and related services that cannot be provided in a public county, regional, or State program be placed in an appropriate nonpublic educational program that offers these services. Additionally, this bill requires nonpublic schools to pay their teachers a salary that is equivalent to the local school system salaries. In order to meet this requirement, a nonpublic school is required to submit to the county board in which the nonpublic school is located a list of salaried teacher positions in the nonpublic school 30 days before the county board is required to submit their budget. For each position the nonpublic school must submit the necessary qualifications as well as the annual salary provided by the nonpublic school. The county board is then required to match the teachers on the list provided by the nonpublic school to teachers with similar qualifications in the public schools and calculate the difference in funding currently provided by the nonpublic school for salaries of its teachers to meet the local school system salaries and provide this funding in its annual budget. In fiscal year 2025 county boards are required to provide 33% of the difference in funding, in fiscal year 2026 66% of the difference in funding, and in fiscal year 2027 and each year thereafter 100% of the difference in funding shall be provided by county boards.

AACPS believes that all students are entitled to challenging instruction from highly qualified professionals that address their unique learning needs and differences. AACPS places a very high priority on ensuring that students receive high quality special education programs and instruction to meet the unique needs of every disabled student. Maryland's private professional educators and school administrators play a significant role in providing special education services in accordance and compliance with the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and corresponding federal and state regulations.

AACPS has great respect and appreciation for the dedication and commitment of public and nonpublic educators who ensure that the education needs of students qualifying for special education services are being met. As such, AACPS recognizes the merits of providing equitable salaries for public and non-public education staff. However, this bill as amended creates a convoluted and inequitable way of creating pay parity between private and public educators and will result in increased costs to local school systems, and thus divert funding from public education. AACPS respectfully requests that the amendments to the bill be removed and that the bill be enacted as introduced.

The amendments to this bill will result in local school systems being responsible for ensuring that all private educators in their county are receiving pay equal to that of their public counterparts, not just those educators who serve students of the school system. This change to the bill has the potential to significantly increase the costs of implementing this bill to local school systems. Additionally, as introduced the bill reduced the local contribution and increase the State contribution for special education placement. Without this change in funding, this bill will serve as a significant unfunded mandate to public school systems.

Accordingly, AACPS requests an **UNFAVORABLE** report on HB448.