

Senate Education, Energy & the Environment Committee
HB 1237: State Department of Education - Task Force to Study the
Maryland Online Special Education System
March 23, 2024
Letter of Information

I am providing this letter of information regarding House Bill 1237, which would establish a task force to study the effectiveness, functionality, and usability of the Maryland Online Individualized Education Program (MOIEP) and the Maryland Online Individualized Family Service Plan (MOIFSP), and to make recommendations including on possible alternatives to these systems by June 2025.

I am currently serving as the co-chair of the Blueprint Special Education Workgroup convened by the Maryland State Department of Education as mandated by the Blueprint Accountability & Implementation Board's Comprehensive Implementation Plan. Our 48-member Workgroup includes a diverse group of stakeholders, including Local Education Agency administrators, principals, general and special education teachers, related service providers, parents, advocates, and other experts. The Workgroup is charged with making "recommendations on improving the education of students receiving special education services in P-12 schools in the State."

Our February 28, 2024, session was focused on Effective IEP Implementation and included discussions on data collection, monitoring, and technical assistance. The MOIEP and MOIFSP are integral parts of these processes, and our discussions and the Workgroup members' feedback reflected the need for attention to these critical systems. At our March 20, 2024, meeting, the Workgroup approved the following recommendation:

MSDE should review the Maryland Online IEP (MOIEP) and Maryland Online Individualized Family Service Plan, including data collection, reporting capabilities, user experience, and current mechanisms for feedback and revision, with particular attention to families who do not speak English as their native language, and report on suggested improvements and/or alternatives within six months.

The Workgroup has been a productive and collaborative effort between MSDE, advocates, and the diverse membership. MSDE has committed to implementing the Workgroup's recommendations; therefore, I expect a report on improvements and alternatives to MOIEP and MOIFSP by September 2024, nine months prior to the task force report that would result from this bill.

Please consider this information as you deliberate HB1237. I would be happy to provide any additional information that would be helpful.

Respectfully submitted,

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