

Carey M. Wright, Ed.D. Interim State Superintendent of Schools

BILL:	House Bill 1297	DATE:	Feb 26, 2024
SUBJECT:	Education - Artificial Intelligence - Guidelines and Pilot Program	COMMITTEE:	Ways and Means
POSITION:	Information Only		
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EXPLANATION:

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) is providing information for consideration regarding House Bill (HB) 1297– Education - Artificial Intelligence - Guidelines and Pilot Program.

HB 1297

HB 1297 requires MSDE to undertake the following:

- Coordinate with the Department of Information Technology (DoIT) to build best practices and guidelines for the development, procurement, implementation, and assessment of Artificial Intelligence (AI) systems for the Local Education Agencies (LEAs).
- Coordinate with the CTE Committee and the CTE Skills Standards Advisory Committee to integrate AI into the College and Career Readiness Standards as established by the State Board of Education.
- In consultation with DoIT, MSDE must develop a pilot program to support the Governor's Al subcabinet's initiative to identify and prioritize the best uses of AI in each unit of State government and in each private sector enterprise.
- MSDE would also be required to promote training and workforce development in AI across the state agencies.

Additionally, each LEA is required to designate an employee to oversee the ethical and productive use of AI in schools, conducting impact assessments and submitting an annual inventory of systems that employ AI to MSDE and DoIT, on or before December 1, 2024, and each December 1 thereafter.

RESPONSE:

MSDE believes it is important that K-12 students, principals, and teachers have a State-level advocate to collaborate with prior to implementing AI to mitigate negative impacts on student safety, health, and wellbeing. The Department is supportive of the bill's intention to standardize AI vocabulary across the State and further explore policies and best practices as they relate to the education setting, including the State's understanding of college and career readiness. However, MSDE seeks further clarity on how AI policies and procedures can be integrated into the State's recently adopted CCR standard.

In reference to the proposed directives within section 7-2202, MSDE understands the need for the development and updating of guidelines, standards, and best practices regarding AI for County Boards. However, paragraph (C) places a requirement for LEAs to designate an employee to facilitate the productive

and ethical use of AI systems. Currently, MSDE and LEAs have no AI-experienced resources, and hiring an AI subject matter expert (SME) is expensive due to scarcity in the market for this burgeoning field of technology. There are LEAs that do not have funding for teams dedicated to cybersecurity and data privacy, so adding AI designees will further strain limited resources. This may affect the submission of the annual inventory of systems that employ AI, as well as the required associated impact assessments.

While MSDE generally supports pilot programs exploring the ethical use of AI, the Department has concerns about implementing and promoting best practices and procedures for emerging technologies to other units of state government as well as the private sector. MSDE does not currently have the personnel, knowledge base, or infrastructure to install, direct, and manage a pilot program for AI at the state level. As a result, the Department anticipates the need to hire one Educational Technology AI Specialist and two Educational Technology Specialists to implement the directives outlined in the bill. Significant participation and support from DoIT will be necessary to execute the Bill's requirements on a State-wide scale, given their expertise, authority, infrastructure, and ability to guide state agencies and private sector enterprises on emerging technologies in accordance with policies to be set by the IT Security Manual and the State guidelines.

We respectfully request that you consider this information as you deliberate **HB 1297**. For further information, please contact Dr. Akilah Alleyne at 410-767-0504, or <u>Akilah.alleyne@maryland.gov.</u>