

**FAVORABLE**  
**House Bill 1237**  
**State Department of Education – Task Force to Study the Maryland Online**  
**IEP System**

**House Ways and Means Committee**  
**February 28, 2024**

**Betsy Perry**  
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**Special Education Teacher / Team Leader**  
**Harmony Hills Elementary School (Montgomery County Public Schools)**

The Maryland State Education Association supports House Bill 1237. House Bill 1237 establishes a Task Force to study the Maryland Online IEP System that would include key stakeholders including MSDE, educators, special education advocacy organizations, and parents. The charge of the Task Force is to study the effectiveness, functionality, and usability of the Maryland Online IEP System, compare and evaluate other platforms, evaluate the costs of maintaining or upgrading the current system or acquiring another platform, and making recommendations to maintain and upgrade the system or replace the system with another platform as determined by the Task Force. The Task Force would submit its findings and recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly on or before June 1, 2025.

MSEA represents 75,000 educators and school employees who work in Maryland's public schools, teaching and preparing our almost 900,000 students so they can pursue their dreams. MSEA also represents 39 local affiliates in every county across the state of Maryland, and our parent affiliate is the 3 million-member National Education Association (NEA).

I would like to identify some of the challenges with the current MOIEP system that add difficulty to educators' working conditions in special education. The current system has a short window for time outs- data entered is not saved, an auto save feature would be beneficial. Supplementary aids should not require individual or separate dates for each one and should be determined by the term of the IEP- this is



very labor intensive and time consuming. The IEP summaries are not user friendly- consider changing the format with tables and bullets, condense some information; the goal area and objectives should be able to be saved at the same time; there needs to be access for multiple users since the students is supported by a team and only one user can work on the IEP at a time in MOIEP.

MOIEP impacts Special Educator working conditions because it is very time consuming, it takes at minimum 3-4 hours per student to complete the process. It is not parent friendly, especially with our growing demographic of families whose native language is not English and come from diverse backgrounds. I was first trained on MOIEP in 2017 for a two and a half hour training, which is not practical considering the many nuances of the system and various platforms, forms, and reports. I am still learning new facets of MOIEP that I had to learn most of this on my own, with most of my training being self- initiated with a lot of trial and error. Making MOIEP more user friendly with more options for drop down menus, easier navigation of platforms within the system, an auto save option, user friendly language for parents and staff, concise and condensed IEP summaries, allow use of multiple users, and more professional development for staff will greatly improve the working conditions of special educators to meet their paperwork requirements.

**We urge the committee to issue a Favorable Report on House Bill 1237.**