



February 23rd, 2024

Bill: HB 1237 - State Department of Education - Task Force to Study the Maryland Online IEP System

Position: FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENT

Dear Chair, Vice Chair, and Committee Members:

The Maryland Speech Language Hearing Association (MSHA) represents speech language pathologists and audiologists across Maryland. We elevate and engage members to strive for excellence in serving those impacted by communication and related disorders through advocacy, equity, education, interprofessional collaboration, and leadership development. Our membership works in private practice and in our Maryland's public schools. HB 1237, as written, does not include speech language pathologists who access the system daily. We ask that speech language pathologists be given equal opportunity to shape any future direction or changes to MDOIEP and suggest the following language with proposed additions underlined and deletions in red:

(c) The Task Force consists of: (3) the following members, appointed by the State Superintendent of Schools:

- (i) three general education public school teachers, representing an urban, a suburban, and a rural local school system;
- (ii) three special education public school teachers, representing a large, medium, and small local school system;
- (iii) three public school speech-language pathologists, representing a large, medium, and small local school system
- ~~(iii)~~ iv) one representative of the Maryland State Educators Association;
- ~~(iv)~~ v) one representative of a special education advocacy organization; and
- ~~(v)~~ vi) two parents of students enrolled in a public school that have an individualized education program

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Speech language pathologists use Maryland Online IEP more frequently than any other staff member in the school system. We have large caseloads and in many districts in Maryland use the system to enter our daily notes. The effectiveness, functionality, and usability of the system has a major impact on our practice in public schools. It is a frustrating system and speech-language pathologists are uniquely positioned to provide meaningful recommendations for maintaining, upgrading, or replacing the system. Without the input from the most frequent users of the system, all recommendations from the proposed Task Force would provide an incomplete picture of changes needed for the primary electronic medical/education record system used in Maryland public schools. Thank you for taking up this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Megan Miskowski". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'M'.

Megan Miskowski
Director of Advocacy and Public Policy
Maryland Speech Language Hearing Association

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