

Education Advocacy Coalition

for Students with Disabilities

HOUSE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

HOUSE BILL 522: Public Schools—Student Telehealth Appointments—Policy and Access

DATE: February 7, 2024

POSITION: SUPPORT

The Education Advocacy Coalition for Students with Disabilities (EAC), a coalition of more than 40 organizations and individuals concerned with education policy for students with disabilities in Maryland, is pleased to support House Bill 522, which would require each county board of education to establish a policy to accommodate students who need to participate in telehealth appointments scheduled during the school day. In setting out several parameters for the policy, House Bill 522 specifies that each middle and high school shall designate a private space in the school with internet access and at least one seating option with a nearby electrical outlet and a flat surface to accommodate a laptop device.

EAC members represent or work with numerous students who must leave school regularly to attend health appointments that cannot be scheduled outside of the school day because of the unavailability of the health provider. Depending on when the appointment is scheduled and depending on the distance of the provider from the school, students may miss several hours or more of school on the days of their appointments. House Bill 522 would enable students to access the health services they need while remaining in school, thereby enabling them to keep up with their coursework and be full participants in their school community.

For these reasons, the EAC supports House Bill 522. Please contact Leslie Seid Margolis, Co-Chair for additional information at lesliem@disabilityrightsmd.org or 443-692-2505.

Respectfully submitted,

Rene Averitt-Sanzone, The Parents' Place of Maryland

Selene Almazan, Selene Almazan Law, LLC

Linda Barton, MSED, Education Advocate

Elizabeth Benevides, Autism Society of Maryland, Co-Chair

Melanie Carlos, xMinds (Partnership for Extraordinary Minds)

Stephanie Carr, S.L. Carr Education Consultants, LLC

Ariannwyn Carver, Maureen van Stone, Mallory Legg, Tyler Cochran, Project HEAL at
Kennedy Krieger Institute

Rich Ceruolo, Parent Advocacy Consortium

Michelle Davis, M.Ed., ABCs for Life Success

Jennifer Engel Fisher, Weinfeld Education Group

Lisa Frank, Andrea Bennett, Jen Ritchotte, Amy Tonti, Special Kids Company

Beth Ann Hancock, Charting the Course, LLC
Kalman Hettleman, Independent Advocate
Rachel London, Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council
Leslie Seid Margolis, Disability Rights Maryland, Co-Chair
Mark B. Martin, Law Offices of Mark B. Martin, P.A.
Lindsay Muir, Abilities Network
Ellen O'Neill, Atlantic Seaboard Dyslexia Education Center
Ronza Othman, National Federation of the Blind of Maryland
Maria Ott, Attorney
Rebecca Rienzi, Pathfinders for Autism
Jaime E. Seaton, BGS Law
Ronnetta Stanley, M.Ed., Loud Voices Together
Wayne Steedman, Steedman Law Group, LLC
Guy Stephens, Alliance Against Seclusion and Restraint
Jessica Williams, Education Due Process Solutions, LLP
Liz Zogby, Maryland Down Syndrome Coalition