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Jewish Connection Network

An agency of The Associated

WRITTEN TESTIMONY

SB602 - County Boards of Education - Special Education Service Delivery Models - Publication Requirement

Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee – February 19, 2025

SUPPORT

Senate Bill 602 would require each county board of education to publish on its website a certain list of special education service delivery models provided for parentally-placed private school students; and define "parentally-placed private school student" as a child with a disability enrolled by the parent or guardian of the child in a private elementary or secondary school or facility, including a religious school or facility.

Written Comments: The Macks Center for Jewish Connection is dedicated to enriching the connection to Jewish life for individuals of all abilities and backgrounds. From assistance with IEPs and 504 plans to community resources and engaging programming, we offer a range of free advocacy services to help local Jewish families navigate the complex special education system and lay the foundation for a full life. Through our support, we empower families to advocate for their children with delays or disabilities and ensure they receive the necessary assistance for thriving both in school and life.

The Federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) provides that a portion of federal IDEA funds will be used to address the educational needs of private school students with disabilities. This program is often referred to as Child Find. Annual consultations are required to be held by Local Educational Agencies (LEAs), with representatives and parents within private schools. **Information on the “who, what, when, and where” services will be made available must be shared.**

By expanding the legal requirement for LEAs to publicize their service delivery models to include those service delivery models available for parentally-placed private school students, families will be more aware of the special education services available to them and make better use of already allocated federal funds.

Imagine that a fire department is giving away free smoke detectors. Some residents are contacted personally to tell them about the program. However other customers are only told about the availability of free smoke detectors if they call and ask about them. The current landscape of providing information on service delivery models is very similar to this situation. The entire community is better off if everyone is aware of the availability of necessary services. Students with disabilities having the information and services they need makes our entire community stronger.

For these reasons, we urge a favorable report on SB602.