Maryland
STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Carey M. Wright, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Schools
Joshua L. Michael, Ph.D.
President, State Board of Education

TO: Senate Committee on Energy, Education, and the Environment

BILL: Senate Bill 0704 - State Department of Education and Department of Information Technology - Evaluation on Artificial Intelligence in Public Schools

DATE: February 21, 2025

POSITION: Support with Amendments

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and the State Board of Education support Senate Bill (SB) 0704 - State Department of Education and Department of Information Technology - Evaluation on Artificial Intelligence in Public Schools with amendments. The bill requires MSDE to conduct an evaluation on the use and potential use of artificial intelligence (AI) in public schools.

MSDE recognizes the growing importance of AI in education and the need to carefully study its impact and potential before widespread adoption. AI has the potential to be a powerful tool for education, but it must be implemented thoughtfully with clear guardrails and support. This evaluation is an essential first step in that process for Maryland. We appreciate that SB0704 provides for a thoughtful and comprehensive evaluation process, including:

- Surveying local school systems on their current AI policies, usage, readiness, and needs
- Reviewing available AI systems that can support student learning, curriculum development, evaluation, and school administration
- Analyzing the pedagogical value and relative costs/benefits of AI systems
- Providing interim and final reports to inform future policy and implementation decisions

MSDE believes this evaluation will provide essential information to guide the effective and equitable use of AI in Maryland schools. It aligns with our priorities to leverage technology to enhance teaching and learning while safeguarding student data privacy and promoting digital equity.

However, MSDE respectfully requests two amendments to ensure the successful implementation of SB0704:

1. Provide funding for two contractual positions (1 AI Education Director and 1 AI Technical Specialist) to lead the evaluation work required by the bill. Existing MSDE staff do not have the capacity or specialized expertise to absorb these substantial additional responsibilities.
2. Extend the abrogation date from June 30, 2027 to June 30, 2028 to allow adequate time to conduct the AI system review, cost/benefit analysis, final reporting and follow-up work after the completion of the local school system survey in fall 2025.

With these requested amendments, MSDE supports SB0704 and looks forward to working with the sponsor, legislative committees, the Department of Information Technology, and local school systems to study this important issue.

For further information, please contact Dr. Akilah Alleyne (Executive Director of Government Affairs) at 410-767-0504, or Akilah.alleyne@maryland.gov.

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