AI in Public Schools

Uploaded by: Akilah Alleyne

Position: FAV

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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Committee: Education, Energy, and the Environment

Bill Number: Senate Bill 704 – State Department of Education and Department of Information Technology – Evaluation on Artificial Intelligence in Public Schools

Hearing Date: February 21, 2025

Position: Support

The Maryland School Counselor Association (MSCA), representing over 900 school counselors serving students from pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade in public, private, charter, and magnet schools, strongly supports SB 704.

SB 704 would require the State Department of Education to conduct an evaluation on the use and potential use of artificial intelligence (AI) in public schools. It would also require that the evaluation consist of a survey of local school systems and review of available AI to assist with student learning, require the Department of Information Technology to assist the State Department of Education in performing its review, and require the Department to issue a final report on the results of the evaluation by December 15, 2026.

MSCA believes that studying AI's role in public education is essential, as it has the potential to revolutionize learning by providing personalized educational experiences, assisting educators with administrative tasks, offering real-time feedback to students, and increasing accessibility. However, AI also presents challenges, including concerns about equity, algorithmic bias, and the appropriate extent of AI integration in classrooms. A careful, state-level policy approach is necessary to ensure its responsible implementation and maximize benefits for all students.

AI's ability to process vast amounts of data and generate personalized insights makes it a valuable tool for enhancing school counseling. By analyzing students' interests and aptitudes, AI can facilitate more meaningful student-counselor interactions and support effective goal setting. Additionally, AI can break down complex tasks into manageable steps, streamlining career and academic planning—an often time-intensive process for human counselors.

By integrating AI into counseling services, counselors can allocate more time to providing essential social and emotional support, fostering stronger mentorship relationships, and addressing students' unique needs. AI-powered tools can also track student progress, refine recommendations, and stay updated on evolving job market trends, equipping counselors with cutting-edge guidance for students' future opportunities.

Furthermore, AI can offer real-time, context-specific suggestions for coursework, local internships, and career pathways that adapt to students' changing interests.

As schools navigate budget constraints and rising absenteeism, leveraging AI in counseling services presents an opportunity to enhance support systems and optimize student engagement. However, this must be approached thoughtfully. Human counselors play an irreplaceable role in helping students explore their identities, interests, and post-secondary options. By thoughtfully integrating AI with human expertise, counseling services can evolve to meet students' diverse needs in a more personalized, engaging, and goal-oriented manner.

For these reasons, MSCA urges a favorable committee report on SB 704. For further information, please contact Jocelyn I. Collins at jcollins@policypartners.net.

AI LEA Survey Responses Summary.docx.pdf

Uploaded by: Katie Fry Hester

Position: FAV

Survey Context:

Total respondents: 26

Total LEAs responded: 18

By LEA size[1]:

- 3 large LEAs (50,000+ students)
- 15 small LEAs (0-49,999 students)

Total respondents by role:

- Teaching and Learning (T&L): 10
- IT/Information Leader: 16

Survey Analysis:

1. **Artificial Intelligence policy**
   - 2 of the 16 LEAs (13%) have a generative Artificial Intelligence policy.[2]
   - 1 of the 3 large LEAs (33%) has a policy, while 1 of the 13 small LEAs (8%) does not.

2. **Community objections regarding the use of Artificial Intelligence**
   - 8 of the 18 (44%) LEAs have received community objections regarding the use of Artificial Intelligence.[3]
   - 2 of the 3 large LEAs (67%) of LEAs have received objections, while 6 of the 15 small LEAs (40%) have.
   - 3 of the 10 T&L respondents (30%) reported that their LEA had received objections, whereas 5 of the 16 IT respondents (31%) reported objections.

3. **Groups that provided objections**
   - Seven respondents indicated that teachers provided the objections and five indicated that parents did. Other objections were provided by administrators, IT, operations, elected officials, staff, and students.
   - Seven respondents reported objections due to lack of privacy.
   - Four respondents reported objections regarding reliability.
   - Other objections were on autonomy, job security, quality, cheating, bias, cost, and unethical use.

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[1] As defined by student enrollment in SY 2023-2024.
[2] Two LEAs with multiple respondents answered differently and were therefore not included.
[3] Note that 4 LEAs with multiple respondents had different answers but were categorized as an affirmative response.

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4. **Implementation of generative Artificial Intelligence**
   - 10 of the 18 LEAs (56%) have implemented generative Artificial Intelligence.[4]
   - 1 of the 3 large LEAs (33%) have implemented generative Artificial Intelligence, whereas 9 of the 15 small LEAs (60%) did.[3]
   - 6 of the 10 respondents (60%) in T&L roles reported that their LEA implemented generative Artificial Intelligence, whereas 7 of the 16 IT respondents (44%) reported that their LEA implemented generative Artificial Intelligence.

5. **Challenges the LEA has faced with implementing and using generative Artificial Intelligence**
   - Eleven respondents mentioned that security and data privacy was a challenge that the LEA faced.
   - Cost, training challenges, integration with preexisting systems, and compliance were each mentioned by eight respondents.
   - Other challenges were staff use without vetting, understanding when and how to use generative Artificial Intelligence, and understanding the risks and biases that come with Artificial Intelligence.
   - One respondent indicated that there were no challenges.

6. **Areas in which the LEA has achieved success in implementing and utilizing generative Artificial Intelligence**
   - Eight respondents mentioned the increased production from implementing generative Artificial Intelligence.
   - Five mentioned improved skills and training.
   - Four mentioned improved decision making.
   - Other areas of success included personalization, equity, cost savings, and enhanced investigative capabilities.

7. **Types of usage of generative Artificial Intelligence**
   - Fifteen respondents indicated that generative Artificial Intelligence was used for lesson planning.
   - Eleven indicated that it was used for administrative processes.
   - Nine respondents indicated that Artificial Intelligence was not used.
   - Eight indicated that it was used for information technology and for curriculum development/communications.
   - Other uses were for community outreach/communications, teacher PD, virtual tutoring, operations, student support services, and IEPs. Note that all respondents' answers were used.

8. **Groups in the organization that frequently utilize generative Artificial Intelligence**
   - Fifteen respondents indicated that teachers frequently utilize generative Artificial Intelligence.
   - Twelve indicated Information Technology staff.
   - Other users were administrators, curriculum, students, counselors, and operations.

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[4] Three LEAs with multiple respondents had different answers but were categorized as an affirmative response.

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- Eight respondents indicated that no group used Artificial Intelligence. Note that all respondents' answers were used.

9. **Additional comments or thoughts on generative Artificial Intelligence in the LEA**
   Overall, LEAs indicated that they were in the early stages of using Artificial Intelligence, starting with exploration, pilots using AI-powered tools and still developing policies. Guidelines from MSDE regarding best practices would be helpful.

10. **Preparation of the LEA to implement generative Artificial Intelligence and its uses**
    - On a scale from 1 to 5, the average level of preparedness of the LEA to implement generative Artificial Intelligence and its uses was 2.5.[5] No one rated their LEA preparedness as a 5 and 7 of 18 LEAs (39%) of respondents indicated a rating of 3.
    - The average level of preparedness reported by respondents was 2.0 for large LEAs and 2.6 for small LEAs.
    - The average level of preparedness reported by respondents in T&L roles was 2.9, whereas the average level of preparedness reported by IT respondents was 2.3.

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[5] For LEAs that had more than one respondent, responses were averaged.

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SB 704 Hester Testimony.pdf

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Position: FAV

KATIE FRY HESTER
Legislative District 9
Howard and Montgomery Counties

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Education, Energy, and
Environment Committee

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Chair, Joint Committee on
Cybersecurity, Information Technology
and Biotechnology

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Testimony in Support of SB 704 - State Department of Education and Department of Information Technology - Evaluation on Artificial Intelligence in Public Schools

March 19, 2025

Chair Feldman, Vice-Chair Kagan, and members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee.

Thank you for your consideration of SB 704, which marks a critical step toward recognizing and integrating artificial intelligence (AI) into Maryland's public schools. This legislation will equip state and local officials with the necessary insights to assess AI's role in education and develop informed policies that balance innovation with responsibility.

Over the last year, AI has surged across industries, including education. Tools like OpenAI's ChatGPT have raised concerns about bias, cybersecurity, and misinformation. However, while AI presents challenges, it also offers tremendous benefits. Educators can use AI to streamline administrative tasks, easing workloads in lesson planning, grading, and assessments. For students, AI-powered tutoring provides personalized, one-on-one learning support, enhancing student's learning outcomes.[1] Furthermore, AI-driven tools expand access to language learning, career exploration, and adaptive instruction, ensuring that every student, regardless of background or ability, receives a high-quality education.[2]

In this context, Delegate Ebersole and I were appointed to the Southern Regional Education Board's Commission on Artificial Intelligence by the Speaker and Senate President. We have been working with policymakers in Southern states as well as leaders in education and business to develop policy recommendations to inform how we implement AI into our classrooms. The recommendations from the Commission are attached to my testimony.

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[1] 📕 Colordao AI in K-12 Education_December 2024.pdf
[2] https://www.coloradoedinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/Colorado-Roadmap-for-AI-in-K-12-Education_August-2024.pdf

Last year, MSDE sent out a survey to LEAs regarding their use of AI in schools. Of the 16 LEAs that responded, only 2 had an Artificial Intelligence Policy; however, 10 of 16 LEAs reported they have implemented generative Artificial Intelligence. LEAs are using AI, but they are doing so without clear guidance. Attached to my testimony are a summary of preliminary results that MSDE provided to my office.

SB 704 takes the first step in implementing AI responsibly by directing the **State Department of Education** to evaluate AI's use and readiness in public schools through:

1) **A statewide survey** assessing local school systems' current AI policies, technological infrastructure, staffing, planning, and familiarity with AI tools.
2) **An implementation readiness review** to determine how the State Department of Education can best support AI integration in schools.
3) **A collaboration with the Department of Information Technology** to review AI-driven systems that assist with student learning, curriculum development, and educator support.

Surveys will be distributed to county boards by **August 1, 2025**, with responses due by **October 1, 2025**. The findings will inform strategic AI integration and ensure Maryland schools remain competitive in an increasingly technology-driven world.

If we fail to address AI's role in education now, we risk leaving students unprepared for the evolving workforce and teachers without the necessary tools to adapt. This legislation is essential to modernizing our education system alongside technological advancements.

For these reasons**, *I request a favorable report on SB 704.***

Sincerely,

Senator Katie Fry Hester
Howard & Montgomery Counties

SREB AI Commissions Adopted AI Recommendations 2-2

Uploaded by: Katie Fry Hester

Position: FAV

SREB AI Commission Policy Recommendations
Adopted, November 2024

Policy Recommendation #1
States should establish a statewide artificial intelligence collaborative so people, groups, and agencies can connect, communicate, collaborate and coordinate AI efforts across each state. This will help ensure state efforts are successful and sustained over time. A regional group of statewide network representatives could then gather regularly to share successes and challenges to inform and support each other over time.

Policy Recommendation #2
States should develop and maintain targeted AI guidance for every distinct group using, integrating or supporting AI use in education. States should include distinct groups such as elementary students, middle school students, high school students, college students, teachers, administrators, postsecondary teaching staff and faculty, as well as parents.

Policy Recommendation #3
States should develop, provide and incentivize high-quality professional development plans for AI.

State K-12 and postsecondary agencies should provide leadership by working with local districts and institutions to develop plans that enhance student learning.

Policy Recommendation #4
States should integrate the AI knowledge, skills and applications students will need into the state K-12 standards and curricula to ensure they are prepared to be successful in the workforce.

Policy Recommendation #5
States should develop and conduct state-level AI needs assessments to determine the capacity of local districts, schools and institutions of higher education to integrate AI successfully. The needs assessments should be designed to help states determine if any institution, district or school needs state support, what type of support and the level of support.

Policy Recommendation #6
States must develop detailed resource allocation plans for AI implementation in schools, school districts and institutions of higher education to ensure that the implementation of AI is successful, equitable and sustainable.

Once developed, these AI resource allocation plans should inform the development of state fiscal notes related to education and AI.

Policy Recommendation #7
States should partner with school districts, and postsecondary systems and institutions to ensure their risk management policies have been revised to assess and reduce risks associated with AI.

See the recommendations and supporting documents at AI Commission Recommendations - Southern Regional Education Board.

AI in Public Schools

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Position: FAV

FAVORABLE
Senate Bill 704
State Department of Education and Department of Information Technology –
Evaluation on Artificial Intelligence in Public Schools
Senate Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment
February 21, 2025

Lauren Lamb
Government Relations

The Maryland State Education Association supports Senate Bill 704, which would require the State Department of Education, with the assistance of the Department of Information Technology, to conduct an evaluation on the use and potential use of artificial intelligence in public schools, which would include a survey of local school systems and a review of available systems that use artificial intelligence to assist with student learning. The Department would be required to issue a final report on the results of the evaluation by December 15, 2026.

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).

As educators continue to grapple with the implications of a rapidly changing Artificial Intelligence (AI) landscape, we appreciate efforts to ensure that any use of AI in public schools is equitable, research-based, and developed with educator voices at the table. Underscoring the timeliness of this issue is a resolution passed by the National Education Association in 2023 and updated in 2024 regarding the use AI in public education:

B-71. Artificial Intelligence

The National Education Association believes that the development and expanding use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies will continue to impact students, educators, public education, and the greater community.

The Association also believes that the use of AI in public education should align with the following principles:

a. AI tools should support the needs of students and educators.

b. The implementation of AI must be equitable, accessible, and inclusive to ensure that no community is disadvantaged or excluded.

c. AI tools and their implementation must be free of cultural, racial, and gender biases, and they should not perpetuate or amplify existing biases or discrimination.

d. Educators should be involved in the development of best practices for pedagogical applications of AI.

e. The use of AI in public education should be transparent, including its applications, what data is collected, and how that data is used.

f. AI should not compromise the privacy of educators, students, or their families.

g. Educators and students should be provided guidance and training on the ethical use of AI tools.

h. Evaluation of AI implementation should be ongoing to ensure it supports the needs of students and educators, and aligns with ethical standards and practices.

The Association further believes that AI tools should not be used to replace educators nor their professional judgment.

We recognize the value of gathering detailed data on which, if any, AI tools are currently in use in schools to establish a baseline for future policy decisions. As we monitor this evolving space, we will continue to urge alignment with the resolution above and any forthcoming guidance on maximizing the benefits of AI for education while mitigating potential risks, harms, or overreaches.

The report resulting from this bill would offer timely insights to that end. Following its completion, we would urge that a workgroup that includes current educators is convened to assist in developing recommendations and best practices.

We urge the committee to issue a favorable report on Senate Bill 704.

Education Advocacy Coalition
for Students with Disabilities

SENATE EDUCATION, ENERGY AND THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Senate Bill 704: State Department of Education and Department of Information Technology—Evaluation on Artificial Intelligence in Public Schools

Date: February 21, 2025

POSITION: SUPPORT

The Education Advocacy Coalition for Students with Disabilities (EAC), a coalition of nearly 50 organizations and individuals concerned with education policy for students with disabilities in Maryland, supports Senate Bill 704; this bill, if enacted, would evaluate the use and potential use of artificial intelligence in schools.

As has happened with other new technology applications, our creation of artificial intelligence tools has outpaced our creation of policies and guidelines for the use of this technology in an ethical, equitable, and appropriate way. Senate Bill 704 would address this issue by requiring the Maryland State Department of Education to survey all local school systems to determine I each local school system has a policy for the use of artificial intelligence by students and, if so, how the policy differs by student age, disability status, and English language learning status. We appreciate the inclusion of disability status in the survey. Artificial intelligence could be immensely helpful to students with disabilities; for example, if a student requires writing prompts such as sentence starters, artificial intelligence could produce the prompts, enabling the student to not be as reliant on an adult. Conversely, students with disabilities could be excluded from the benefits of artificial intelligence if the technology is not accessible to them or if they are not provided support they may need to use it effectively.

The EAC also appreciates that in addition to the survey, the evaluation required by Senate Bill 704 also requires a review of available systems that use artificial intelligence in education, as well as an analysis of the pedagogical value of available artificial intelligence systems. This information will be helpful as Maryland develops policy for the role of this powerful but not yet completely reliable, technological tool in schools throughout the state.

For these reasons, the EAC supports Senate Bill 704.

Contact: Leslie Seid Margolis, lesliem@disabilityrightsmd.org or 443-692-2505.

Respectfully submitted,

Selene Almazan, Selene Almazan Law
Rene Averitt-Sanzone, The Parents' Place of Maryland
Beth Benevides, Autism Society of Maryland, Co-Chairperson, Education Advocacy Coalition

Stephanie Carr, S.L. Carr Education Consultants, LLC
Michelle Davis, M.Ed., ABCs for Life Success
Rich Ceruolo, Parent
Beth Ann Hancock, Charting the Course, LLC
Rosemary Kitzinger and Marjorie Guldan, Bright Futures, LLC
Rachel London, Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council
Leslie Seid Margolis, Disability Rights Maryland, Co-Chairperson, Education Advocacy Coalition
Monica Martinez, Martinez Advocacy
Beth Nolan, MAT, Education Team Allies
Sumaiya Olatunde, H2D Counseling
Ronza Othman, National Federation of the Blind of Maryland/Maryland Parents of Blind
             Children
Ellen O'Neill, Atlantic Seaboard Dyslexia Education Center
Rebecca Rienzi, Pathfinders for Autism
Jaime Seaton, BGS Law, LLC
Karleen Spitulnik, Decoding Dyslexia Maryland
Maureen van Stone, Kendall Eaton, Genevieve Hornik, Project HEAL at Kennedy Krieger
             Institute
Liz Zogby, Maryland Down Syndrome Advocacy Coalition

The Maryland Education Coalition also joins this testimony.

Senate Bill 704- DoIT Written Testimony.docx.pdf

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Position: UNF

TO: Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
FROM: Department of Information Technology
RE: Senate Bill 704 - State Department of Education and Department of Information Technology
- Evaluation on Artificial Intelligence in Public Schools
DATE: February 21, 2025
POSITION: Oppose

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman, Chair
Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
2 West, Miller Senate Office Building
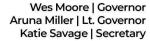Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Chairman Feldman,

The Department of Information Technology (DoIT) is opposed to Senate Bill 704 - State
Department of Education and Department of Information Technology - Evaluation on Artificial
Intelligence in Public Schools. This bill requires the Maryland State Department of Education
(MSDE) to conduct an evaluation on the use and potential use of artificial intelligence (AI) in
public schools and the Department of Information Technology (DoIT) to assist MSDE in this
evaluation. The bill as drafted will impose resource constraints and its impact on DoIT's ability
to fulfill its core mission. **We list below some of our key concerns.**

The AI Enablement Team (AET) within DoIT, a newly formed team of three, is tasked with
catalyzing AI enablement across state agencies. The team's primary focus is to drive the
execution of the 2025 AI Strategy, as shared with the General Assembly, through the
development of policies, procedures, infrastructure, procurement pathways, and
experimentation frameworks. The broad and foundational work of AET is intended to support
agencies in adopting AI responsibly within their respective domains.

Mandating DoIT's AET to conduct a comprehensive review of all AI systems in use by local
school systems—effectively an AI inventory—would divert this small team's attention from its
strategic statewide responsibilities. Such a requirement imposes a significant workload that AET
is not resourced to take on in 2025, potentially undermining the broader AI enablement
initiatives meant to benefit all state agencies.

Moreover, DoIT already anticipates supporting the Maryland State Department of Education
(MSDE) by assisting in the evaluation of fellows, potential staff, or vendors capable of executing

this work. The anticipated outputs of AET's work—including policies and best practices—will likely provide MSDE with a foundational framework to conduct aspects of the AI review outlined in the bill. The most effective path forward is a targeted approach that leverages existing expertise and resources, specifically:

1. Establishing AI fellow(s) based within MSDE, who can focus on AI inventory and oversight for local school systems.
2. Creating a coalition comprising MSDE, Maryland civil society groups engaged in STEM and computing education, academic experts, philanthropic partners, and relevant private sector stakeholders.
3. DoIT playing a supportive role via its ongoing efforts, while removing the specific responsibilities assigned to DoIT in the bill.

By following this approach, the state can achieve the goals of SB 704 without disrupting the essential work of DoIT's AI Enablement Team. We respectfully urge the committee to consider these concerns and explore alternative strategies that align with DoIT's mission and capacity.

Best,

Melissa Leaman
Acting Secretary
Department of Information Technology