

Education Advocacy Coalition

for Students with Disabilities

HOUSE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

House Bill 981: State Department of Education and Department of Information Technology— Evaluation on Artificial Intelligence in Public Schools

Date: February 24, 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 House Bill 981; 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. House Bill 981 would address this issue by requiring the Maryland State Department of Education to survey all local school systems to determine if 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 House Bill 981 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 House Bill 981.

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Respectfully submitted,

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The Maryland Education Coalition also joins this testimony.