

FAVORABLE
House Bill 981
State Department of Education and Department of Information Technology –
Evaluation on Artificial Intelligence in Public Schools
House Ways and Means Committee
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The Maryland State Education Association supports House Bill 981, 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 House Bill 981.