

BILL: House Bill 1313
TITLE: Education – Student Behavior – Parent and Guardian Notice and Required Counseling (Parent and Guardian Accountability Act)
HEARING DATE: March 5, 2025
POSITION: UNFAVORABLE
COMMITTEE: Ways and Means
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The Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE), representing all the state’s local boards of education, opposes House Bill 1313, Education – Student Behavior – Parent and Guardian Notice and Required Counseling (Parent and Guardian Accountability Act).

MABE opposes this bill because it would criminalize the failure of parents and guardians to engage in certain school-based activities on behalf of their students. Local boards strongly support high levels of parental engagement in their child’s education, but not the approach proposed in this legislation.

Every local board of education places a high priority on establishing policies and procedures concerning student discipline, based on a framework established by the General Assembly and the State Board of Education. Local school boards take very seriously the need for strict and comprehensive student discipline and school safety policies that focus on controlling and/or preventing bullying, verbal threats, student fights, and the numerous other actions which can disrupt effective teaching and learning and potentially lead to more serious behavior. MABE believes that restorative approaches should play an integral role in the administration of Maryland’s public schools. Such proactive practices, implemented following appropriate professional development and training of all staff, can make significant improvements in school climate and the learning conditions for all students to learn.

Restorative approaches as a relationship-focused student discipline model ensure that the process is: (1) preventative and proactive; (2) prioritized to build strong relationships and set clear behavioral expectations that contribute to the school community well-being; (3) in response to behavior that violates clear behavioral expectations, focused on accountability for any harm done by the problem behavior; and (4) utilized to address ways to repair the relationships affected by the problem behavior with the voluntary participation of an individual who was harmed. For the reasons outlined above, **MABE respectfully requests an UNFAVORABLE report** on House Bill 1313.