

Education Advocacy Coalition  
for Students with Disabilities

**HOUSE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE**

**HOUSE BILL 488: Public Schools--Discipline**

**Date: February 12, 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 488, which addresses the collection and publication of discipline-related data. EAC members represent or work with students with disabilities across the state who are subjected to exclusionary discipline at a disproportionate rate. According to 2023-24 data, students with disabilities comprise 13% of the students enrolled in Maryland public schools but 27% of out-of-school suspensions and expulsions.

If enacted, House Bill 488 would extend reporting requirements to alternative schools and programs and to public separate special education day schools and would also lower the risk ratio currently used to identify disproportionality based on race/ethnicity, disability status, and English language ability. These measures would create accountability for the use of exclusionary discipline practices and would enable local school systems and the Maryland State Department to better disaggregate and then use data to inform a corrective action plan if needed.

EAC members appreciate House Bill 488's requirement that discipline-related data be made public in an accessible and disaggregated electronic spreadsheet format as a data download on the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE)'s website at the state level, the local school system level, and the individual school level. This will make it easier for interested members of the public to find, review and analyze the data collected by MSDE. EAC members also support House Bill 488's requirement that MSDE submit annual reports and an annual action plan to address disproportionality.

For these reasons, the EAC supports House Bill 488.

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Respectfully submitted,