



SUPPORT

House Bill 854:

School Construction - Nonpublic Special Education School Renovation Program

OFFERED ON BEHALF OF

The Maryland Association of Nonpublic Special Education Facilities
(MANSEF)

BEFORE THE HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

February 17, 2026

On behalf of the 70 nonpublic special education schools across Maryland currently serving approximately 3800 publicly funded school children, the Maryland Association of Nonpublic Special Education Facilities (MANSEF) offers this testimony in SUPPORT of House Bill 854.

Although narrow in scope, HB 854 will establish access to capital grant funds via the Interagency Commission on School Construction to allow providers to make the necessary improvements to their facilities to ensure safe learning environments. This bill recognizes that eligible MANSEF members are afforded the opportunity to similar to public schools as MANSEF members are serving students referred by the local education agencies (LEA). The MANSEF schools are approved under COMAR 13A.09.10 and it is important to note that the MSDE approved tuition does not take into account funding of capital projects.

Nonpublic special education schools are vital to the fulfillment of IDEA, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. IDEA mandates a "continuum of alternative placements to meet the needs of children with disabilities for special education and related services." Our nonpublic special education schools are one component in that continuum and fulfill a unique and essential role in meeting students' particular educational needs and serve an important role for Maryland to comply with the federal law regarding education for special needs students.

The MANSEF schools are uniquely equipped to provide the specific, multidisciplinary, frequently intensive resources students with special needs require. The scope and depth of staff expertise afford specialized, integrated programming that goes beyond academic education and encompasses the social and emotional well-being of each student. In addition to the skilled, highly trained teachers, nonpublic special education schools are staffed to provide other critical services such as behavior programs, crisis management and medical attention.

Because our programs serve multiple LEAs throughout Maryland it is appropriate for the State to include nonpublic programs under the purview of the Interagency Commission on School Construction. MANSEF respectfully requests a favorable report on HB 854.