

March 9, 2026

Position: Favorable with Amendments

SB863 – Prince George’s County Special Education Service Delivery, Transparency, and Accountability Act

Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is **Alicia Reneé**, founder of **The IEP Files**, a special education advocacy organization that supports families navigating the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). I am also a **Prince George’s County parent**.

I submit this testimony **in support of SB863 with amendments**.

I want to begin by stating plainly why legislation like this matters. **My own child was denied a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in Prince George’s County Public Schools**. That denial was not theoretical. It resulted in missed services, academic harm, and years of advocacy simply to enforce rights that already exist under federal law.

Unfortunately, my family’s experience is not isolated. Through my work as a special education advocate, I see the same patterns across cases throughout this district: services written into Individualized Education Programs that are not delivered, one-to-one aide positions left vacant for extended periods, compensatory services delayed or never calculated, and parents forced into complaints or due process simply to enforce what the law already requires.

It is important to understand that the issue is not that schools are incapable of writing IEPs. **In Prince George’s County, we do not have an IEP writing problem. We have an implementation problem.**

A compliant document on paper does not educate a child. **Implementation is the law.** When the services written in an IEP are not delivered with fidelity, students with disabilities lose instructional time, lose behavioral supports, and lose access to the education that federal law guarantees them.

That is why SB863 matters.

The bill introduces critical transparency measures by requiring reporting on key indicators of special education service delivery, including the percentage of IEP service minutes delivered, the number of students requiring one-to-one aides, vacancy and turnover rates for those positions, and the number of students owed compensatory services. These metrics begin to answer a question that families across the district have been asking for years: **Are students actually receiving the services written into their IEPs?**

The requirement for a **third-party audit of the Prince George’s County Public Schools special education system** is also significant. A comprehensive review of complaint patterns,

SB863 – Prince George’s County Special Education Service Delivery, Transparency, and Accountability Act

due process filings, staffing shortages, financial trends, and student outcomes can provide policymakers with the first full picture of how systemic service delivery issues affect students with disabilities across the district.

Additionally, requiring that one-to-one student aides be funded with **full-time salary and benefits** addresses one of the most persistent operational failures in special education delivery. When these positions remain vacant or unstable, the consequences are immediate. Students lose access to behavioral supports, safety plans break down, and the services outlined in their IEPs cannot be implemented as designed.

While these provisions represent meaningful progress, **transparency alone will not ensure compliance with IDEA**. For that reason, amendments are necessary to ensure this legislation leads to real change for students.

First, when reporting identifies missed IEP services, the law should require a **standardized process for calculating and delivering compensatory education**. Families should not have to initiate complaints or due process cases simply to receive services that were already owed to their children.

Second, the audit and corrective action process should include **independent oversight and legislative reporting** to ensure that findings translate into meaningful corrective action and system improvement.

Finally, the transparency and reporting structures established by this bill should not disappear after three years. Sustained transparency is essential for long-term accountability and continuous improvement in special education service delivery.

Quality IEPs require more than well-written documents. **They require full-fidelity implementation—services delivered as written, monitored through data, and adjusted when students are not making progress**. When that process breaks down, students with disabilities bear the consequences.

SB863 begins to address a system where the gap between written plans and delivered services has too often gone unexamined. With targeted amendments that strengthen enforcement and oversight, this bill can move Prince George’s County toward a special education system where accountability, transparency, and fidelity of implementation are the standard—not the exception.

No child’s access to education should depend on how hard their parent is willing or able to fight.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Alicia Renéé, MHA, CSM, CSPO

Founder, The IEP Files | Special Education Advocate
Prince George’s County, Maryland