



SB0050 – EDUCATION – INTERSCHOLASTIC AND INTRAMURAL JUNIOR VARSITY AND VARSITY TEAMS AND SPORTS – DESIGNATION (FAIRNESS IN GIRLS’ SPORTS ACT)

February 18, 2026

EDUCATION, ENERGY, AND THE ENVIRONMENT

OPPOSE

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Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) opposes **SB0050 – Education – Interscholastic and Intramural Junior Varsity and Varsity Teams and Sports – Designation (Fairness in Girls’ Sports Act)**. This bill applies to public high schools and nonpublic high schools for which the student athletes or athletic teams compete against student athletes or athletic teams from public high schools in the State. The bill requires that an interscholastic or intramural junior varsity or varsity athletic team or sport that is sponsored by a public or nonpublic high school be expressly designated as: (1) a boys’, male, or men’s team or sport; (2) a girls’, female, or women’s team or sport; or (3) a coeducational or mixed team or sport. An interscholastic or intramural junior varsity or varsity athletic team or sport designated for girls, females or women may not include students of the male sex.

Additionally, government entities, licensing or accrediting organizations, and athletic associations or organizations are prohibited from accepting a complaint, conducting an investigation, or taking other adverse action against a school for maintaining separate interscholastic or intramural junior varsity or varsity athletic teams for students of the female sex.

Finally, a civil action is authorized for students deprived of an athletic opportunity or who suffer any direct harm as a result of violation of the bill against the school the student attends. Similarly, a civil action is authorized for a student who is subject to retaliation or other adverse action by a school or an athletic association or organization as a result of reporting a violation of this section to an employee or representative of the school, athletic association or organization, or any state or federal agency with oversight of schools in the state.

AACPS opposes this bill considering the disruption it would introduce into the management of interscholastic sports programs offered in Maryland public schools, and potential for creating liability for discriminatory practices under a new statewide system of criteria for student participation in women’s sports based solely on sex assigned at birth.

Interscholastic sports programs in Maryland’s public schools are conducted in accordance with the standards developed by the Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association (MPSSAA) and the regulations adopted by the State Board of Education. Since 1991, interscholastic sports in Maryland have operated in accordance with the Master Agreement Outlining the Interscholastic Structure for Public Schools in Maryland, which establishes the responsibilities of MPSSAA, the Maryland State Department of Education, and local school systems. AACPS believes that this system of regulations and oversight is working well.

The MPSSAA Guidance for Participation of Transgender Youth in Interscholastic Athletics states that its purpose is “to designate a set of criteria in which student-athletes are able to compete on a level playing field in a safe, competitive, and friendly environment, free of discrimination. At the center of educational programming is the value placed in providing equal opportunity for all students.” The Guidance further provides that “each school system should develop and apply criteria for students to participate in interscholastic athletic teams consistent with gender identity.” The Guidance includes several guiding principles and criteria for local school systems to use in determining eligibility of transgender students in interscholastic sports. These include attention to preserving the integrity of women’s sports and policies which are fair in light of the tremendous variation among individuals in strength, size, musculature, and ability. In these ways, the Guidance reflects Maryland’s high priority of establishing and maintaining an interscholastic athletic system that assures that sports activities contribute to the entire education program for all students choosing to participate.

Accordingly, AACPS respectfully requests an **UNFAVORABLE** committee report on SB0050.