

**FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS**  
**Senate Bill 720**  
**Education - Artificial Intelligence - Guidelines, Professional Development, and Collaborative (Artificial Intelligence Ready Schools Act)**

**Senate Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment**  
**February 26, 2026**

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**Government Relations**

The Maryland State Education Association supports, with amendments, Senate Bill 720, which would require the State Department of Education (MSDE) to provide artificial intelligence guidance and best practices to local education agencies (LEAs), educators, parents, and students. It would also require LEAs to create policies governing the use of artificial intelligence and establish the Maryland Education Collaborative on Artificial Intelligence in K-12 Education to study, report on, and make recommendations regarding the uses of artificial intelligence in each local school system. As written, it would require each county board to designate a coordinator for the use of artificial intelligence and create requirements for educator professional development on artificial intelligence.

MSEA represents 76,000 educators and school employees who work in Maryland's public schools, teaching and preparing our almost 900,000 students so they can pursue their dreams. MSEA also represents 44 local affiliates in every county across the state of Maryland, and our parent affiliate is the 3-million-member National Education Association (NEA).

As educators continue to grapple with the implications of a rapidly changing artificial intelligence (AI) landscape, we appreciate efforts to ensure that any uses of AI in public schools are equitable, research-based, and developed with educator voices at the table. Underscoring the timeliness of this issue are the five principles for the use of AI in education adopted by the National Education Association in 2025:

- 1. Students and educators must remain at the center of education**
- 2. Evidence-based AI technology must enhance the educational experience**

3. **Ethical development and use of AI technology and strong data protection practices**
4. **Equitable access to and use of AI tools is ensured**
5. **Ongoing education with and about AI: AI literacy and agency<sup>1</sup>**

This legislation aims to ensure that LEAs, educators, students, and families receive clear guidance on the use of AI, that LEAs create policies governing the use of AI, that educators are trained and aware of the risks and opportunities associated with AI, and that stakeholders can provide insight, research, and recommendations regarding AI in schools.

We appreciate the sponsor's willingness to collaborate on amendments that clarify several features of this bill and protect against unintended consequences for privacy, equity, and educator workload. We have recommended the following amendments:

#### **Guidance from MSDE**

In the section outlining the topics which AI guidance from MSDE must cover, we ask for greater emphasis on compliance with privacy and accessibility laws by replacing §7-2202(A)(1)(iv) with:

(IV) ADDRESSES HOW STATE AND FEDERAL PRIVACY AND ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS APPLY TO THE USE OF ARTIFICIAL INSTRUCTION IN SCHOOLS.

This requirement will help ensure equitable access and strong data protection practices by outlining for LEAs and stakeholders how the use of AI in schools is governed by federal and state laws, such as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and more.

#### **LEA Coordinators**

We appreciate the effort in §7-2202(D) to ensure that there is oversight within LEAs by designating an employee as a coordinator on the use of AI. However, it is crucial to clarify that the LEA coordinator is not a teacher or other school-based employee, but rather a **non-instructional central office employee who specializes in the use**

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<sup>1</sup> Five Principles for the Use of Artificial Intelligence in Education. National Education Association (2025). <https://www.nea.org/resource-library/artificial-intelligence-education/v-five-principles-use-artificial-intelligence-education>

**of technology systems.** This requirement could otherwise represent an unfunded mandate requiring a new position or an unreasonable increase in workload.

In addition, to further clarify that the coordinator role will not be assigned to an instructional employee, we advise replacing §7-2204(D) with the following language:

(D) IT IS THE INTENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY THAT THE EDUCATORS CONSULTED BY THE COLLABORATIVE IN THE COURSE OF GATHERING INFORMATION SHALL REPRESENT DIVERSE SUBJECT AREAS.

### **Professional Development**

As MSDE and LEAs adopt policies and best practices around AI, educators must receive ongoing, **paid or job-embedded professional development** to promote AI literacy and agency. We urge the inclusion of more specific language specifying when and how professional development will be implemented.

We also encourage MSDE to continue providing AI-related courses that are eligible for professional development points toward teachers' licensure renewal.

### **Collaborative on Artificial Intelligence**

We commend the sponsor's inclusion of educator voices on a collaborative that will make recommendations regarding the use of AI in schools. We are requesting the revision of the items assigned to the Collaborative to streamline its objectives and better align its work with the experience and expertise of its membership. This includes striking "on the level and quality of:" from §7-2204(J) and striking the items listed in §7-2204(J)(1)-(7).

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As the use of AI in schools and beyond continues to evolve, we will continue to urge alignment with the NEA principles and seek opportunities to maximize the benefits of AI for education while mitigating potential risks, harms, or overreaches. This bill represents a timely step toward those aims in our current context.

**With these amendments, we would urge the committee to issue a favorable report on Senate Bill 720.**