
TO: Senate Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment

BILL: SB0863 – Prince George’s County Special Education Service Delivery, Transparency, and Accountability Act

DATE: March 11, 2026

POSITION: Letter of Information

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) is providing information regarding SB0863, which would require the Prince George’s County Public Schools (PGCPS) Superintendent (or a designee) to provide quarterly updates to MSDE on certain aspects of special education services and budgeting, including data on students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) who require one-to-one aides, the delivery of required services and compensatory services, staffing vacancy and turnover rates for one-to-one aides, and other related items.

The bulk of the impact for implementation would fall on PGCPS. However, the bill would also require the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to contract with a third-party vendor to conduct an audit of PGCPS covering fiscal years 2021 through 2025, examining areas such as the delivery of special education services and compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), complaints and due process filings, staffing and workforce matters, financial and procurement practices, and special education outcomes.

Currently, MSDE maintains an established general supervision system that overlaps in part with the requirements outlined in the proposed legislation and, through this system, regularly monitors each LEA in the areas identified in the Bill. In particular, the United States Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) has identified eight components that states must include in their general supervision system. They are:

- Integrated monitoring activities;
- Data on processes and results;
- The State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR);
- Fiscal management;
- Effective dispute resolution;
- Targeted technical assistance and professional development;
- Policies, procedures, and practices resulting in effective implementation; and
- Improvement, correction, incentives, and sanctions.

As part of its general supervision system, MSDE, Division of Special Education (DSE) has developed Tiers of General Supervision and Performance Support. Each LEA is assigned to one of four tiers, Universal, Targeted,

Focused, or Intensive, based on trend performance on compliance and results data, fiscal monitoring, and timely correction of noncompliance, including noncompliance identified through dispute resolution processes.

For the current 2025-2026 school year, PGCPs has been assigned to the Focused Tier of General Supervision and Performance Support. LEAs assigned to the Focused Tier receive comprehensive monitoring from MSDE every other year. PGCPs is scheduled to undergo comprehensive monitoring in March 2026. LEAs assigned to the Focused Tier also receive more intensive technical assistance from MSDE, such as meetings with MSDE and its Division of Special Education specialists to review data and co-develop plans to improve compliance and student outcomes.

MSDE identified PGCPs as a high-risk grantee for its 2024–2025 and 2025–2026 IDEA, Part B funding due to persistent areas of noncompliance with federal and state special education requirements. MSDE has worked with PGCPs to address these issues through targeted action plans, professional learning for staff, and implementation of corrective measures. Special conditions were placed on Part B funds, and PGCPs was required to hire key personnel and collaborate with an MSDE-appointed technical assistance team. Since that time, PGCPs has made substantial progress in staffing, including reducing special education teacher vacancies from 242 to 81 and speech-language pathologist vacancies from 50 to 0.

MSDE recognizes that while significant progress has been made in addressing systemic noncompliance and improving special education services in PGCPs, further work is needed to ensure all students with disabilities receive the services to which they are entitled. MSDE will continue to monitor and support PGCPs through its established oversight and technical assistance processes.

For further information, please contact Laurel Cratsley, Interim Executive Director of Government Affairs, at 443-571-5461 or Laurel.Cratsley@maryland.gov.