



SB0447 – CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT – DISCLOSURE OF REPORTS AND RECORDS

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JUDICIARY

SUPPORT

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Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) supports **SB0447 – Child Abuse and Neglect – Disclosure of Reports and Records**. This bill expands the circumstances under which a report or record concerning child abuse or neglect may be disclosed by the Department of Human Services to include: (1) the administrator of a child care center operated by or on behalf of a unit of State or local government or in a state-occupied building; (2) the coach, team administrator, or manager of a youth sports program; and (3) the administrator or other appropriate personnel of any organization that provides adult supervision or care and control of children.

Student safety is of the utmost importance to local school systems. As such, AACPS supports this bill which will contribute to the safety and well-being of students in schools and in the community. Current Maryland law authorizes the Department of Human Services to disclose a report or record concerning child abuse or neglect to the appropriate public school superintendent or the principal or equivalent employee of a nonpublic school to carry out appropriate personnel or administrative actions following a report of suspected child abuse involving a student committed by: (1) a public school employee in that school system; (2) an employee of that nonpublic school; (3) an independent contractor who supervises or works directly with students in that school system or nonpublic school; or (4) an employee of an independent contractor, including a bus driver or bus assistant, who supervises or works directly with students in the school system or that nonpublic school.

AACPS appreciates the intent to this legislation to ensure that, in addition to public school systems and nonpublic schools, other employers with care and control of children are notified of an indicated finding of child abuse or neglect by one of their employees. Timely notification of a suspected abuser potentially working with or around children is paramount to the safety of the children in these programs. Allowing the Department of Human Services to expand this disclosure to include coaches, sports teams, childcare centers, and any other organization that provides supervision of children only improves the safety of AACPS students in our community.

Accordingly, AACPS respectfully requests a **FAVORABLE** committee report on SB0447.