



MARYLAND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COALITION

Dedicated to the rights and quality of life for people with developmental disabilities in Maryland

Support Children with Disabilities

While investments in education are without question needed, including for students with disabilities, we believe that the amount, purpose, and timing of the funding must take into consideration the needs of other Marylanders with disabilities. Funding for this bill should not be offset by limiting essential funding for other critical needs, most immediately the Developmental Disabilities Administration community services that thousands of Marylanders depend upon.

The following legislation affects children with disabilities and their families:

HB458/SB603: University of Maryland, College Park Campus - TerpsEXCEED Program - Funding

Allows, but does not require, the Governor to include money in the budget for the TerpsEXCEED Program starting in 2027.

- To increase access to inclusive higher education for people with intellectual disability, the TerpsEXCEED program was created in 2020. The first class enrolled in the Fall of 2021.
- Students take classes, participate in campus life, and get support from peer mentors.

HB 504/SB429: Excellence in Maryland Public Schools Act

Changes the definitions and funding formulas in the Blueprint for Maryland's Future because the Blueprint Fund only has enough funds to cover the costs in FY26 and FY27.

- Budget cuts to per-pupil foundation funding will mean few resources for classrooms, teacher salaries, instructional materials, and critical student services.
- Delaying collaborative time grants will prevent teachers from getting the professional development and planning time they need.
- Delaying funding for community schools will widen the achievement gap, and take away necessary supports.
- The proposed cuts disproportionately affect students with disabilities, Black and Brown students, students experiencing poverty, and students who are English Language Learners.

HB694/SB851: Public Schools - Individuals with Disabilities - Main Entrance Accessibility and Emergency Planning

Requires each county board of education to publish on the website the number of main entrances to public school buildings that are not accessible for people with disabilities, and requires local school systems to send emergency plans to the Department.

- School systems are already required to have emergency plans that accommodate, safeguard, and evacuate students, staff, and visitors with disabilities on public school grounds. Now they will have to send them to the Department of Education.
- Despite that, many entrances to schools remain not accessible to people with disabilities.

For additional information about the bills highlighted here, please contact:

Rachel London, Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council, RLondon@md-council.org

Leslie Seid Margolis, Disability Rights Maryland, LeslieM@disabilityrightsmd.org

Ande Kolp, The Arc Maryland, AKolp@thearcmd.org