



**HB718 STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION - EARLY LITERACY AND DYSLEXIA PRACTICES -
GUIDANCE AND ASSISTANCE**

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WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

OPPOSE

Jeanette Ortiz, Esq., Legislative & Policy Counsel (410.703.5352)

Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) opposes **HB718 State Department of Education - Early Literacy and Dyslexia Practices - Guidance and Assistance**. This bill requires, by October 1, 2020, the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to establish a stakeholder advisory group to develop a reading and dyslexia handbook with specified elements to guide local school systems in the implementation of best practices for early literacy and dyslexia. By June 1, 2021, MSDE and the stakeholder advisory group must make a completed handbook available to the public, as specified. MSDE must update and publish the handbook every three years. MSDE and the stakeholder advisory group must develop a list of recommended programs and materials that address the needs of at-risk and struggling readers and students with dyslexia. MSDE must develop professional learning opportunities and technical assistance on the content of the handbook to be published as specified. By June 1, 2021, MSDE must designate a dyslexia liaison to provide technical assistance to local school systems on the content of the handbook.

MSDE has already provided a Technical Assistance Bulletin, opportunities for technical assistance on this issue, and is required by 2019 legislation to develop and update resources. Additionally, a new 2019 requires law each local school system, beginning in the 2020-2021 school year, to ensure that specified students are screened to identify if the student is at risk for reading difficulties. Local school systems must select one or more screening instruments that accurately and reliably identify students at risk for poor learning outcomes; are developmentally appropriate; are economical in time and cost to administer; and use norm-referenced or criterion-based scores. Under the law, MSDE must develop and update resources for local boards every four years and provide technical support to local boards allowing them to provide training opportunities annually. Local boards must report annually to MSDE beginning with the 2020-2021 school year.

Accordingly, AACPS respectfully requests an **UNFAVORABLE** committee report on HB718.