

Many of the data elements included in HB 258 are currently available on the Maryland Report Card website and are disaggregated at the State, school system, and school levels by foster status, per the federal definition. These data elements include attendance, student mobility, graduation, and dropout data. HB 258 would require that some data be available for students that are in more than one student group, e.g. foster care and students with disabilities.

In the publicly available data for students receiving special services, students in foster care are included. However, an actual number of students in foster care is not provided for any Maryland public school, due to data suppression requirements that protect student privacy. HB 258 seeks a count of the number of children in foster care that would be fewer than the number in any one school, making it unlikely that any of the data sought could be publicly released.

Each local school system maintains its own student information system (SIS) and sends certain data elements to the MSDE for each student. These SISs currently send foster status for each student to the MSDE but do not provide further information about student involvement in the state child welfare system. Unique protocols for the transmission of these data would therefore be required. The MSDE would need to develop the protocol standards, convey those standards to local school systems, and work with local school systems to ensure that each SIS could produce and transmit the required data to the MSDE.

The MSDE respectfully requests that this information be considered during deliberation of **HB 258**. For further information, please contact Zachary Hands by phone at 410-767-0504 or by email at zachary.hands1@maryland.gov.