



Letter of Information

SB 515 and HB 48

On behalf of the nonpublic special education schools serving students with special needs, MANSEF submits the following Letter of Information.

The Maryland Association of Nonpublic Special Education Facilities (MANSEF) represents 70 nonpublic special education schools across Maryland. MANSEF members currently serve approximately 3800 publicly funded school children and employs over 2500 teachers, clinicians and administrators. All of the students we serve have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

Our member schools are approved by the Maryland State Department of Education under COMAR 13A.09.10. Our programs are part of the continuum of educational options as prescribed by the federal *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA – Sec 300.115). Maryland offers a wide array of schooling from home schooling, public separate day, private day and residential programs, nonpublic special education schools as well as alternative schools. (See MD. Code Ann., Ed Art 7-304)

Central to our mission is to serve students who cannot otherwise be served at their local public school for a myriad of reasons be it instructional, social/emotional or behavioral. As currently proposed, this bill will restrict our ability to serve students who may have been placed on the Sexual Offender Registry but desperately need our unique and specialized services. In fact, some of our programs have established trauma-informed approaches specifically for students who have sex trafficking in their histories. Our members support the intent of the bill which we believe is to uphold the safety of students with the utmost importance.

Certainly, the incident at Parkville Senior High was extremely unfortunate and had a devastating impact felt by many. We want to ensure members of the general assembly that our schools follow procedures from the time of admissions and throughout the students' time of enrollment to protect the safety of the school community. Restricting the options to either 1) Home and Hospital or 2) placement in one of the RICA's seems to counter the need for some of these very students to best be served within one of the nonpublic special education schools.

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