



Maryland Community Health System

Committee: Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

Bill: Senate Bill 856 – Public Schools – Health Services – School Nurses

Hearing Date: March 8, 2022

Position: Support

Maryland Community Health System supports *Senate Bill 856 – Public Schools – Health Services – School Nurses*. The bill will require each public school to have a full-time registered nurse, also known as a school nurse.

Maryland Community Health System is a network of federally qualified health centers with a focus on providing somatic, behavioral, and oral health care services to underserved communities. School nurses are essential to ensuring students are healthy, yet many counties do not have a nurse in every school. According to data provided by the Maryland State Department of Education, many counties assign nurses to multiple schools. The following are just examples of jurisdictions that do not have a nurse in every school: Anne Arundel – 77 nurses for 124 schools, Baltimore City – 77 nurses for 174 schools, and Kent County – 2 nurses for 5 schools.

Students in schools without a full-time nurse are at a great disadvantage. School nurses make sure that students daily health care needs are met, including medication management for chronic diseases, coordination of health services for medically complex children, and management of medical emergencies.

We ask for a favorable report. If we can provide any additional information, please contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net.