

February 7, 2023

From: Judy Murray 27 Montauk Ct. Parkville, MD. Jlondon11@comast.net

To: Senate Budget and Taxation Committee: Public Hearing February 8, 2023
Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 311 (the Teacher Pay Parity Act)

I am writing in support of SB 311, to provide pay parity to special education teachers in nonpublic schools in Maryland.

- Maryland nonpublic schools serve students whose educational needs cannot be met in public schools due to one or more learning challenges.
- Special education schools assist the State in meeting its obligations under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), to offer a full continuum of placements for children with special needs to address their multi-faceted learning challenges.
- Teacher pay-parity is key to attracting and retaining the most qualified teachers in our special education schools.

Our Story:

Our grandson is 15 and in his second year at Baltimore Lab School, a MANSEF school, located in Baltimore City, where he is excelling in his classes and taken on a leadership role in many after school clubs. He received a Baltimore County public school placement at Baltimore Lab School in 9th grade after struggling in elementary and middle school.

- Public school teachers with classrooms of 30 kids, despite their best intentions, were unable to consistently implement supports in his IEP. “Pull-outs” from general education classes into small study groups were stigmatizing and ineffective.
- Despite having a 504 plan in 2-4th grade and an IEP plan in 5-8th grade, the skill-divide between he and his peers became increasing evident as he advanced through elementary and middle public school. Multiple learning challenges impact his learning and skill development.

The Baltimore Lab School / The “MANSEF” Difference

- Small class sizes at Baltimore Lab School enable the BLS teachers to implement IEP that achieve learning goals without employing a one-size-fits all teaching style.
- Teachers provide intensive instruction to students to strengthen areas of weakness.
- Extra-curricular activities build community and improve social skills.

While learning disabilities do not disappear, life outcomes improve when students receive the accommodations they need, learn how to advocate for themselves and refuse to give up in the face of obstacles.

If you would like more information about Maryland's special education schools, please contact MANSEF (Maryland Association of Nonpublic Special Education Facilities) at 410-938-4413.