



Mary Pat Fannon, Executive Director
P.O. Box 12040
Baltimore, Md 21281
410-935-7281
marypat.fannon@pssam.org

Bill: SB 706 – Nonpublic Educational Programs – Children With Disabilities – Costs of Teacher Salaries
Date: March 10, 2022
Position: Oppose
Committee: Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
Contact: Mary Pat Fannon, Executive Director

This bill requires a nonpublic educational program for students with disabilities to provide its teachers a salary that is equivalent to public school teachers of similar training and experience in the same county. If the costs to do so are not met by the existing State and local cost sharing mechanism in current law for nonpublic placements, such additional funding is to be paid for by the State and the local school system in the same proportion as provided by that mechanism. Funding for other components of a nonpublic educational program may not be reduced to provide for required nonpublic teacher salary increases.

The Public School Superintendents' Association of Maryland (PSSAM), **opposes SB 706**.

The state's twenty-four local school systems are working hard to implement the Blueprint for Maryland's Future legislation, which includes a significant increase in teacher compensation to bring the teaching profession on par with professions that require similar education standards. These provisions include a 10% increase in salaries by FY '24 over FY '19 to close the gap of average teacher salaries in peer states. The Blueprint also calls for a \$60,000 starting salary for all teachers by FY '27. These are ambitious goals and each system is working with fidelity to meet these requirements. These provisions are already putting pressure on local systems to provide equal increases to personnel that are not specifically identified in the Blueprint, yet are integral staff in our systems, including psychologists, social workers, reading specialists, and more.

This bill would add an undue burden on local school systems and local governments as we strive to implement the Blueprint. We appreciate and support our nonpublic education providers, but as the fiscal note indicates, this bill creates a potential decrease in public school funding since school districts are responsible for paying the tuition of these nonpublic placements, which could increase at any time.

For the reasons stated above, PSSAM **OPPOSES SB 706** and requests an **unfavorable** committee report.