



MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

850 Hungerford Drive ♦ Room 123 ♦ Rockville, Maryland 20850



Bill: House Bill 245
Title: Child Abuse and Neglect - Failure to Report
Committee: Judiciary
Date: February 11, 2015
Position: **SUPPORT**
Contact: Michael Durso, President, Montgomery County Board of Education

The Montgomery County Board of Education supports House Bill 245.

This bill proposes to require Maryland agencies that employ mandated reporters to file a complaint with the appropriate licensing board, law enforcement agency, or county Board of Education, if the agency has substantial evidence to indicate that an employee (i.e., health practitioner, police officer, or educator, respectively) knowingly failed to report suspected child abuse to Child Protective Services (CPS).

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) is committed to ensuring the safety of its students. To this end, the Montgomery County Board of Education (Board) Policy JHC: *Child Abuse and Neglect* and MCPS Regulation JHC-RA: *Child Abuse and Neglect* state "Any MCPS employee, acting within his or her professional capacity for MCPS, who suspects child abuse and/or neglect and knowingly fails to report it, or who intentionally prevents or interferes with reporting, shall be subject to discipline up to and including suspension or dismissal." The policy and regulation further state that the MCPS employee may be subject to suspension or revocation of any certification issued by the Maryland State Board of Education. The policy and regulation apply to contractors and volunteers who also may be subject to discipline up to and including discontinuation of contractor services or volunteering privileges, respectively.

Finally, Board Policy JHC mandates that the superintendent of schools submit annual reports and additional updates, as appropriate, to the Board to demonstrate implementation of the policy and regulation.

House Bill 245 serves only to legislate at the state level what currently exists in the Board policy and MCPS regulation and will not result in a change to MCPS practices.

For these reasons, we support this bill and ask for a favorable report.