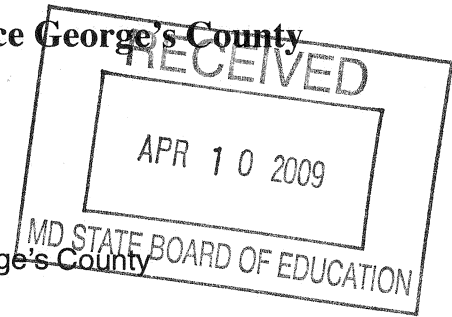


Special Education Citizens Advisory Committee of Prince George's County

Working for positive outcomes in special education.



To: The Maryland State Board of Education

From: The Special Education Citizens' Advisory Committee of Prince George's County

Re: Maintenance of Effort waiver request

Date: April 9, 2009

Statement of opposition to a waiver of the Maintenance of Effort (MOE) requirement requested by the Prince George's County Executive and County Council.

The Special Education Citizens' Advisory Committee of Prince George's County (SECAC-PG) urges the State Board of Education to deny the request for a waiver of the Maintenance of Effort (MOE) requirement that was made by the Prince George's County Executive and County Council.

Our concerns are many but center on the confusion surrounding the stipulations and guidelines attached to both the MOE waiver and the funds that our county will receive from the American Relief and Recovery Act (ARRA). The timing of the waiver request, coming immediately after the ARRA was authorized, has many parents and educators worried that the County Executive and County Council don't fully understand the ARRA, its intent, its restrictions, or its interactions with a waiver of the MOE.

The ARRA funds targeted for special education are designated "pass-through" funding. However, it should be recognized that the effects from a reduction to our county's education budget as large (\$23.6 million) as what the MOE waiver would cause will be felt by students receiving special education services. Efforts at improving least restrictive environments (LRE) by providing access to the general education classroom to students with disabilities will be especially affected. Our county's local determination of "Needs Intervention" is due largely to our need to improve LRE, and should be sufficient argument to deny the waiver request.

The complicated nature of the MOE waiver as it relates to the stimulus funds could negate any anticipated "recovery" that those funds intend. Therefore, we strongly recommend that Prince George's County's request for waiver to the Maintenance of Effort requirement be denied.

Thank you,

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SECAC-PG Executive Board

Mike McLaughlin, Chair; Lillie Bond, Vice Chair; Sarah Wayland, Secretary; Gail Voigt, Assist. Secretary; Meg Dillman, Treasurer