



MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

850 Hungerford Drive ♦ Room 123 ♦ Rockville, Maryland 20850



Bill: Senate Bill 794
Title: Prekindergarten and Kindergarten Assessments - Administration
Committee: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs
Date: March 2, 2016
Position: **SUPPORT**
Contact: Michael Durso, President, Montgomery County Board of Education

The Montgomery County Board of Education strongly supports Senate Bill 794.

Currently, every kindergarten student is administered the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) during the first eight weeks of kindergarten; this test takes approximately 45 minutes per student to administer. Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) is committed to assessing children's strengths, progress, and needs through developmentally appropriate methods. We have found that collecting ongoing informal observational data about prekindergarten students in language and literacy skills, academic knowledge in mathematics, science, and social studies, physical and social development has provided meaningful information for teachers and parents. These assessment practices serve to provide information on prekindergarten programming and the school readiness of our youngest learners.

The current assessment of *every* child at the beginning of kindergarten is disruptive and time consuming and potentially yields data of marginal usefulness that is quickly out-of-date. Currently, MCPS pays for every teacher of kindergarten students to have one day of substitute time to use to support test administration and data entry. MCPS pays for retired teachers to administer the current assessment to students in immersion programs. Finally, our Kindergarten teachers report that administering the test during the first eight weeks of kindergarten is disruptive to the routines they are trying to establish and uses valuable instructional time.

For these reasons, we strongly urge a favorable report on this bill.