



**COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**  
**THE JOHN A. WILSON BUILDING**  
**1350 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, NW**  
**WASHINGTON, D.C. 20004**

**CHRISTINA HENDERSON**  
Councilmember, At-Large  
Chairperson, Committee on Health

**Committee Member**  
Facilities  
Human Services  
Transportation and the Environment

**Statement of Introduction**  
**Advancing Equity in Special Education Protocols Amendment Act of 2025**  
**January 17, 2025**

Today, I am proud to introduce the Advancing Equity in Special Education Protocols Amendment Act of 2025, along with Councilmembers Robert C. White, Jr., Brooke Pinto, Janeese Lewis George, Zachary Parker, Brianne K. Nadeau, and Matthew Frumin. This measure was first introduced in Council Period 25 and received a hearing in November 2024.

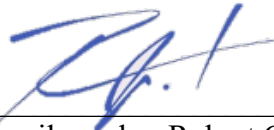
Stability in school placement is critical for students with special education needs, providing them with a consistent environment where they can build relationships, receive continuous support, and achieve their academic goals. In the District, such stability means remaining in their initial school placement feeder pattern. Disruptions in the school placement of a student with special needs can lead to gaps in their education, increased anxiety, and declines in both academic performance and social wellbeing.

Students with special needs are best served when educators are adequately supported to provide the best classroom experience. Clear staff-to-student ratio standards that are adhered to equip teachers to provide a safe, consistent learning environment that can meet the needs of each student. Appropriate staff-to-student ratios in special education classrooms are critical for teacher well-being and effectiveness, provide a learning environment that improves student engagement and academic achievement, and reduce behavioral issues.

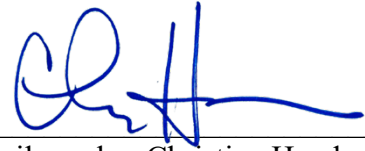
This legislation would give a student with special needs who has an individualized education program (IEP) the right to remain in their initial school placement feeder pattern, unless the programs available in their feeder pattern cannot support their needs. If a student with an IEP is moved to a school outside of their feeder pattern, the student's IEP team would be informed in writing of the rationale for the move. Additionally, this bill would require the Executive to promulgate rules that establish staff-to-student ratio standards for self-contained special education classrooms. In the event that the number of students in a self-contained special education classroom increases and the classroom does not conform with the staff-to-student ratio standard, a local education agency would provide a written explanation within 5 days to teachers in an affected self-contained special education classroom, parents of students in an impacted self-contained special education classroom, and school administrators, describing the additional resources and personnel that will be allocated to meet each student's needs as defined by their IEP.

By providing these supports and resources to students, parents, and dedicated special education teachers, the District can enhance educational outcomes and improve the overall well-being of students and teachers in self-contained classrooms.

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Councilmember Robert C. White, Jr.



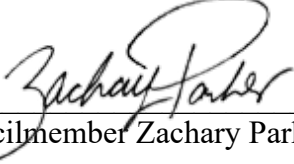
Councilmember Christina Henderson



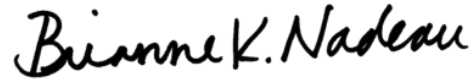
Councilmember Janeese Lewis George



Councilmember Brooke Pinto



Councilmember Zachary Parker



Councilmember Brianne K. Nadeau



Councilmember Matt Frumin

A BILL

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

To amend the Special Education Procedural Protections Expansion Act of 2014 to give a child with a disability with an individualized education program the right to remain in their initial placement feeder pattern unless there is no program available in their feeder pattern, to require that an LEA consult with the IEP team of a child with a disability prior to any change in the child's service location, to require that an LEA provide a written explanation to the parent of a child with a disability before any change in service location for the child is made and explain why the special education services in the current feeder pattern cannot meet the child's needs if the action removes the child from their current placement's feeder pattern, and to require that an LEA provide a written explanation to the special education teacher in an affected self-contained special education program classroom, the parents of students in an affected self-contained special education classroom, and school administrators, describing the additional resources and personnel that will be allocated to a classroom when the student-to-staff ratio exceeds those ratios set by regulation.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this act may be cited as the "Advancing Equity in Special Education Protocols Amendment Act of 2025".

45           Sec. 2. The Special Education Procedural Protections Expansion Act of 2014, effective  
46 March 10, 2015 (D.C. Law 20-194; D.C. Official Code § 38-2571.01 *et seq*), is amended as  
47 follows:

48           (a) Section 101 (D.C. Official Code § 38-2571.01), is amended by adding a new  
49 paragraph (4A) to read as follows:

50           “(4A) “Self-contained special education classroom” means a full-time, outside of  
51 general-education classroom that provides instruction for students in accordance with their  
52 IEPs.”.

53           (b) Section 103 (D.C. Official Code § 38-2571.03) is amended as follows:

54                   (1) The existing language is redesignated as subsection (b).

55                   (2) A new subsection (a) is added to read as follows:

56                   “(a) A child with a disability has the right to continue with their initial placement’s feeder  
57 pattern as that term is defined in section 1102a(2A) of the School Based Budgeting and  
58 Accountability Act of 1998, effective June 21, 2014 (D.C. Law 20-114; D.C. Official Code § 38-  
59 2801.01(2A)), unless the new service location within the feeder pattern does not have special  
60 education services available that would support the child’s IEP.”.

61                   (3) Subsection (b)(1) is amended to read as follows:

62                   “(b)(1) Before any change in service location for a child with a disability is made,  
63 the LEA shall consult with the child’s IEP team as defined by 20 USC § 1414 (d)(1) and shall  
64 provide the IEP team with written notice of the proposed change, which shall at minimum  
65 include:”.

66                   (4) Subsection (b)(1)(B) is amended to read as follows:

67                   “(B) An explanation of the following:

68 (i) Why the LEA proposes to take the action; and  
69 (ii) Why the special education services in the current feeder  
70 pattern cannot meet the student’s needs, if the action removes the child from their current  
71 placement’s feeder pattern;”.

72 (c) New sections 105 and 106 are added to read as follows:

73 “Sec. 105. Self-contained classroom size.

74 “If the student to staff ratio in a self-contained special education classroom exceeds the  
75 ratio set by the rules promulgated pursuant to section 106, an LEA shall provide a written  
76 explanation to the special education teacher in an affected self-contained special education  
77 classroom, the parents of the students in an affected self-contained special education classroom,  
78 and school administrators, describing the additional resources or personnel that will be allocated  
79 to a self-contained special education classroom to meet each student’s needs as defined by their  
80 IEP, within 5 business days.”.

81 “Sec. 106. Rulemaking.

82 “The Mayor, pursuant to Title I of the District of Columbia Administrative Procedure  
83 Act, approved October 21, 1968 (82 Stat. 1204; D.C. Official Code § 2-501 *et seq.*), shall  
84 promulgate rules to implement the provisions of this title no later than 120 days after the  
85 effective date of this section.”.

86 Sec. 3. Fiscal impact statement.

87 The Council adopts the fiscal impact statement in the committee report as the fiscal  
88 impact statement required by section 4a of the General Legislative Procedures Act of 1975,  
89 approved October 16, 2006 (120 Stat. 2038; D.C. Official Code § 1-301.47a).

90 Sec. 4. Effective date.

91           This act shall take effect following approval by the Mayor (or in the event of veto by the  
92 Mayor, action by the Council to override the veto) and a 30-day period of congressional review  
93 as provided in section 602(c)(1) of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act, approved December  
94 24, 1973 (87 Stat. 813; D.C. Official Code § 1-206.02(c)(1)).