

**Public Comment Received During the 30-day Public Comment Period for  
NEW Policy JV – Personal Care and Toileting**

Please note that the following comments were received during the 30-day public comment period for the proposed adoption of NEW Policy JV – Personal Care and Toileting. Other than formatting and the removal of some personal information, the comments have not been altered.

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Under 5A in the Personal Care and Toileting the policy needs to state that AACPS will provide PPE to ALL staff members, regardless of student age. It is currently written as "Early Learning Programs". This would not necessarily cover all students with toileting needs.

Jenny Simonson

*Good afternoon, Ms. Simonson:*

*Thank you for your feedback regarding new Policy JV - Personal Care and Toileting. Your comments will be shared with the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County and the Superintendent.*

*Best,*

*Grace Wilson*

*Director of Legislation and Policy*

Dear Members of the Board of Education,

I am writing to respectfully express concern regarding the proposed regulation that would place the responsibility of potty training and cleaning students after toileting accidents on general education classroom teachers.

First and foremost, there are significant sanitary and health considerations associated with this responsibility. Classroom teachers are not equipped with the appropriate facilities, or training necessary to safely manage bodily waste. Schools typically have established health and safety protocols that involve trained personnel, appropriate sanitation procedures, and designated areas for handling such situations. Assigning these tasks to classroom teachers could create potential health risks for staff and students, while also exposing school systems to liability concerns.

Additionally, potty training is widely recognized as a developmental milestone that is typically addressed by families prior to school entry, unless a student has a documented medical, developmental, or special education need that requires individualized support. When toileting needs are related to disabilities or medical conditions, these supports are typically addressed through individualized plans such as IEPs or 504 plans with the assistance of trained staff and appropriate resources.

Placing the responsibility for potty training on general education teachers also raises practical and instructional concerns. Teachers are responsible for supervising and instructing an entire classroom of students. Leaving the classroom to assist with toileting or to clean a student after an accident could compromise classroom supervision and reduce valuable instructional time for all students. In early childhood and elementary classrooms especially, maintaining consistent supervision is critical for safety.

Furthermore, this expectation may blur the important boundary between family responsibilities and classroom instruction. Families play a key role in preparing children for school readiness, including the development of independent toileting skills. Schools certainly support students with occasional accidents compassionately; however, expecting teachers to take on routine potty training responsibilities shifts a fundamental developmental responsibility away from families and onto classroom educators.

Teachers deeply care about the well-being and dignity of their students, and they consistently go above and beyond to support children throughout the school day. However, policies should also ensure that teachers are

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able to focus on their primary role—providing instruction, maintaining a safe learning environment, and supporting students academically and socially.

I respectfully encourage the Board to carefully reconsider this proposed regulation and to explore alternative approaches that maintain appropriate health standards, protect instructional time, and preserve the partnership between schools and families regarding developmental readiness for school.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and continued dedication to supporting both students and educators.  
Sincerely,  
Angie Ross  
PreK teacher, Four Seasons Elementary

*Good afternoon, Ms. Ross:*

*Thank you for your feedback regarding the proposed adoption of new Policy JV - Personal Care and Toileting. Your comments will be shared with the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County and the Superintendent.*

*As outlined in Policy JV, AACPS is committed to ensuring that all students, regardless of disability status, are treated with dignity, respect, and provided appropriate support to access their educational environment. The intent of the proposed policy and accompanying regulation is not to shift responsibility for toileting onto general education teachers, but rather to clarify that supporting students' basic needs is a shared responsibility of school staff within early learning environments, consistent with developmentally appropriate practice and legal requirements.*

*Students in early childhood settings (Birth-5, PreK, and Kindergarten) enter school with a wide range of developmental skills, including varying levels of toileting independence. The policy and regulation reflect this reality and establishes that staff, including teachers, assistants, and other designated personnel, may be required to support students with personal care needs as part of ensuring access to education and progressing toward independence. Importantly, this work is not expected to occur without structure or safeguards. The policy, regulation, and accompanying guidelines provide for the following:*

- Health and Safety: Schools provide personal protective equipment and follow established procedures to ensure sanitary and safe practices.*
- Defined Roles and Shared Responsibility: Support is not limited to a single individual; principals designate staff and ensure appropriate coverage to maintain classroom supervision.*
- Parent Partnership: Families are required to provide necessary supplies and are engaged through permission forms and communications, reinforcing that toileting independence remains a shared responsibility.*
- Individualized Planning: For students with disabilities or specific needs, toileting supports are documented through IEPs, 504 plans, or individual care plans to ensure consistency and appropriateness.*

*We recognize and deeply value the instructional role of classroom teachers. This regulation is designed to ensure that all students can safely access school while balancing instructional priorities, student dignity, and legal obligations.*

*Again, thank you for your comments. If I can provide any additional information or clarification, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.*

Best,  
Grace Wilson  
Director of Legislation and Policy

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Furthermore, this expectation may blur the important boundary between family responsibilities and classroom instruction. Families play a key role in preparing children for school readiness, including the development of independent toileting skills. Schools certainly support students with occasional accidents compassionately; however, expecting teachers to take on routine potty training responsibilities shifts a fundamental developmental responsibility away from families and onto classroom educators.

Teachers deeply care about the well-being and dignity of their students, and they consistently go above and beyond to support children throughout the school day. However, policies should also ensure that teachers are able to focus on their primary role—providing instruction, maintaining a safe learning environment, and supporting students academically and socially.

I respectfully encourage the Board to carefully reconsider this proposed regulation and to explore alternative approaches that maintain appropriate health standards, protect instructional time, and preserve the partnership between schools and families regarding developmental readiness for school.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and continued dedication to supporting both students and educators.

Sincerely,  
Nicole Marie  
Kindergarten/ Four Seasons Elementary

*Good afternoon, Ms. Marie:*

*Thank you for your feedback regarding the proposed adoption of new Policy JV - Personal Care and Toileting. Your comments will be shared with the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County and the Superintendent.*

*As outlined in Policy JV, AACPS is committed to ensuring that all students, regardless of disability status, are treated with dignity, respect, and provided appropriate support to access their educational environment. The intent of the proposed policy and*

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*accompanying regulation is not to shift responsibility for toileting onto general education teachers, but rather to clarify that supporting students' basic needs is a shared responsibility of school staff within early learning environments, consistent with developmentally appropriate practice and legal requirements.*

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*We recognize and deeply value the instructional role of classroom teachers. This regulation is designed to ensure that all students can safely access school while balancing instructional priorities, student dignity, and legal obligations.*

*Again, thank you for your comments. If I can provide any additional information or clarification, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.*

*Best,  
Grace Wilson  
Director of Legislation and Policy*

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Thank you for your time, consideration, and continued dedication to supporting both students and educators.  
Sincerely,  
Mrs. DelGrosso  
Kindergarten Teacher  
Four Seasons Elementary

*Good afternoon, Mrs. DelGrosso:*

*Thank you for your feedback regarding the proposed adoption of new Policy JV - Personal Care and Toileting. Your comments will be shared with the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County and the Superintendent.*

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Sincerely,  
Kristina Madison

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*Good afternoon, Ms. Madison:*

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*As outlined in Policy JV, AACPS is committed to ensuring that all students, regardless of disability status, are treated with dignity, respect, and provided appropriate support to access their educational environment. The intent of the proposed policy and accompanying regulation is not to shift responsibility for toileting onto general education teachers, but rather to clarify that supporting students' basic needs is a shared responsibility of school staff within early learning environments, consistent with developmentally appropriate practice and legal requirements.*

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*We recognize and deeply value the instructional role of classroom teachers. This regulation is designed to ensure that all students can safely access school while balancing instructional priorities, student dignity, and legal obligations.*

*Again, thank you for your comments. If I can provide any additional information or clarification, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.*

*Best,  
Grace Wilson  
Director of Legislation and Policy*

Unless the student has a physical disability, toileting is a parental responsibility NOT a teacher or TA responsibility. The parents need to be called to come to school and toilet their child.  
Francine Murphy

*Good afternoon, Ms. Murphy:*

*Thank you for your feedback regarding the proposed new Policy JV - Personal Care and Toileting. Your comments will be shared with the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County and the Superintendent.*

*State law requires that all students over the age of five are enrolled in school, regardless of their toileting abilities. Additionally, students in early childhood settings (Birth-5, PreK, and Kindergarten) enter school with a wide range of developmental skills, including varying levels of toileting independence. The policy and regulation proposed reflect this reality and establishes that staff may be required to support students with personal care needs as part of ensuring access to education and progressing toward independence. Families are required to provide necessary supplies and are engaged through permission forms and communications, reinforcing that toileting independence remains a shared responsibility.*

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I disagree that toileting is a shared responsibility, it is a parental responsibility. I do not believe "shared responsibility" should appear in the proposed permission form.

Francine Murphy

It has come to my attention that AACPS is considering not requiring preK and kindergarten students to be potty trained. While I can understand some preK students needing assistance and reinforcement at times, this is not an appropriate educational expectation for teachers and related service providers who already have large caseloads/class sizes, challenging behaviors and a rigorous curriculum to teach and adapt as needed. Add onto this, the strict budget cuts excessing teachers and support staff and cuts to special education, how is this feasible? For far too long, parents have passed many responsibilities to the schools. Schools are meant to educate, they are not a replacement for parental responsibility. Having this as a blanketed generalized policy will be harmful to educational outcomes, teacher and related service provider workload and parental expectations. While exceptions can and do exist, I do not agree with this being an acceptable educational standard. Not to mention the inappropriateness and possible liability of a teacher being routinely tasked with student personal care. Is it worth the risk of possible accusations? Hardly. AACPS is already underfunding needed supports as it is. Let's not add on additional, unnecessary expectations for teachers and support staff who are already overwhelmed, overworked, and underappreciated.

Thank you,  
Katie Sears Snoberger

*Good morning, Ms. Sears Snoberger:*

*Thank you for your feedback regarding the proposed adoption of Policy JV - Personal Care and Toileting. Your comments will be shared with the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County and the Superintendent.*

*As outlined in Policy JV, Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) is committed to ensuring that all students, regardless of disability status, are treated with dignity, respect, and provided appropriate support to access their educational environment. The intent of the proposed policy and accompanying regulation is not to shift responsibility for toileting onto general education teachers, but rather to clarify that supporting students' basic needs is a shared responsibility of school staff within early learning environments, consistent with developmentally appropriate practice and legal requirements.*

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*We recognize and deeply value the instructional role of classroom teachers. This policy and regulation are designed to ensure that all students can safely access school while balancing instructional priorities, student dignity, and legal obligations.*

*Again, thank you for your comments. If I can provide any additional information or clarification, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.*

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Hello,

I am a current PreK teacher and believe this policy should be removed. Teachers are here to teach. Spending countless amount of hours trying to toilet a child is not acceptable whether they have an IEP or not. Many of our classrooms have bathrooms right in the middle of the room so this is not private. I would not be comfortable closing a door to help a student with a diaper change. The student will also feel embarrassed.

Right now I have a student with a pull up who changes himself. He goes to use the nurse bathroom because that is a private bathroom and is the only place with a diaper genie. It is unsanitary to put dirty diapers in an open trash can. It takes 20 minutes or more for him to do this on his own. That's a lot of time.

If you are a parent you know the work it takes to potty train. It is a hands on task and should be done at home. If parents aren't willing to help how can we expect to do it. I can't be stopping multiple times a day to change diapers and have 19 other 4 year olds who have behavior issues and can't be left with just myself or my assistant if one of us is changing a child. Curriculum would not get taught how it's intended. That's being kind. If we have more than 1 child nothing will get done. We will also be out of ratio compliance if the assistant has to leave the room to take the child somewhere.

Instead of holding parents accountable and creating a policy that the child needs to be potty trained before school you are putting more work on your teachers and creating an unsafe atmosphere. This is an unacceptable policy instead of facing the truth. Parents need to potty train their own kid!

Maybe spending some time in our classrooms will help you understand how much we deal with each day.

I want to teach, if I wanted to potty train and change diapers I'd work in a daycare. We are NOT daycare and I'm disappointed that we are being treated as such.

Please do not let this policy pass. We simply do not have adequate space, time or manpower for this.

Thank you  
Jennifer Reynolds

*Good morning, Ms. Reynolds:*

*Thank you for your feedback regarding the proposed adoption of new Policy JV - Personal Care and Toileting. Your comments will be shared with the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County and the Superintendent.*

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*Again, thank you for your comments. If I can provide any additional information or clarification, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.*

*Best,  
Grace Wilson  
Director of Legislation and Policy*

I am writing to share my opinion about Policy JV-RA. While I understand the need for this policy, I am unhappy with it. Many school staff do not have easy access to a bathroom and would not be able to assist students that might need help without leaving students in their classrooms unsupervised.

This would especially be an issue for elementary Cultural Arts teachers, who are often left alone with the students with no additional staff support, even when it is written into IEPs. Cultural Arts time is often break time for TSAs assigned to students.

If this policy is approved, then the people writing the procedures need to be teachers, not administrative staff far removed from the realities of classroom teachers.

Amy Young-Buckler

*Good morning, Ms. Young-Buckler:*

*Thank you for your feedback regarding the proposed adoption of new Policy JV - Personal Care and Toileting. Your comments will be shared with the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County and the Superintendent.*

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*Best,  
Grace Wilson  
Director of Legislation and Policy*

Dear Members of the Board of Education,  
I am writing to respectfully ask you to remove general education classroom teachers as the designated staff member in supporting student toileting needs.

While educators are committed to supporting the whole child, it is important to recognize that toileting for general education students is not a responsibility that can be reasonably or safely assumed by classroom teachers. Teachers are responsible for supervising an entire classroom of students at all times. If a teacher were to leave the classroom to assist an individual child with toileting, the remaining students would be left unsupervised, which presents both safety concerns and potential liability issues.

Additionally, toileting is a developmental skill that is most appropriately taught and reinforced at home. Parents and caregivers play a critical role in ensuring that children are toilet trained prior to entering school. When students arrive without these foundational skills, it places teachers in a difficult position that detracts from instructional time and the ability to meet the needs of all learners.

For this reason, it would be appropriate for the district to adopt a clear policy stating that children should be fully toilet trained prior to entering kindergarten, and that this responsibility rests with families. Establishing this expectation would provide consistency, support school readiness, and help ensure that classrooms can function safely and effectively.

It is also important to note that providing toileting assistance may involve personal care that falls outside the scope of a teacher's professional responsibilities and training, particularly in general education environments where such supports are not typically built into staffing or resources. Each early childhood teacher would need their own TA in order to ensure there was an adult in the room while the teacher is toileting a child. There would also need to be a third staff member present to supervise the adult toileting the child in order to protect them from accusations being made against them.

I respectfully ask the Board to consider reinforcing clear guidelines that families are responsible for toileting their children at home before entering kindergarten. Establishing consistent policies will help ensure student safety, preserve instructional time, and support teachers in maintaining an effective learning environment for all students.

Thank you for your time and consideration.  
Kaitlin Day

*Good morning, Ms. Day:*

*Thank you for your feedback regarding the proposed adoption of new Policy JV - Personal Care and Toileting. Your comments will be shared with the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County and the Superintendent.*

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*Best,  
Grace Wilson  
Director of Legislation and Policy*

Dear Members of the Anne Arundel County Board of Education,  
I am writing as an early childhood educator in Anne Arundel County to express my concerns regarding the proposed policy on toileting and diapering in classrooms such as Pre K, kindergarten, and other early education programs.

While I understand the intent behind the policy, I believe it does not fully reflect the realities of early childhood classroom environments. One of the primary concerns cited is that there is not enough staff to support toileting and diapering. This is, in fact, a significant and ongoing challenge. Even without this policy, these issues are already occurring in schools today. In many cases, students who are actively potty training require assistance at unpredictable times, often during transitions, small group instruction, or when staffing is already limited. This creates situations where adequate supervision for the rest of the class may be compromised.

I want to be clear that I personally have no issue assisting with toileting or diapering a child when needed. Supporting young children in these moments is part of caring for the whole child. However, the current staffing limitations make it unrealistic to safely change a child while also teaching the rest of the class and ensuring that all students are properly supervised. This is not a matter of willingness. It is a matter of maintaining safety and meeting the needs of all students in the room.

Additionally, many classrooms are not equipped with appropriate facilities such as changing tables. While I understand that some school sites do have changing tables available, these are typically provided only when a child has documented needs on an IEP that include toileting or diapering support, with conjunction with outside providers such as physical therapy. Even at sites where changing tables are available, they are not

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always located within the early childhood classroom and often require an adult to leave the room with the student to access them. This leaves many general education early childhood classrooms without consistent or immediate access to proper changing facilities. As a result, staff are expected to change students while they are standing, often in open bathroom spaces. This raises concerns related to safety, hygiene, and dignity for both the child and the adult and does not align with best practices. Any adult who has had to change a standing child with a bowel movement knows how incredibly difficult this can be to do safely, effectively, and with dignity. Other private childcare and early education settings are equipped with designated changing stations and appropriate spaces to safely and respectfully meet these needs. Why can these settings be equipped in this way, while our public school early childhood classrooms are not?

There are also logistical concerns regarding supplies. When families do not consistently provide diapers, wipes, or other necessary items, it is unclear who will be responsible for supplying these materials. Without clear policies, clearly defined expectations, and accountability, this places an additional burden on classroom staff and creates inconsistency in care. In addition, it is unclear who is responsible for providing the cleaning products needed to properly sanitize the space after diapering or toileting. Clear expectations and consistent access to appropriate cleaning supplies are essential to maintain a safe and hygienic environment for all students.

Furthermore, this policy raises important questions about shared responsibility. For children who are developmentally ready, toilet training is a critical life skill that requires consistency between home and school. Without clear expectations, accountability, and a defined toilet training plan with families, it becomes difficult to support children effectively in the classroom setting.

It is also important to clarify staffing roles. Teacher Assistants and Temporary Support Assistants do have it in their contracts to support toileting and diapering for students with identified needs through IEPs or 504 plans. However, it is unclear who is responsible for toileting and diapering children who do not yet have an IEP or 504 but are not potty trained. With the increasing number of children entering early childhood programs, including Pre K and kindergarten, without being toilet trained, a clear plan is needed to support these students without placing additional strain on already limited staff.

Additionally, staffing schedules further impact ratios. Teacher Assistants and Temporary Support Assistants are entitled through their contracts to take two 15 minute breaks during the day aside from their designated lunchtime. Maryland's required ratio of two adults per ten children is already difficult to consistently maintain throughout the school day. When toileting and diapering needs arise, especially during times of reduced staffing due to breaks or other responsibilities, it becomes even more challenging to maintain safe and appropriate supervision.

I urge the Board to carefully consider the real world implications of this policy. If implemented without addressing staffing limitations and classroom realities, it may place both students and staff in unsafe situations. Teachers may be forced to choose between attending to a child's immediate toileting needs and maintaining supervision of the rest of the class, neither of which should be compromised. I also urge you to consider how many students with diapering needs in a general education classroom is truly sustainable and at what point additional staffing would be required due to the frequency and time needed for diapering and changing.

I respectfully ask the Board to consider:

- Providing adequate staffing ratios that reflect the realities of toileting needs in early childhood settings
- Ensuring classrooms are equipped with proper changing facilities
- Establishing clear policies, clarifying expectations, and ensuring accountability for family responsibility for supplies
- Clarifying expectations, accountability, and a defined toilet training plan with families

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- Creating a clear plan to support students without IEPs or 504 plans who are not toilet trained
- Considering how staffing breaks and daily schedules impact ratio and safety
- Providing clear guidance on who is responsible for supplying and maintaining appropriate cleaning products for sanitizing after diapering

With these considerations in mind, I would be more than willing to support and accept this policy if the concerns outlined above were clearly addressed within it. I am not suggesting that toileting or diapering students is outside the scope of my role. I have done so in the past and will continue to do so when needed. However, for the safety of all children and staff, and to ensure consistent and appropriate expectations, these supports, responsibilities, and procedures must be clearly defined in writing within the policy itself.

I love what I do. I love this age group and truly have a passion for supporting students with diverse needs and implementing supports to help them access learning and show what they know to the best of their abilities. With that said, I respectfully urge you to revisit and rewrite this policy while taking into account the realities and considerations outlined above.

Our goal is always to provide a safe, respectful, and developmentally appropriate learning environment for all children. In its current form, this policy presents significant challenges that may hinder our ability to do so effectively.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
An Early Childhood Educator

*Good morning,*

*Thank you for your feedback regarding the proposed adoption of new Policy JV - Personal Care and Toileting. Your comments will be shared with the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County and the Superintendent.*

*As outlined in Policy JV, AACPS is committed to ensuring that all students, regardless of disability status, are treated with dignity, respect, and provided appropriate support to access their educational environment. The intent of the proposed policy and accompanying regulation is not to shift responsibility for toileting onto general education teachers, but rather to clarify that supporting students' basic needs is a shared responsibility of school staff within early learning environments, consistent with developmentally appropriate practice and legal requirements.*

*Students in early childhood settings (Birth-5, PreK, and Kindergarten) enter school with a wide range of developmental skills, including varying levels of toileting independence. The policy and regulation reflect this reality and establishes that staff, including teachers, assistants, and other designated personnel, may be required to support students with personal care needs as part of ensuring access to education and progressing toward independence. Importantly, this work is not expected to occur without structure or safeguards. The policy, regulation, and accompanying guidelines provide for the following:*

- *Health and Safety: Schools provide personal protective equipment and follow established procedures to ensure sanitary and safe practices.*
- *Defined Roles and Shared Responsibility: Support is not limited to a single individual; principals designate staff and ensure appropriate coverage to maintain classroom supervision.*
- *Parent Partnership: Families are required to provide necessary supplies and are engaged through permission forms and communications, reinforcing that toileting independence remains a shared responsibility.*
- *Individualized Planning: For students with disabilities or specific needs, toileting supports are documented through IEPs, 504 plans, or individual care plans to ensure consistency and appropriateness.*

*We recognize and deeply value the instructional role of classroom teachers. This regulation is designed to ensure that all students can safely access school while balancing instructional priorities, student dignity, and legal obligations.*

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*Again, thank you for your comments. If I can provide any additional information or clarification, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.*

*Best,  
Grace Wilson  
Director of Legislation and Policy*

Dear Grace and Members of the Board of Education,

Thank you for your thoughtful response and for taking the time to outline the intent behind Policy JV. I appreciate the emphasis on student dignity, shared responsibility, and access to education, all of which I strongly support as an early childhood educator.

However, I would like to respectfully request further clarification and consideration regarding how this policy will be implemented in practice before it is voted on and adopted.

While the response references safeguards such as health and safety procedures, defined roles, parent partnership, and individualized planning, many of these remain broad in nature. Given the realities of early childhood classrooms, I believe it is critical that these safeguards be more clearly specified and accompanied by a detailed, written implementation plan prior to approval.

For example:

- What does “appropriate coverage” look like in real time when a teacher or assistant must leave the classroom to support toileting?
- How will staffing be adjusted when multiple students require toileting or diapering at the same time?
- How will consistency be ensured across schools so that expectations are not interpreted differently building to building?
- What are the exact procedures for sanitizing spaces, and who is responsible for ensuring materials are consistently available?
- How will accountability be maintained if families do not provide supplies or follow through with toileting plans?

Additionally, according to the [Maryland State Education Association](#), indicates that two designated adults should be present if a student requires physical assistance with personal care tasks. If a classroom does not have an assistant, then another staff member in the building should be designated. It also states that two adults should be present when personal care is managed away from the instructional area.

How will these expectations be reflected within the safeguards outlined in this policy? Without clear procedures to ensure this level of support, there is a significant risk that staff may be placed in situations that do not align with recommended safety practices for either students or adults.

Additionally, while the policy states that this is a shared responsibility and not intended to shift the burden onto general education teachers, the practical reality is that without a clearly defined structure and staffing plan, the responsibility will inevitably fall on whoever is available in the moment. In many cases, that will be the classroom teacher, which directly impacts both instruction and student supervision.

I also respectfully suggest that an implementation plan include:

- Clear staffing expectations tied to the number of students requiring toileting support
- Defined procedures for when staff must leave the classroom
- Building level logistics, including access to appropriate changing facilities
- A structured and enforceable toileting plan with families that includes accountability measures
- Training expectations for staff to ensure consistency and safety
- A phased rollout or pilot to evaluate effectiveness before full implementation

While I appreciate the intent of the policy, intent alone does not ensure safe and consistent practice. Without a clearly written and detailed implementation plan, there is a risk that this policy will create unintended safety concerns for both students and staff.

I respectfully urge the Board to consider further specifying these safeguards and developing a comprehensive implementation plan prior to voting on this policy. Having this in place would not only support staff, but

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ultimately ensure that the policy achieves its goal of maintaining student dignity while also preserving a safe and effective learning environment.

Thank you again for your time and for considering the perspectives of those working directly in early childhood classrooms each day.

Sincerely,  
Early Childhood Educator

*Good morning,*

*Thank you for your additional feedback regarding proposed Policy JV - Personal Care and Toileting. Your comments will be shared with the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County and the Superintendent.*

*Anne Arundel County Public Schools plans to issue additional procedures and guidance regarding the implementation of Policy JV/Regulation JV-RA - Personal Care and Toileting via the AACPS Personal Care and Toileting Guidelines referenced in the regulation.*

*Best,  
Grace Wilson  
Director of Legislation and Policy*

Dear Members of the Board of Education,

I am writing to respectfully ask you to remove general education classroom teachers as the designated staff member in supporting student toileting needs.

While educators are committed to supporting the whole child, it is important to recognize that toileting for general education students is not a responsibility that can be reasonably or safely assumed by classroom teachers. Teachers are responsible for supervising an entire classroom of students at all times. If a teacher were to leave the classroom to assist an individual child with toileting, the remaining students would be left unsupervised, which presents both safety concerns and potential liability issues.

Additionally, toileting is a developmental skill that is most appropriately taught and reinforced at home. Parents and caregivers play a critical role in ensuring that children are toilet trained prior to entering school. When students arrive without these foundational skills, it places teachers in a difficult position that detracts from instructional time and the ability to meet the needs of all learners.

For this reason, it would be appropriate for the district to adopt a clear policy stating that children should be fully toilet trained prior to entering kindergarten, and that this responsibility rests with families. Establishing this expectation would provide consistency, support school readiness, and help ensure that classrooms can function safely and effectively.

It is also important to note that providing toileting assistance may involve personal care that falls outside the scope of a teacher's professional responsibilities and training, particularly in general education environments where such supports are not typically built into staffing or resources. Each early childhood teacher would need their own TA in order to ensure there was an adult in the room while the teacher is toileting a child. There would also need to be a third staff member present to supervise the adult toileting the child in order to protect them from any accusations that could be made against them.

I may also add that if this is policy is put in place more parents will not take it upon themselves to toilet train their child. They will wait until the child enters school. The trend will grow. The more students we have not potty trained, the less time we are focusing on academics and the more time is spent with toileting.

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I respectfully ask the Board to consider reinforcing clear guidelines that families are responsible for toileting their children at home before entering kindergarten. Establishing consistent policies will help ensure student safety, preserve instructional time, and support teachers in maintaining an effective learning environment for all students.

Thank you for your time and consideration.  
Krista Willson

*Good morning, Ms. Willson:*

*Thank you for your feedback regarding the proposed adoption of new Policy JV - Personal Care and Toileting. Your comments will be shared with the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County and the Superintendent.*

*As outlined in Policy JV, AACPS is committed to ensuring that all students, regardless of disability status, are treated with dignity, respect, and provided appropriate support to access their educational environment. The intent of the proposed policy and accompanying regulation is not to shift responsibility for toileting onto general education teachers, but rather to clarify that supporting students' basic needs is a shared responsibility of school staff within early learning environments, consistent with developmentally appropriate practice and legal requirements.*

*Students in early childhood settings (Birth-5, PreK, and Kindergarten) enter school with a wide range of developmental skills, including varying levels of toileting independence. The policy and regulation reflect this reality and establishes that staff, including teachers, assistants, and other designated personnel, may be required to support students with personal care needs as part of ensuring access to education and progressing toward independence. Importantly, this work is not expected to occur without structure or safeguards. The policy, regulation, and accompanying guidelines provide for the following:*

*Defined Roles and Shared Responsibility: Support is not limited to a single individual; principals designate staff and ensure appropriate coverage to maintain classroom supervision.*

*Parent Partnership: Families are required to provide necessary supplies and are engaged through permission forms and communications, reinforcing that toileting independence remains a shared responsibility.*

*We recognize and deeply value the instructional role of classroom teachers. This regulation is designed to ensure that all students can safely access school while balancing instructional priorities, student dignity, and legal obligations.*

*Again, thank you for your comments. If I can provide any additional information or clarification, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.*

*Best,  
Grace Wilson  
Director of Legislation and Policy*

Dear Members of the Anne Arundel County Board of Education,  
I am writing to you today as a dedicated kindergarten teacher within Anne Arundel County Public Schools to share my professional perspective and growing concerns regarding the proposed or existing policies involving staff responsibilities for student toileting.

While I am fully committed to the success and well-being of every child in my classroom, I believe that requiring instructional staff to manage routine toileting for students, specifically those without identified medical needs, IEPs, or 504 Plans, presents a significant challenge to the integrity of our educational mission.

Our kindergarten programs have become increasingly rigorous, focusing on foundational literacy, mathematics, and critical social-emotional development. The transition to a full-day, academically demanding

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schedule requires every minute of instructional time. When a teacher or lead instructional assistant must step away to manage a toileting accident or provide hygiene assistance, the flow of instruction is severed, and the safety and supervision of the remaining 20+ students are compromised.

Furthermore, I am concerned about the following:

- Instructional Integrity: Kindergarten is no longer "play-based" daycare; it is the bedrock of a child's academic career. Frequent interruptions for toileting hygiene detract from our ability to meet the state-mandated curriculum standards.
- Social Development: Part of the transition to a school environment involves developing self-help skills and personal independence. Encouraging these milestones is essential for a child's confidence and social integration.
- Staffing and Safety: Current staffing ratios do not allow for the "two-person rule" or adequate coverage when one adult is occupied with a hygiene-related task, creating potential liability and safety risks for both staff and students.

I urge the Board to consider alternative solutions, such as employing dedicated health or hygiene aides for Early Learning Programs or establishing clearer expectations for family partnerships regarding school readiness. Our primary role as educators is to teach; we want to ensure that our time and energy are focused on providing the high-quality, rigorous instruction that the children of Anne Arundel County deserve.

Thank you for your time and your consideration of this vital issue.

Sincerely,  
Lindsay Childs

*Good morning, Ms. Childs:*

*Thank you for your feedback regarding the proposed adoption of new Policy JV - Personal Care and Toileting. Your comments will be shared with the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County and the Superintendent.*

*As outlined in Policy JV, AACPS is committed to ensuring that all students, regardless of disability status, are treated with dignity, respect, and provided appropriate support to access their educational environment. The intent of the proposed policy and accompanying regulation is not to shift responsibility for toileting onto general education teachers, but rather to clarify that supporting students' basic needs is a shared responsibility of school staff within early learning environments, consistent with developmentally appropriate practice and legal requirements.*

*Students in early childhood settings (Birth-5, PreK, and Kindergarten) enter school with a wide range of developmental skills, including varying levels of toileting independence. The policy and regulation reflect this reality and establishes that staff, including teachers, assistants, and other designated personnel, may be required to support students with personal care needs as part of ensuring access to education and progressing toward independence. Importantly, this work is not expected to occur without structure or safeguards. The policy, regulation, and accompanying guidelines provide for the following:*

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*We recognize and deeply value the instructional role of classroom teachers. This regulation is designed to ensure that all students can safely access school while balancing instructional priorities, student dignity, and legal obligations.*

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*Again, thank you for your comments. If I can provide any additional information or clarification, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.*

*Best,  
Grace Wilson  
Director of Legislation and Policy*

Dear Members of the Anne Arundel County Board of Education,  
I am writing to you today as a dedicated kindergarten teacher within Anne Arundel County Public Schools to share my professional perspective and growing concerns regarding the proposed or existing policies involving staff responsibilities for student toileting.

While I am fully committed to the success and well-being of every child in my classroom, I believe that requiring instructional staff to manage routine toileting for students, specifically those without identified medical needs, IEPs, or 504 Plans, presents a significant challenge to the integrity of our educational mission.

Our kindergarten programs have become increasingly rigorous, focusing on foundational literacy, mathematics, and critical social-emotional development. The transition to a full-day, academically demanding schedule requires every minute of instructional time. When a teacher or lead instructional assistant must step away to manage a toileting accident or provide hygiene assistance, the flow of instruction is severed, and the safety and supervision of the remaining 20+ students are compromised.

Furthermore, I am concerned about the following:

- Instructional Integrity: Kindergarten is no longer "play-based" daycare; it is the bedrock of a child's academic career. Frequent interruptions for toileting hygiene detract from our ability to meet the state-mandated curriculum standards.
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- Staffing and Safety: Current staffing ratios do not easily allow for the "two-person rule" or adequate coverage when one adult is occupied with a hygiene-related task, creating potential liability and safety risks for both staff and students.

I urge the Board to consider alternative solutions, such as employing dedicated health or hygiene aides for Early Learning Programs, or establishing clearer expectations for family partnerships regarding school readiness. Our primary role as educators is to teach; we want to ensure that our time and energy are focused on providing the high-quality, rigorous instruction that the children of Anne Arundel County deserve.

Thank you for your time and your consideration of this vital issue.  
Sincerely,  
Lori-Ann Balzano

*Good morning, Ms. Balzano:*

*Thank you for your feedback regarding the proposed adoption of new Policy JV - Personal Care and Toileting. Your comments will be shared with the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County and the Superintendent.*

*As outlined in Policy JV, AACPS is committed to ensuring that all students, regardless of disability status, are treated with dignity, respect, and provided appropriate support to access their educational environment. The intent of the proposed policy and accompanying regulation is not to shift responsibility for toileting onto general education teachers, but rather to clarify that*

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*supporting students' basic needs is a shared responsibility of school staff within early learning environments, consistent with developmentally appropriate practice and legal requirements.*

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*We recognize and deeply value the instructional role of classroom teachers. This regulation is designed to ensure that all students can safely access school while balancing instructional priorities, student dignity, and legal obligations.*

*Again, thank you for your comments. If I can provide any additional information or clarification, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.*

*Best,  
Grace Wilson  
Director of Legislation and Policy*

Good morning,

I hope this email finds you well! The proposed Toileting Policy is very concerning to myself and my Kindergarten teammates here at Monarch Academy Annapolis. If students need support with Toileting, we would not be able to provide any instruction while we stop everything to support this student. This would result in lost instructional time and would create learning barriers for our students.

Even if we did have bathrooms attached to our classrooms, which we don't, changing a child while maintaining supervision of our other students would be impossible if we are closing the door to provide privacy for the student being supported with toileting needs.

Although students with IEPs or 504 plans may have differing levels of school readiness, they are the exception to the rule. By allowing general education students to come in to Pre-K and Kindergarten unable to go to the bathroom unassisted, we are harming each and every child in the classroom. The children who are not able to go to the bathroom on their own may feel alienated, and their lack of independence in this area will lower their confidence and increase discomfort. If parents choose not to sign off on the toileting document, students would have to wait for parents to show up to change them. Even though the document says "without delay", there are no repercussions for parents being delayed and making their child wait in soiled clothing for their parents to show up.

As mentioned before, this policy would take away learning time from children who need every minute of their school day to be used wisely.

Passing this new Toileting Policy would harm each child in the classroom, and therefore it should not be allowed. If we want all students to BELONG, GROW, and SUCCEED, we should not lower the

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expectations for general education students in a way that would decrease their independence, possibly alienate them, and take away valuable minutes of learning time.

Sincerely,  
Kylie Gulbrandsen

*Good morning, Ms. Gulbrandsen:*

*Thank you for your feedback regarding the proposed adoption of new Policy JV - Personal Care and Toileting. Your comments will be shared with the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County and the Superintendent.*

*As outlined in Policy JV, AACPS is committed to ensuring that all students, regardless of disability status, are treated with dignity, respect, and provided appropriate support to access their educational environment. The intent of the proposed policy and accompanying regulation is not to shift responsibility for toileting onto general education teachers, but rather to clarify that supporting students' basic needs is a shared responsibility of school staff within early learning environments, consistent with developmentally appropriate practice and legal requirements.*

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*We recognize and deeply value the instructional role of classroom teachers. This regulation is designed to ensure that all students can safely access school while balancing instructional priorities, student dignity, and legal obligations.*

*Again, thank you for your comments. If I can provide any additional information or clarification, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.*

Best,  
Grace Wilson  
Director of Legislation and Policy

To whom it may concern,

I understand the need to have it in writing that students with personal care needs should be treated with respect. There is an additional need- if general educators in Pre K and kindergarten are expected to attend to these personal care tasks throughout the school day, a significant change needs to be made to our teaching & learning schedules. We find time for things like getting students their change of clothes after an accident, but assisting children in the bathroom, especially hallway bathrooms as opposed to in-class bathrooms, will cause a significant disruption to our schedules.

I hope this will be taken into consideration.

Thank you. -Sally Ward

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*Good morning, Ms. Ward:*

*Thank you for your feedback regarding the proposed adoption of Policy JV - Personal Care and Toileting. Your feedback will be shared with the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County and the Superintendent.*

*Best,  
Grace Wilson  
Director of Legislation and Policy*

Good evening,

After reading JV-Personal Care, it's clear there is an additional subgroup of AACPS students that is missing from the policy. This policy, as written, covers students in early learning, pre-k and Kindergarten classes. The policy is not inclusive of students 1st grade and above who may require personal care assistance. The policy should be inclusive of all students who require toileting and personal care assistance within AACPS.

Lori Kane

*Good afternoon, Ms. Kane:*

*Thank you for your feedback regarding the proposed adoption of Policy JV - Personal Care and Toileting. Your comments will be shared with the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County and the Superintendent.*

*The proposed policy and accompanying regulation are intentionally focused on Early Learning Programs, including Birth-5, Prekindergarten, and Kindergarten, as these are the entry points where toileting independence is still developmentally emerging. However, Anne Arundel County Public Schools recognizes that students of all ages may require personal care supports. In these cases, supports are addressed through Individualized Education Programs, Section 504 Plans, or individualized health or care plans. These existing structures ensure that older students receive appropriate, individualized supports aligned to their needs, consistent with federal and State laws and regulations.*

*Again, thank you for your comments. If I can provide any additional information or clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me.*

*Best,  
Grace Wilson  
Director of Legislation and Policy*

As a pre-k teacher in the county it is my belief as a requirement to register for Pre-k, students must be toilet trained. This will also help the possibility of more Kindergarten students being potty trained since they are required by law to be in school. Pre-k is not mandatory so I feel like you can make this a policy for Pre-K. Parents need to be held accountable for toilet training their own children. Many parents see Pre-k as free daycare which we are not. It is not our responsibility to toilet train children. When teachers/IA's have to tend to one student for toilet issues then it takes away from all students. Therefore the policy should be that students entering Pre-k should be potty trained as part of the requirement.

Renee Beron

*Good afternoon, Ms. Beron:*

*Thank you for your feedback regarding the proposed adoption of Policy JV - Personal Care and Toileting. Your feedback will be shared with the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County and the Superintendent.*

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*As outlined in Policy JV, AACPS is committed to ensuring that all students, regardless of disability status, are treated with dignity, respect, and provided appropriate support to access their educational environment. While Anne Arundel County Public Schools strongly encourages families to support toileting independence, State law does not allow schools to deny enrollment based on toileting ability. As such, toileting independence cannot be a requirement for enrollment in prekindergarten or kindergarten. The intent of the proposed policy and accompanying regulation is not to shift responsibility for toileting onto general education teachers, but rather to clarify that supporting students' basic needs is a shared responsibility of school staff within early learning environments, consistent with developmentally appropriate practice and legal requirements.*

*Students in early childhood settings (Birth-5, PreK, and Kindergarten) enter school with a wide range of developmental skills, including varying levels of toileting independence. The policy and regulation reflect this reality and establishes that staff, including teachers, assistants, and other designated personnel, may be required to support students with personal care needs as part of ensuring access to education and progressing toward independence. Importantly, this work is not expected to occur without structure or safeguards.*

*Again, thank you for your comments. If I can provide any additional information or clarification, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.*

*Best,  
Grace Wilson  
Director of Legislation and Policy*

To whom it may concern,  
I am a kindergarten teacher in the county. I am in my 33rd year of teaching. I have taught only pre-K and Kindergarten in those years.

I am writing to express my concerns regarding the current toileting policy in our kindergarten classroom. While I fully support helping young children develop independence with toileting skills, the current expectations present significant challenges related to student safety, dignity, hygiene, and staffing.

First, we do not have adequate facilities that allow for privacy and preserve child modesty during toileting or changing. This is an important developmental and ethical consideration, and our current setup does not appropriately support it. Many classrooms don't even have a bathroom within the room. I'm struggling to imagine how this will work in those cases.

Second, staffing limitations make it difficult to safely implement this policy. I am responsible for 19 students, and when I am in the bathroom assisting one child, there is no one available to supervise the remaining 18 students. Although we do have access to a classroom assistant, that support is shared across the entire grade level and is not consistently available when needed. This creates a situation where I must choose between assisting a child and ensuring appropriate supervision of the rest of the class, which is not a safe or sustainable expectation. And, to protect against allegations of inappropriate touch, 2 adults should really be present at each toileting session.

Additionally, the current practice of changing children on the bathroom floor raises serious hygiene concerns. This method is not sanitary for either the child or staff. It also presents a physical challenge, as getting up and down from the floor repeatedly is difficult and increases the risk of injury. Private changing tables to preserve the child's dignity should be standard.

Finally, we do not have appropriate systems in place for the disposal of soiled diapers or clothing. Placing these items in an open classroom trash can is not hygienic, creates strong odors, and poses a risk of exposure to other students.

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I want to be clear that I am committed to supporting my students in developing toileting independence. However, to do so safely and appropriately, we need adequate staffing, proper facilities that ensure privacy and hygiene, and appropriate tools and procedures for sanitary disposal.

I respectfully request that these concerns be addressed so that we can provide a safe, respectful, and developmentally appropriate environment for all students.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.  
Kim Dixon

*Good afternoon, Ms. Dixon:*

*Thank you for your feedback regarding the proposed adoption of Policy JV - Personal Care and Toileting. Your feedback will be shared with the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County and the Superintendent.*

*As outlined in Policy JV, AACPS is committed to ensuring that all students, regardless of disability status, are treated with dignity, respect, and provided appropriate support to access their educational environment. I appreciate the concerns you raised regarding classroom supervision, staff availability, and student safety during toileting support. The regulation clarifies that multiple staff members, including teachers, assistants, and designated staff, may provide personal care support, as determined by the principal. AACPS is committed to ensuring safe supervision of all students and continuing to evaluate implementation to support both student needs and classroom safety. Additionally, we recognize that facilities vary across schools. AACPS will continue to provide guidance through the Personal Care and Toileting Guidelines, ensure access to personal protective equipment, and work toward solutions that promote safe, sanitary and dignified care environments.*

*Again, thank you for your comments. If I can provide any additional information or clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me.*

*Best,  
Grace Wilson  
Director of Legislation and Policy*

To whom It may concern,

I am writing to express my concerns regarding the draft policy on personal care and toileting. As a kindergarten teacher with 20 years of experience in the county, I believe this plan is unrealistic and raises significant concerns about student safety, instructional quality, and staff capacity.

According to this plan, general education kindergarten and pre-kindergarten teachers and teaching assistants are expected to assist with dressing and undressing, helping students on and off the toilet, managing clothing, and providing cleaning support. This will have a substantial negative impact on both learning and supervision. While I recognize and appreciate that these responsibilities are currently handled in specialty centers, those environments are staffed and resourced very differently. They are designed to support these needs with additional personnel and appropriate facilities.

In most general education kindergarten classrooms, there is no dedicated teaching assistant. It is not feasible for a classroom teacher to pause instruction to provide one-on-one toileting assistance without compromising the safety and supervision of the remaining students. Additionally, due to privacy and liability concerns, another adult would need to be present during such assistance. This raises the question of whether the county is prepared to provide additional staffing in every classroom to ensure the safety of both students and staff.

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The expectations placed on teachers and teaching assistants have already increased significantly. Interrupting instructional time—particularly given the current academic demands—to assist with diapering or toileting is not sustainable. It also creates potential safety risks, as the rest of the class would be left without adequate supervision during these moments. There are also practical concerns, including the lack of appropriate facilities and disposal methods for diapers and wipes in general education classrooms. There are concerns regarding infectious diseases without the proper PPE.

Furthermore, this policy may unintentionally encourage families to delay potty training, shifting that responsibility to schools that are not equipped to handle it.

I want to emphasize that assisting students with minor needs—such as helping with buttons, zippers, or removing sweatshirts—is both reasonable and already part of our role. However, the expectations outlined in this draft extend far beyond what is practical or safe in a general education setting. This plan, as written, is unsafe, unrealistic, and would negatively impact both student learning and the overall classroom environment. Teachers already operate without spare time in the school day, and adding full toileting responsibilities is not feasible without significant additional resources and structural changes.

I respectfully urge the county to reconsider this policy.

Thank you.

Risa Flor

*Good afternoon, Ms. Flor:*

*Thank you for your feedback regarding proposed Policy JV - Personal Care and Toileting. Your comments will be shared with the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County and the Superintendent.*

*As outlined in Policy JV, AACPS is committed to ensuring that all students, regardless of disability status, are treated with dignity, respect, and provided appropriate support to access their educational environment. The intent of the proposed policy and accompanying regulation is not to shift responsibility for toileting onto general education teachers, but rather to clarify that supporting students' basic needs is a shared responsibility of school staff within early learning environments, consistent with developmentally appropriate practice and legal requirements.*

*Students in early childhood settings (Birth-5, PreK, and Kindergarten) enter school with a wide range of developmental skills, including varying levels of toileting independence. The policy and regulation reflect this reality and establishes that staff, including teachers, assistants, and other designated personnel, may be required to support students with personal care needs as part of ensuring access to education and progressing toward independence. Importantly, this work is not expected to occur without structure or safeguards. The policy, regulation, and accompanying guidelines provide for the following:*

- *Health and Safety: Schools provide personal protective equipment and follow established procedures to ensure sanitary and safe practices.*
- *Defined Roles and Shared Responsibility: Support is not limited to a single individual; principals designate staff and ensure appropriate coverage to maintain classroom supervision.*
- *Parent Partnership: Families are required to provide necessary supplies and are engaged through permission forms and communications, reinforcing that toileting independence remains a shared responsibility.*
- *Individualized Planning: For students with disabilities or specific needs, toileting supports are documented through IEPs, 504 plans, or individual care plans to ensure consistency and appropriateness.*

*We recognize and deeply value the instructional role of classroom teachers. This regulation is designed to ensure that all students can safely access school while balancing instructional priorities, student dignity, and legal obligations.*

*Again, thank you for your comments. If I can provide any additional information or clarification, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.*

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*Best,  
Grace Wilson  
Director of Legislation and Policy*

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According to this plan, general education kindergarten and pre-kindergarten teachers and teaching assistants are expected to assist with dressing and undressing, helping students on and off the toilet, managing clothing, and providing cleaning support. This will have a substantial negative impact on both learning and supervision. While I recognize and appreciate that these responsibilities are currently handled in specialty centers, those environments are staffed and resourced very differently. They are designed to support these needs with additional personnel and appropriate facilities.

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The expectations placed on teachers and teaching assistants have already increased significantly. Interrupting instructional time—particularly given the current academic demands—to assist with diapering or toileting is not sustainable. It also creates potential safety risks, as the rest of the class would be left without adequate supervision during these moments. There are also practical concerns, including the lack of appropriate facilities and disposal methods for diapers and wipes in general education classrooms. There are concerns regarding infectious diseases without the proper PPE.

Furthermore, this policy may unintentionally encourage families to delay potty training, shifting that responsibility to schools that are not equipped to handle it.

I want to emphasize that assisting students with minor needs—such as helping with buttons, zippers, or removing sweatshirts—is both reasonable and already part of our role. However, the expectations outlined in this draft extend far beyond what is practical or safe in a general education setting. This plan, as written, is unsafe, unrealistic, and would negatively impact both student learning and the overall classroom environment. Teachers already operate without spare time in the school day, and adding full toileting responsibilities is not feasible without significant additional resources and structural changes.

I respectfully urge the county to reconsider this policy.  
Thank you.  
Kari Cawthorne

*Good afternoon, Ms. Cawthorne:*

*Thank you for your feedback regarding proposed Policy JV - Personal Care and Toileting. Your comments will be shared with the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County and the Superintendent.*

*As outlined in Policy JV, AACPS is committed to ensuring that all students, regardless of disability status, are treated with dignity, respect, and provided appropriate support to access their educational environment. The intent of the proposed policy and*

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*accompanying regulation is not to shift responsibility for toileting onto general education teachers, but rather to clarify that supporting students' basic needs is a shared responsibility of school staff within early learning environments, consistent with developmentally appropriate practice and legal requirements.*

*Students in early childhood settings (Birth-5, PreK, and Kindergarten) enter school with a wide range of developmental skills, including varying levels of toileting independence. The policy and regulation reflect this reality and establishes that staff, including teachers, assistants, and other designated personnel, may be required to support students with personal care needs as part of ensuring access to education and progressing toward independence. Importantly, this work is not expected to occur without structure or safeguards. The policy, regulation, and accompanying guidelines provide for the following:*

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*We recognize and deeply value the instructional role of classroom teachers. This regulation is designed to ensure that all students can safely access school while balancing instructional priorities, student dignity, and legal obligations.*

*Again, thank you for your comments. If I can provide any additional information or clarification, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.*

*Best,  
Grace Wilson  
Director of Legislation and Policy*

Dear Members of the School Board,

I am writing as a classroom teacher to express serious concerns regarding the proposed policy that would require all school personnel, including classroom teachers, to implement personal care and toileting strategies for students. We currently handle students who have toileting listed on their IEP with their aides handling toileting procedures, but adding non-IEP students to this raises a big concern in many aspects.

While I fully understand the importance of supporting student development and independence, I believe this policy raises significant issues that must be carefully considered before implementation.

First and foremost, there are substantial health and hygiene concerns. Classroom environments are not equipped to safely manage frequent toileting and cleanup needs, particularly when multiple students require assistance. This introduces risks related to contamination, sanitation, and the spread of illness within the classroom setting.

Additionally, there are liability and safety considerations. Assisting students with toileting is a highly sensitive responsibility that can expose staff to potential allegations or misunderstandings. Clear protections, training, and protocols would be required, and even then, many educators may not feel comfortable or adequately supported in this role.

The issue of personal protective equipment (PPE) must also be addressed. If staff are expected to perform these duties, consistent access to appropriate PPE, disposal systems, and sanitation supplies is essential.

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Furthermore, consideration should be given to health protections, given the nature of exposure risks involved.

From a practical standpoint, there are significant concerns about feasibility within the instructional day. Classroom teachers are responsible for managing instruction, student behavior, safety, and learning for an entire group of students. Current data already indicates an increase in behavioral and developmental needs among incoming kindergarten students. Teachers cannot safely leave a classroom unattended to assist individual students with toileting, nor can they effectively balance this responsibility without compromising instructional time and attention for all students.

Additionally, when a classroom teacher is occupied assisting a student in the bathroom, the remaining students are left without direct supervision, which creates a serious safety concern. During these moments, situations can escalate quickly—for example, a student may become upset and hit another student, take a peer's belongings, or experience a behavioral meltdown that requires immediate intervention. Without the teacher present, these incidents cannot be addressed promptly, putting students at risk and creating an unsafe classroom environment. I work at a school that has very limited "extra" staff. Calling for another adult to come cover my class while I am addressing a toileting issue is often always feasible.

Ultimately, requiring classroom teachers to take on this role would detract from their primary responsibility: providing quality instruction and support to all students. It risks reducing learning time, increasing stress on staff, and creating inequities in classroom management and student supervision.

I strongly urge the Board to reconsider this policy or, at minimum, to explore alternative solutions such as dedicated support staff, clear role delineation, and appropriate resources to ensure student needs are met without compromising safety, instruction, or staff well-being.

Thank you for your time and for considering these important concerns.

Sincerely,  
Suzanne Jones

*Good afternoon, Ms. Jones:*

*Thank you for your feedback regarding proposed Policy JV - Personal Care and Toileting. Your comments will be shared with the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County and the Superintendent.*

*As outlined in Policy JV, AACPS is committed to ensuring that all students, regardless of disability status, are treated with dignity, respect, and provided appropriate support to access their educational environment. The intent of the proposed policy and accompanying regulation is not to shift responsibility for toileting onto general education teachers, but rather to clarify that supporting students' basic needs is a shared responsibility of school staff within early learning environments, consistent with developmentally appropriate practice and legal requirements.*

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- *Parent Partnership: Families are required to provide necessary supplies and are engaged through permission forms and communications, reinforcing that toileting independence remains a shared responsibility.*
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*We recognize and deeply value the instructional role of classroom teachers. This regulation is designed to ensure that all students can safely access school while balancing instructional priorities, student dignity, and legal obligations.*

*Again, thank you for your comments. If I can provide any additional information or clarification, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.*

*Best,  
Grace Wilson  
Director of Legislation and Policy*

Hello Board Members/Policy Makers,

I am begging for your undivided attention in response to the new Toileting Regulation being considered. While personally, it makes me feel as if my Master's Degree in Early Childhood Education turns me into a daycare provider, I will share with you some very real facts to be considered.

- Students in PK and K are taught the mandatory House Bill 72 Erin's Law lessons. These lessons teach a young child that no one should be touching you in a place covered by your bathing suit (aside from family) which will completely contradict what will happen in a classroom setting if I am to change diapers.
- A greater number of students are entering school with significant speech and language delays as well as non-Native English speakers. What will happen when a child that has difficulty articulating that Ms. Braml touched them (here).is an innocent toileting issue vs. sexual abuse? What will become of these allegations? How can I protect myself?
- There is already a HUGE shortage of staffing. It has been recommended that if you help a child in the bathroom, you should have a second adult as a witness. If my TA and I are assisting and witnessing in the bathroom, who is watching the other 29 students in my PK class.
- It is likely that there will be more PK than K students that are not independent in the bathroom because of age alone. PK classes have 20 students each. I have never seen a K classroom with 20 students. Shouldn't class size of PK's be lowered before we make these types of changes?
- The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends a child-oriented, low-pressure approach to toilet training, usually beginning when signs of readiness appear around 18–24 months. Key indicators include staying dry for 2+ hours, predictable bowel movements, following simple instructions, and expressing interest. Training should focus on positive reinforcement, avoiding punishment, and allowing the child to lead, usually mastering it by age 4. Therefore, toilet training should be complete before entering 4 year old PK or 5 year old kindergarten. Obviously, toileting should be supported in ECSE and ACC classrooms.
- Parents are to provide supplies. What happens when they do not? Then who is responsible? They won't send in crayons or glue, it won't be a surprise if they do not send diapers.
- What will be taken off of PK and K teachers plates? Testing (CLA, CMA, KRA, DIBELS) scores are bound to go down when we are spending a portion of the day changing as many as 20 students. We are continually being asked to do more. What is going to be taken away so that I can allow time to attend for this?
- My school is not equipped with a changing table or other equipment needed for diapering. Is this going to be provided to every school? Where will it be placed? Our bathroom does not have room for a changing table to provide a child privacy and dignity.

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- The policy is too vague. State who should be responsible in the school building. The only position that it is in their job description is the Special Education TA.
- More and more responsibility is being put on teachers. We no longer just "teach" academics. We have to teach social emotional learning because kids no longer learn this at home. And behavior? The behavior in PK has been notoriously disruptive as even Dr. Bedell has stated. Some responsibilities like toilet training belong to parents. Period.

Please take these concerns seriously. Please do not pass this policy as written. If toileting procedures are needed then designate the staff who are to do it. We know not all principals are equitably. Do not give them the authority to assign this responsibility.

Additionally, the bullet about a child with speech deficits not articulating or a parent not understanding happened to me only in a physical situation. Please call me if you'd like to hear that story. I think it is surprisingly similar to what could potentially happen.

Kimberly Braml

*Good morning, Ms. Braml:*

*Thank you for your feedback regarding proposed Policy JV - Personal Care and Toileting. Your comments will be shared with the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County and the Superintendent.*

*As outlined in Policy JV, AACPS is committed to ensuring that all students, regardless of disability status, are treated with dignity, respect, and provided appropriate support to access their educational environment. The intent of the proposed policy and accompanying regulation is not to shift responsibility for toileting onto general education teachers, but rather to clarify that supporting students' basic needs is a shared responsibility of school staff within early learning environments, consistent with developmentally appropriate practice and legal requirements.*

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*We recognize and deeply value the instructional role of classroom teachers. This regulation is designed to ensure that all students can safely access school while balancing instructional priorities, student dignity, and legal obligations.*

*Again, thank you for your comments. If I can provide any additional information or clarification, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.*

*Best,  
Grace Wilson  
Director of Legislation and Policy*

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I am a Pre-K TA in Anne Arundel County with 10 years of experience. After reading the Draft Regulation JV-RA, I have made these observations. The Draft Regulation JV-RA Personal Care and Toileting, while well-intentioned, removes from parents/guardians of non-IEP or non-504 children any need to attend to their capable child's foundational self-care development. The skill of toileting can now be optional according to the Regulation. The ability to tend to one's own toileting is, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics, a developmental milestone that prepares a child for independence, self-regulation, and structured learning before entering school at age 4. Even most daycare centers and early childhood programs require students to be potty trained before entering 3 year old programs. Why should ACCPS have lower expectations for typically developing students?

Beyond introducing policy that disagrees with child development observations, there are several serious questions to be considered.

- Why are parents not a part of the plan? In Pre-K, tending to the occasional "accident" is no problem, but eliminating the potty training expectation from parents/guardians is quite literally "opening the flood gates" because the number of students who will need assistance will definitely rise if the parents can just bow out of their responsibility. Why should staff members have to sacrifice teaching/work time to provide what should be a home-based activity for typically developing children?
- Who is responsible for creating the toileting plan? Toileting is a core OT issue.
- Who will instruct the staff in the proper, safe technique of toileting?
- Who takes over the class when a TA or TSA is not in the room and a student must be changed? Does the child just sit and wait while another staff member is called?
- What if the child does not cooperate with the toileting plan?
- Is AACPS willing to accept the liability and risk of allegations? Toileting should be done with 1 adult and another in at least clear visibility to provide an extra layer of accountability to minimize the risk of allegations or misinterpretation. This is needed to support a safe, transparent environment. How will this be ensured?
- Who will explain to parents that the person attending to their child's toileting may be someone the child does not know and may be of the opposite sex?
- What happens when parents/guardians do not provide the necessary supplies? They often cannot even provide a change of clothes for their "trained" child for the occasional "accident", food spill, or Art Center mishap. Is it the teacher's responsibility?
- Who will enforce the signing of the Permission Form?
- Are we just expected to become Caregivers not Educators?

This Draft Regulation, while trying to be part of AACPS's Inclusion Directive is allowing parents/guardians to exclude themselves from part of their responsibility for their typically developing children. It is also asking teachers, TA's, TSA's, and other support staff to spend less time at their jobs and assume more risk and liability.

Please rethink this Draft Regulation.

Respectfully,  
Laurene Collins

*Good morning, Ms. Collins:*

*Thank you for your feedback regarding proposed Policy JV - Personal Care and Toileting. Your comments will be shared with the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County and the Superintendent.*

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*We recognize and deeply value the instructional role of classroom teachers. This regulation is designed to ensure that all students can safely access school while balancing instructional priorities, student dignity, and legal obligations.*

*Again, thank you for your comments. If I can provide any additional information or clarification, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.*

*Best,  
Grace Wilson  
Director of Legislation and Policy*

I am writing to formally express concern regarding the newly proposed district regulation that would require teachers to assist students with toileting needs.

While I fully support ensuring that all students receive appropriate care and access to a safe learning environment, this policy raises several significant issues that merit careful reconsideration.

First, the requirement would substantially disrupt instructional time. Teachers are responsible for maintaining continuous supervision of their classrooms and delivering consistent, focused instruction. Leaving a class unattended—or even partially unsupervised—while assisting a student in the restroom compromises both student safety and the integrity of the learning environment.

Second, the expectation that teachers provide toileting assistance represents a fundamental shift in professional responsibilities. Teaching is not a role that traditionally includes routine exposure to bodily waste, and many educators have neither the training nor the contractual obligation to perform such tasks. This raises concerns related to professional boundaries, workplace expectations, and potential liability.

Additionally, this policy may create inequities in classroom management and place undue strain on already limited staffing resources. Students requiring personal care support would be better served by trained

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paraprofessionals, nurses, or designated support staff equipped to handle these responsibilities safely and appropriately.

Given these concerns, I respectfully urge the district to reconsider this policy and explore alternative solutions that both protect instructional time and ensure students receive appropriate care from qualified personnel.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this matter further.

*Good morning;*

*Thank you for your feedback regarding proposed Policy JV - Personal Care and Toileting. Your comments will be shared with the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County and the Superintendent.*

*As outlined in Policy JV, AACPS is committed to ensuring that all students, regardless of disability status, are treated with dignity, respect, and provided appropriate support to access their educational environment. The intent of the proposed policy and accompanying regulation is not to shift responsibility for toileting onto general education teachers, but rather to clarify that supporting students' basic needs is a shared responsibility of school staff within early learning environments, consistent with developmentally appropriate practice and legal requirements.*

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*Again, thank you for your comments. If I can provide any additional information or clarification, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.*

*Best,  
Grace Wilson  
Director of Legislation and Policy*

Anne Arundel County Public Schools,  
I disagree with the proposed new regulation of Personal Care and Toileting at AACPS. Our education system should focus on teaching; toilet-training should be done at home and should be a prerequisite for school admission. Please redouble your educational efforts and allow the toilet-training to be done at home.

Thank you for considering my position.  
-Richard Slonaker

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*Good morning, Mr. Slonaker:*

*Thank you for your feedback regarding proposed Policy JV - Personal Care and Toileting. Your comments will be shared with the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County and the Superintendent.*

*As outlined in Policy JV, AACPS is committed to ensuring that all students, regardless of disability status, are treated with dignity, respect, and provided appropriate support to access their educational environment. The intent of the proposed policy and accompanying regulation is not to shift responsibility for toileting onto general education teachers, but rather to clarify that supporting students' basic needs is a shared responsibility of school staff within early learning environments, consistent with developmentally appropriate practice and legal requirements.*

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*Again, thank you for your comments. If I can provide any additional information or clarification, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.*

*Best,  
Grace Wilson  
Director of Legislation and Policy*

To Whom it May Concern,  
Before the policy is changed, I would like to invite you to spend one day in my Pre-K classroom. I currently have 16 students, and among those students, 4 have IEPs. I am an experienced teacher with over 28 years in the county. I have degrees in early childhood and special education. When I tell you this is the most challenging class I have ever taught, I am not exaggerating.

I currently have one student who is not potty trained. He does have an IEP, however I do feel that behavior also impacts this ability to be potty trained. He has a bowel movement 1-2 times daily. When this happens, my TA is pulled to assist with the change because he cannot independently change himself. This puts us out of compliance for at least 10-15 times each time he requires a change. Now, imagine if several children require this multiple times a day. This is a compliance and safety concern.

We need to stop lowering the bar for parents and make them accountable. We also need to treat our teachers with respect for the degrees they have earned. With behaviors escalating and expectations constantly increasing, we are not going to be able to retain quality teachers.

Please come to my classroom and understand the reality before implementing this policy.  
Thank you for your time,  
Crystal Ward

*Good morning, Ms. Ward:*

*Thank you for your feedback regarding proposed Policy JV - Personal Care and Toileting. Your comments will be shared with the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County and the Superintendent.*

## Public Comment Received During the 30-day Public Comment Period for NEW Policy JV – Personal Care and Toileting

*As outlined in Policy JV, AACPS is committed to ensuring that all students, regardless of disability status, are treated with dignity, respect, and provided appropriate support to access their educational environment. The intent of the proposed policy and accompanying regulation is not to shift responsibility for toileting onto general education teachers, but rather to clarify that supporting students' basic needs is a shared responsibility of school staff within early learning environments, consistent with developmentally appropriate practice and legal requirements.*

*Students in early childhood settings (Birth-5, PreK, and Kindergarten) enter school with a wide range of developmental skills, including varying levels of toileting independence. The policy and regulation reflect this reality and establishes that staff, including teachers, assistants, and other designated personnel, may be required to support students with personal care needs as part of ensuring access to education and progressing toward independence. Importantly, this work is not expected to occur without structure or safeguards. The policy, regulation, and accompanying guidelines provide for the following:*

- *Health and Safety: Schools provide personal protective equipment and follow established procedures to ensure sanitary and safe practices.*
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- *Individualized Planning: For students with disabilities or specific needs, toileting supports are documented through IEPs, 504 plans, or individual care plans to ensure consistency and appropriateness.*

*We recognize and deeply value the instructional role of classroom teachers. This regulation is designed to ensure that all students can safely access school while balancing instructional priorities, student dignity, and legal obligations.*

*Again, thank you for your comments. If I can provide any additional information or clarification, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.*

*Best,  
Grace Wilson  
Director of Legislation and Policy*

Good afternoon,

I hope this email finds you well. I am writing about the proposed change in the toileting training. **As a Pre-K teacher who has previously taught kindergarten and Pre-K 3 in AACPS**, I am uniquely qualified to provide feedback on the disruptions and issues this could cause in the classroom.

When I taught Pre-K 3, half of the class came in with pull ups (which is appropriate for three year olds). The only reason we were able to help students with toileting was because of the amount of adults in our classroom. In Pre-K 3 there was myself and two Instructional Assistants all day, in addition to one TSA and one special educator most of the day. It takes **two staff members to change a diaper**: one to change and one to stand at the door. With the number of adults we had in the classroom, we could safely perform this task. **There is no way this can be done safely in a Pre-K or kindergarten classroom, without at least two extra staff members.** If you are not able to provide two extra staff members for each child who is not toilet trained, this is a huge safety concern. Teachers' responsibilities are to monitor safety of students in their classroom, providing rich curriculum-based instruction. To interrupt the flow of a lesson to help with toileting would be detrimental to students' education. Instructional Assistants are in class to provide specialized supports and to support teacher's instruction. A TSA's role in a classroom is to support students either one on one or with a small number of students. To take any of these two positions out of the classroom to help one student with toileting would be extremely unfair to the other 20 or more students in the class. **Speaking from personal experience, students are not able to be toilet trained at school**

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**unless their family is willing to support from home.** Toilet training is a family's job, and not a school's responsibility.

When I taught kindergarten, I had a student who was not toilet trained who had an IEP. The toilet training that had to happen in the classroom was very distracting to the other students. Children are smart, and it got to the point where every child in the class could say when the student needed a diaper change (because of appearance and smell). When the student got their diaper changed, two adults were taken away from the classroom to assist which violated necessary legal ratios for other students with IEPs. This also took a lot of time in the bathroom, leading to having to send other students down the hall to use the bathroom, which is also a safety concern as no adult was available to escort them. Kindergarten is a huge step for all children and they deserve as little interruptions as possible, especially when they have to attend to instruction for so much of the day. Also, there is only one instructional assistant for four classrooms, meaning there is generally only one teacher in the room at any time. Do you expect this teacher to conclude their lesson and give students independent work suddenly to meet the toileting needs of one student? How is that equitable for the rest of the class, whose education should not be impacted by their classmates not being toilet trained?

By allowing families to send their child (without an IEP) to school without being toilet trained, you are sending the message that this is an educator's job. **We are professionals with at minimum a Master's degree. It is not our job to do what a parent should be doing at home.** The burden and expectation on teachers is extremely difficult to start: managing the needs of each student, following curriculum with fidelity, giving formative and summative assessments, participating in school improvement teams, attending professional developments, writing STIPs and IEPs, just to name a few of our responsibilities. **If you expect teachers to change diapers, be prepared for teachers to switch to other school systems AND for poorly executed curriculum and instruction, because of how disruptive this is.** There is no excuse for a four, five, or six year old to come to school without being toilet trained, unless they have an IEP. If parents know their child doesn't have to be toilet trained to come to school, there will be more and more children needing toileting assistance, since parents will think this is an educator's job and not theirs. **This also places a liability on all school employees involved.**

I implore you to reconsider this proposal. **Please visit any Pre-K and Kindergarten class before you make this decision, and you will quickly see this is not possible without two extra people in the classroom.** It is important to demonstrate to families that they have an obligation to teach this life skill, while the school can focus on things such as curriculum and social emotional learning. Our early childhood educators are experiencing more behavior concerns than ever before. Look at the number of referrals in Pre-K and Kindergarten in the past couple of years, and you will see documentation of escalating behavior in our early childhood classrooms. Educators are spread so thin, and early childhood educators have to manage more disruptions than ever before. It is a disservice to the school staff and more importantly the other children in the class to have the distraction and disruption of a student needing to be taught toileting.

Thank you for your time and consideration.  
Hanna Walker-Greenbaum

*Good morning, Ms. Walker-Greenbaum:*

*Thank you for your feedback regarding proposed Policy JV - Personal Care and Toileting. Your comments will be shared with the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County and the Superintendent.*

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*We recognize and deeply value the instructional role of classroom teachers. This regulation is designed to ensure that all students can safely access school while balancing instructional priorities, student dignity, and legal obligations.*

*Again, thank you for your comments. If I can provide any additional information or clarification, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.*

*Best,  
Grace Wilson  
Director of Legislation and Policy*

I am writing to respectfully express my concern regarding the proposed policy expecting PreK–Kindergarten teachers to provide routine toileting assistance to students.

While I am fully committed to supporting students’ needs, I believe this expectation raises several important concerns. Providing routine toileting assistance takes away valuable instructional time and creates inequity for the remaining students who must wait while the teacher is assisting another child. It also places additional responsibilities on teachers whose primary role is to provide instruction and manage the classroom learning environment.

Additionally, this expectation may conflict with established job descriptions and collective bargaining agreements, and it introduces potential safety and liability concerns. Assisting students in bathroom settings requires specific training, clear procedures, and adequate staffing to ensure the safety and protection of both students and staff.

I fully support providing appropriate assistance to students with documented special needs; however, those responsibilities are most appropriately assigned to trained personnel such as paraprofessionals, health staff, or other designated support staff whose roles include personal care duties.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the district to reconsider this policy and collaborate with educators and staff to explore alternative solutions that protect instructional time, maintain safety standards, and ensure clear professional role boundaries.

Thank you for your time and consideration.  
Dr. Karen Jackson-Williams

**Public Comment Received During the 30-day Public Comment Period for  
NEW Policy JV – Personal Care and Toileting**

*Good morning, Dr. Jackson-Williams:*

*Thank you for your feedback regarding proposed Policy JV - Personal Care and Toileting. Your comments will be shared with the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County and the Superintendent.*

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*Again, thank you for your comments. If I can provide any additional information or clarification, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.*

*Best,  
Grace Wilson  
Director of Legislation and Policy*

Dear Members of the Anne Arundel County Board of Education,

I am writing in response to the recent policy change within AACPS requiring all teachers and teaching assistants to change student diapers regardless of whether a student has a documented medical need through a 504 Plan or IEP. While I fully support meeting the needs of students with legitimate medical or developmental challenges, I have significant concerns about the broad application of this policy and its impact on classroom instruction, student safety, and staff responsibilities.

As a Pre-K educator, I have extensive, hands-on experience working with young children at a critical stage of development. I want to be clear that I have no hesitation in assisting students who have documented medical, developmental, or disability-related needs. In fact, I have previously advocated for appropriate supports, including toileting accommodations, to be formally included in a student's IEP to ensure dignity and consistency of care.

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However, requiring teachers and instructional assistants to routinely change diapers for students who are developmentally capable of being toilet trained presents several concerns.

First, research in early childhood development consistently shows that most children achieve daytime bladder and bowel control between ages 2 and 4. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, the majority of children are toilet trained by age 4, barring medical or developmental delays. Similarly, guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention outlines toileting independence as an expected developmental milestone within this age range. While individual variation exists, a lack of toilet training at this age without medical cause is typically addressed through consistent routines and reinforcement at home.

This leads to a second concern: the role of families. Toilet training is a foundational life skill that is most effectively taught through consistency between home and school. When responsibility is shifted primarily to school staff, it reduces family accountability and creates inconsistency for the child, often prolonging the process rather than supporting it.

Third, there are significant instructional impacts. Time spent on diapering is time taken away from teaching and supporting the rest of the class. For example, just recently during a read-aloud lesson, I was supporting a student with expressive and receptive language challenges who required immediate attention due to distress. At the same time, my assistant was occupied for over 20 minutes changing another student who had soiled a diaper, including managing resistance and cleaning both the child and the bathroom space. During that time, the rest of the class lost access to instructional support. Situations like this are not isolated and directly impact the quality of instruction and supervision for all students.

Additionally, there are sanitation and safety concerns. Our current facilities and procedures are not designed for routine diapering of students. Changing students on a bathroom floor using a towel does not meet best practices for hygiene and infection control. According to health and childcare sanitation standards, proper diapering requires designated changing stations, appropriate disinfecting protocols, and protective equipment—resources that are not consistently available in general education classrooms.

There are also liability and supervision considerations. Best practice recommends that diapering be conducted with appropriate safeguards, often including the presence or awareness of another adult. If two adults are required to ensure safety and accountability, this raises a critical question: who is supervising the remainder of the class? This creates potential safety risks and places staff in difficult and untenable positions.

Finally, while occasional toileting accidents are developmentally appropriate and expected, there is a clear distinction between responding to accidents and assuming responsibility for ongoing toileting needs in students who are otherwise capable. The current policy does not adequately differentiate between these situations.

Given these concerns, I respectfully urge AACPS to reconsider and refine this policy. A more balanced approach would:

- Continue to fully support students with documented medical or developmental needs through IEPs or 504 Plans
- Reinforce shared responsibility with families for toilet training when no medical need exists
- Ensure appropriate facilities, training, and staffing are in place if diapering is required
- Protect instructional time and maintain safe supervision ratios for all students

I appreciate the intent to support all learners, but in its current form, this policy creates significant challenges that impact not only staff, but the overall learning environment for students.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Johanna "Josie" Wiswall

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NEW Policy JV – Personal Care and Toileting**

*Good morning, Ms. Wiswall:*

*Thank you for your feedback regarding proposed Policy JV - Personal Care and Toileting. Your comments will be shared with the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County and the Superintendent.*

*As outlined in Policy JV, AACPS is committed to ensuring that all students, regardless of disability status, are treated with dignity, respect, and provided appropriate support to access their educational environment. The intent of the proposed policy and accompanying regulation is not to shift responsibility for toileting onto general education teachers, but rather to clarify that supporting students' basic needs is a shared responsibility of school staff within early learning environments, consistent with developmentally appropriate practice and legal requirements.*

*Students in early childhood settings (Birth-5, PreK, and Kindergarten) enter school with a wide range of developmental skills, including varying levels of toileting independence. The policy and regulation reflect this reality and establishes that staff, including teachers, assistants, and other designated personnel, may be required to support students with personal care needs as part of ensuring access to education and progressing toward independence. Importantly, this work is not expected to occur without structure or safeguards. The policy, regulation, and accompanying guidelines provide for the following:*

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- Individualized Planning: For students with disabilities or specific needs, toileting supports are documented through IEPs, 504 plans, or individual care plans to ensure consistency and appropriateness.*

*We recognize and deeply value the instructional role of classroom teachers. This regulation is designed to ensure that all students can safely access school while balancing instructional priorities, student dignity, and legal obligations.*

*Again, thank you for your comments. If I can provide any additional information or clarification, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.*

*Best,  
Grace Wilson  
Director of Legislation and Policy*

Hello,  
I am writing to formally express concern regarding the newly proposed district regulation that would require teachers to assist students with toileting needs.

While I fully support ensuring that all students receive appropriate care and access to a safe learning environment, this policy raises several significant issues that merit careful reconsideration.

First, the requirement would substantially disrupt instructional time. Teachers are responsible for maintaining continuous supervision of their classrooms and delivering consistent, focused instruction. Leaving a class unattended—or even partially unsupervised—while assisting a student in the restroom compromises both student safety and the integrity of the learning environment.

Second, the expectation that teachers provide toileting assistance represents a fundamental shift in professional responsibilities. Teaching is not a role that traditionally includes routine exposure to bodily

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waste, and many educators have neither the training nor the contractual obligation to perform such tasks. This raises concerns related to professional boundaries, workplace expectations, and potential liability.

Additionally, this policy may create inequities in classroom management and place undue strain on already limited staffing resources. Students requiring personal care support would be better served by trained paraprofessionals, nurses, or designated support staff equipped to handle these responsibilities safely and appropriately.

Given these concerns, I respectfully urge the district to reconsider this policy and explore alternative solutions that both protect instructional time and ensure students receive appropriate care from qualified personnel.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this matter further.  
Kali Bird

*Good morning, Ms. Bird:*

*Thank you for your feedback regarding proposed Policy JV - Personal Care and Toileting. Your comments will be shared with the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County and the Superintendent.*

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*Again, thank you for your comments. If I can provide any additional information or clarification, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.*

*Best,  
Grace Wilson  
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**Public Comment Received During the 30-day Public Comment Period for  
NEW Policy JV – Personal Care and Toileting**

Dear Policy Committee,

I am writing as a concerned advocate for both students and educators regarding the proposed policy requiring PreK–Kindergarten teachers to provide routine toileting assistance.

While I strongly support schools meeting student needs, this policy raises serious concerns about instructional quality, student safety, and appropriate use of professional staff roles. Requiring teachers to leave the classroom for personal care tasks reduces instructional time and creates inequities for students who are left waiting without access to ongoing learning.

There are also important supervision and liability concerns. When a teacher must leave a classroom to assist a student in the restroom, it can result in inadequate supervision for the remaining students and may place the district at risk of not maintaining required safety or staffing ratios.

Additionally, routine toileting assistance is a specialized responsibility that typically falls outside the scope of instructional staff duties and may conflict with established job descriptions and collective bargaining agreements. Expecting teachers to assume these responsibilities risks blurring professional boundaries and placing undue strain on already overextended classrooms.

Students who require toileting assistance due to documented needs absolutely deserve appropriate support. However, this is most appropriately provided by trained paraprofessionals, special education staff, or health personnel whose roles include personal care duties and safety protocols.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the district to reconsider this policy and instead explore staffing solutions that preserve instructional time, ensure student safety, and align responsibilities with professional training and role definitions.

Thanks,  
Danielle

*Good morning, Danielle:*

*Thank you for your feedback regarding proposed Policy JV - Personal Care and Toileting. Your comments will be shared with the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County and the Superintendent.*

*As outlined in Policy JV, AACPS is committed to ensuring that all students, regardless of disability status, are treated with dignity, respect, and provided appropriate support to access their educational environment. The intent of the proposed policy and accompanying regulation is not to shift responsibility for toileting onto general education teachers, but rather to clarify that supporting students' basic needs is a shared responsibility of school staff within early learning environments, consistent with developmentally appropriate practice and legal requirements.*

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- *Individualized Planning: For students with disabilities or specific needs, toileting supports are documented through IEPs, 504 plans, or individual care plans to ensure consistency and appropriateness.*

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*Again, thank you for your comments. If I can provide any additional information or clarification, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.*

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Dear Policy Committee,

I am writing as a concerned advocate for both students and educators regarding the proposed policy requiring PreK–Kindergarten teachers to provide routine toileting assistance.

While I strongly support schools meeting student needs, this policy raises serious concerns about instructional quality, student safety, and appropriate use of professional staff roles. Requiring teachers to leave the classroom for personal care tasks reduces instructional time and creates inequities for students who are left waiting without access to ongoing learning.

There are also important supervision and liability concerns. When a teacher must leave a classroom to assist a student in the restroom, it can result in inadequate supervision for the remaining students and may place the district at risk of not maintaining required safety or staffing ratios.

Additionally, routine toileting assistance is a specialized responsibility that typically falls outside the scope of instructional staff duties and may conflict with established job descriptions and collective bargaining agreements. Expecting teachers to assume these responsibilities risks blurring professional boundaries and placing undue strain on already overextended classrooms.

Students who require toileting assistance due to documented needs absolutely deserve appropriate support. However, this is most appropriately provided by trained paraprofessionals, special education staff, or health personnel whose roles include personal care duties and safety protocols.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the district to reconsider this policy and instead explore staffing solutions that preserve instructional time, ensure student safety, and align responsibilities with professional training and role definitions.

-Jeff

*Good morning, Jeff:*

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*Again, thank you for your comments. If I can provide any additional information or clarification, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.*

*Best,  
Grace Wilson  
Director of Legislation and Policy*

Dear Policy Committee,

I am writing to respectfully express my concerns regarding the proposed policy establishing an expectation that teachers in PreK–Kindergarten classrooms provide routine toileting assistance to students.

As an educator who is deeply committed to supporting young learners and maintaining a safe, productive classroom environment, I strongly believe this policy raises several important issues that warrant careful reconsideration.

First, providing routine toileting assistance significantly reduces valuable instructional time. When a teacher must leave or redirect attention to assist one student with toileting, the remaining students are required to wait, resulting in lost learning opportunities. This creates an inequitable situation in which the majority of students miss out on instruction due to responsibilities that fall outside the core role of teaching.

Second, assisting students with toileting needs is not part of the traditional professional job description for classroom teachers. Teachers are highly trained educators whose primary responsibility is to provide instruction, support academic development, and manage the classroom learning environment. Expanding expectations to include routine toileting assistance shifts the focus away from educational responsibilities and places additional demands on an already full workload.

Third, this policy represents a shift in responsibility that has historically been shared with families. While schools play a critical role in supporting children’s development, potty training is typically a developmental milestone addressed primarily at home. Reassigning this responsibility to teachers may unintentionally create unrealistic expectations for classroom staff.

Fourth, teachers are already managing extensive responsibilities beyond instruction, including planning, assessment, communication with families, behavioral support, and compliance with numerous educational

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requirements. Adding routine toileting assistance to these responsibilities increases stress and workload, which can contribute to burnout and reduced effectiveness in the classroom.

I want to emphasize that I fully support providing appropriate assistance to students with documented special needs who require help with toileting. In those cases, support is best provided by trained personnel whose roles specifically include personal care responsibilities, such as special education assistants, health professionals, or other designated staff members.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the district to reconsider this policy and explore alternative solutions that ensure student needs are met while preserving instructional time and maintaining clear professional role boundaries. Possible alternatives may include dedicated support staff, revised staffing models, or additional resources for classrooms serving students who require personal care assistance.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and continued commitment to supporting both students and educators. I appreciate the opportunity to share my perspective on this important matter.

Sincerely,  
Ophelia Baker

*Good morning, Ms. Baker:*

*Thank you for your feedback regarding proposed Policy JV - Personal Care and Toileting. Your comments will be shared with the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County and the Superintendent.*

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*We recognize and deeply value the instructional role of classroom teachers. This regulation is designed to ensure that all students can safely access school while balancing instructional priorities, student dignity, and legal obligations.*

*Again, thank you for your comments. If I can provide any additional information or clarification, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.*

Best,  
Grace Wilson  
Director of Legislation and Policy

## Public Comment Received During the 30-day Public Comment Period for NEW Policy JV – Personal Care and Toileting

Dear Members of the Anne Arundel County Board of Education,  
I am writing as a public school Pre-K teacher in AACPS to express strong opposition to the proposed changes to the Personal Care and Toileting regulation currently under consideration.

While I fully support the legal and ethical responsibility to provide access to education for all students—including those with disabilities—this proposal, as written, extends far beyond that obligation and creates serious and foreseeable harm to students, staff, and the integrity of early childhood classrooms.

The draft regulation requires school staff to provide toileting support for students “with and without IEPs or 504 plans”. This language effectively removes any expectation that typically developing students enter school with basic toileting independence—a foundational developmental skill.

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, most children achieve daytime toileting independence by age 4. This is a widely accepted developmental milestone tied to independence, self-regulation, and readiness for structured learning environments.

Even more concerning, this proposed expectation is **lower than what is required in childcare settings**. In most daycare and early childhood programs, children are not permitted to move into a 3-year-old classroom until they are fully potty trained—even if they are already three years old. AACPS, by contrast, begins Pre-K at age 4 and no longer serves 3-year-olds in the system. This means the proposed policy sets expectations **below those of daycare centers serving younger children**, which is both developmentally inconsistent and professionally concerning.

Beyond being misaligned with child development, this proposal introduces significant and dangerous consequences:

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### 1. Systemic Loss of Instructional Time

This policy will fundamentally shift the role of educators from teaching to caregiving. Each toileting incident requires a staff member to leave the classroom—often for extended periods—to assist, clean, and manage clothing.

The result:

- Reduced instructional time for all students
- Disrupted routines and transitions
- Lower academic and social-emotional outcomes

This policy does not just impact one child—it degrades the educational experience of every child in the classroom.

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### 2. Immediate and Ongoing Safety Risks

Maryland State ratios (1:10 in Pre-K) exist to ensure safe supervision. This policy makes those ratios functionally impossible to maintain.

When a staff member leaves the classroom:

- The remaining adult is out of ratio
- Supervision is compromised
- The risk of accidents and behavioral incidents increases

This creates a predictable and ongoing safety concern.

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### 3. Serious Staff Liability and Risk of Allegations

This policy requires staff to assist students with undressing, cleaning, and redressing.

Without another adult present, this creates:

- Situations with no witness or accountability
- Increased vulnerability to accusations or misunderstandings

**Public Comment Received During the 30-day Public Comment Period for  
NEW Policy JV – Personal Care and Toileting**

- Significant professional and legal risk for staff

No policy should require educators to operate under these conditions without clear safeguards.

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**4. Unfunded and Unrealistic Burden on Schools**

The policy states that families are expected to provide diapers, pull-ups, wipes, and clothing . However, this expectation does not reflect the reality in many of our classrooms.

In practice:

- Families often cannot consistently provide even a change of clothes
- Borrowed school clothing is frequently not returned
- Classroom supplies are quickly depleted

The burden will fall directly on teachers and schools, without additional funding, resources, or support.

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**5. Erosion of Developmentally Appropriate Expectations**

Toileting is a critical life skill. Removing expectations for typically developing children delays independence and shifts responsibility away from families in a way that is neither appropriate nor sustainable.

This policy sends the message that foundational self-care skills are optional and can be deferred without consequence.

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**6. Degradation of the Classroom Environment**

Frequent toileting incidents impact:

- Classroom hygiene
- Student dignity and peer dynamics
- Instructional continuity

Teachers cannot effectively teach while simultaneously functioning as full-time caregivers.

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This proposal, while likely well-intentioned, is fundamentally flawed in its scope and implementation. It does not adequately distinguish between students with documented needs and typically developing students, nor does it provide the staffing, funding, or safeguards necessary to implement it safely.

If enacted, the consequences will be immediate and far-reaching:

- Decreased instructional quality
- Increased safety risks
- Greater staff burnout and attrition
- Heightened liability for educators and the system
- Widening inequities across classrooms

I urge the Board to pause this proposal and revise it to:

- Clearly distinguish expectations for typically developing students
- Maintain developmentally appropriate toileting expectations
- Limit full personal care support to students with documented needs
- Provide staffing and procedural safeguards to protect students and staff
- Address the real resource gaps faced by schools and families

As educators, we are committed to supporting all students—but we cannot do so under policies that compromise safety, instruction, and developmentally appropriate practice.

This proposal, in its current form, does exactly that.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Colin Pannell

**Public Comment Received During the 30-day Public Comment Period for  
NEW Policy JV – Personal Care and Toileting**

*Good morning, Mr. Pannell:*

*Thank you for your feedback regarding proposed Policy JV - Personal Care and Toileting. Your comments will be shared with the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County and the Superintendent.*

*As outlined in Policy JV, AACPS is committed to ensuring that all students, regardless of disability status, are treated with dignity, respect, and provided appropriate support to access their educational environment. The intent of the proposed policy and accompanying regulation is not to shift responsibility for toileting onto general education teachers, but rather to clarify that supporting students' basic needs is a shared responsibility of school staff within early learning environments, consistent with developmentally appropriate practice and legal requirements.*

*Students in early childhood settings (Birth-5, PreK, and Kindergarten) enter school with a wide range of developmental skills, including varying levels of toileting independence. The policy and regulation reflect this reality and establishes that staff, including teachers, assistants, and other designated personnel, may be required to support students with personal care needs as part of ensuring access to education and progressing toward independence. Importantly, this work is not expected to occur without structure or safeguards. The policy, regulation, and accompanying guidelines provide for the following:*

- Health and Safety: Schools provide personal protective equipment and follow established procedures to ensure sanitary and safe practices.*
- Defined Roles and Shared Responsibility: Support is not limited to a single individual; principals designate staff and ensure appropriate coverage to maintain classroom supervision.*
- Parent Partnership: Families are required to provide necessary supplies and are engaged through permission forms and communications, reinforcing that toileting independence remains a shared responsibility.*
- Individualized Planning: For students with disabilities or specific needs, toileting supports are documented through IEPS, 504 plans, or individual care plans to ensure consistency and appropriateness.*

*We recognize and deeply value the instructional role of classroom teachers. This regulation is designed to ensure that all students can safely access school while balancing instructional priorities, student dignity, and legal obligations.*

*Again, thank you for your comments. If I can provide any additional information or clarification, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.*

*Best,  
Grace Wilson  
Director of Legislation and Policy*

I am writing to provide feedback regarding the proposed JV-RA Personal Care and Toileting policy for early learning programs.

While I understand and support the goal of ensuring all students are able to attend school and receive appropriate care, I have several concerns about the practical implementation of this policy in a typical classroom setting.

First, many classrooms do not have adequate space or facilities to safely and appropriately support toileting needs, particularly when changing or assisting students who require significant help. This raises concerns about privacy, hygiene, and maintaining a safe environment for all students.

Additionally, the expectation that staff will provide this level of care presents staffing challenges. I would imagine two adults are needed for appropriate supervision and liability protection, which directly impacts classroom instruction. When multiple adults are required for toileting assistance, it leaves remaining students without adequate supervision or instruction time.

In higher-needs or high-behavior classrooms, calling for assistance is not always feasible. Staff are often already managing complex behaviors, and leaving the classroom or waiting for support can create unsafe conditions.

**Public Comment Received During the 30-day Public Comment Period for  
NEW Policy JV – Personal Care and Toileting**

There are also concerns regarding staff vulnerability. Even when following procedures, assisting with toileting tasks places staff at risk for misunderstandings or allegations from families. Clear safeguards, documentation procedures, and protections for staff should be more explicitly addressed.

While the policy states that gender is not a factor, this may conflict with family expectations and cultural considerations. This is an area that could lead to concern or pushback from parents if not clearly communicated and supported with options.

Further, the policy does not clearly outline procedures for the disposal of waste materials or expectations for maintaining sanitary conditions in classrooms not designed for these tasks.

Additional concerns include:

- Loss of instructional time due to increased caregiving responsibilities
- Lack of training provided to staff for safe and appropriate toileting support
- Emotional impact on students who may feel uncomfortable or embarrassed in a classroom setting
- Increased workload on early childhood staff without additional compensation or staffing support
- Lack of clarity around liability, documentation, and incident reporting procedures

While I understand the legal obligation to serve all students, I strongly encourage the district to more fully consider the realities of classroom environments and provide clearer guidance, additional staffing support, and safeguards for both students and staff before implementing this policy.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Stacey Sesney

*Good morning, Mr. Sesney:*

*Thank you for your feedback regarding proposed Policy JV - Personal Care and Toileting. Your comments will be shared with the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County and the Superintendent.*

*As outlined in Policy JV, AACPS is committed to ensuring that all students, regardless of disability status, are treated with dignity, respect, and provided appropriate support to access their educational environment. The intent of the proposed policy and accompanying regulation is not to shift responsibility for toileting onto general education teachers, but rather to clarify that supporting students' basic needs is a shared responsibility of school staff within early learning environments, consistent with developmentally appropriate practice and legal requirements.*

*Students in early childhood settings (Birth-5, PreK, and Kindergarten) enter school with a wide range of developmental skills, including varying levels of toileting independence. The policy and regulation reflect this reality and establishes that staff, including teachers, assistants, and other designated personnel, may be required to support students with personal care needs as part of ensuring access to education and progressing toward independence. Importantly, this work is not expected to occur without structure or safeguards. The policy, regulation, and accompanying guidelines provide for the following:*

- *Health and Safety: Schools provide personal protective equipment and follow established procedures to ensure sanitary and safe practices.*
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*We recognize and deeply value the instructional role of classroom teachers. This regulation is designed to ensure that all students can safely access school while balancing instructional priorities, student dignity, and legal obligations.*

*Again, thank you for your comments. If I can provide any additional information or clarification, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.*

**Public Comment Received During the 30-day Public Comment Period for  
NEW Policy JV – Personal Care and Toileting**

*Best,  
Grace Wilson  
Director of Legislation and Policy*

I am writing as a classroom teacher to express serious concerns regarding the proposed policy that would require school personnel, including classroom teachers, to implement personal care and toileting strategies for students.

While I fully support efforts to promote student development and independence, I believe this policy raises several critical issues that warrant careful consideration before implementation.

First, there are significant health and hygiene concerns. Classroom environments are not designed or equipped to safely manage frequent toileting assistance and related cleanup needs, particularly when multiple students require support. This presents risks related to sanitation, contamination, and the potential spread of illness within the classroom.

Second, there are important liability and safety considerations. Assisting students with toileting is a highly sensitive responsibility that may expose staff to misunderstandings or allegations. Even with training and protocols in place, many educators may not feel adequately protected or supported in assuming this role.

The issue of personal protective equipment (PPE) must also be addressed. If staff are expected to perform these duties, they must have reliable access to appropriate PPE, sanitation supplies, and safe disposal systems. Additionally, health protections—such as access to recommended vaccinations—should be considered due to the nature of potential exposure risks.

From a practical standpoint, the feasibility of this expectation within the instructional day is a serious concern. Classroom teachers are responsible for delivering instruction, managing behavior, ensuring student safety, and supporting the needs of an entire class. Current trends already indicate increasing behavioral and developmental needs among incoming students. Teachers cannot safely leave a classroom unattended to assist an individual student, nor can they balance these responsibilities without compromising instructional time and attention for all students. Currently we have three kindergarten classrooms with one aide to share between us. This does not give us the support we need for toileting issues throughout the day.

When a teacher is occupied assisting a student in the restroom, the remaining students are left without direct supervision, creating a significant safety risk. During these moments, situations can escalate quickly—students may engage in conflict, take one another's belongings, or experience behavioral crises that require immediate intervention. Without supervision, these incidents cannot be addressed promptly, placing students at risk and disrupting the learning environment.

Ultimately, requiring classroom teachers to assume this responsibility detracts from their primary role: providing high-quality instruction and support to all.

I strongly urge the Board to reconsider this policy or, at minimum, to explore alternative solutions such as dedicated support staff, clear role delineation, and appropriate resources to ensure student needs are met without compromising safety, instruction, or staff well-being. Thank you for your time and for considering these important concerns.

Sincerely,  
Jen Johnson

**Public Comment Received During the 30-day Public Comment Period for  
NEW Policy JV – Personal Care and Toileting**

*Good morning, Ms. Johnson:*

*Thank you for your feedback regarding proposed Policy JV - Personal Care and Toileting. Your comments will be shared with the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County and the Superintendent.*

*As outlined in Policy JV, AACPS is committed to ensuring that all students, regardless of disability status, are treated with dignity, respect, and provided appropriate support to access their educational environment. The intent of the proposed policy and accompanying regulation is not to shift responsibility for toileting onto general education teachers, but rather to clarify that supporting students' basic needs is a shared responsibility of school staff within early learning environments, consistent with developmentally appropriate practice and legal requirements.*

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*We recognize and deeply value the instructional role of classroom teachers. This regulation is designed to ensure that all students can safely access school while balancing instructional priorities, student dignity, and legal obligations.*

*Again, thank you for your comments. If I can provide any additional information or clarification, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.*

*Best,  
Grace Wilson  
Director of Legislation and Policy*

Dear Members of the Board of Education,  
I am writing to express my concerns regarding the proposed expectation that teachers may be required to change diapers for 4- and 5-year-old students.

While I understand the importance of supporting all students, I believe this policy raises several significant concerns. First, changing diapers in a school setting can expose teachers to bodily fluids that may carry infectious diseases, increasing the risk of transmission. Additionally, improper handling and sanitation can lead to the spread of bacteria and viruses, posing health risks to both staff and students. What will happen in the event that the bathrooms and classrooms are not cleaned?

Additionally, this responsibility takes time away from instruction and student supervision. Teachers are already balancing many demands, and stepping away to provide this level of care could impact the safety and learning of the entire class.

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There are also concerns regarding liability and professional boundaries. Educators are trained to teach. Requiring teachers to change diapers for 4- and 5-year-olds can create legal liability for schools, as it raises concerns about potential violations of health and safety regulations, and increased risk of allegations related to student privacy or misconduct.

Furthermore, most children at this age are developmentally expected to be toilet trained. For students with documented medical or developmental needs, individualized plans and trained support staff would be a more appropriate and effective approach.

I respectfully ask the Board to carefully reconsider this policy and to explore alternative solutions that ensure student needs are met while also protecting staff, maintaining instructional time, and upholding appropriate professional roles.

Thank you for your time and consideration.  
Sincerely,  
M. Noelle O'Toole

*Good morning, Ms. O'Toole:*

*Thank you for your feedback regarding proposed Policy JV - Personal Care and Toileting. Your comments will be shared with the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County and the Superintendent.*

*As outlined in Policy JV, AACPS is committed to ensuring that all students, regardless of disability status, are treated with dignity, respect, and provided appropriate support to access their educational environment. The intent of the proposed policy and accompanying regulation is not to shift responsibility for toileting onto general education teachers, but rather to clarify that supporting students' basic needs is a shared responsibility of school staff within early learning environments, consistent with developmentally appropriate practice and legal requirements.*

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*We recognize and deeply value the instructional role of classroom teachers. This regulation is designed to ensure that all students can safely access school while balancing instructional priorities, student dignity, and legal obligations.*

*Again, thank you for your comments. If I can provide any additional information or clarification, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.*

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Grace Wilson  
Director of Legislation and Policy*

**Public Comment Received During the 30-day Public Comment Period for  
NEW Policy JV – Personal Care and Toileting**

Dear Members of the Anne Arundel County Board of Education,

I am writing as a public school Pre-K teacher in AACPS to express strong opposition to the proposed changes to the Personal Care and Toileting regulation currently under consideration.

While I fully support the legal and ethical responsibility to provide access to education for all students, including those with disabilities, this proposal, as written, extends far beyond that obligation and creates serious and foreseeable harm to students, staff, and the integrity of early childhood classrooms.

The draft regulation requires school staff to provide toileting support for students “with and without IEPs or 504 plans”. This language effectively removes any expectation that typically developing students enter school with basic toileting independence, a foundational developmental skill.

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, most children achieve daytime toileting independence by age 4. This is a widely accepted developmental milestone tied to independence, self-regulation, and readiness for structured learning environments.

Even more concerning, this proposed expectation is lower than what is required in childcare settings. In most daycare and early childhood programs, children are not permitted to move into a 3-year-old classroom until they are fully potty trained, even if they are already three years old. AACPS, by contrast, begins Pre-K at age 4 and no longer serves 3-year-olds in the system. This means the proposed policy sets expectations below those of daycare centers serving younger children, which is both developmentally inconsistent and professionally concerning.

Beyond being misaligned with child development, this proposal introduces significant and dangerous consequences:

**1. Systemic Loss of Instructional Time**

This policy will fundamentally shift the role of educators from teaching to caregiving. Each toileting incident requires a staff member to leave the classroom, often for extended periods, to assist, clean, and manage clothing.

The result:

- Reduced instructional time for all students
- Disrupted routines and transitions
- Lower academic and social-emotional outcomes

This policy does not just impact one child, it degrades the educational experience of every child in the classroom.

**2. Immediate and Ongoing Safety Risks**

Maryland State ratios (1:10 in Pre-K) exist to ensure safe supervision. This policy makes those ratios functionally impossible to maintain.

When a staff member leaves the classroom:

- The remaining adult is out of ratio
- Supervision is compromised
- The risk of accidents and behavioral incidents increases

This creates a predictable and ongoing safety concern.

**3. Serious Staff Liability and Risk of Allegations**

This policy requires staff to assist students with undressing, cleaning, and redressing.

Without another adult present, this creates:

- Situations with no witness or accountability
- Increased vulnerability to accusations or misunderstandings
- Significant professional and legal risk for staff

No policy should require educators to operate under these conditions without clear safeguards.

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NEW Policy JV – Personal Care and Toileting**

**4. Unfunded and Unrealistic Burden on Schools**

The policy states that families are expected to provide diapers, pull-ups, wipes, and clothing . However, this expectation does not reflect the reality in many of our classrooms.

In practice:

- Families often cannot consistently provide even a change of clothes
- Borrowed school clothing is frequently not returned
- Classroom supplies are quickly depleted

The burden will fall directly on teachers and schools, without additional funding, resources, or support.

**5. Erosion of Developmentally Appropriate Expectations**

Toileting is a critical life skill. Removing expectations for typically developing children delays independence and shifts responsibility away from families in a way that is neither appropriate nor sustainable.

This policy sends the message that foundational self-care skills are optional and can be deferred without consequence.

**6. Degradation of the Classroom Environment**

Frequent toileting incidents impact:

- Classroom hygiene
- Student dignity and peer dynamics
- Instructional continuity

Teachers cannot effectively teach while simultaneously functioning as full-time caregivers.

This proposal, while likely well-intentioned, is fundamentally flawed in its scope and implementation. It does not adequately distinguish between students with documented needs and typically developing students, nor does it provide the staffing, funding, or safeguards necessary to implement it safely.

**If enacted, the consequences will be immediate and far-reaching:**

- Decreased instructional quality
- Increased safety risks
- Greater staff burnout and attrition
- Heightened liability for educators and the system
- Widening inequities across classrooms

**I urge the Board to pause this proposal and revise it to:**

- Clearly distinguish expectations for typically developing students
- Maintain developmentally appropriate toileting expectations
- Limit full personal care support to students with documented needs
- Provide staffing and procedural safeguards to protect students and staff
- Address the real resource gaps faced by schools and families

As educators, we are committed to supporting all students, but we cannot do so under policies that compromise safety, instruction, and developmentally appropriate practice.

This proposal, in its current form, does exactly that.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jackie Olson

*Good morning, Ms. Olsen:*

*Thank you for your feedback regarding proposed Policy JV - Personal Care and Toileting. Your comments will be shared with the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County and the Superintendent.*

*As outlined in Policy JV, AACPS is committed to ensuring that all students, regardless of disability status, are treated with dignity, respect, and provided appropriate support to access their educational environment. The intent of the proposed policy and*

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NEW Policy JV – Personal Care and Toileting**

*accompanying regulation is not to shift responsibility for toileting onto general education teachers, but rather to clarify that supporting students' basic needs is a shared responsibility of school staff within early learning environments, consistent with developmentally appropriate practice and legal requirements.*

*Students in early childhood settings (Birth-5, PreK, and Kindergarten) enter school with a wide range of developmental skills, including varying levels of toileting independence. The policy and regulation reflect this reality and establishes that staff, including teachers, assistants, and other designated personnel, may be required to support students with personal care needs as part of ensuring access to education and progressing toward independence. Importantly, this work is not expected to occur without structure or safeguards. The policy, regulation, and accompanying guidelines provide for the following:*

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*We recognize and deeply value the instructional role of classroom teachers. This regulation is designed to ensure that all students can safely access school while balancing instructional priorities, student dignity, and legal obligations.*

*Again, thank you for your comments. If I can provide any additional information or clarification, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.*

*Best,  
Grace Wilson  
Director of Legislation and Policy*

Good morning,

I am the parent of a pre K student in AACPS. I am writing to comment on the proposed bathroom policy.

1. What is the plan to make sure coverage is provided and that the classes stay within ratio during toileting activities?
2. What is the plan for privacy and safety of the students? My son is 4 and has had two defecation accidents this year. In both incidents he was taken to the nurses office where his teacher and nurse worked together to help clean him / coach him to clean himself.  
This is obviously not a solution for students who are not potty trained and are having daily accidents as it took at least 20 minutes and two staff members each time. However having one person do this in a bathroom feels like a recipe for potential abuse. At childcare centers bathrooms are typically open to the space while also allowing children some privacy. This is not the case in a public school.
3. I understand that as a parent i must provide wipes. Since my son is potty trained 99.9% of the time it would be likely that i may not think of this ahead of time. Prior to attending school he had no accidents at daycare so I was not expecting the accidents he had at school. I am sure other parents have a similar mindset. Who will provide the wipes in cases like this?
4. I as a teacher am given one pair of gloves and 10 band aids at a time by the nurse at my school. We often go through that amount of band aids in a day because we have hundreds of students come through our space

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daily. I have had to purchase my own band aids because the nurse tells us we cant have more. Will this be the case with gloves as well?

5. Where will students be changed? There are no changing tables. When I worked in childcare we had changing tables with steps up to the pre k classrooms. Will students be changed on the floor? Regulations said we had to sanitize with a bleach solution after changing children. Will daily bottles of bleach solution be provided? Will the bathroom floors be sanitized nightly? The floors in the bathroom in my space are often forgotten.

6. If I have to assist a child in K with toileting in my space i would need to leave the gym and go into a separate hallway. Who will watch my class?

I understand both sides of this issue, especially since my own child has been assisted with toileting. However I implore you to really think through the real life issues associated with this so that our students safety is not compromised.

*Good morning;*

*Thank you for your feedback regarding proposed Policy JV - Personal Care and Toileting. Your comments will be shared with the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County and the Superintendent.*

*As outlined in Policy JV, AACPS is committed to ensuring that all students, regardless of disability status, are treated with dignity, respect, and provided appropriate support to access their educational environment. The intent of the proposed policy and accompanying regulation is not to shift responsibility for toileting onto general education teachers, but rather to clarify that supporting students' basic needs is a shared responsibility of school staff within early learning environments, consistent with developmentally appropriate practice and legal requirements.*

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*We recognize and deeply value the instructional role of classroom teachers. This regulation is designed to ensure that all students can safely access school while balancing instructional priorities, student dignity, and legal obligations.*

*Again, thank you for your comments. If I can provide any additional information or clarification, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.*

*Best,  
Grace Wilson  
Director of Legislation and Policy*

**Public Comment Received During the 30-day Public Comment Period for  
NEW Policy JV – Personal Care and Toileting**

Good afternoon,

I am writing to express my concern for the proposed toileting policy changes/updates. As a kindergarten teacher, I am incredibly concerned with what these updates will be requiring teachers to take on. Our day is non-stop and packed full from start to finish each day, and requiring teachers to assist students with toileting needs simply will not fit into our schedule. Many of our classrooms at this school do not have bathrooms attached, meaning that students have to walk a short walk across and down the hall to use the facilities. Should a student require assistance, we would need to leave our students (or bring them to wait in the hall) while we enter the bathroom to help. Logistically, I don't see how this would work or how we will be able to teach the material required each day.

Additionally, this policy opens up a whole situation where teachers can be accused of inappropriate touch/harassment, etc. Teachers already face comments/complaints from students that must be investigated in areas where, thankfully, there are cameras to catch interaction. Expecting teachers to be in a bathroom or stall with students assisting them with toileting just opens a whole different can of worms. One that teachers have great anxiety about.

Finally, I have serious concerns for what this policy will do as schools and counties already struggle maintaining adequate staffing levels. Teachers are already feeling overwhelmed and try to get done with their current workload, adding toileting assistance might just be a step too far for many.

If the county would like to move forward with allowing students into buildings that are not toilet trained, specific staff needs to be hired to assist only with this, not adding this to the already overwhelming number of tasks teachers and support staff are already asked to complete.

Thank you for your time and consideration.  
Caroline Bailey

*Good morning, Ms. Bailey:*

*Thank you for your feedback regarding proposed Policy JV - Personal Care and Toileting. Your comments will be shared with the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County and the Superintendent.*

*As outlined in Policy JV, AACPS is committed to ensuring that all students, regardless of disability status, are treated with dignity, respect, and provided appropriate support to access their educational environment. The intent of the proposed policy and accompanying regulation is not to shift responsibility for toileting onto general education teachers, but rather to clarify that supporting students' basic needs is a shared responsibility of school staff within early learning environments, consistent with developmentally appropriate practice and legal requirements.*

*Students in early childhood settings (Birth-5, PreK, and Kindergarten) enter school with a wide range of developmental skills, including varying levels of toileting independence. The policy and regulation reflect this reality and establishes that staff, including teachers, assistants, and other designated personnel, may be required to support students with personal care needs as part of ensuring access to education and progressing toward independence. Importantly, this work is not expected to occur without structure or safeguards. The policy, regulation, and accompanying guidelines provide for the following:*

- Health and Safety: Schools provide personal protective equipment and follow established procedures to ensure sanitary and safe practices.*
- Defined Roles and Shared Responsibility: Support is not limited to a single individual; principals designate staff and ensure appropriate coverage to maintain classroom supervision.*
- Parent Partnership: Families are required to provide necessary supplies and are engaged through permission forms and communications, reinforcing that toileting independence remains a shared responsibility.*

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- *Individualized Planning: For students with disabilities or specific needs, toileting supports are documented through IEPs, 504 plans, or individual care plans to ensure consistency and appropriateness.*

*We recognize and deeply value the instructional role of classroom teachers. This regulation is designed to ensure that all students can safely access school while balancing instructional priorities, student dignity, and legal obligations.*

*Again, thank you for your comments. If I can provide any additional information or clarification, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.*

*Best,  
Grace Wilson  
Director of Legislation and Policy*

Dear Members of the Anne Arundel County Board of Education,

I am writing as an early childhood educator to share concerns about the proposed toileting and diapering policy in Pre-K, kindergarten, and early childhood classrooms.

While I understand the intent, the policy does not reflect the realities of our classrooms. Toileting needs are unpredictable and already difficult to manage due to limited staffing. Assisting students often requires leaving the rest of the class unsupervised or disrupting instruction, which raises safety concerns.

I am fully willing to assist students with toileting and diapering. However, current staffing levels make it unrealistic to do so safely while maintaining supervision of the entire class. This is not about willingness, but about practicality and student safety.

Many classrooms also lack proper facilities, such as changing tables, and staff are often expected to change students in open bathroom areas. This creates concerns related to safety, hygiene, and student dignity. Additionally, there is a lack of clarity around responsibility for providing supplies like diapers, wipes, and cleaning products, which creates inconsistency and added burden on staff.

Clear expectations are also needed regarding family responsibility and toilet training, as well as staff roles—particularly for students without IEPs or 504 plans. Staffing schedules and required breaks further impact ratios, making it even more difficult to safely meet students' needs.

I respectfully urge the Board to reconsider this policy and address:

- Realistic staffing ratios
- Access to appropriate changing facilities
- Clear responsibility for supplies and sanitation
- Defined expectations with families for toilet training
- A plan for students without IEPs or 504 plans
- The impact of staffing schedules on supervision

I am committed to supporting all students and have always assisted with toileting when needed. However, expectations and procedures must be clearly defined to ensure safety for both students and staff.

Thank you for your time and consideration.  
Jessie Scheerer

*Good morning, Ms. Scheerer:  
Thank you for your feedback regarding proposed Policy JV - Personal Care and Toileting. Your comments will be shared with the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County and the Superintendent.*

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*Students in early childhood settings (Birth-5, PreK, and Kindergarten) enter school with a wide range of developmental skills, including varying levels of toileting independence. The policy and regulation reflect this reality and establishes that staff, including teachers, assistants, and other designated personnel, may be required to support students with personal care needs as part of ensuring access to education and progressing toward independence. Importantly, this work is not expected to occur without structure or safeguards. The policy, regulation, and accompanying guidelines provide for the following:*

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*We recognize and deeply value the instructional role of classroom teachers. This regulation is designed to ensure that all students can safely access school while balancing instructional priorities, student dignity, and legal obligations.*

*Again, thank you for your comments. If I can provide any additional information or clarification, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.*

*Best,  
Grace Wilson  
Director of Legislation and Policy*

Dear Members of the School Board,

I am writing as a classroom teacher to share concerns about the proposed policy requiring all school personnel, including teachers, to provide personal care and toileting support for students.

While I recognize the importance of fostering student independence and meeting developmental needs, this policy raises several issues that warrant careful consideration before moving forward.

First, there are significant health and hygiene concerns. Classroom settings are not designed to safely handle frequent toileting assistance and cleanup, especially when multiple students require support. This creates potential risks related to sanitation, contamination, and the spread of illness.

There are also important liability and safety considerations. Assisting students with toileting is a sensitive responsibility that may leave staff vulnerable to misunderstandings or allegations. Even with training and clear protocols, many educators may feel unprepared or uncomfortable assuming this role.

Access to appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) is another critical factor. If these duties are expected, staff must have reliable access to PPE, proper disposal systems, and sanitation supplies. Health protections, including recommended vaccinations such as Hepatitis A and B, should also be considered due to the nature of potential exposure.

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From a practical standpoint, this expectation presents challenges within the structure of the school day. Teachers are responsible for instruction, classroom management, and student safety. Increasing behavioral and developmental needs among students already require significant attention. It is not feasible for a teacher to leave a classroom unattended to assist an individual student, nor to balance these responsibilities without affecting instructional quality and time.

Additionally, when a teacher is occupied assisting a student outside the classroom, the remaining students are left without direct supervision. This creates safety risks, as situations can escalate quickly and require immediate intervention.

Requiring teachers to take on these responsibilities may ultimately detract from their primary role of delivering instruction and supporting all students. It could reduce learning time, increase staff stress, and create challenges in maintaining a safe and well-managed classroom.

I respectfully urge the Board to reconsider this policy or to explore alternative approaches, such as assigning dedicated support staff, clearly defining roles, and ensuring appropriate resources are in place to meet student needs without compromising safety, instruction, or staff well-being.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration.  
Sincerely,  
Danielle Bender

*Good morning, Ms. Bender:*

*Thank you for your feedback regarding proposed Policy JV - Personal Care and Toileting. Your comments will be shared with the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County and the Superintendent.*

*As outlined in Policy JV, AACPS is committed to ensuring that all students, regardless of disability status, are treated with dignity, respect, and provided appropriate support to access their educational environment. The intent of the proposed policy and accompanying regulation is not to shift responsibility for toileting onto general education teachers, but rather to clarify that supporting students' basic needs is a shared responsibility of school staff within early learning environments, consistent with developmentally appropriate practice and legal requirements.*

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*We recognize and deeply value the instructional role of classroom teachers. This regulation is designed to ensure that all students can safely access school while balancing instructional priorities, student dignity, and legal obligations.*

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*Again, thank you for your comments. If I can provide any additional information or clarification, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.*

*Best,  
Grace Wilson  
Director of Legislation and Policy*

Good Evening,

Thank you for your response and for taking the time to outline the intent behind Policy JV. I appreciate the acknowledgment of the importance of dignity, safety, and access for all students.

That said, I respectfully disagree with both the premise and the practical implications of this policy as described.

While the language emphasizes “shared responsibility” and “defined roles,” the reality of a general education classroom—particularly in kindergarten—is that the teacher is ultimately responsible for the supervision, safety, and learning of all students at all times. When a teacher is required to assist a child with toileting, even with guidelines in place, it inevitably creates situations where the rest of the class is left without direct supervision or where instructional time is significantly disrupted. This is not a minor logistical issue; it directly impacts student safety and the quality of instruction for every child in the room.

Additionally, while I understand that children enter school with a range of developmental readiness, toileting is a foundational life skill that families should be expected to address prior to entry into a general education kindergarten setting, except in cases involving documented disabilities or medical needs. Framing toileting as a routine, shared responsibility of classroom staff risks normalizing a level of dependency that is not developmentally appropriate for a general education environment and places an unrealistic burden on educators.

I also question whether those involved in drafting and supporting this policy have recent, firsthand experience managing a full classroom of young students. The operational challenges—maintaining supervision, meeting instructional demands, and responding to a WIDE range of student needs simultaneously—are significant. Policies that expand responsibilities of this nature, even with stated supports, often do not translate effectively into real classroom conditions.

Ultimately, I believe this policy, as written, will place undue strain on teachers, reduce instructional effectiveness, and create avoidable safety concerns. I strongly urge the Board and Superintendent to reconsider how this policy will function in practice and to more clearly distinguish between general education expectations and situations requiring specialized support. I urge you to work WITH current general education teachers to rewrite this policy instead of having people who are out of touch with or maybe have never even stepped foot into an early childhood classroom hand us a policy they have written. Thank you for your time,

Kaitlin Day

*Good morning, Ms. Day:*

*Thank you for your feedback regarding proposed Policy JV - Personal Care and Toileting. Your comments will be shared with the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County and the Superintendent.*

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*We recognize and deeply value the instructional role of classroom teachers. This regulation is designed to ensure that all students can safely access school while balancing instructional priorities, student dignity, and legal obligations.*

*Again, thank you for your comments. If I can provide any additional information or clarification, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.*

*Best,  
Grace Wilson  
Director of Legislation and Policy*

I support putting a policy and regulation in place for toileting and personal care, as it is always a gray area. I have the following questions about implementation specifically in the general education PreK and Kindergarten classrooms:

- What training will be provided to staff and when? How will it be decided what staff needs to be trained?
- What PPE will be provided and what funding will be used?
- What happens if staff are contaminated and need to change/clean themselves? Will they be provided the opportunity to go home and change without penalty?
- Is there a requirement that 2 staff members be present during toileting? (There should be.)
- Toileting is not currently part of the Kindergarten teacher or TA position job description. Will this be negotiated/updated?
- What is the parent responsibility beyond signing the permission form? What tasks are expected at home and how will these be monitored? Monthly check-ins, etc.

Alane Connolly

*Good morning, Ms. Connolly:*

*Thank you for your feedback regarding proposed Policy JV - Personal Care and Toileting. Your comments will be shared with the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County and the Superintendent.*

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*students can safely access school while balancing instructional priorities, student dignity, and legal obligations. Please know that additional guidance regarding student personal care and toileting will be provided in the AACPS Personal Care and Toileting Guidelines referenced in regulation.*

*Again, thank you for your comments. If I can provide any additional information or clarification, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.*

*Best,  
Grace Wilson  
Director of Legislation and Policy*