



**Jolene Ivey**  
Council  
Member  
District 5

**Testimony Concerning SB 533  
Education-Teacher Certification-Montessori Schools  
Submitted to Education Health and Environmental Affairs  
February 18, 2020**

**Position: Support**

As a Montessori parent, I have experienced firsthand the impact that our public Montessori schools had on my own children, as well as their peers. These programs nurtured not only their academic skills but also leadership, independence, confidence, and social-emotional skills that created a vital foundation for their future learning and growth. Our two sons who were students through one of the Prince George's County's Public School Montessori schools both passed the test to enter Eleanor Roosevelt's Science and Technology program and both went on to the University of Maryland. They both have followed their own passions, and achieved high levels of mastery of their interests. Their Montessori education helped form the framework for them being strong, independent learners.

As a Prince George's County Council member, I know that the Prince George's County Montessori programs have always been in high demand. In 2010 the county expanded from 2 to 3 public Montessori schools serving children pre-K through grade 8; even so, these programs continue to have long wait lists. Properly Montessori trained teachers are the cornerstone of the quality of these programs. Unfortunately, in MD there is not currently a pathway to state teacher licensure for Montessori teachers which creates several issues in hiring for our public Montessori programs because the schools can rarely find individuals who are both Montessori trained and who have a state teaching license. The result is that our Montessori classrooms have teachers who are not trained leading those classrooms, schools need to spend significant resources to get the teachers trained, the Montessori teacher preparation requires a significant time investment from the teacher, and in the meantime, the students lose out.

Maryland children deserve to have properly trained, highly qualified teachers in their classrooms. SB 533 will ensure that students being served in our public Montessori schools have the teachers who can help them excel. Montessori teachers hold a bachelor's degree and then complete rigorous teacher education which includes graduate level coursework and a significant practicum. We have assurances about the quality of their teacher preparation because these programs are accredited by the Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education (MACTE) which is recognized by the US Department of Education to accredit Montessori teacher education programs.

10 other states have a pathway to licensure for Montessori teachers and I urge Maryland to follow their lead.

Sincerely,

Jolene Ivey