



PSSAM
Public School Superintendents' Association
OF MARYLAND

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BILL: HB 880

TITLE: Education - Public Middle Schools - Course on Collateral Consequences of a Criminal Conviction

DATE: March 1, 2023

POSITION: Oppose

COMMITTEE: Ways and Means

CONTACT: Mary Pat Fannon, Executive Director, PSSAM

The Public School Superintendents' Association of Maryland (PSSAM), on behalf of all twenty-four public school superintendents, **opposes** House Bill 880.

House Bill 880 would require the Maryland State Board of Education (MSDE) to develop curriculum standards for a course on the collateral consequences of a criminal conviction for public middle school students in the State. Additionally, county boards of education would be required to develop and implement a curriculum for a course on the collateral consequences of a criminal conviction, which would be a required course offering for students in grades six through eight.

PSSAM has a longstanding policy of opposing efforts by the General Assembly to codify curriculum standards, assessments, or graduation requirements. Local superintendents strongly believe that the role of curriculum development and implementation belongs solely to local boards of education in conjunction with MSDE. Rest assured, PSSAM's opposition to this bill does not rest on an evaluation of the merits of teaching any specified subject matter, but rather opposition to statutorily mandating revisions to content standards and curriculum.

The Maryland General Assembly, in creating the Maryland State Board of Education and local boards of education, has delegated to them the responsibility of delivering a high-quality statewide system of public education through State standards and accountability measures, as well as locally governed and administered curriculum. The State Board establishes State content frameworks, state assessment standards, and minimum state graduation requirements, while each local board and school system implement locally-developed curriculum to ensure that the state

content frameworks are followed, student performance standards are met, and students are prepared to meet graduation requirements.

Superintendents are committed to providing students with a comprehensive, well-rounded education through curriculum that is implemented after proper stakeholder input is received and review processes are completed in each individual system. However, as it stands, this bill would require all local systems to expend additional funds in curriculum and assessment creation that are not provided under the bill's current language. Therefore, this bill serves as an unfunded mandate for all twenty-four local systems.

Again, PSSAM's opposition to this bill rests on the implications of curricular mandates on local school systems. House Bill 880, alongside similar bills which seek to interject or extract piecemeal segments of the curriculum, only serve to weaken the effectiveness of the overall educational curriculum.

For these reasons, PSSAM **opposes** House Bill 880 and urges an unfavorable report.