

SB598 testimony 2-23-24 Wooleyhand.pdf

Uploaded by: Christopher Wooleyhand

Position: FAV



Maryland Association of
Elementary School Principals

Maryland Association of Elementary
School Principals
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February 23, 2024

Good morning, Mr. Chairman, Madam Vice Chair, and (Education, Energy, and the Environment) committee members. My name is Christopher Wooleyhand, I am the executive director of the Maryland Association of Elementary School Principals, a professional organization with members from all 24 Maryland districts. Our organization provides service, support, and advocacy for current and aspiring school leaders across this great state. I am here to speak in favor of SB598.

We believe Senate Bill 598 should be an easy decision for Maryland lawmakers. The current state board includes students, parents, and teachers. It is time to add a sitting principal. Having a school principal on the state board of education will offer valuable perspectives and insights into the practical realities of running schools.

Principals are on the front lines of education, dealing with daily challenges, interacting with students, teachers, and parents, and implementing educational policies at the ground level. Their experiences will provide a crucial link between policymaking and its actual impact on schools and students.

The Blueprint for Maryland's Future has placed significant responsibilities at the feet of Maryland principals. They accept those responsibilities with grace and a firm commitment to their students. The reality is that there has been a disconnect in Maryland between building level school administrators and state level decision-makers.

Including a principal on the state board of education will help foster collaboration and communication between policymakers and practitioners, leading to more informed decision-making and improving the quality of education statewide.

Principals can offer firsthand knowledge of the needs and challenges faced by schools in their communities. This can help ensure that education policies are relevant, effective, and responsive to the diverse needs of students and schools across the state.

Thank you to Senators Kramer and Jackson for sponsoring this bill and thank you to the Senate Education, Energy, and Environment Committee for holding today's hearing. We are grateful for your advocacy on behalf of students, parents, teachers, and, of course, **PRINCIPALS**. We hope you'll give a favorable report for SB598.

Christopher Wooleyhand, Ph.D.
Executive Director
Maryland Association of Elementary School Principals

SB 1058 Educate to Stop the Hate.pdf

Uploaded by: deborah miller

Position: FAV



**Testimony in SUPPORT of *House Bill 1058* –
Education - Curriculum Standards – Antihate and Holocaust Education
(Educate to Stop the Hate Act) –
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
February 23, 2024**

The Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Washington (JCRC) serves as the public affairs and community relations arm of the Jewish community. We represent over 100 Jewish organizations and synagogues throughout Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia. The JCRC is strongly committed to cultivating a society based on freedom, justice, and pluralism. We work throughout the region to advocate for our agencies that serve the most vulnerable residents and to campaign for important policy interests on behalf of the Jewish community and all Marylanders.

House Bill 1058 requires that the State Board of Education develop curriculum standards and resources for antihate and Holocaust education by January 1, 2025. The Bill applies to elementary, middle, and high school classrooms in all public and nonpublic schools that receive state funding. Additionally, the curriculum would include utilizing historical contexts that have led to contemporary racism and prejudice and the Holocaust. It also will revise the high school history framework to include the contributions of historically disadvantaged racial and ethnic groups.

We are living in a time of heightened hate where every marginalized community seems to be under attack. The spike in racism, antisemitism, Islamophobia, and anti-Asian hate is unprecedented. House Bill 1058 is a critical piece of legislation to combat such hatred. Students of all ages need to understand history, including bigotry and prejudice, so that horrific events of the past - like the Holocaust - will never be repeated. In the last few months, the Jewish community has seen a 361% increase in antisemitic incidents compared to the same period a year ago. At the JCRC, it seems like a week doesn't go by without a call about vandalism at a synagogue, bullying on a playground, or a swastika found on a school desk. It's unacceptable and has to be addressed.

The Educate to Stop the Hate Act is not a panacea, but it certainly is a necessary step to help stem the tide and fight back against the harmful impact of hatred which undermines the very fabric of our society. HB 1058 is an opportunity to attack all forms of hatred. It's an opportunity we can't afford to miss. For these reasons, we ask for a favorable report on HB 1058.

SB 598.Principal on the StateBoard.pdf

Uploaded by: John Woolums

Position: FAV

BILL: Senate Bill 558
TITLE: State Board of Education - Membership - School Principal
DATE: February 23, 2024
POSITION: SUPPORT
COMMITTEE: Education, Energy, and the Environment
CONTACT: John R. Woolums, Esq.

The Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) supports Senate Bill 558. This bill will enhance the composition of the Maryland State Board of Education by adding a member representing school principals.

MABE supports this addition in order ensure the representation of school administrators responsible for leading the delivery of teaching and learning in the 1,400 public schools throughout the State. MABE notes that the association historically opposed adding members to the State Board, including representatives from teachers' associations and parents' associations. However, since these additions were enacted in 2019, MABE now supports the addition of a school principal as an appropriate complementary voice and perspective on the State Board of Education.

MABE firmly believes that the role of a full complement of qualified school-based staff will be pivotal to the successful implementation of Blueprint for Maryland's Future. School Principals are leading the day-to-day operations of schools, and all that entails, but are also doing so in accordance with the comprehensive school-based reforms mandated by the Blueprint.

To be clear, MABE supports adding a school principal representative on the State Board in order to better inform the Board's state-level policy making on all public education matters. The State Board is responsible for regulations spanning issues such as curriculum standards, assessments, student health, student discipline, special education, student transportation, school meals, among many others. MABE believes that on all of these matters, the principals' voice will be uniquely and highly beneficial in informing the Board's deliberations.

Again, MABE supports the addition of a school principal able to share their expertise and experience working every day with teachers, staff, students, and families toward the ultimate goal of each student learning to love learning and meeting the challenges of attaining college and career readiness.

For these reasons, MABE urges this Committee to issue a favorable report on Senate Bill 558.

SB 598 State Board of Education - Membership - Sch

Uploaded by: Mary Pat Fannon

Position: FAV



PSSAM
Public School Superintendents' Association
OF MARYLAND

Mary Pat Fannon, Executive Director
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BILL: SB 598
TITLE: State Board of Education - Membership - School Principal
DATE: February 23, 2024
POSITION: Support
COMMITTEE: Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
CONTACT: Mary Pat Fannon, Executive Director, PSSAM

The Public School Superintendents' Association of Maryland (PSSAM), on behalf of all twenty-four public school superintendents, **supports** Senate Bill 598.

Senate Bill 598 would add an active, certified principal to the Maryland State Board of Education (MSDE). This bill would require a state-wide election to be held for all active and certified principals in the State, as well as require that the principal member who receives the highest number of votes be appointed to the vacancy by the Governor. Additionally, Senate Bill 598 provides parameters for the voting capacity and term length of the principal member.

PSSAM understands amendments may be forthcoming from the sponsor and the State Board and certainly yields to the wisdom and direction of those discussions and decisions by this Committee.

PSSAM appreciates the goal of this legislation to allow for the appointment of a principal member to the Maryland State Board of Education. Maryland's superintendents have found value in adequate representation of other populations through elections and appointments to the State Board, such as teacher and student members. PSSAM sees this legislation as a natural extension, as well as a vehicle for adequate representation of school leadership, which is essential for equitable outcomes in education.

For these reasons, PSSAM **supports** Senate Bill 598 and urges a favorable committee report.

Shindel Witness Statement to State Board (1).pdf

Uploaded by: Melissa Shindel

Position: FAV



February 22, 2024

Dear Chairman Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and the Education, Energy, and Environment Committee,

Mr. Chair and committee members, I am Melissa Shindel, and I am here on behalf of principals across the State of Maryland to urge favorable passage of Senate Bill 598. First and foremost, I am the proud principal of Glenwood Middle School in Howard County, Maryland. I have been an administrator in both Prince George's County Public Schools and the Howard County Public School System, have been the principal of four very different schools, and this is my 15th year as a middle school principal.

As school principals, we have firsthand experience with the day-to-day operations of schools. Our perspective is global; we have a keen understanding of the complex inner workings of a school community, which balances the whole needs of children with the implementation of educational decisions and policies. We make hundreds - if not thousands - of decisions each day, and we understand the opportunities and challenges associated with implementing new initiatives, mandated policies, and exciting opportunities at the school level. Our experiences and perspectives consider all voices - not only those of school leaders, but also those of teachers, students, parents, support staff, and community stakeholders.

Principals are charged with implementing the policies, programs and initiatives of the State Board of Education (in addition to those of federal, state and local Boards and legislators). We ensure compliance. Accountability falls on our shoulders. We ensure our teachers and students are prepared, and we do everything we can to ensure the highest levels and success and achievement for our children. Having a principal on the State Board of Education brings our breadth and depth of experience into critical decisions that are impacting our schools, teachers, administrators, communities and most of all - our students. Our voice and perspective can only help strengthen the multitude of programs and initiatives in our schools that will ultimately make public education in Maryland *world class*.

If we are truly committed to providing the very best for our children, then It is crucial that a principal have a position on the Maryland State Board of Education, and I urge favorable passage of Senate Bill 598. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Melissa Shindel

Hilliard Testimony 2.23.24.docx.pdf

Uploaded by: Tracy Hilliard

Position: FAV



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Amber James, Assistant Principal
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Learn Today, Lead Tomorrow!

BILL: SB0598
TITLE: State Board of Education - Membership - School Principal
DATE: February 23, 2024
POSITION: Favorable

Good morning, Mr. Chair, Madam Vice Chair, and members of the committee. My name is Tracy Hilliard, and I am honored to address you today. I serve as the principal at Urbana Elementary School in Frederick County, and I hold the esteemed position of the current president of the Maryland Association of Elementary School Principals. I stand before you with a deep sense of responsibility and pride in representing not only my school but also the collective voice of well over 600 elementary school principals spanning 24 school districts across Maryland.

I am here today to express my strong endorsement of Senate Bill 598 for the inclusion of a practicing principal on the Maryland State Board of Education. Currently, the composition of the Maryland State Board of Education is commendable in its representation of various stakeholders, including parents, students, and teachers. However, it is crucial to recognize that principals play a pivotal role in the school community, serving as leaders who directly engage with the multifaceted aspects of education.

The role of a principal in shaping the daily operations and overall direction of a school is indeed significant. As we embark on the implementation of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future, principals are tasked with additional responsibilities that directly impact the school community. It is crucial to recognize that many of the decisions related to this implementation are currently being made by the Maryland State Board of Education, which only includes the voices of a student member, a parent member, and a teacher member.

While these perspectives are undoubtedly valuable, the absence of a practicing principal's voice leaves a critical gap in the representation of those responsible for executing and adapting to the policies on a day-to-day basis. Principals bring a unique set of experiences and insights into the practical implications and challenges of implementing educational initiatives.

Including a practicing principal on the Maryland State Board of Education would not only enhance the comprehensiveness of the board but also ensure that decisions made at the state level are well-informed by the realities faced by schools on the ground level. The Blueprint for Maryland's Future, being a comprehensive and transformative plan, would benefit significantly from the input of someone directly engaged in managing the intricate details of a school environment.

I urge the committee to consider the invaluable perspective that a practicing principal can bring to the Maryland State Board of Education. This inclusion would foster a more holistic understanding of the implications of policies and contribute to the successful implementation of initiatives aimed at improving Maryland's educational system.



Tracy D. Hilliard, Principal
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Amber James, Assistant Principal
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Learn Today, Lead Tomorrow!

In conclusion, I want to express my sincere gratitude to Senators Kramer and Jackson for sponsoring Senate Bill 598. Your commitment to recognizing the importance of including a practicing principal on the State Board of Education is commendable and aligns with the principles of fairness and inclusivity.

I also extend my thanks to the members of the Education, Energy, and Environment Committee for facilitating today's hearing. Your time and attention to this matter are highly appreciated, and I am confident that your thoughtful consideration will contribute to the advancement of education in Maryland. We hope you'll give SB598 a favorable report.

Thank you.

Tracy Hilliard,
President
Maryland Association of Elementary School Principals

SB598_MSEA_Lamb_FWA.pdf

Uploaded by: Lauren Lamb

Position: FWA

FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS

Senate Bill 598

State Board of Education - Membership - School Principal

Senate Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment

February 23, 2024

Lauren Lamb

Government Relations

The Maryland State Education Association supports, with an amendment, Senate Bill 598, which would alter the membership of the State Board of Education to include a school principal as a member and provide for the initial term of the principal member.

MSEA represents 75,000 educators and school employees who work in Maryland's public schools, teaching and preparing our almost 900,000 students so they can pursue their dreams. MSEA also represents 39 local affiliates in every county across the state of Maryland, and our parent affiliate is the 3-million-member National Education Association (NEA).

Including a teacher and principal on the State Board of Education provides valuable insight into the daily operations and needs of Maryland's schools. However, we continue to lack the perspective of a non-supervisory, non-certificated education support professional, such as a paraeducator, food service staff member, or one of the many other roles that keep our schools functioning. Such a member would bring a unique and essential perspective to the State Board's role in the oversight and regulation of education policy.

We therefore urge an amendment to add an elected non-supervisory education support professional to the State Board with the same voting rights and restrictions as the teacher member and principal member. The education support professional member should be elected in a manner and to a term comparable to the teacher member, with voting made available to all non-supervisory, noncertificated school employees in the state.

With the inclusion of the proposed amendment, we urge the Committee to issue a Favorable Report on Senate Bill 598.

SB 598 - State Board - SWA.pdf

Uploaded by: Zachary Hands

Position: FWA

TO: Senate Education, Energy, and Environment Committee

BILL: Senate Bill (SB) 598 – State Board of Education – Membership – Principal

DATE: February 23, 2024

POSITION: Support with Amendments

Chair Feldman and Members of the Senate Education, Energy, and Environment Committee,

The Maryland State Board of Education (State Board) would like to share a few proposed amendments to **SB 598**, which would add an additional member to the State Board who is required to be a certified, active school principal in Maryland, and who would be selected through an election conducted by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE).

The State Board appreciates the intent of this bill to ensure that the principal voice is well represented on the board. We concur that the experience, knowledge, and perspective of an active principal would be valuable. We are fortunate to have current members of the State Board who have served as principals in our public schools.

We have some concerns with continued growth of the size of the State Board, which is already one of the largest [state boards of education](#) in the United States at 14 members. Additionally, we want to ensure that the Governor retains the flexibility to appoint members of the State Board who have a wide array of experiences and skill sets.

The State Board does not oppose an active, certified principal serving as a member of the State Board and requests that the committee consider the following amendments that would allow for that flexibility without increasing the size of the State Board:

1. On page 1, line 16, page 2, line 8, and page 4, line 13, remove the increase in the number of regular members of the State Board from 13 members to 14 members.
2. On page 3, lines 2-3, strike “who received the highest number of votes after an election of principals in the State”, and strike lines 4-8 in their entirety.
3. On page 4, lines 13-18, strike the suggested uncodified language in its entirety and provide that the principal member of the State Board shall begin their term on July 1, 2025.

The State Board requests that the committee consider this information and suggested amendments to **SB 598**. Please contact Dr. Akilah Alleyne, Executive Director of Government Affairs, Education Policy, and Government Relations, at Akilah.alleyne@maryland.gov or at 410-767-0504 or Zach Hands, Executive Director of the State Board, at Zachary.hands1@maryland.gov or at 443-915-6094, if you would like any additional information.