

Introduction

On behalf of the Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE), representing all 24 local boards of education in Maryland, I thank you for your support for public education and respectfully request your consideration of MABE's positions on legislative issues. Founded in 1957, the association is a private, non-profit organization to which all the school boards in the State voluntarily belong. MABE challenges, leads, and assists local boards to create and maintain excellent public schools for all of Maryland's children.

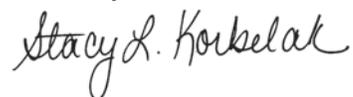
MABE is uncompromisingly committed to the academic success of all students. Just as local boards of education are the primary voice for public education at the local level, MABE is the primary voice for local boards in the State of Maryland. MABE represents the local school board point of view to the General Assembly and State Board of Education and monitors and adopts positions on legislation and regulations affecting public education. The Advocacy sections of MABE's website, www.mabe.org, provide information on MABE's advocacy before the General Assembly, State Board of Education, and federal government.

MABE's top priorities for the 2018 Legislative Session include:

- **Support for continued governance autonomy for local boards of education to set education policy and school budgets which provide educational benefits for all students; and opposition to unfunded mandates. Specifically, MABE is seeking approval of enhanced local school calendar flexibility.** MABE supports continued autonomy for all local boards to adopt education policies that promote high standards for academic and fiscal accountability. Therefore, MABE opposes any executive, legislative or regulatory initiatives which would have the effect of reducing local board governance or budgetary authority, or which create unfunded mandates.
- **Support for full State funding for Maryland's outstanding public schools. Specifically, MABE is seeking increased funding for prekindergarten.** MABE urges the Governor and General Assembly to support increased funding of public education in the FY 2019 State Budget. Local boards of education are committed to preparing all students to be globally competitive in college and careers. Increased state investments in public education are essential in these times of rapid change, rising expectations, and increased costs.
- **Support for robust State funding for school construction and renovation projects. Specifically, MABE is seeking funding and process reforms to enhance local flexibility.** MABE urges the Governor and General Assembly to support increased investments in school construction and renovation projects. MABE requests an FY 2019 school construction budget of at least \$350 million to support local boards in providing optimal learning environments to prepare our students to be college and career ready.
- **Support for sustained local government investments in education. Specifically, MABE is seeking to preserve state law to ensure local funding increases above maintenance of effort.** Funding from Maryland's 23 counties and Baltimore City plays a critical role in combination with state and federal funding to support teaching and learning. Therefore, MABE strongly supports the maintenance of effort reforms enacted in 2012 to guarantee stable and increasing local investments in public education.

On behalf of all 24 local boards of education, MABE looks forward to your support for MABE's legislative priorities in 2018. If you have any questions regarding MABE's legislative positions, please contact MABE's Director of Governmental Relations, John R. Woolums, Esq., at (410) 841-5414 or jwoolums@mabe.org; or me, at stacy.korbelak@aacps.org.

Sincerely,



Stacy Korbela, Chair
MABE Legislative Committee