

January 22, 2016

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MABE Briefs Ways & Means Committee

On Thursday, January 21, Joy Schaefer, MABE's Legislative Committee Chair, briefed the House Ways and Means Committee on MABE's 2016 legislative priorities and positions.

The [presentation](#) highlighted MABE's mission, services, and legislative positions and priorities including MABE's support for legislation in 2016 to boost prekindergarten funding, and to create a new education funding commission. In addition, Ms. Schaefer reviewed MABE's legislative positions on the state budget and school construction funding, labor relations, vouchers, and highlighted the importance of local board discretion to adopt policies on student assessments, curriculum, student health, and school safety. Committee members asked a number of questions ranging from the operation of school system audits and ethics commissions to the educational backgrounds of board members.

Education Budget Highlights

On January 20, the Governor released his proposed State Budget for FY 2017, including the significant segment of the budget devoted to operating and capital funding for public schools. The Governor's proposed budget for FY 2017 includes full funding for PreK-12 public elementary and secondary education, including the newly mandated Geographic Cost of Education Index.

2016 Legislative Committee Calendar

- (Session convened Jan. 13, 2016)
- February 1, 2016
- **2016 Legislative Day Luncheon
Friday, February 12, 2016
11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.**
(Note: The Legislative Committee will meet before the Luncheon, 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.)
- February 29, 2016
- March 14, 2016
- April 4, 2016
- (Session Adjourns April 11, 2016)
- April 25, 2016 - Session Summary

MABE's Legislative Committee meetings are held in the MABE office on Monday mornings, 10:00 to 12:00, unless otherwise indicated. Meeting agendas and materials are posted on the [MABE website](#).

“Included in this budget, for the second straight year, is a record level of funding going toward the education of our children. We are putting \$6.3 billion into K-12 education, which is about \$140 million more than last year. We are fully funding education aid, including the Geographic Cost of Education Index. Our commitment to education does not end there. We are also putting forward \$314 million for school construction, and we are allocating resources for important programs like P-Tech.”

- Governor’s FY 2017 Budget Highlights

The Governor’s [Budget Highlights](#) is available on the Department of Budget and Management’s (DBM) website. The General Assembly will consider the Governor’s operating budget as [Senate Bill 190](#), and capital budget as [Senate Bill 191](#). MABE looks forward to testifying in support of the Governor’s budget proposal to fully funding of public education in the 2016-2017 school year.

Nonpublic Student Assistant Grant Program

The Governor’s budget does include the proposal to create a \$5 million program to reimburse 50% of business contributions to student assistance organizations established to provide financial assistance to students attending private and parochial schools. The proposal would have the recently renamed Department of Commerce administer the grant program. MABE opposes this proposal, identical to one proposed and rejected last session, and we anticipate continued support for our position in the General Assembly.

The FY 2017 Education Budget by Category

Foundation Program: The foundation program is the largest single local aid program and is fully funded in FY 2017. Under the program, aid is distributed on the basis of public school enrollment and equalized for taxable wealth so that jurisdictions with smaller per pupil tax bases receive proportionately more aid. The FY 2017 allowance includes one-time grants of \$5.6 million to three jurisdictions that have had declining enrollment in K-12 education aid over a five year period, in order to give those jurisdictions time to plan how to deal with future enrollment declines. The additional grant includes \$4 million for Carroll County, \$1.3 million for Garrett County, and \$300,000 for Kent County.

Compensatory Education: The compensatory education program is directed toward the education of children who are economically and environmentally disadvantaged. The Bridge to Excellence Act directs the aid according to the number of students receiving free or reduced price meals.

Special Education: Aid for special education is provided to school systems to help cover the additional cost of educating students with needs for special services. These funds are allocated on a formula basis for students in local schools and to support children placed in nonpublic special education schools. The FY 2017 budget reflects the State’s share at 70 percent of the cost of nonpublic placements over a certain amount.

Student Transportation: This program provides aid for the transportation of students to and from school, including a specific grant aid for transporting special needs students.

Other Education Aid: Other education aid includes \$227.2 million to support students with limited English proficiency and \$54.5 million for the Guaranteed Tax Base program, which provides grants to those subdivisions that have less than 80 percent of the statewide average wealth per pupil and that provide local education funding above the local share required by the foundation program.

State Retirement System: In addition to direct aid for education, the State pays a portion of the pension and retirement benefits for teachers, principals, administrators, and other eligible employees on behalf of each board of education.

P-Tech: The budget includes \$704,000 over two years to launch the development of four P-TECH grade 9-14 schools in Maryland to help better prepare students for college and entry into the job market. Graduates from Maryland's P-TECH schools will earn their high school diploma and a two-year postsecondary degree in a STEM field from an accredited community college. For more information on the P-Tech program, visit www.ptech.org.

Capital Budget for School Construction

The Governor's school construction budget (SB 191) totals \$314 million, including \$280 million for approved projects in the state capital improvement program, \$20 million for school systems with high enrollment growth; \$6 million for the Aging Schools Program; \$4.6 million for federal Qualified Zone Academy Bond projects; and \$3.5 million for improvements to aging non-public school facilities. The budget also includes \$20 million to meet the State's annual commitment to the multi-year Baltimore City schools' revitalization and reconstruction program.

Nonpublic Aging Schools Program

The proposed capital budget once again includes \$3.5 million for the Nonpublic Aging Schools Program, which provides funds to reimburse nonpublic schools for facility-related expenditures eligible under the Aging Schools Program.

Bill Highlights

Bill Report & Hearing Schedule – [January 21, 2016 Report](#) and [Hearing Schedule](#)

[HB 72](#) - Education - Sexual Abuse and Assault Awareness and Prevention Program - Development and Implementation - Requiring the State Board of Education and specified nonpublic schools to develop and implement a program of age-appropriate education relating to the awareness and prevention of sexual abuse and assault; requiring the specified program to be taught by a teacher who is trained to provide instruction on the awareness and prevention of sexual abuse and assault; requiring the specified program to be incorporated into the health curriculum of each county board of education and each nonpublic school; etc. (MABE Position: Oppose)

HB 85 - Education - Children With Disabilities - Support Services - Parental Notification - Requiring specified school personnel to provide the parents of a child with a disability written information that the parents may use to contact early intervention and special education family support services staff members and a brief description of the available services; requiring specified school personnel to provide a translator at a meeting for parents who require information to be translated into the parents' native language; requiring a local school system to publish specified contact information on its Web site; etc.

HB 109 - Public Schools - Health and Safety - Food Transparency - Requiring specified local school systems to include specified information relating to items sold a la carte on monthly dining menus; requiring a specified monthly menu to include specified information under specified circumstances; and requiring specified local school systems to create an individual monthly a la carte menu for each school under specified circumstances; etc. (MABE Position: Oppose)

HB 115 - Education - Robotics Grant Program – Establishment - Establishing the Robotics Grant Program to provide grants to public schools in the State to support and expand existing robotics programs; establishing eligibility requirements for the Program; requiring the Governor to include in the State budget an appropriation of at least \$500,000 to the Program; requiring the State Department of Education to implement and administer the Program; and authorizing the Department to adopt specified regulations.

HB 141 - Education - Education Accountability Program - Limits on Testing - Requiring the State Board of Education to adopt regulations limiting the amount of time in the aggregate that may be devoted to federal, State, and locally mandated tests for each grade to 2% of the specified minimum required annual instructional hours; and prohibiting time devoted to teacher-selected classroom quizzes and exams, portfolio reviews, or performance assessments from being counted toward the specified testing time limits. (MABE Position: Oppose)

HB 142 - Education - Health and Safety - Emotional Health Awareness Programs - Requiring specified local school systems to implement a specified program of emotional health awareness for specified individuals and to implement a specified program to provide specified student athletes and coaches with specified tools; authorizing specified local school systems to use specified materials and collaborate with organizations with expertise in emotional health or transforming the culture of youth sports; and requiring the State Department of Education to adopt specified regulations. (MABE Position: Oppose)

HB 145 - Public School Labor Relations Board - Renegotiation Procedures and Administration - Authorizing a public school employer and an employee organization to use a specified alternative procedure regarding the renegotiation of specified allocated funds under specified circumstances; requiring the Attorney General to assign an assistant Attorney General to provide legal services to the Public School Labor Relations Board, the Higher Education Labor Relations Board, and the State Labor Relations Board; requiring the chair of the Public School Labor Relations Board to be a specified member of the Board; etc. (MABE Position: Oppose)

[SB 190](#)/HB 150 - Budget Bill (Fiscal Year 2017) - Making the proposed appropriations contained in the State budget for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2017, in accordance with Article III, Section 52 of the Maryland Constitution; etc. (MABE Position: Support with Amendments)

[SB 191](#)/HB 151 - Creation of a State Debt - Maryland Consolidated Capital Bond Loan of 2016 (Capital Budget for Fiscal Year 2017) - Authorizing the creation of a State Debt in the amount of \$1,002,385,000, the proceeds to be used for specified necessary building, construction, demolition, planning, renovation, conversion, replacement, and capital equipment purchases of the State, etc. (MABE Position: Support with Amendments)

[HB 196](#) - Primary and Secondary Education - Security - School Resource Officers - Requiring that at least one school resource officer be assigned to each public school in the State; requiring specified public schools to hire retired law enforcement officers as school resource officers for the school; requiring specified school resource officers to obtain a special police officer commission issued by the Department of State Police; requiring the county superintendent to submit an application to the Secretary of State Police for a special police commission for each school resource officer hired; etc. (MABE Position: Oppose)

[SB 145](#) - Wicomico County Board of Education - Election and Appointment of Members - Requiring that, beginning in 2018, members of the Wicomico County Board of Education be elected by districts and members be elected at large, as specified; providing that, alternatively, beginning in 2018, members of the Wicomico County Board of Education be elected by districts and members be appointed, as specified; establishing a School Board Nominating Commission; submitting the Act to a referendum of the qualified voters of Wicomico County; etc. (Local)

[SB 183](#) - School Vehicles - Seat Belts – Requirements - Prohibiting specified persons from allowing pupils to stand in a school vehicle while the school vehicle is in motion; requiring school vehicles in the State to be equipped with seat belts; prohibiting a person from operating a specified school vehicle unless the person and each occupant under 16 years old are restrained by a seat belt; providing for a delayed effective date; etc. (MABE Position: Oppose)

Bill Hearing & Briefing Schedule

- January 26, 11:30 Fiscal Briefing by the Dept. of Legislative Services in the Joint Hearing Room.
- February 8, at 1:00 MABE, PASSAM and MDPTA will brief the Commission to Review Maryland’s Use of Assessments in Public Schools on MABE’s perspectives on the survey of mandated testing and testing issues coming before the commission. Location: Howard County Public Schools, Board Room B, 10910 Clarksville Pike, Ellicott City.

Bill Title	Hearing Schedule	MABE Position
SB 83 - Public Safety - School Safety Enforcement Fund	Judicial Proceedings 1/26/2016 - 1:00 p.m.	Support
HB 23 - Procurement - Prevailing Wage Law -	Economic Matters	Support

Waiver From Provisions	1/27/2016 - 1:00 p.m.	
HB 72 - Education - Sexual Abuse and Assault Awareness and Prevention Program - Development and Implementation	Ways and Means 2/4/2016 - 2:00 p.m.	Oppose
HB 29 - Education - Participants in Youth Sports Programs - Concussions - Penalties for Coaches	Ways and Means 1/28/2016 - 2:00 p.m.	Oppose
HB 41 - Public Schools - Boards of Education - Anonymous Two-Way Text Messaging Tip Programs	Ways and Means 1/28/2016 - 2:00 p.m.	Oppose

MABE's Advocacy Centers

MABE strives to be the primary voice for public education in Annapolis. The unity of 24 local school boards lends strength to our increasing importance in the legislative process, ensuring that the Governor, General Assembly, and State Board of Education turn to MABE to help determine what is best for school children.

Annapolis Advocacy Center

MABE's Legislative Committee holds monthly meetings to guide the Association's lobbying activities in Annapolis, and invites policy and legislative leaders to exchange ideas. The Director of Governmental Relations, in coordination with MABE leadership, conducts direct lobbying activities including written and oral testimony before the General Assembly. MABE adopts and publishes an annual Legislative Positions publication and a Session Summary. MABE coordinates the Green Street Coalition, which is comprised of legislative liaisons from school systems and the superintendents association, and MABE staff pens the weekly GreenSheet update on legislative activity.

State Board Advocacy Center

MABE staff and members of the Board of Directors attend each meeting of the State Board of Education, and staff pens The Monitor, which provides a comprehensive summary of each meeting. MABE frequently informs the State Board of the Association's positions on priority issues through testimony, correspondence, and meetings.

Federal Advocacy Center

MABE encourages all boards of education to engage in advocacy at the federal level to ensure that our federal officials are well informed on the priorities and perspectives of local school systems and the fiscal and policy issues arising under the myriad federal programs impacting public education. MABE's Federal Relations Network (FRN) Committee is comprised of board members appointed to represent the association in communicating NSBA and MABE positions to Maryland's federal delegation, including our two U.S. Senators and eight members of the U.S. House of Representatives.

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