



621 Ridgely Avenue, Suite 300, Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-5414 · 800-841-8197 · Fax: 410-841-6580

BILL: House Bill 18
TITLE: Task Force to Improve Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers Scores for Maryland Public School Students
DATE: February 2, 2017
POSITION: OPPOSE
COMMITTEE: Ways and Means Committee
CONTACT: John R. Woolums, Esq.

The Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) opposes House Bill 18, which would create a task force to make recommendations on the State's administration of the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) student assessments.

In general, MABE advocates that any changes to requirements regarding curriculum, student assessments, or graduation requirements, should be addressed through the State Board of Education's policy-making and regulatory process. MABE believes that in creating the State Board and local boards of education the General Assembly has appropriately delegated the responsibility for the development of curriculum and student instructional programming, as well as professional development programming for teachers and other school employees. However, Maryland's development of College and Career Readiness Standards and the corresponding assessment program has already involved an unprecedented amount of legislation. MABE certainly appreciates the General Assembly's attention to the major transitions in the State's education system in recent years. Local board members have participated on several state commissions and collaborated on program initiatives in the area of student assessments, but MABE opposes House Bill 18 and the proposal to establish a new assessment-related task force.

MABE and local boards have been closely engaged in the development and implementation of Maryland's College and Career-Ready Standards and the corresponding PARCC assessments. Maryland adopted the Common Core State Standards in 2010, and MSDE then proceeded to adopt the Maryland College and Career Readiness Standards and curricular framework. At the same time, the State Board decided to transition from the Maryland School Assessments (MSAs) and High School Assessments (HSAs) to new State assessments developed in conjunction with the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC).

The General Assembly has also been actively engaged in guiding and monitoring the transition of the State's school and student performance accountability system. In 2013, Senate Bill 740, the College and Career Readiness and College Completion Act of 2013 was enacted to establish a number of requirements regarding student assessments and courses aimed at increasing college and career readiness (Chapter 533). In 2014, the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards and Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) Implementation Review Workgroup was created by the General Assembly under House Bill 1164 (Chapter 246). In addition, in 2015 the Commission to Review Maryland's Use of Assessments and Testing in Public Schools was authorized (Chapter 421). MABE believes that there has been ample legislative focus on assessment issues.

The passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), signed by President Obama on December 10, 2015, represents a comprehensive revision of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), previously known as the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). MABE believes that ESSA provides an historic opportunity for school boards across the country to help shape how this law will impact their schools, teachers and students. As this work proceeds, MABE does not support creating the task force proposed by this bill, and requests an unfavorable report on House Bill 18.