

BILL: House Bill 1351
TITLE: Education - Foreign Language Requirement -
Computer Programming Language Courses
POSITION: OPPOSE
DATE: March 10, 2017
COMMITTEE: Ways and Means Committee
CONTACT: John R. Woolums, Esq.

The Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE), representing all of the State's local boards of education, opposes House Bill 1351, which would authorize the substitution of the foreign language credit requirement with a course in computer programming.

Generally, MABE opposes efforts by the General Assembly to legislate curriculum, courses of instruction, assessments, or graduation requirements, firmly believing that this role belongs to local boards of education in conjunction with the State Board of Education. Exceptions to this rule are rare. In creating the State Board and local boards of education, the General Assembly has delegated to them the responsibility for guiding and delivering a high quality statewide system of public education through state standards and accountability measures, and locally governed and administered curriculum, teaching, and learning.

Specifically, MABE is a strong proponent of the value of the current graduation requirement for a credit in foreign language. Now more than ever it is important for our students to have a credit in foreign language to graduate from a Maryland high school. Maryland students need to be educated to be globally competitive and fully prepared to participate in the world community of commerce and ideas.

As this Committee knows, Maryland continues to implement the statewide student assessments aligned with the Common Core and Maryland's College and Career Readiness Standards, the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) assessments. As Maryland continues to implement reforms in standards and assessments relating to College and Career Readiness, MABE looks forward to the General Assembly's support for sustaining Maryland's comprehensive and rigorous graduation requirements including the foreign language requirement.

For these reasons, MABE requests an unfavorable report on House Bill 1351.