

For Immediate Release - October 17, 2017

MABE and Superintendents Association Join to Provide Remarks to the Kirwan Commission

Annapolis, MD – The Maryland Association of Boards of Education, representing all boards of education across the state, joined with the Public School Superintendent's Association of Maryland (PSSAM) to present remarks to the Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education, also known as the Kirwan Commission on October 12, 2017.

The panel consisted of Tolbert Rowe, MABE President-Elect, Theresa Alban, Frederick County Superintendent of Schools, and D'Ette Devine, PSSAM President and Cecil County Superintendent of Schools.

In his remarks, Mr. Rowe stated, "MABE believes that significant funding increases are needed to support equitable access for all students to an excellent education. MABE also believes that local boards must be at the helm, fulfilling the responsibility to govern school systems in the best interests of all students. MABE urges the Commission to fulfill its primary charge and address the adequacy study's overarching conclusion that there is an enormous statewide funding gap. Substantially more per pupil funding is required not only to prepare all students to succeed based on higher standards in reading, math and science, but also to fund new programs such as universal prekindergarten and more robust college and career readiness programs, including dual enrollment, career technology education, and apprenticeship programs."

Mr. Rowe further stated, "Maryland has a proven track record as the best statewide school system in the nation for many years. MABE sees no rationale for adopting a new governance model, or creating a new board or bureaucracy, when we know that Maryland's state and local boards of education and educational leaders are up to the task – and can and should be held accountable – for achieving excellence for all students when provided constitutionally adequate resources. MABE is confident that through incremental implementation of funding recommendations developed by this Commission and enacted by the General Assembly, Maryland can renew its commitment to fulfilling its constitutional mandate to fully fund and support an excellent education for all students."

The Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education was created by legislation passed in 2016, and was one of MABE's top legislative priorities for the 2016 session. The Commission has received comprehensive presentations on the Funding Adequacy reports produced by APA Consulting and adopted a framework for its work based on the National Center on Education and the Economy's (NCEE) "Nine Building Blocks of a World Class Education System."

MABE's representative on the Kirwan Commission is MABE Immediate Past President Joy Schaefer.

Contact: John Woolums, 410-841-5414, jwoolums@mabe.org

#####

Founded in 1957, the Maryland Association of Boards of Education is a private, non-profit organization dedicated to serving and supporting boards of education in Maryland. MABE is a leading advocate for public education in the state. All 24 Maryland boards of education are members of MABE.