

## Introduction

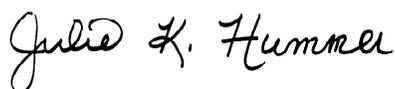
On behalf of the Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE), representing all 24 local boards of education in Maryland, I thank you for your support for public education and respectfully request your consideration of MABE's positions on legislative issues. Founded in 1957, the association is 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](http://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 2019 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 passage of the Kirwan Commission legislation to update and enhance the constitutional adequacy and equity of state and local funding. A top priority for MABE is establishing a per pupil funding allocation for all prekindergarten students.** MABE urges the Governor and General Assembly to support increased funding of public education in the FY 2020 State Budget. Local boards of education are committed to preparing all students to be globally competitive in college and careers, and the increased funding and reforms in the Kirwan Commission bill 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 of at least \$400 million and implementation of the process reforms in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century School Facilities Act consistent with the law's intent to enhance local flexibility.** MABE requests an FY 2020 school construction budget of at least \$400 million to support local boards in providing safe and sustainable 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 update state law to ensure local funding increases above maintenance of effort include the local share for students in prekindergarten, special education, economically disadvantaged, and English learner state funding categories.** 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 updating the maintenance of effort law to require local funding contributions to support targeted funding for our highest needs students.

On behalf of all 24 local boards of education, MABE looks forward to your support for MABE's legislative priorities in 2019. 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](mailto:jwoolums@mabe.org).



Julie Hummer, Chair  
MABE Legislative Committee