



MABE Services & 2019 Legislative Priorities & Positions

Presented to the
House Ways and Means Committee
January 15, 2019

MABE's Mission



MABE's mission is to provide members with a strong collective voice, and to support local school board governance through professional development, advocacy, and member services.

MABE Programs & Services

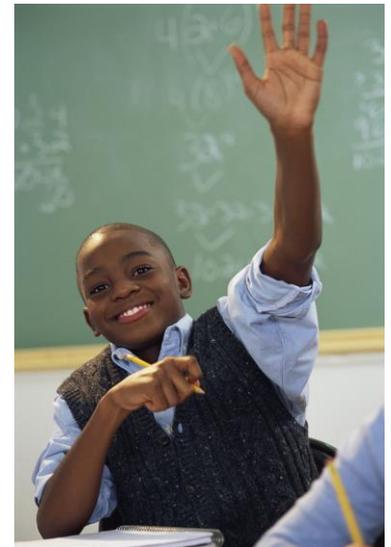
- **Professional Development** – MABE provides the skills and knowledge required for our members to become effective leaders.
- **Legal and Policy Services** – MABE provides legal assistance, including amicus briefs, and policy training and alerts.
- **Insurance Programs** – MABE manages two member owned Trusts, set up to handle Property/Casualty and Workers' Compensation Pooled Self-Insurance.
- **Advocacy** – MABE represents all 24 local boards on legislative and regulatory matters before the General Assembly, State Board, and federal government.

2019 Legislative Positions & Policy Statements

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MABE's 2019 Legislative Priorities

- MABE supports continued **governance autonomy for local boards** of education to set education policy and school budgets; opposes **unfunded mandates**; and supports **enhanced local school board calendar flexibility**;
- Supports **full State funding** for Maryland's outstanding public schools;
- Supports at least \$400 million in State funding for school **construction and renovation projects**; and
- Supports **sustained local government investments** in education.



State Education Funding

- **Supports** the legislative and funding recommendations of the Kirwan Commission to update and enhance Maryland's nationally recognized standards-based school finance system, consistent with preserving local board governance.
- **Supports** increased funding for all students and targeted increases for prekindergarten, English learners, economically disadvantaged students, and students receiving special education services.
- **Supports** increased funding for public education in the FY 2020 and FY 2021 State Budgets, including the phase-in of dedicated gaming revenue in the Education Trust Fund.
- **Opposes** proposals to reduce or eliminate the governance and decision-making authority of local boards and administrators as a condition for receiving increased state funding.

Education Reform & Kirwan Commission

- In 2016, APA's Adequacy Study of funding for education in the state of Maryland, **concluded a \$2 billion shortfall in state funding for education** based on current academic standards.
- In 2019, the Kirwan Commission **recommends phasing in \$3.8 billion in increased state and local funding** for all students, targeted per pupil increases, universal prekindergarten, enhanced CTE (Post-secondary Career & Technical Education) programs, more individualized tutoring, and significant increases in the numbers of educators and teacher pay raises.
- MABE supports a strong launch of Kirwan funding in the FY 2020 State Budget.

Local Board Governance

- **Supports** local board governance of education policy and administration, and believes that this principle is fundamental to an effective system of public education that promotes high standards of academic and fiscal accountability.
- **Supports** local board control of, and accountability for, appropriations of the school system budget.
- **Supports** adequate and equitable state funding for mandated programs and policies, and that local board governance autonomy and flexibility are respected in funding decisions.
- **Opposes** executive, legislative, and agency actions and proposals which would have the effect of reducing or circumscribing local board authority or creating unfunded mandates.

School Facilities Funding

- **Supports** a state funding level of at least \$400 million for school construction and renovation projects for FY 2020 to provide the State's share of approved projects to build, renovate, and improve schools.
- **Supports** continued improvements to the state school construction program, including the recently enacted 21st Century School Facilities Act, consistent with MABE'S adopted resolutions and legislative positions.
- **Supports** continued state and local investments in projects to enhance school safety and security, and supports the safety, security, and student health services called for in the Safe to Learn Act of 2018.
- **Opposes** any State mandated school sizes or prototypes or proposals which limit local authority over school design, construction, maintenance, procurement, or operations.

Local Funding & Maintenance of Effort

- **Supports** growth in local funding in addition to the minimum maintenance of effort amounts, including increases based on inflation and other factors, and to provide supplemental local per pupil funding for prekindergarten, English language learners, low-income students and students receiving special education services.
- **Supports** the maintenance of effort law enacted in 2012 because it provides for a legally enforceable minimum amount of local funding, allows for multiple exceptions and waivers, and provides reasonable state and local mechanisms to increase education funding.
- **Opposes** legislation to provide additional school budget authority to local governments or weaken the maintenance of effort law.



School Safety & Security

- **Supports** federal, State, and local government funding for local public school safety programs, facility upgrades, and behavioral health and public safety services provided by other entities which are essential to maintaining safe and secure schools and access to an excellent education for all of Maryland's students.
- **Supports** increased state funding to support the work of local school systems to ensure that the Safe to Learn Act is implemented with fidelity; and increased state and local funding for programs addressing gangs, drugs, human trafficking, behavioral health, and the impact of systemic violence in communities, schools and our students' lives.
- **Supports** local discretion to adopt programs and policies to ensure school safety and security.
- **Opposes** legislation which attempts to address student safety concerns by prescribing specific tools or approaches, or imposes unfunded mandates on local boards of education.

Special Education

- **Supports** increased state and federal funding and resources to support high quality special education programs and services.
- **Supports** maintaining the State's share of the total costs for nonpublic placements of students.
- **Opposes** legislation to mandate expanded special education services beyond federal requirements.
- **Opposes** legislation to shift the burden of proof in special education decisions and disputes including IEP meetings and due process hearings.

Public Charter Schools

- **Supports** local control and authority over public schools, including public charter schools, and supported passage of the Public Charter School Act of 2003, and secured amendments to the Charter School Improvement Act of 2015, to ensure that Maryland's charter school law is aligned with this principle.
- **Opposes** legislation which would diminish the local board's role as sole chartering and oversight authority, or otherwise weaken the charter school law's academic or fiscal accountability requirements.



Vouchers & Funding for Nonpublic Schools

- **Supports** strong public accountability measures for every public dollar spent, including public dollars dedicated or diverted to private and parochial schools.
- **Opposes** private and parochial school vouchers, tuition tax credit programs, or other proposals that would threaten public school funding and public control over the use of public dollars.
- **Supports** the repeal of the BOOST program enacted in the State Budget Bill since 2016.
- **Opposes** legislation mandating that public schools accommodate private or home schooled students in academic or extracurricular programs offered in the public schools.

Testing & Curriculum

- **Supports** local decision-making authority in developing curriculum, assessments, and instructional programs in conjunction with the State Board of Education.
- **Supports** adequate state funding to support mandated assessment programs, including federally required reading/language arts, mathematics, and science assessments, the state's high school assessment in government, and initiatives under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).
- **Supports** a pause in implementing high stakes graduation requirements based on minimum cut scores on state assessments until new assessments are field tested and administered for multiple years.
- **Opposes** any efforts by the General Assembly to legislate curriculum or testing matters inconsistent with MABE's adopted resolutions and legislative positions.

Student Discipline

- **Supports** local flexibility to create and enforce consistent and fair disciplinary standards in order to respond to infractions of the rules committed by individual students.
- **Supports** increased state and local funding and resources to support restorative justice programs.
- **Opposes** legislation or regulations that would unduly limit the authority of school administrators and boards of education to ensure the safety of all students and staff and to provide a school environment conducive to teaching and learning for all students.



Student Health, Nutrition & Fitness

- **Supports** local board discretion to adopt policies and allocate resources to support improvements in student behavioral and physical health and fitness.
- **Supports** funding and policy decisions to strengthen school meal programs to provide healthy food for all students and expand access for economically disadvantaged students.
- **Opposes** the unfunded mandate for increased physical education instruction, including minimum minutes per week.
- **Opposes** the unfunded mandate to expand the responsibility of public schools to provide “adequate school health services” to include behavioral health services.

Employee Relations & Collective Bargaining

- **Supports** the work of the PSLRB (Public School Labor Relations Board) consistent with the adoption of a balancing test to determine whether the impact of a negotiated matter on the school system as a whole outweighs the direct impact on employees.
- **Supports** maintaining the authority of local boards to hear appeals in employee discipline cases, as opposed to binding arbitration, especially in cases involving the safety of students.
- **Opposes** legislation, or decisions of the PSLRB, that comprise the authority and responsibility of the State Board and local boards to establish educational policy in collaboration with all key stakeholders.



Federal Education Funding & Policy

- **Supports** local boards of education in playing a prominent role in developing and monitoring Maryland's participation in federal education programs, especially the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).
- **Supports** increased federal funding to states and local school systems to support the costs of implementing federally mandated programs and services, especially the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).



621 Ridgely Avenue, Suite 300
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

410-841-5414 800-841-8197

Fax: 410-841-6580

www.mabe.org

