Member Benefits & Solutions

Providing members with a strong collective voice.

Supporting local school board governance through professional development, advocacy, and member services.
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The Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) is a private, non-profit organization dedicated to serving and supporting boards of education in Maryland.

We have been a leading advocate for Maryland public education since 1957. Currently, all 24 Maryland boards of education are active members of MABE.

There are five entities within MABE which have their own board of directors or trustees who work together to fulfill our mission and vision, and to implement our Strategic Plan.

"For MABE, educational equity in Maryland means providing access to essential academic, social, emotional, and economic supports in order to engage each student in rigorous instruction with appropriate educational resources to achieve their highest potential."

~ MABE’s Definition of Educational Equity, January 2018
VISION

MABE is a champion for excellence in public education.

Provide members with a strong collective voice and support local school board governance through professional development, advocacy and member services.

Our core values (pg. 19) are integral to who we are and how we work. They are the guiding principles by which we conduct ourselves as we seek to fulfill our mission.

MISSION

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:
Enhance professional learning opportunities to meet the diverse needs of all members.

ADVOCACY:
Enhance and refine MABE’s leadership position among education advocates by providing quality resources to boards, board members, and staff, effectively advocating for MABE’s positions and the role of local board governance.

COMMUNITY & BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS:
Provide avenues for businesses and nonprofits to connect with MABE member boards to facilitate student achievement, enabling them to operate more efficiently, offer benefits to staff, or generate revenue for the school system and MABE.

COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING:
Provide meaningful information to and through board members that serves and supports them in their work, informs the larger community, and communicates the value of MABE as a professional organization.

ASSOCIATION GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT:
Ensure the effective and efficient growth and functioning of the Association.

EQUITY:
Assist board members in developing a shared understanding and vision of educational equity, by helping them formulate and implement an equity policy that provides educational equity for each student by creating and maintaining equitable, inclusive, and diverse environments.
MABE BELIEVES
that excellence in the classroom begins with excellence in the boardroom.

OUR GOAL
for professional development is to promote student achievement and effective local governance of schools by ensuring that all school board members understand the National School Boards Association (NSBA) Key Work Model for effective school board leadership.

TO ACHIEVE THAT
MABE offers comprehensive training for new and experienced members, and for individuals and boards as a whole, through our Annual Conference, Leadership Programs, Workshops and Retreats.
The Board Service Academy is a series of workshops for board members and their local staff on current topics such as the Open Meetings Act and other legislation, the work of the State Board and parliamentary procedure.

This program is designed to teach the essentials of school board governance, enabling new members to quickly assume an active role in school board decision making. Orientation introduces the Key Work of School Boards and immerses members in the basics of school law, policy, finance, advocacy, and more.

Once a year MABE brings all local board members together for three days of professional development, break-out sessions, and active networking opportunities.
MABE STRIVES
to be the primary voice for public education in Annapolis. The unity of 24 local boards of education lends strength to our influence in the legislative process.

MABE SERVICES
include lobbying representation before Maryland’s State Board of Education, General Assembly, and Congressional Delegation, and regularly creating and distributing publications to inform and involve local boards of education in the legislative process.
ANAPOLIS ADVOCACY CENTER

MABE's Legislative Committee holds monthly meetings to guide the Association’s lobbying activities in Annapolis, and invites policy and legislative leaders to exchange ideas. The Director of Governmental Relations and MABE leadership conduct direct lobbying activities including testimony before the General Assembly.

MABE annually adopts legislative positions, publishes the Education Advocate legislative newsletter, provides bill tracking and testimony online during the legislative session, and publishes and presents summaries of the legislative session.

STATE BOARD ADVOCACY CENTER

MABE monitors and advocates on behalf of local boards before the Maryland State Board of Education and Maryland State Department of Education on myriad policy and regulatory issues. MABE frequently informs the State Board of the Association’s positions on priority issues through testimony, correspondence, and meetings. In addition, MABE leadership and other local board members representing MABE routinely participate on state workgroups, task forces, and commissions.

FEDERAL ADVOCACY CENTER

MABE’s Federal Relations Network (FRN) Committee meets throughout the year to discuss pending issues and coordinate meetings on Capitol Hill. The committee is comprised of board members appointed to represent the Association in advocating the positions of MABE and the National School Boards Association (NSBA) to Maryland’s federal delegation.

MABE representatives also attend the annual NSBA Advocacy Institute in Washington, D.C., and participate in “Day on the Hill” congressional visits.
The Legal Services Association (LSA) was established in 1984 to supplement the legal services available to local boards of education through education, representation, and advocacy.

The "Maryland School Law Deskbook" is a concise and accessible guide written by experienced education law attorneys, published by LexisNexis® in cooperation with MABE. It offers current and authoritative information on legal issues facing schools within the context of state and federal education law.
Each year LSA hosts a variety of seminars for local school staff, lawyers, and board members. These are offered free of charge for LSA members. Past seminars have included:

- Special Education Law
- First Amendment Issues
- Religion in Schools
- Search & Seizure

LSA gives its members a list of attorneys who specialize in the following areas of school law and provide legal services to LSA member boards at reduced fee rates:

- Special Education and Other Disability Matters
- Federal and State Law Compliance Issues
- Personnel Matters and Collective Bargaining
- Federal and State Litigation Representation
- Student and Teacher Discipline Matters

Amicus Curiae, or "friend of the court" briefs, are filed on behalf of member boards of education in cases of statewide importance. LSA also presents testimony in Annapolis and before the State Board of Education regarding the legal implications of proposed legislation or regulations.
MABE keeps members and the public informed... on key education issues through various publications, handbooks, special reports, and our website. We also send email alerts and updates to our members on issues deserving immediate attention.

In addition to regular publications, MABE makes other resources available throughout the year for our members. Samples include our Partnership Services Brochure, outlining the benefits of MABE membership; our Annual Directory for members, an annual publication that lists members, committees, associates and affiliates; and the resources on the following page.
Actively underway since Fall 2021, our workbook, "Leading for Educational Equity Through School Board Governance," helps boards of education grasp the critical importance of what educational equity is, and how it must be built into school board governance.

During the legislative session, The Education Advocate is sent each week to help keep members informed on key developments in Annapolis.

A well-regarded resource, The Monitor is a monthly e-summary of Maryland State Board of Education meetings.

The MABE Brief is sent out electronically on an as-needed basis to keep our members informed of Association and member news, news from the state and federal level, and links to articles of interest for education leaders.

A concise, accessible guide written by experienced education law attorneys, published by LexisNexis in cooperation with MABE. Offering current, authoritative information on legal issues schools face in the context of state and federal education law, this publication is available for purchase through the LexisNexis bookstore.
MABE offers a variety of programs and publications that help engage board members, staff, and educators, benefiting the community as a whole.

Programs for Local Boards

Programs for boards of education are designed as opportunities for local boards to experience training as a team and are generally conducted in the members’ respective school district. These programs can include:

- Board Retreats
- Key Work of School Boards
- Vision Building
- Board Operations
This forum asks citizens -- parents, students, community members, governmental and business leaders -- their perception of the local public schools, what about them is important, and what should count when assessing their productivity and success. This sampling of the public's perception yields data valuable to boards and staff in moving forward with continuous improvement and student achievement.

"What Counts?" Forum

In support of our commitment to quality leadership for Maryland's public schools, MABE has developed a Candidate Information Session to help school and community leaders inform school board candidates. Customized for the school system and held locally upon request of the local school board, these sessions provide candidates with information on the following topics:

- Overview of School Boards and Members in the State and Nation
- Board Member Duties, Roles and Responsibilities
- The Board-Superintendent Relationship
- Characteristics of Effective Board Members

Candidate Information Session

MABE offers superintendent search services at a cost well below private search firms and specific to the needs of Maryland boards of education. Local school boards will work with search consultants to plan and execute a thoughtful, responsive, and fair search process, minimize the possibility of legal challenges resulting from procedural flaws, and ultimately identify the best leader for their school system.
MABE manages two self-funded insurance programs that provide members affordable Property & Casualty and Workers’ Compensation Coverage. The primary goal is to support public education by providing effective risk management services to reduce member losses and help control costs.

Insurance Programs

In addition to the Workers’ Compensation Fund and the Group Insurance Pool, MABE offers other programs to assist local schools with providing services to their staff and to students. These include:

**OPEB POOLED INVESTMENT TRUST**--Provides participating school systems with the opportunity to save for the costs of retiree health benefits as required by GASB 45.

**FLEXIBLE SPENDING PROGRAM**--Allows employees to set aside pre-tax funds to cover the cost of qualified medical and childcare expenses.

**GROUP TERM LIFE INSURANCE**--Offers a group life insurance program with benefits such as Basic Life Insurance, Supplemental Life Insurance and Accidental Death & Dismemberment for employees of the participating school systems.

**STUDENT ACCIDENT COVERAGE**--For very reasonable rates, parents have the option of purchasing different levels of coverage for medical expenses should their child be injured in an accident.

**CATASTROPHIC COVERAGE**--Provides the participating school systems with coverage for the payment of medical and other expenses incurred from catastrophic paralyzing injuries.
Workers' Compensation Fund

Established in 1984 and now with 17 members, the Workers' Compensation Fund provides statutorily required workers’ compensation coverage for all employees of the member school systems, should they suffer compensable work-related injuries. The Fund strives to ensure injured employees receive all reasonable and necessary medical care and assists them to return to work when possible.

The Fund is governed by a Board of Trustees, one from each member and four named by MABE. The Trustees operate under terms of the Trust & Indemnity Agreement and Bylaws. The Fund engages MABE to provide Administrative Services. This includes Claims Administration handled by the experienced adjusters in the MABE Claims Unit, and Risk Management services offered by MABE's Risk Management Officers.

Group Insurance Pool

Founded in 1986 and now with 19 members, the Group Insurance Pool provides casualty or liability coverage for claims made by third parties against members, such as a bus striking and damaging a mailbox. It also provides property coverage against losses to the member’s owned physical property such as damage to a school caused from a lightning strike or a fire.

The Pool is governed by a Board of Trustees, one from each member and four named by MABE. The Trustees operate under the terms of the Trust & Indemnity Agreement and Bylaws. The Pool’s coverage terms are described in the Scopes of Coverage which are tailored to provide coverage needed by the members.

The Trust engages MABE to provide a variety of Administrative Services for the Pool. This includes Claims Administration handled by the experienced adjusters in the MABE Claims Unit, and Risk Management services offered by MABE's Risk Management Officers.
MABE offers numerous opportunities for businesses wishing to connect with Maryland school board members, show their support for public education, and participate in the programs and activities of MABE.

Affiliates Program

Affiliates are:
- Listed in the MABE Directory
- Listed in the Annual Conference Program
- Listed on the MABE website with a link to the Affiliate’s website

Affiliates receive:
- The MABE Directory of school systems and members
- Publications including legislative updates, event invites and news releases
- Access to key decision makers in Maryland public school systems

Affiliates are able to reach key decision makers with information about products and services through our publications, website, sponsorship opportunities, and Annual Conference exhibit hall.
Sponsorship Opportunities

MABE's primary sponsorship opportunity is during Annual Conference. Opportunities include sponsoring speakers, meals, and promotional items. Benefits are based on sponsorship levels.

Partnership Services

MABE partners with select companies, providing member districts with services that enable them to operate more efficiently, offer benefits to staff, or generate revenue. MABE Partnership Services contributes to the important mission of serving and supporting Maryland boards of education.
The MABE staff brings an array of skills and educational background to the Association. As passionate public education advocates, we are available to assist and support as needed.

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Executive Director

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Deputy Executive Director

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Director of Legal & Policy Services

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Tony Curro  
Senior Adjuster

Lovetta Maddox-Richardson  
Adjuster

Tracy Oldaker  
Accounting & Administrative Assistant

Miriam Morrow  
Claims Examiner

Kate Dorsett  
Adjuster

Sarah Flood  
Claims Assistant
Our core values are integral to who we are and how we work.

They are the guiding principles by which we conduct ourselves as we seek to fulfill our mission.

We SERVE public school boards.

We CHAMPION local governance.

We CREATE and ENCOURAGE collaborative relationships.

We VALUE the diversity that enriches our school communities.

We CHAMPION educational equity and excellence for each student.

We are a SAFE place to learn, laugh, share, and network.