

BILL: House Bill 1280
TITLE: Public Schools - Mathematics Credit - College Preparatory Computer Science or Computer Programming Course
POSITION: OPPOSE
DATE: April 5, 2022
COMMITTEE: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs
CONTACT: John R. Woolums, Esq.

The Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) opposes House Bill 1280, which would require all local school systems to allow high school students to satisfy part of their requirement to earn credits in math for high school graduation by completing a course in computer science or 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.

MABE recognizes and shares the General Assembly's strong support for computer science education, as evidenced by legislation that went into effect in the 2021-2022 school year. In 2018, legislation was enacted to require all public high schools to offer at least one high-quality computer science course beginning in the 2021-2022 school year. MABE supported this legislation as amended and greatly appreciates the initiative to establish and fund the new Maryland Center for Computing Education to support much needed computer science-related professional development.

Again, MABE's opposition to House Bill 1280 does not rest on an evaluation of the merits of teaching any specified subject matter, certainly not computer science, but rather on the association's opposition to statutorily mandating or modifying the course requirements for high school graduation.

For these reasons, MABE requests an unfavorable report on House Bill 1280.