

BILL: House Bill 960
TITLE: Education - Public Schools - Asian American History Curriculum Requirement
DATE: March 1, 2023
POSITION: OPPOSE
COMMITTEE: Ways and Means
CONTACT: John R. Woolums, Esq.

The Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) opposes House Bill 960, which would mandate that Maryland schools include in the curriculum a unit of instruction on Asian American History.

MABE generally opposes efforts by the General Assembly to legislate curriculum, including the content standards on which curriculum is based, firmly believing that this role belongs to local boards of education in conjunction with the State Board. Therefore, MABE's opposition to this bill does not rest on an evaluation of the merits of teaching any specified subject matter, but rather opposition to statutorily mandating revisions to content standards and curriculum.

More specifically, this bill would direct the State Board of Education to develop curriculum content standards that include defined elements for a unit of instruction on Asian American history to be implemented beginning in the 2024-2025 school year. In addition, the unit would be required to be taught in elementary, middle, and high school.

In creating the State Board and local boards of education, the General Assembly has delegated to them the responsibility for reviewing and adopting content standards and, at the local level, reviewing and adopting curriculum. The State Board establishes State content frameworks, state assessment standards, and minimum state graduation requirements. Each local board and school system implement locally-developed curriculum to ensure that the state content frameworks are followed, student performance standards are met, and students are prepared to meet graduation requirements.

For these reasons, MABE requests an unfavorable report on House Bill 960.