

**BILL:** Senate Bill 338  
**TITLE:** Primary and Secondary Education - Extended School Year Innovation Grant  
**DATE:** February 22, 2023  
**POSITION:** SUPPORT  
**COMMITTEE:** Education, Energy, and the Environment  
Budget and Taxation  
**CONTACT:** John R. Woolums, Esq.

The Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) supports Senate Bill 338 in order to Provide sustained funding for a statewide grant program to support local school system initiatives to extend the school year to mitigate and prevent learning loss.

The grant program established by this legislation would support the substantial personnel and operating costs that may arise when adopting an extended school year that does not include prolonged lapses in instruction, such as the traditional summer break. The bill appropriately targets the development of programs in elementary schools and in schools with demonstrated needs. MABE appreciates that Senate Bill 338 would direct the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to prioritize awarding grants to schools in urban, suburban and rural areas throughout the state.

MABE always places a high priority on advocating 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. In this context, MABE supports enhanced local school calendar flexibility and the provision of adequate resources to enable the successful implementation of innovative school calendars. The funding provided by Senate Bill 338 would allow each of Maryland's 24 local school systems to consider options for extending the school year.

Fortunately, the legislature acted to alleviate these barriers to local decision making on school calendars by authorizing a local board of education to adopt their own start and end dates to the school year. Again, MABE supports Senate Bill 338 to further expand the options available to local boards by allowing them to consider innovative extended scheduling strategies. Such strategies may be designed not only to meet minimum educational requirements but also to facilitate efforts to avoid long gaps in instruction and to align with the Blueprint for Maryland's Future expansions of career and technical education and dual enrollment programs. In these ways, this bill would greatly assist local boards in determining whether and how to adjust their respective local school calendars in the best interests of student learning.

For these reasons, MABE requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 338.