Greetings school board colleagues,

It's hard to believe we've already reached April, and are busy planning for another school year's conclusion and graduation season! Sincere congratulations to every hard-working school board member in our state. Your commitment to public education and to Maryland students truly does make a world of difference.

The 2023 Session of the Maryland General Assembly concluded on April 10th, and I can report we made progress on several issues of importance to school systems throughout our state. From working toward sustained or increased funding for state public schools, to helping preserve Maryland school systems' longtime tradition of local governance, we succeeded in numerous areas. This was in no small part due to the continuing commitment and efforts of MABE member school boards. Thank you for all you do! You can find additional details on the 2023 Session on the following page.

We are gearing up for this year's MABE Annual Conference, to be held at The Westin Annapolis. We'll be sending you conference information and agenda details soon this spring, but in the meantime, please be sure to mark your calendars for October 2-4, 2023. The dynamic line-up of speakers taking shape, combined with the number of new school board members we have this year, will surely make MABE's 2023 Annual Conference one for the books.

Thank you for your involvement, your support, and your continuing belief in the strength and potential of Maryland public education!

~ Joe Goetz (Kent County)  
MABE President

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Upcoming Trainings (Q2 2023)

**The Board of Education Role in Community Engagement & Leadership**  
**Tues., April 25**  
9:00 am - Noon ($75)  
[Click to register](#).

**Parliamentary Procedures: Maximizing the Benefits & Rewards**  
**Thurs., May 4**  
9:00 am - Noon ($75)  
[Click to register](#).

**New Laws Passed in 2023 Affecting Your School System: Implications & Opportunities**  
**Mon., May 15**  
9:00 am - Noon ($75)  
[Click to register](#).

**Ethics: What You Most Need to Know**  
**Wed., June 7**  
9:00 am - Noon ($75)  
[Click to register](#).

**Boost Your Effective Board Governance with Stronger Board Self-Evaluations & Superintendent Evaluations**  
**Thurs., June 22**  
9:00 am - Noon ($75)  
[Click to register](#).

MABE workshops will be held virtually until or unless announced otherwise. Additional workshops will be offered as the need or issue arises.

There is a charge of $75 per person per training. Please note that event registration closes at 10:00 am on the business day prior to each event's occurrence.
The 2023 legislative session concluded at midnight on Monday, April 10th, with more than 100 of the nearly 400 bills MABE was tracking becoming new laws.

The FY 2024 State Budget, as passed, includes increased state funding for the 2023-2024 school year, and a $900 million investment in future funding for the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future (HB 200). The Capital Budget provides more than $1 billion for school construction, which is less than provided in FY 2023 and raises concerns with any further cuts in future years (HB 201).

A bill passed to require new school meal services safety measures to protect students with food allergies (HB 78). A controversial bill passed which will require the state and local governments to share the costs of supplementing teacher salaries at nonpublic special education schools to achieve pay parity between these teachers and their public school counterparts (HB 448). MABE unsuccessfully opposed the bill to allow parents who prevail in special education disputes to recoup expert witness fees (HB 1237).

A high profile bill passed to remove any statute of limitations for actions for damages arising out of an alleged incident of sexual abuse that occurred while the victim was a minor (HB 1/SB 686). With respect to these claims, the new law increases the liability cap and minimum comprehensive liability coverage for local boards to $890,000.

MABE supported a bill to provide reasonable extensions and clarifications of timelines for developing regulations and beginning to collect employer and employee contributions for the new Family and Medical Leave Insurance (FAML) Program (SB 828). The Public Employee Relations Act (PERA) passed and will abolish and consolidate the State, Higher Education, and Public School Labor Relations Boards. MABE succeeded in securing amendments to preserve existing scope of bargaining law and PSLRB precedents from prior opinions in school system cases (HB 894).

The virtual schools bill passed to provide new definitions and standards for short-term use of virtual learning during weather emergencies, the operation of permanent virtual schools established by local boards, and plans for long-term shifts to virtual learning as occurred during the pandemic. The bill requires that virtual school teachers be members of the local bargaining unit and that virtual schools not be operated by for profit entities, with a two-year extension for such a virtual school on the Eastern Shore (SB 610).

The Governor’s Educator Shortage Act passed, and establishes the Teacher Development and Retention Program as a pilot program to encourage college students to pursue teaching careers and makes a number of additional changes related to the recruitment and retention of teachers, including prekindergarten teachers and school-based mental health professionals (HB 1219).

A Blueprint related bill passed to alter the definitions and funding allocated for income eligible 3 and 4 year old Prekindergarten students. The bill also requires MSDE to create a new income reporting form and modifies the requirement that assistant principals teach 20% of their time (HB 770).

Bills not passing, and which MABE opposed, include the health curriculum bill amended to expand the state superintendent’s authority to enforce local board and classroom compliance with all state curriculum standards (HB 119); the bill to shift the burden of proof from the parents to the school system in special education due process cases (HB 294); and the bill to limit local discretion in the operation of active shooter drills (HB 515).

MABE is preparing a comprehensive session summary report and presentation on all major education bills passed this year. MABE looks forward to assisting boards in implementing these new laws, particularly where policies and procedures must be updated or newly adopted.
In Memorium: Susan Rowe Buswell (1935-2023)

With great sadness we share news of the passing of Susan Rowe Buswell, who served as MABE’s Executive Director for nearly a decade beginning in the late 1980s.

In addition to raising her two children, Janice and Scott, with her husband David, Susan served in the Maryland House of Delegates for several years in the 1980s, and represented portions of Howard and Prince George’s counties. An active volunteer in numerous community organizations, Susan also worked for the CIA, and enjoyed worldwide travel throughout her life.

Susan’s life will be celebrated on top of Longs Peak in Rocky Mountain Park in the future. “It is Sue’s wish that you become active in serving the community in which you live,” according to her obituary on Legacy.com. Our sincere condolences go out to Susan’s family and friends.

Note: Some publications may require subscriptions.
**Update: MABE's New Executive Director Search**

Following 10 years of dedicated service, MABE Executive Director Frances ("Francie") Hughes Glendening has announced her retirement with planned departure timing of July 2023. As a result, MABE's executive team launched in February of this year its search for a new Executive Director of the Association.

Initial interviews began for this key role on April 13 and the MABE board is planning to reach its decision on MABE's new Executive Director by June 1.

The Executive Director serves as the Chief Administrative Officer of the Association, appointed by and directly responsible to the Board of Directors. He or she is responsible for leading, directing and administering a wide range of services responsive to the needs of the membership. Recognizing that Maryland is a diverse state with rural, suburban and urban areas, and has a rich history of multi-cultural populations, he or she will develop and maintain effective relationships with all internal and external stakeholders.

We will be sure to keep MABE members updated on the status of the board's continuing search.

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**Call for Nominations!**

MABE’s Nomination Committee is seeking nominations for MABE’s 2023-2024 Board of Directors.

Please discuss with your Board and send nominations to Francie Glendening at fglendening@mabe.org by the close of business Monday, May 1, 2023.

**MABE Member Resources**

**Facilitator's Guide to MABE's "Leading for Educational Equity Through School Board Governance" Heading to Superintendents**

MABE's Facilitator's Guide to our "Leading for Educational Equity Through School Board Governance" workbook is on its way to Maryland school superintendents. As a reminder, the workbook was completed last year by MABE's Educational Equity Committee, and was designed to assist Maryland local boards of education in formulating a plan to exercise their governance role in the pursuit of educational equity for each of their students.*

Original planning for the project included recommending that school boards undertake this challenging process with assistance from an experienced facilitator, and this is where MABE's Facilitator's Guide comes in.

The Facilitator's Guide is designed to support Maryland school boards in crafting related policy, and help equip school board members with the information, scenarios, and relevant resources they need to best carry out their work in this important realm.

We expect this new resource to help educational equity facilitators guide productive, robust dialogue with school board members that brings a heightened awareness of school board members’ important role in promoting educational equity. Superintendents should be receiving their copies of the Facilitator's Guide later this month.

For further details regarding MABE's ongoing educational equity work and related efforts, please contact Debra Daniel, MABE Director of Legal & Policy Services (Ph: 443-603-0391). We hope you find both the workbook and companion Facilitator's Guide to be valuable additions to your efforts during this school year and beyond.

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*Maryland law makes a board responsible for the creation of educational policies designed to provide a quality and equal education opportunity for all children. Boards also are directed to seek ways to promote the interests of the schools under their jurisdiction. For additional context, please visit Page 4 of the Leading for Educational Equity Through School Board Governance workbook. You are welcome to order additional copies of the workbook for your peers.
Upcoming Trainings

MABE Member Benefits

MABE’s new Member Benefits & Solutions booklet will shortly be sent to Board Assistants for distribution to Board Members.

Please keep an eye out for your copy, which provides helpful details on MABE’s professional development services, publications, insurance offerings and much more -- all geared toward helping you with your much-needed work as a school board member.

Cost-Saving MABE Pharmacy Purchasing Collaborative to Benefit Maryland Schools and Counties

As today’s prescription-drug prices continue to skyrocket, public school systems and county governments are facing the daunting trifecta of inflation, COVID-19-related additional expenses, and growing budget demands.

In working to tackle this challenge, MABE decided to develop our own pharmacy program in collaboration with key stakeholders and pharmacy industry experts. We constructed a custom PBM program called the MABE Pharmacy Collaborative, co-managed with Keenan Pharmacy Services (KPS), an independent pharmacy benefit consultant with a proven track record with public schools and county governments in Maryland and across the U.S.

MABE and KPS are able to negotiate exclusive group purchase arrangements that provide deeply discounted pricing, and rigorous financial and service performance guarantees. Additionally, Keenan has negotiated a series of important services that enhances the client experience and provides real savings. For example, ESMEC, a current MABE collaborative member, has experienced $6 million in fully audited savings with this innovative program.

For further details, please visit this related blog post on MABE’s website. For additional information about this innovative program, we encourage you to contact Keenan’s Chris Van Hook at Ph: 310-749-6899.

A quick reminder that the latest edition of the Maryland School Law Deskbook is available.

The Deskbook includes a comprehensive index and table of cases cited, and is considered the essential education law resource for school principals, administrators, school board members, superintendents, education professionals and attorneys in Maryland.

To order the new edition, visit here.