

**BILL:** Senate Bill 735  
**TITLE:** Workgroup to Study the Wages of Education Support Professionals  
**DATE:** March 8, 2023  
**POSITION:** SUPPORT  
**COMMITTEE:** Budget & Taxation  
Education, Energy, and the Environment  
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The Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) supports Senate Bill 735 to establish the Workgroup to Study the Wages of Education Support Professionals to study and make recommendations regarding the adequacy of wages of education support professionals. MABE agrees that such a study is needed to analyze and explain the policies and funding decisions available to the Governor and legislature to enhance school systems' abilities to recruit, competitively compensate, and retain these essential support personnel in every school system across the state.

MABE supported similar legislation in 2022. However, Senate Bill 831 (Ch. 532) was enacted to invest in bonuses for education support staff but amended to remove the provisions establishing the wage study workgroup. Again, MABE is supporting Senate Bill 735 in recognition of the value of the many and varied roles of school system support staff who contribute so significantly to the operations of school facilities, transportation, and other services as well as to the teaching and learning of students.

Education support professionals include a broad range of noncertificated staff members, including: teachers' aides and paraeducators, administrative assistants, custodians, bus drivers, facilities maintenance staff, security and technology staff, food service workers, and many other critically important school employees. The Blueprint for Maryland's Future ensures new statewide systems of compensation, working conditions, and professional development for certain educational staff, and increases per pupil funding to support these initiatives.

MABE supports actions by the General Assembly to provide sufficient state funding to compensate all educators and educational support professionals in line with the initiatives contained with the Blueprint. Again, local boards recognize that these professionals are essential to achieving the goals outlined by the Blueprint and successful day-to-day operations of 1,400 school serving nearly 900,000 students every school day.

For these reasons, MABE requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 735.