

BILL: Senate Bill 558
TITLE: State Board of Education - Membership - School Principal
DATE: February 23, 2024
POSITION: SUPPORT
COMMITTEE: Education, Energy, and the Environment
CONTACT: John R. Woolums, Esq.

The Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) supports Senate Bill 558. This bill will enhance the composition of the Maryland State Board of Education by adding a member representing school principals.

MABE supports this addition in order ensure the representation of school administrators responsible for leading the delivery of teaching and learning in the 1,400 public schools throughout the State. MABE notes that the association historically opposed adding members to the State Board, including representatives from teachers' associations and parents' associations. However, since these additions were enacted in 2019, MABE now supports the addition of a school principal as an appropriate complementary voice and perspective on the State Board of Education.

MABE firmly believes that the role of a full complement of qualified school-based staff will be pivotal to the successful implementation of Blueprint for Maryland's Future. School Principals are leading the day-to-day operations of schools, and all that entails, but are also doing so in accordance with the comprehensive school-based reforms mandated by the Blueprint.

To be clear, MABE supports adding a school principal representative on the State Board in order to better inform the Board's state-level policy making on all public education matters. The State Board is responsible for regulations spanning issues such as curriculum standards, assessments, student health, student discipline, special education, student transportation, school meals, among many others. MABE believes that on all of these matters, the principals' voice will be uniquely and highly beneficial in informing the Board's deliberations. MABE supports the addition of a school principal able to share their experiences working every day with teachers and staff, students, and families toward the ultimate goal of each student learning to love learning and meeting the challenges of attaining college and career readiness.

For these reasons, MABE urges this Committee to issue a favorable report on Senate Bill 558.