

BILL: House Bill 1191
TITLE: Interstate Teacher Mobility Compact
DATE: February 28, 2024
POSITION: SUPPORT
COMMITTEE: Ways and Means
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The Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) strongly supports House Bill 1191 to facilitate the mobility of teachers across the member states, with the goal of supporting teachers through new pathways to licensure.

All local boards of education value the essential role of the educators and staff persons who work for the public school system as the keys to educating and meeting the needs of our students. Therefore, MABE has consistently supported efforts by the General Assembly to assist local school systems in addressing the critical shortages of highly qualified teachers, principals, and other staff in every school and the classrooms of all students across the State. At this time, Maryland is experiencing critical shortages across all of the educational and related services professional fields; a critical shortage of the staff needed to deliver and support student learning and to administer schools as educational leaders. By adopting the Compact, House Bill 1191 would effectively address one aspect of the teacher shortage by streamlining processes for qualified educators to work across borders. MABE agrees that the compact should be adopted as a framework that expedites and enhances the ability of teachers to move across state lines. This ensures that schools in underserved areas have access to a pool of talented teachers, thereby enhancing educational opportunities for all students.

MABE believes that the compact would provide new professional development opportunities for teachers to broaden their horizons and enhance their skills. House Bill 1191 would facilitate the exchange of innovative teaching methods and contribute to continuous improvement of educational quality. This would not only benefit the participating teachers but also enrich the educational experiences of their students. The compact would assist in leveraging the expertise and talents of educators from diverse backgrounds and help ensure that every student has access to the high-quality instruction and support they deserve.

In the 2023 legislative session, MABE supported several bills, including the Governor's Educator Shortage Reduction Act (HB 1219, Ch. 627), which became law and included major initiatives to expand the alternative teacher certification program to include educators in prekindergarten programs, create a new Maryland Educator Recruitment, Retention, and Diversity Dashboard, and reform the Teachers Fellows for Maryland scholarship program. However, that bill did not pass to reflect the Compact, as initially intended. Therefore, MABE supports enacting the Teacher Mobility Compact to:

- Create a streamlined pathway to licensure mobility for teachers.;
- Support the relocation of eligible military spouses;
- Facilitate and enhance the exchange of licensure investigative and disciplinary information between the member states;
- Enhance the power of state and district level education officials to hire qualified, competent teachers by removing barriers to the employment of out-of-state teachers;
- Support the retention of teachers in the profession by removing barriers to re-licensure in a new state; and
- Maintain state sovereignty in the regulation of the teaching profession.

For these reasons, MABE urges a favorable report on House Bill 1191.