

**BILL:** Senate Bill 1043  
**TITLE:** Education – Public School Employers and Employees – Subcontracting for Services  
**DATE:** March 6, 2024  
**POSITION:** OPPOSE  
**COMMITTEE:** Education, Energy, and the Environment  
**CONTACT:** John R. Woolums, Esq.

The Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) strongly opposes Senate Bill 1043 to establish strict limitations on school systems benefiting from the services of persons working as subcontractors rather than as school system employees.

To be clear, the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future is established throughout as a public private partnership between local school systems and private sector entities and employers. From the mixed delivery model of expanding access to full-day Prekindergarten in public schools and private settings, to transforming high schools into opportunities for more students to experience college and the workplace on a daily basis, the Blueprint is premised on non-school system employees playing pivotal roles. In this light, MABE appreciates that the bill would not impact either Prekindergarten services by private providers or community-based mental health services. However, MABE believes that the recognition that these enormous initiatives should be excluded from the proposed law helps make the case that the new limitations proposed in Senate Bill 1043 should not be placed on all other aspects of school operations.

Senate Bill 1043 would limit school system options to secure the services of non-employees provided through contracts with other entities. Examples of such agreements include services such as student transportation (school bus drivers and mechanics), school nurses, information technology and cyber security, and special educators. Senate Bill 1043 would unduly limit the ability of school systems to not only replace but also supplement the services already being provided by school employees. In this way, the bill would impede the ability of school systems to consider and decide on options that would utilize the services of non-school employees.

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.

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 includes 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.

MABE is generally supportive of the state taking bold, innovative steps to build Maryland’s teacher pipeline and workforce. Unfortunately, Senate Bill 1043 would frustrate the efforts of local school systems to integrate the services of our employees and the employees of contractors to provide the array of educational and operations programs and services.

For these reasons, MABE urges an unfavorable report on Senate Bill 1043.