



Delegate Anne R. Kaiser, Chair  
Delegate Alonzo T. Washington, Vice Chair  
Ways and Means Committee  
House Office Building, Room 131  
6 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD 21401

**Re: House Bill 202 – Restorative Schools Fund and Grants - Establishment**

**SUPPORT**

Dear Chair Kaiser, Vice Chair Washington, and Ways and Means Committee Members:

We are writing on behalf of the Maryland School Psychologists' Association (MSPA), a professional organization representing about 500 school psychologists across the state. We advocate for the social-emotional, behavioral, and academic wellbeing of students and families across Maryland.

The purpose of this letter is to provide our support for House Bill 202 – Restorative Schools Fund and Grants – Establishment, which is scheduled for hearing on January 30, 2020. This bill, among other things, provides funds to train school personnel in a broad application of restorative practices within our schools.

Restorative practices are based on the assumption that relationships and communities form the foundation of a healthy society, and fostering a sense of community naturally reduces problem behaviors which damage that community. The model focuses on repairing harm and taking accountability for misbehavior rather than assigning blame and punishment. While controlled research studies of restorative practices are still ongoing, there is considerable evidence for their effectiveness based on studies of schools already using this model for years. Schools that have implemented restorative approaches have benefited from an improved school climate, greater student connectedness to school, decrease in disruptive or aggressive behaviors, and decrease in the use of suspension and expulsion. The bill explicitly notes how these changes in school culture and practices can reduce disproportionate application of discipline and promote racial equity.

MSPA supports House Bill 202 – Restorative Schools Fund and Grants – Establishment, and we respectfully urge a favorable vote. If we can provide any additional information, or be of any assistance, please feel to contact us at [legislative@mSPAonline.org](mailto:legislative@mSPAonline.org).

Respectfully submitted,

Kyle Potter, Ph.D., NCSP  
Chair, Legislative Committee  
Maryland School Psychologists' Association  
Association

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