



Maryland Education Coalition



Shanetta Martin & Sue Fothergill – Co-chairs

Web site - www.marylandeducationcoalition.org Email – md.ed.coaliton@gmail.com

Date: March 1, 2022

BILL: [SB794](#)

POSITION: Support

TITLE: State Department of Education – Procurement and Personnel Actions

COMMITTEE: Budget and Tax committee

Senate Bill 794 would grant greater authority to the State Board of Education to appoint or hire employees of the State Department of Education along with requiring that the State Board establish policies and guidelines governing hiring or appointment, compensation, promotion, and termination of MSDE personnel.

For State Superintendent Mohammad Choudhury, the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and Maryland State Board of Education (MSBE) to operate efficiently and meet the expectations of their agency including implementation of the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future, the State Superintendent requires the same level of authority and flexibility in the hiring process as other agency heads have available to them. That flexibility will not come without oversight, especially since the State Superintendent will still have to bring hiring decisions before the MSBE. That means oversight will still exist even without the extra steps that have been imposed on MSDE.

The future of our schoolkids depends on MSDE having the management capacity to carry out and be held accountable for effective implementation of the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future. MSDE staffing capacity had been shrinking while its duties had been expanding. MSDE staff capacity has not only decreased over the past decade, but it has suffered under budget and procurement procedures that are more restrictive than for other agencies, with far less responsibilities than MSDE, especially under the Blueprint.

If we are to build a World Class education system in Maryland, MSDE needs the tools to get the job done but a lot depends on MSDE having sufficient capacity and support across their department along with state government, including the provisions of SB 794. Let’s hold MSDE accountable but let’s not tie its hands.

The Maryland Education Coalition (MEC) is the oldest, largest, most experienced, and diverse group of public education stakeholders in Maryland. We are an independent, non-partisan voice for Maryland’s K-12 students. MEC’s goal is to ensure adequate, equitable funding and systemic accountability for the estimated 900,000 public school students in Maryland regardless of academic, cultural, economic, geographic, racial, or other demographic status. MEC is committed to advocating for state education policies that deliver on the constitutional right and civil right for all students to access a high-quality, competitive education.

For these and other reasons, we urge a favorable report for SB794.

American Civil Liberties Union of MD, Arts Education in Maryland Schools, Arts Every Day, Attendance Works, CASA, Children’s Behavioral Health Coalition, Decoding Dyslexia of MD, Disability Rights Maryland, League of Women Voters of MD, Let Them See Clearly, Right to Read Maryland, Maryland Coalition for Community Schools, Maryland Coalition for Gifted & Talented Ed, Maryland Down Syndrome Advocacy Coalition, Maryland Out of School Time Network, Maryland Alliance for Racial Equity in Education, MSC-NAACP, Maryland School Psychologists' Association, Parent Advocacy Consortium, Public Justice Center, School Social Workers of MD, Strong Schools Maryland, Kalman Hettleman, David Hornbeck, Shanetta Martin, Sharon Rubinstein, Rick Tyler, Jr.