



Mohammed Choudhury
State Superintendent of Schools

BILL: Senate Bill 794 **DATE:** March 1, 2022

SUBJECT: State Department of Education - Procurement and Personnel Actions **COMMITTEE:** Budget and Taxation

POSITION: Support

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EXPLANATION:

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) supports **Senate Bill 794 - State Department of Education - Procurement and Personnel Actions.**

MSDE has embraced a new era of public education for Maryland's 900,000 public school students over the past nine months. The new Administration hit the ground running to ensure that the Blueprint for Maryland's Future is implemented with fidelity and efficacy.

The Blueprint tasks the Department with an unprecedented amount of challenging work and ambitious timelines. We will complete this work and we will do it well. However, to create transformational change, MSDE needs the flexibility to recruit, hire, and retain top talent at every level. The ability to establish our own human resources management system will allow the Department to hire innovative and experienced staff while offering hiring packages that are competitive statewide and across the country. The bill does not affect collective bargaining for employees of the Department.

The procurement flexibility established in SB 794 for matters related to the Blueprint is similarly vital to the success of the landmark legislation. The legislature recognized the need to procure expediently and flexibility in Blueprint implementation when it created the Accountability and Implementation Board (AIB); SB 794 extends the same flexibility to the Department.

It is critical that our procurement process enables MSDE to secure best-in-class providers if the Blueprint is truly expected to transform Maryland's public schools. The Department is tasked with services that will require procurements for: studying the College and Career Ready Standard, conducting an evaluation of Judy Centers and early childhood centers, supporting professional development tied to the career ladder, assisting in reviewing teacher preparation programs, among a significant number of other requirements that will require support.

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The bill maintains proper procurement safeguards and procedures to be certain that all parties continue to meet the intent of Maryland's procurement laws.

We respectfully request that you consider this information as you deliberate **SB 794**. Please contact Ary Amerikaner, at 410-767-0090, or ary.amerikaner@maryland.gov, for any additional information.