



# Maryland State Board of Education

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200 WEST BALTIMORE ST. / BALTIMORE, MD 21201-2595 / (410) 767-0467

March 1, 2022

Senator Guy Guzzone  
Chair, Budget and Taxation Committee  
11 Bladen St.  
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: **Senate Bill 794** - State Department of Education – Procurement and Personnel Actions

Dear Chair Guzzone and Members of the Budget and Taxation Committee:

The Maryland State Board of Education (State Board) submits this letter in support of **Senate Bill (SB) 794 - State Department of Education – Procurement and Personnel Actions**.

When the Blueprint for Maryland's Future officially became law in February of 2021, the State Board recognized that the vision embedded within the Blueprint for the future of education in Maryland hinged on the selection of a new superintendent that had the ability to simultaneously reform the capacity and capabilities of the Department and tackle the remarkable challenges and timelines presented within the Blueprint.

Superintendent Choudhury and his team have made tremendous progress in laying the foundation for the future and developing the building blocks necessary to make the transformational changes the Blueprint charges educational leadership in Maryland with enacting.

It is critical that the Department have every tool at its disposal to make these changes with fidelity and efficacy. This begins with the ability to recruit and hire qualified personnel in a manner that is competitive in the unique job market that encompasses educational policy. Establishing a human resources management system within MSDE will allow the State Board and the Department to bring on experienced and innovative personnel while offering hiring packages that are competitive statewide and across the country.

The new Administration has worked diligently to maximize its resources and flexibility within the current personnel framework through repurposing and reexamining current and longstanding vacancies. However, the challenges of the current structure often proved too difficult for allowing the necessary flexibility to offer a competitive package to prospective employees.

The State Board has long been an oversight body for the appointment of personnel within MSDE, and the Board stands ready to continue this role as the Department would shift towards a new personnel management system model with enactment of this legislation.

It is equally critical that the Department have the procurement agility necessary to implement the Blueprint on the timelines envisioned by the legislature and with a priority on securing the highest quality external partners.

It is clear that the legislature intended Blueprint procurement efforts to be granted this flexibility, as it was provided to the Accountability Implementation Board (AIB). SB 794 would eliminate

the inconsistencies that currently impede MSDE's ability to play its vital role as a full partner to the AIB in Blueprint implementation.

This flexibility is similar to that used by the University System of Maryland, and will support multiple high priority strands of Blueprint work, including, for example, 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, and a significant number of other requirements that will require external partner support.

For the reasons stated above, the State Board respectfully urges your committee to give **SB 794** a favorable report.

For additional information or questions, please contact Ary Amerikaner at [ary.amerikaner@maryland.gov](mailto:ary.amerikaner@maryland.gov) or 410-767-0504.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Clarence C. Crawford', is written over a light blue rectangular background.

Clarence C. Crawford  
President, Maryland State Board of Education

cc: Mohammed Choudhury, State Superintendent of Schools