



Maryland Education Coalition

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House Appropriations Committee

Delegate Ben Barnes, Chair

[HB0313](#) - Education - Public School Stadium Grant Program

POSITION: INFORMATIONAL

The Maryland Education Coalition (MEC) was originally founded over 40 years ago (1980) and is the oldest, most experienced, and diverse public education advocacy coalition in Maryland. MEC is made up of over twenty statewide organizations and individuals advocates(see below). We advocate for adequate operating and capital funding, equitable policies, and transparent accountability statewide for the estimated 900,000 students in Maryland's public schools, regardless of their academic, cultural, economic, geographic, racial, other demographic status or residence.

MEC believes that HB 313- Public School Stadium Grant Program is not among the highest priority needs for our public school systems facility programs. We believe that the State of Maryland with local support must first allocate all available funds for school construction, renovation, maintenance, systemic replacements, health, and safety in a way that prioritizes needs fairly by district and major category This is supported by the new [Statewide Facilities Assessment \(SFA\)](#) and [Maintenance Effectiveness Assessment \(MEA\)](#) as reported by the [Interagency Commission on School Construction \(IAC\)](#) and [Public School Construction office staff](#).

There also is some historical evidence among some school systems who invested large amounts of funds in sports facilities, before ensuring that all of their facilities had adequate or any air conditioning or air quality systems. Some continue to be unable to adequately fund and address major systematic or maintenance needs. In addition, according to the last report we saw, there are probably at least two dozen schools or more that do not have separate or adequate indoor facilities for appropriate physical education or recess during cold, inclement weather, because their multi-purpose rooms now are used for extended meal periods and other needs. In addition, the expanded Early Education and Career-technology programs will require some schools to make renovations to meet their unique education specification.

MEC believes that all public school facilities must meet 21st century standards, and that a safe and supportive learning environment is essential to ensuring equal educational opportunities. All children must be assured adequate, attractive, physically accessible, environmentally comfortable, technologically appropriate, and well-maintained spaces for instruction and family/community services that promote child development. MEC also supports smaller learning and career-technology programs within larger school facilities with appropriate program offerings, facility modifications, staffing, and instructional resources. We do support sport facilities, but not as a top priority.

Finally, the proposed \$50 million grant if available must be added to the Public School Construction Program and process based on priority of needs putting academic, safety and health first. No funds should allocated for outdoor fields using artificial materials without an environmental impact study, that monitor health and environment conditions and maintains a database on materials, conditions and maintenance. Therefore, we urge the committee to be tabled this issue, until adequate funds to meet all other priority needs.

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