



**PSSAM**  
Public School Superintendents' Association  
OF MARYLAND

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**BILL:** HB 119

**TITLE:** County Boards of Education - Curriculum Guides and Courses of Study - Requirements

**DATE:** March 29, 2023

**POSITION:** Oppose

**COMMITTEE:** Education, Energy, and the Environment

**CONTACT:** Mary Pat Fannon, Executive Director, PSSAM

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The Public School Superintendents' Association of Maryland (PSSAM), on behalf of all twenty-four Maryland local school superintendents, strongly **opposes** House Bill 119.

House Bill 119 requires each county board of education to follow the policies and guidelines for each program of instruction established by the Maryland State Board of Education (MSDE). Additionally, if the State Superintendent makes a determination that a county board is not following the State Board's policies and guidelines, the State Superintendent is then required to direct the State Comptroller to withhold up to 20% of State funding from a county board if the board does not resolve the discrepancy within a certain period of time. Under this bill, withheld funds could only be released by the State Comptroller if the State Superintendent determines that the county board has resolved the discrepancy.

PSSAM is a staunch advocate for local board governance authority on matters pertaining to curriculum, and Maryland's superintendents strongly advocate against all bills aiming to codify any curriculum standards, assessments, or graduation requirements via the Maryland Legislature. However, it is important to note that this bill significantly alters the current status quo regarding curriculum implementation that flies in the face of the long standing partnership between MSDE and the local school systems. While the State Superintendent currently has some authority to withhold funds from local education agencies for major infractions, this power has never been used to mandate standardized implementation of curriculum. Maryland's public school systems have historically implemented curriculum based on a number of local factors, including, budget, personnel, classroom space, community culture, and other localized needs. This bill threatens the

governance ability of local boards of education to best implement curriculum based on the sole discretion of the current State Superintendent.

PSSAM firmly maintains that the role of curriculum development belongs solely to local school boards and superintendents, in partnership with the State Board of Education. Each of Maryland's local school systems must be granted flexibility in developing curriculum that best reflects the specific, and diverse needs of their student population and local community..

For these reasons, PSSAM **opposes** House Bill 119 and requests an unfavorable committee report.