



Maryland Education Coalition



Ellie Mitchell & Rick Tyler, Jr. – Co-Chairs

Web site - www.marylandeducationcoalition.org

Email – md.education.coaliton@gmail.com

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Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

Senator Brian Feldman, Chair

[SB0199](#) - Comprehensive Health Education Framework – Established

POSITION: INFORMATIONAL

Fiscal and Policy Note

The Maryland Education Coalition (MEC) was originally founded over 40 years ago and is made up of over twenty diverse statewide organizations and individual advocates (see below). MEC is made up of over twenty statewide organizations and individuals. Our members include former state or local administrators, educators, lawyers, social workers, psychologists, artist/musicians, parents, community, and business leaders. We advocate for adequate funding, equitable policies, and transparent accountability statewide for the estimated 900,000 students in Maryland’s schools. (More [Here](#))

MEC supports grade and age-appropriate Health Education for all students in Maryland believes it should begin at home and become a life-long learning tool. A red flag goes up, if a bill appears to be part of the roles and responsibilities of the State Board and Department of Education or others with experience and expertise with the issues being addressed.

The fiscal note already has noted the following:

New health education standards were adopted by the State Board of Education in December 2019; the Maryland Comprehensive Health Education Framework was revised and posted in July 2020. There are Family Life and Human Sexuality standards for prekindergarten through grade 8 and for two semesters of high school. MSDE advises that the current framework contains all the elements required by the bill.

The MSDE webpage for Comprehensive Skills-Based Health Education includes the following overview:

Comprehensive Pre-K–12 Skills-Based Health Education focuses on a student’s development of protective life skills that promote health and well-being. By participating in a variety of learning experiences, students are able to develop adaptive and positive behaviors that will equip them to meet the demands and challenges of everyday life.

You can review the School Health Framework here - [Pre-K through High School Health Framework](#). The State Board also approved [COMAR Regulation \(13a.04.18.01\) Health Education Instructional Programs \(PK-12\)](#). Under the regulations adopted by the State Board, local education agencies must provide the opportunity for parents/guardians to view any instructional materials used in teaching family life and human sexuality and establish an opt-out policy for that instruction. MSDE and each local school system provides additional related resources.

Therefore, if the primary intent of this legislation is to codify Public School Health Education policy developed by MSDE and other stakeholders, then approved by the State Board, the Maryland Education Coalition supports, but we also encourage the General Assembly and others to submit any related policy changes to MSDE and the State Board for their review and consideration for approval as the body most directly knowledge, experience and responsibility for the development, oversight, data collection and accountability for education policy. We also urge the General Assembly to work with MSDE and local school systems to ensure each has adequate, high-quality staff and resources to implement, review and report Health Education access, performance and progress so each student has access to high quality health education.

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