



PSSAM
Public School Superintendents' Association
OF MARYLAND

Mary Pat Fannon, Executive Director

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BILL: HB 119 - Primary and Secondary Education - Comprehensive Health Education Framework - Established

DATE: February 1, 2023

POSITION: Oppose

COMMITTEE: Ways and Means

CONTACT: Mary Pat Fannon, Executive Director, PSSAM

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

House Bill 119 requires that local school systems create age-appropriate health curriculum based on the comprehensive health education framework created through a partnership by the Maryland State Department of Education and the Maryland Department of Health. This bill also requires local school systems to establish methods by which parents would be able to opt out of topics contained within the health curriculum.

PSSAM champions the localized approach to implementation of health curriculum consistent with State guidelines. However, PSSAM shares concerns with local school boards and other advocacy organizations regarding legislative efforts to codify standardized curriculum, assessments, or standards. PSSAM maintains our longstanding position regarding curricular mandates, which highlights the critical nature of preserving local authority and oversight concerning matters such as curriculum and assessments. 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. Again, local superintendents support robust and comprehensive instruction in health education, and believe that this objective is best accomplished by preserving local flexibility in implementing health curriculum.

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.

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