

**FAVORABLE**  
**House Bill 1441**  
**Early Childhood Education – Publicly Funded Prekindergarten Programs -**  
**Alterations**

**Senate Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment**  
**March 27, 2024**

**Lauren Lamb**  
**Government Relations**

The Maryland State Education Association strongly supports House Bill 1441, which would adjust qualifications for public and private prekindergarten providers. It also addresses resources and requirements for the implementation of mixed-delivery prekindergarten to meet the goals of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future.

MSEA represents 75,000 educators and school employees who work in Maryland's public schools, teaching and preparing our almost 900,000 students so they can pursue their dreams. MSEA also represents 39 local affiliates in every county across the state of Maryland, and our parent affiliate is the 3-million-member National Education Association (NEA).

Early childhood education addresses a uniquely impactful period in a child's academic career. We know from an extensive body of research that children's learning before and during prekindergarten through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade have profound long-term effects on their literacy, social, and emotional development.<sup>1 2</sup> As we work toward the Blueprint's vision of high-quality prekindergarten for all children in our state, we are committed to expanding pathways and

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<sup>1</sup> Universal pre-K: The long-term benefits that exceed short-term costs. Georgetown University McCourt School of Public Policy (2022).

<https://mccourt.georgetown.edu/news/universal-pre-k-long-term-benefits-exceed-short-term-costs/>

<sup>2</sup> Effectiveness of Early Literacy Instruction: Summary of 20 Years of Research. Institute of Education Sciences (2021). [https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/southeast/pdf/REL\\_2021084.pdf](https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/southeast/pdf/REL_2021084.pdf)



identifying strategies to recruit and retain early childhood educators.

We ardently support the measures in this bill that would make Pre-K paraeducators in public programs who have at least 15 years of experience exempt from the requirement to hold a Child Development Associate certificate or associate's degree by SY 2027-2028. Career paraeducators with a track record of success should not be subject to new requirements to keep their jobs, and this exemption is designed to recognize the valuable expertise of longtime early childhood educators.

**We urge the committee to issue a favorable report on House Bill 1441.**