

SENATE VERSION HB1386 - Education - Employee Train

Uploaded by: Abigail Snyder

Position: FAV

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 Zionist Organization of America
 Baltimore District

WRITTEN TESTIMONY

**House Bill 1386 – Education - Employee Training and Holocaust
 Education Study - Requirements
 Education, Energy, & the Environment Committee – March 27, 2024
 SUPPORT AS AMENDED**

Background: In an effort to address the need for our teachers and staff at all levels of education to be prepared to handle issues of hate-bias in the classroom, this legislation would require each county board of education and certain nonpublic schools to provide each employee with training on the prevention of antisemitism and Islamophobia each year; require institutions of higher education to include specific training on the prevention of antisemitism and Islamophobia in required cultural diversity training; and require the State Department of Education to contract with a consultant to conduct an independent study and assessment of Holocaust education in middle and high school instruction in the State.

Written Comments: It's impossible to turn a blind eye to the increased hateful rhetoric that is plaguing our school systems across the State. Whether it's a swastika next to the words "kill the Jews" in the bathroom at Pikesville Middle School or the numerous antisemitic incidents occurring in Montgomery County Public Schools, this is an epidemic and we must do something to address it. HB1386 takes a bold step by requiring teachers and administrators to learn about antisemitism and islamophobia prevention so they can better address and ultimately deter these types of incidents in schools and teach children why they are so harmful. Further, by requiring MSDE to assess Holocaust education in schools, we can better learn where they may be gaps in the system and correct them. Requiring cultural diversity training for our educators in a key piece of the puzzle to address the hate that is being spewed through our school systems.

For these reasons the Baltimore Jewish Council asks for a favorable report on HB1386.

The Baltimore Jewish Council, a coalition of central Maryland Jewish organizations and congregations, advocates at all levels of government, on a variety of social welfare, economic and religious concerns, to protect and promote the interests of The Associated Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore, its agencies and the Greater Baltimore Jewish community.

JCRC Senate HB1386 Education School Employee Antib

Uploaded by: deborah miller

Position: FAV



Testimony in SUPPORT of *House Bill 1386 - Education – School Employee Antibias Training - Requirements*
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
March 27, 2024

The Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Washington (JCRC) serves as the public affairs and community relations arm of the Jewish community. We represent over 100 Jewish social service agencies, synagogues, and schools throughout Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia. The JCRC is strongly committed to cultivating a society based on freedom, justice, equity, and pluralism. We work throughout the region to advocate for our agencies that serve the most vulnerable residents and to campaign for important policy interests on behalf of the Jewish community and all Marylanders.

The JCRC supports House Bill 1386 which requires the State Department of Education to develop guidelines for an antibias training program for school employees and requires county boards of education and certain nonpublic schools to offer training based on the guidelines. The purpose of these guidelines is to reduce implicit bias, raise awareness of discrimination that historically marginalized racial and ethnic minorities face, and combat prejudices that historically marginalized religious minorities face, including antisemitism and islamophobia.

The JCRC understands first-hand the critical need for school employee antibias training and the positive impact such training can have on students. Our agency runs a robust education outreach and programming department. Its mission is to combat school-based antisemitism; advocate on behalf of Jewish students, families, and employees; and promote safe, hate-free, respectful learning environments for all students. In Montgomery County, the JCRC is also deeply engaged in addressing all forms of academic inequity. We have strongly supported MCPS' anti-racist audit, we are a proud member of the Black and Brown Coalition for Educational Equity and Excellence, and we also work closely with Identity to support MCPS' Latino youth.

Dramatic spikes in antisemitism over the last several years have been well-documented and show no signs of abating. Indeed, this trend has only intensified since Hamas' October 7th attack on Israel and the ongoing war, resulting in an unprecedented and disturbing 361% increase in antisemitic incidents compared to the same period a year ago. A significant portion of those incidents, from vandalism to bullying to discrimination, have occurred in K-12 educational settings. Even before October 7th, FBI data revealed that 10% of all reported hate crimes occurred on school or college campuses, and that 30% of all juvenile victims of hate crimes were targeted at their schools. According to the ADL, school abased antisemitism in 2022 increased about 50% from the previous year. This includes vandalism and harassment.

History has shown that bias, intolerance, and prejudice, can lead to violence, dehumanization, and in the case of the Jewish people, extermination of six million. Education and training are critical to helping stem this trajectory of hatred. We need these guidelines to create greater accountability and signal to the community that inclusivity, cultural awareness and combatting all forms of hatred, including antisemitism, are a priority.

School personnel often have limited familiarity with antisemitism and little cultural competency about Jewish ethnicity, Jewish practice, and the critical importance of Israel to the Jewish identities of an overwhelming majority of American Jews. To address this gap, the JCRC has developed an ever-expanding roster of teacher training opportunities for educators. Most critically, we have partnered with the ADL's DC regional office to develop a comprehensive 3-hour training on antisemitism, anti-Zionism, and Jewish identity that has been presented to over 1,400 MCPS personnel. The JCRC strongly believes that school employees should have a baseline competency in the forms of hatred that are significantly manifesting in our schools at this time, both those that are religiously based - antisemitism and Islamophobia - and otherwise. That includes xenophobia, anti-Asian hatred, homophobia, transphobia, and racism. This knowledge can help schools respond swiftly and effectively to hate and bias incidents when they occur.

Our agency also believes that the prevention of antisemitism and Islamophobia must be part of antibias training at institutions for school employees. If these hatreds are not included, it is impossible to disrupt what feels like an endlessly repeating cycle of antisemitic and Islamophobic incidents. Educational leaders must be equipped to address these difficult issues. House Bill 1386 is an expression of our community's commitment to responding forcefully, consistently, and sensitively to a problem that has only continued to worsen over recent months and years, and which undermines the very fabric of our society. It is also a commitment to ensuring that our schools reflect the very best values that we wish to instill in future generations of leaders. For these reasons we urge a favorable report for House Bill 1386.

XHB1386_MSEA_Lamb_FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Lauren Lamb

Position: FAV

FAVORABLE
House Bill 1386
Education - School Employee Antibias Training - Requirements

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

Lauren Lamb
Government Relations

The Maryland State Education Association supports House Bill 1386, which would require the State Department of Education, in consultation with the Professional Standards and Teacher Education Board, to develop guidelines for an antibias training program for school employees. It would also require each county board of education and certain nonpublic schools to offer training based on the guidelines.

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).

Educators know that students learn best when they feel safe, seen, and supported. As we see a disturbing rise in hate crimes in our state, educators have a critical role to play as leaders within the school community.¹ We unequivocally support efforts to ensure that all educators are prepared to address alarming incidents motivated by prejudice. Moreover, we must promote in educators a deep understanding of bias and its implications and provide tools to prevent it through teaching wherever possible.

Developing this training would help ensure that educators receive consistent, comprehensive support toward preventing bias, prejudice, and hate, preparing

¹¹ U.S. Department of Justice: Maryland (2022). <https://www.justice.gov/hatecrimes/state-data/maryland#stats-md>

them to address a breadth of issues affecting students and their families. We also appreciate that it would be credit eligible or job embedded and paid, meaning that the value of antibias training will either be recognized toward certificate renewal or provided as part of established professional development time.

We urge the Committee to issue a Favorable Report on House Bill 1386.

ADL MD Written Testimony - HB1386 - education trai

Uploaded by: Meredith Weisel

Position: FAV



Maryland General Assembly
Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
March 27, 2024

Testimony of Meredith R. Weisel
ADL Washington D.C. Regional Director

ADL (the Anti-Defamation League) is pleased to submit this testimony in **support of amended House Bill 1386, Education – School Employee Antibias Training - Requirements**. This bill will require the State Department of Education to develop guidelines for an antibias training program for school employees and require each county board of education and certain nonpublic schools to offer training based on these new guidelines. It will impose on our county schools the importance of providing more comprehensive teacher and faculty training and teaching materials in K-12 schools as we see unprecedented levels of hate crimes and bias incidents impacting our faith-based communities.

Since 1913, the mission of ADL (the Anti-Defamation League) has been to “stop the defamation of the Jewish people and to secure justice and fair treatment to all.” As a leading anti-hate organization, for decades one of the most important ways in which ADL has fought against bigotry and antisemitism has been by investigating extremist threats across the ideological spectrum, producing research to inform the public, and working with law enforcement, educators, the tech industry, and elected leaders to promote best practices to effectively address and counter these threats. Further, ADL conducts an annual *Audit of Anti-Semitic Incidents*, which is widely used by law enforcement, educational institutions, elected officials, and the community at-large to not only understand how to respond to antisemitic incidents, but how to create change.

At a time of rising antisemitism across the country, including in the entire state of Maryland, this bill sends a clear message that our community is committed to ensuring that schools have the tools they need to push back against these trends. The need for robust training for our educators in K-12 schools could not be more urgent. When our school districts faculty do not understand the history of antisemitism and how it manifests in modern day, or the elements leading to these incidents, they cannot fully grasp the significance of bias and bigotry, or the lasting impact that hateful words and conduct can have on the community at large. **Therefore, this bill is a measure ADL wholeheartedly supports and sees as a critically important step in the right direction for statewide anti-bias training.**

Since October 7, U.S. antisemitic incidents have skyrocketed, reaching the highest point of any three-month period since ADL began tracking in 1979, according to preliminary data. Between October 7, 2023, and January 7, 2024, ADL recorded **a total of 3,283 antisemitic incidents** across the United States, representing a **361-percent increase** compared to the same period one year prior, which saw 712 incidents. The preliminary three-month tally is higher than the total number of antisemitic incidents tracked in any year in the last decade, except for calendar year

2022, when the total number of incidents reached a historic high of 3,697.

Since Oct. 7, there's been an average of nearly 34 antisemitic incidents per day, putting 2023 on track to be the highest year for antisemitic acts against Jews since ADL started tracking this data in the late 1970s. The American Jewish community is facing a threat level that's now unprecedented in modern history. It's shocking that we've recorded more antisemitic acts in three months than we usually would in an entire year. In this difficult moment, antisemitism is spreading and mutating in alarming ways. This onslaught of hate includes a dramatic increase in fake bomb threats that disrupt services at synagogues and put communities on edge across the country.

This data also confirms what Jewish communities have seen firsthand across the country – and it corresponds with a notable rise in antisemitic attitudes. We're seeing a mainstreaming and a normalization of antisemitism, the likes of which have not been seen in this country for generations. In Maryland, 109 antisemitic incidents were reported in 2022, a 98 percent increase from the 55 incidents in 2021, and a 132 percent increase from the 47 incidents reported in 2020. Maryland registered with the 10th highest number of antisemitic incidents reported in the country for 2022. And of these numbers close to 60 percent occurred in Montgomery County with many in our K-12 schools. The raw data we are analyzing shows both the county and the state of Maryland poised to report even higher for our 2023 audit of antisemitic incidents.

In 2022, there were 494 antisemitic incidents tabulated in non-Jewish schools (mostly public schools). This is a 49-percent increase from the 331 incidents in 2021. Of the 494 K-12 school incidents, 257 were incidents of harassment, 232 were incidents of vandalism and five were assaults. School-based harassment incidents in 2022 included one-off incidents such as when one student told another, "Ew Jew. Why don't you kill yourself," or when a student shouted in the middle of a math class, "If anyone celebrates Yom Kippur today, you can die!" Harassment incidents included recurrent antisemitic bullying, such as classmates taunting Jewish students with Holocaust jokes and references.

The 232 incidents of antisemitic vandalism in K-12 schools in 2022 represent a 53 percent increase from the 152 incidents tabulated in 2021. Of the 232 vandalism cases recorded, swastikas were present in 88 percent of K-12 school vandalism cases (205 incidents). Vandalism incidents included messages such as "Kill all Jews," "6M Oven," "Hitler was right" and "Jews not welcome." Given the insidious nature of bullying, compounded by the fact that many children may not feel empowered to report their experiences, it is likely that the actual number of school-based antisemitic incidents was significantly higher than the data reported in the Audit.

These incidents did not take place in a vacuum. They come at a time of rising bigotry, the emboldening of hate groups, and a resurgence of Holocaust denialism—a challenge that has existed on the fringes for many years, but in recent years has encroached on the mainstream of our politics and discourse. When our school employees are not prepared to work with students or respond to parents and guardians, it can cause tremendous harm to the school community of those impacted by the hate incidents. Education is therefore key to combating hate in all its forms. By learning about the history of antisemitism, anti-Muslim hate, or other forms of religious discrimination, and how we are seeing it evident today, educators will have the

opportunity to explore how stereotypes, prejudice, and religious and ethnic hatred can escalate to atrocity.

ADL has been a long-standing trainer on antisemitism and anti-bias education for our schools throughout the entire state. As one example, ADL is incredibly proud of the education work we have been doing together in partnership with the Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Washington (JCRC) throughout Montgomery County. In lockstep, we have been providing over the past few years in-depth professional development training on antisemitism. JCRC and ADL created a two-day professional development series for K-12 educators and administrators to increase awareness of the Jewish experience and educate participants about the history and contemporary manifestations of antisemitism. On day one of these sessions, participants deepen their understanding of Jewish life, explore “classic” antisemitic tropes and the modern-day manifestations of antisemitism. Further, they develop an understanding of the varied experiences of Jewish people, explore how antisemitism impacts Jewish youth, explore how antisemitism manifests today, and understand how they can use their collective voice for change.

Session two is dedicated to responding to antisemitism where there is a focus on how participants can identify antisemitism in the community and respond effectively. We provide time and reflection for how to take personal action to combat antisemitism as an individual and organization. Participants increase their awareness of incidents of antisemitism in their environment, improve their ability to address specific incidents of antisemitism and bias and to select appropriate responses, and develop and use a variety of preventive and reactive responses to challenge incidents of antisemitism and bias.

In addition to the antisemitism training, ADL has education tools and resources on our website to help your schools, communities and society be more respectful, inclusive and equitable. We provide anti-bias education through professional learning, educational programs, resources and strategies for educators both through online self-paced programs and in-person professional development. We work in partnership with schools, organizations and communities to design and deliver anti-bias education as we believe that when we learn, as individuals, how to challenge bias, discrimination and hate – together, we have the capacity to foster equity and inclusion.

In recent months, as ADL has tracked a drastic increase in antisemitic incidents, we have also seen an uptick of incidents of anti-Muslim attacks in various communities. Therefore, ADL in November released a guide called “**Anti-Muslim Bias and Acting as an Ally.**” This guide focuses on what we call a Table Talk Conversation and is geared towards age 11 and up. It’s a way for educators, families, and anyone else interested, to learn about anti-Muslim as a form of religious bias and a form of racism, and how to respond effectively to it.

Behind every hate crime statistic, there is a person, a family, a community – dealing with the unimaginable. Hate crimes and bias incidents cause a distinct type of harm that can have a lasting, immeasurable impact. This is because they target people due to their protected, immutable characteristics – race, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, sex, gender, gender identity, disability – things about a person that are central to identity and cannot be changed.

ADL is proud to be a leading anti-hate organization that has been able to help thousands of people who report hate and bias incidents to us.

We feel very strongly that it is imperative to disrupt the cycle of hate with education, starting with those who are leading our school buildings and classrooms. **HB1386** helps put this conversation front and center and continues the good work that ADL and many others have been focusing on in several area school districts. There is unfortunately no magic wand that we can wave to undo the irreparable harm that hate crimes or bias incidents cause. Yet here in Maryland, we can make sure that our policies are crafted in a way that will help stem the rising tide. We have an important obligation and unique opportunity to empower a new generation to learn from our past to build a safer, stronger, and more equitable society in the future.

**We urge the Committee to give
House Bill 1386 a favorable report.**

HB 1386 - Antibias Training (Crossover).pdf

Uploaded by: NaShona Kess

Position: FAV



NAACP

Maryland
STATE CONFERENCE

March 27, 2024
Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

HB 1386 - Education - School Employee Antibias Training – Requirements

Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Maryland State Conference NAACP, I am writing to express our heartfelt gratitude to the sponsors of House Bill 1386 for their understanding of the critical importance of addressing bias and discrimination in our educational institutions. We commend their recognition that all members of marginalized communities are equally important and deserve equal protection and support.

The provisions outlined in this bill underscore the significance of providing comprehensive antibias training for our educators. By acknowledging that anti-hate education must occur on multiple levels, the sponsors of this bill demonstrate a keen understanding of the complex challenges facing our schools and communities today.

At a time when Islamophobia and antisemitism are rampant, it is essential that we also acknowledge the centuries-long struggle that Black communities have endured against hate and racism in our schools and neighborhoods. This legislation recognizes that now is not the time to lower our heads and ignore the issues that surround us. Instead, it is a time to forge ahead and declare, "enough is enough."

We firmly believe that education is the key to combating hate and bigotry in all its forms. By starting with our educators, we are taking a smart and proactive approach to lifting this burden from our communities. That providing them with the tools and knowledge to recognize and address bias, it will not only benefit students but will also create more inclusive and supportive learning environments for all.

By investing in antibias training for school employees, we are taking a significant step towards building a more just, equitable, and compassionate society for all Marylanders.

The Maryland State Conference NAACP fully supports House Bill 1386 and urges the Committee to vote in favor of its passage.

Thank you for considering our testimony on this crucial issue.

In Service,

NaShona Kess, Esq., MLS
Executive Director
Maryland State Conference NAACP
NaShona.Kess@naacpmarland.org

Testimony in support of crossover bill HB1386.pdf

Uploaded by: Richard KAP Kaplowitz

Position: FAV

CROSSOVER BILL HB1386_RichardKaplowitz_FAV

3/27/2024

Richard Keith Kaplowitz
Frederick, MD 21703

TESTIMONY ON CROSSOVER BILL HB#/1386 – FAVORABLE

Education - Employee Training and Holocaust Education Study – Requirements

TO: Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard K. Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3. I am submitting this testimony in support of CROSSOVER BILL HB#1386, Education - Employee Training and Holocaust Education Study – Requirements

My Jewish faith tell me (Leviticus 19:17-18) ¹⁷ “Do not hate your brother in your heart, but rebuke your neighbor frankly, so that you won’t carry sin because of him. ¹⁸ Don’t take vengeance on or bear a grudge against any of your people; rather, love your neighbor as yourself; I am your G-d”

This bill attempts to ensure employees in educational settings know how to stop hate from spreading by requiring the provision of education on those topics. It also mandates that an independent study and assessment occur to see what anti-hatred education is currently being done in our middle and high schools in Maryland.

Rogers and Hammerstein, in their classic musical *South Pacific*, sum up what has to happen in the song “You’ve Got To Be Carefully Taught”.

“You’ve got to be taught to hate and fear,/You’ve got to be taught from year to year,
It’s got to be drummed in your dear little ear—/You’ve got to be carefully taught!

You’ve got to be taught to be afraid / Of people whose eyes are oddly made,
And people whose skin is a different shade— / You’ve got to be carefully taught.

You’ve got to be taught before it’s too late, / Before you are six or seven or eight,
To hate all the people your relatives hate— / You’ve got to be carefully taught!”

This bill will help our educators battle this mindset and help to stop the vastly increased hatreds that are now permeating our society.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report and pass CROSSOVER BILL HB1386.

Bienenfeld testimony HB1386 mar 27 2024.pdf

Uploaded by: Paula Bienenfeld

Position: FWA

Montgomery County Jewish Parents Coalition



One Community, many voices. United Against Antisemitism.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 1386 with amendments. I am Dr. Paula Bienenfeld, and I am testifying on behalf of the Montgomery County Jewish Parents Coalition. The Montgomery County Jewish Parents Coalition was founded in 2021 in response to the alarming increase in antisemitism in Montgomery County, Maryland, in particular, the antisemitism, from both students and teachers, in the Montgomery County Public School (MCPS) system. The Coalition consists of hundreds of parents and resident activists working as volunteers to fight antisemitism and antiZionism in the county. In addition to fighting antisemitism in the schools we raise our Jewish voices in the county through events like Jewish American Heritage Month; and we testify and work with county and state legislators and agencies to stop JewHated and to support Israel. We are a powerful, consistent Jewish voice fighting antisemitism wherever and whenever we see it.

We support House Bill 1386 with amendments. This action is sorely needed not only in Montgomery County but throughout the State of Maryland. In our discussions with MCPS teachers and students, it is clear that antisemitism is on the rise and that it is coming from both students and teachers. This increase is verified by Montgomery County Police reports. This bill addresses the desperate need for teacher and staff training on what antisemitism is; its ancient history; and its current context, the ‘new antisemitism.’ It should address the fact that Judaism is not only a religion. We are a nation and a people that have existed and thrived for over 3,000 years. It may be difficult for those of other faiths or groups to understand this basic fact and we look forward to training which will address what Judaism is. We thank the members of the House and Senate for putting this bill forward and urge its adoption.

In the same way racism bias does harm to our students and teachers, antisemitism adversely affects our children and their teachers. Yet antisemitism was never addressed in our MCPS schools, even though our organization repeatedly requested it be included in the regular antiracism training that goes on often in our public schools. As yet there is no consistent appropriate teacher and staff training on antisemitism. We appreciate that the bill that requires the antibias training includes antisemitism, as MCPS refused repeatedly to include it in their antiracism training. We expect robust, ‘evidence-based’ training on antisemitism.

Given the unprecedented levels of antisemitism in our public schools, coming both from students and from teachers, it is critical that this legislation be passed, to require training on antisemitism, to counteract in part the horrific hatred to which our Jewish students are subjected. Our members have heard from Jewish students and their parents of children being yelled at, physically assaulted, children who have had their yarmulkes pulled off their heads, children who no longer wear their tsitsis (religious garb) because they are afraid. We have heard personally from our students of the antisemitic statements made by teachers in the classroom. We have heard from teachers in MCPS who are afraid to wear any jewelry signifying they are Jews, and are, in the words of one teacher, 'just keeping my head down.' We have heard from teachers who are tearful and in pain because MCPS will not acknowledge the antisemitism prevalent in our schools and will do almost nothing to prevent it.

We appreciate that the bill states that the Department shall incorporate lessons learned from real life incidents. The Jewish Parents Coalition has heard numerous personal statements from Jewish children and Jewish teachers subject to vile antisemitism, and the creation of an atmosphere of fear in our MCPS schools. No child, no teacher, no staff member, should EVER be afraid to go to school. No child should EVER feel unwelcome in our public schools. We expect the implementation of the directions of this bill will work strongly to end Jew hatred in our schools.

No child should be afraid to attend our county public schools, and no parent should be afraid to send their children to school. Yet within the last few years this is what has happened. An atmosphere reminiscent of 1930s Europe is taking hold here in the U.S., and here in Montgomery County. One teacher said to us, 'there are swastikas everywhere.' This must stop now.

The requirement for training on antisemitism in our schools is long overdue. Education about the history of the Jews, including the context and years-long run-up to the horrors and genocide of the Holocaust, as well as the history of Jews in the United States, as a marginalized group of people, is critical to an understanding of the meaning of 'Never again' and the current precarious position of Jews in our nation. It is critical in our efforts to deconstruct antisemitism and end Jew hatred in Maryland.

We are an ancient people and we have been through all this before. There is no hate you can throw at us that will stop us or intimidate us. This bill is required now for MCPS to recognize and acknowledge the vicious antisemitism that is coursing through the school system, and which must be stopped immediately. No more antisemitic students. No more antisemitic teachers. This stops now.

We request this amendment, given that one-half day every other year is not sufficient to stop Jew hatred in our public schools:

For Section (C)(1), instead of 'every other year' please replace with 'every year.'

For Section (C)(3)(II) please replace 'Take a half day or less to complete;' with 'Take a full day to complete.'

Thank you.

HB1386 Howard Co BOE Testimony 032724 for EEE - An

Uploaded by: Staff Howard County

Position: FWA



Board of Education of Howard County
Testimony Submitted to the Maryland Senate,
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
March 27, 2024



Board of Education
of Howard County

Jennifer Swickard Mallo, *Chair*

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William J. Barnes
*Acting Superintendent,
Secretary/Treasurer*

HB1386: FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS
Education - School Employee Anti-Bias Training – Requirements

The Board of Education of Howard County (the Board) supports **HB1386 Education - School Employee Anti-Bias Training – Requirements** with amendments to financially support the important training called for in the bill.

As amended and passed by the House of Delegates, HB1386 has been shifted to a broader anti-bias training bill rather than a curriculum mandate. The Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) staff support the intent of the amended bill to bring awareness and training to staff that would support strategic goals of the school system for students and staff to thrive in a safe, nurturing, and inclusive culture that embraces diversity. While anti-hate and anti-bias may be general terms for work that opposes or prohibits unfair discrimination against people based on race, religion, etc., a focus on belonging would be the preferred descriptor for such training. DEI currently provides training on belonging to staff across all schools through professional learning with targeted groups such as administrators and school counselors and customized professional learning during program implementation periods. DEI also provides support and training for hate/bias response.

Training as called for under the amended HB1386 has the potential to more widely benefit all employees, and is flexible in delivery to account for local preference, but given the scope must also be supported financially. The Board respectfully requests an amendment to guarantee funding to support the required training under HB1386.

With this amendment, we urge a FAVORABLE report of HB1386 from this Committee.

HB 1386 xover - antibias training - EEE.pdf

Uploaded by: Mary Pat Fannon

Position: UNF

Mary Pat Fannon, Executive Director
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BILL: HB 1386
TITLE: Education - School Employee Anti Bias Training - Requirements
DATE: March 27, 2024
POSITION: Unfavorable
COMMITTEE: Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
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 1386.

This legislation requires the State Department of Education, in consultation with the Professional Standards and Teacher Education Board, to develop guidelines for an anti-bias training program for school employees. Further, it requires local school systems to provide training that is job-embedded, paid professional development provided during non teaching time; to the extent practical, be offered in a peer-to-peer setting, take half a day or less and incorporate lessons from local incidents.

PSSAM strongly supports the sentiment behind this legislation but opposes the overly prescriptive requirements in the bill. All school systems have some professional development that include elements and topics described in this bill. In fact, many systems have a staff position whose sole responsibility is to incorporate concepts of diversity and equity in student and professional development curriculum. This bill's omnibus, one-size-fits-all approach does not recognize the extraordinary efforts currently underway in the LEAs, and instead layers on a tremendous amount of new training that will be incredibly expensive to implement.

In addition, the legislation requires that training is created and developed in conjunction with staff and teachers. This is not a bad practice per se, but completely disregards our local flexibility to negotiate these types of activities with our bargaining units, along with any other number of locally identified priorities. This legislation also does not recognize the existing, competing

professional development requirements with which we must comply. Nor does it contemplate or acknowledge that some of these existing programs would be edged out or diminished to allow for this extensive new training.

One of our largest school systems estimates that this legislation could easily cost over \$600,000 and would require a minimum of 5 additional specialists . This is in addition to their existing office of equity that already does much of this work, but not in the very prescriptive manner required in the bill. In addition, this estimate does not account for costs that might be needed to engage consultants, as necessary, to reconfigure their internal team responsible for implementation. In fact, this system has only been able to sustain their current high level of equity programming due to the generous support of philanthropic funders. They, along with every other LEA, does not have the infrastructure or fiscal resources to sustain the new requirements every two years for the vast number of employees who would be impacted by this legislation.

Again, PSSAM supports the goals of this legislation and is happy to work with the sponsor in the interim to provide an inventory of existing training on these topics to more holistically identify gaps in local professional development.

For these reasons, we **oppose** HB 1386 and request an **unfavorable** report.

SB1058.Curric.Holocaust.24.pdf

Uploaded by: Virginia Crespo

Position: UNF



Maryland Retired School Personnel Association

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Senate Bill 1058/HB 1181
In Opposition Of
Education – Curriculum Standards – Antihate and Holocaust Education
(Educate to Stop the Hate Act)
Ways and Means

Dear Honorable Delegate Vanessa Atterbeary, Chair, and Honorable Delegate Jheanelle Wilkins, Vice Chair, and distinguished Ways and Means Committee members,

Maryland Retired School Personnel Association (MRSPA) opposes SB 1058/HB 1181 Education – Curriculum Standards – Antihate and Holocaust Education (Educate to Stop the Hate Act)

We oppose this legislation for several reasons, mainly because teacher training is the purview of the State Department of Education (MSDE) and local Boards of Education. The legislature should not be involved in mandating curriculum either for teachers or for students.

Although education against Antisemitism and Islamophobia is a worthy goal, we cannot condone legislators mandating training requirements for teachers. MRSPA is not opposed to education on multicultural diversity and anti-hate rhetoric which is likely already included in the statewide social studies curriculum. We suggest that legislators contact the appropriate staff at MSDE to learn what is already included in curriculum.

Teachers go through numerous training courses each year which the State Department of Education and local school systems have already sanctioned, and we strongly oppose having another item added to the plates of our already overburdened teachers. We especially oppose including online components in the training. The impact of such training will be minimal at best, given the unreasonable number of online training courses each year. This could then just be another box for teachers to check, with little to no impact as intended.

On behalf of the 12,000 members of the Maryland Retired School Personnel Association, we urge strong opposition to SB 1058/HB 1181.

Sincerely,

Carla J. Duls
President

Virginia G. Crespo
Legislative Aide

HB1386 MSDE Letter of Information.pdf

Uploaded by: Dr. Carey Wright

Position: INFO

BILL:	House Bill 1386	DATE:	March 27, 2024
SUBJECT:	Education – School Employee Antibias Training – Requirements	COMMITTEE:	Ways and Means
POSITION:	Information Only		
CONTACT:	Akilah Alleyne, Ph.D. 410-767-0504 akilah.alleyne@maryland.gov		

EXPLANATION:

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) is providing information for consideration regarding House Bill (HB) 1386 – Education – School Employee Antibias Training – Requirements, which requires MSDE, in consultation with the Professional Standards and Teacher Education Board (PSTEB), to develop guidelines for an antibias program for school employees. The guidelines are required to: be inclusive, include lessons in cultural awareness, aim to reduce implicit bias, be culturally responsive to the needs of educators and students, raise awareness of biases, combat prejudices, seek to achieve schools that are more inclusive and tolerant, and be evidence-based.

House Bill 1386 requires the Department, in consultation with PSTEB, to develop guidelines for an antibias training program for school employees. It should be noted that PSTEB has not historically participated in the development of in-service training standards, nor has PSTEB developed rules and regulations for school employees outside of those requirements for the preparation and certification of educators who are required to be certified to be employed. As the PSTEB has not worked in this area previously, its membership is unlikely to be prepared to assist the Department in developing anti-bias training program guidelines for school employees in general.

For reference, PSTEB, established and governed by Education Article 6-702 through 6-708, has the purview under the statute to develop for consideration rules and regulations for:

- Requirements for the preparation of teachers and other education personnel; and
- The certification of social workers employed by a local school employer as professional personnel.

MSDE does not currently have the staff expertise or capacity to develop the guidelines specified in HB1386. To implement the requirements of HB 1386, MSDE would need to contract with entities with expertise in antibias research and practices to produce evidence-based guidelines that meet the other specified criteria. MSDE would need to dedicate staff to managing the project and see the guidelines to completion. MSDE estimates a cost of \$100,000 to hire a consultant to conduct the required research and develop the guidelines based on projects of similar size and scope.

The Department would like to highlight the impact the proposed anti-bias training could hold for local education agencies (LEAs). Under HB1386, LEAs, and those nonpublic schools that choose to participate, will most likely experience an operational and fiscal impact as they will be responsible for developing antibias training based on the guidelines developed by MSDE. House Bill 1386 requires LEAs to train each public-school employee whose job duties include frequent interaction with students. The bill stipulates that training be job-embedded, paid professional development training that is provided during non-teaching time.

Training and professional development are provided by LEAs, MSDE, and other providers throughout the school year. Professional development typically occurs during the workday (e.g. training during after-school all staff meetings, during school year professional development days, or during summer professional development). Training and professional development are considered a part of the job responsibilities of school-based and central office staff. When training or professional development is during the workday, there is no additional payment outside of salary. If training were required outside of the workday, payment would be required but that is not typical and would be costly for the LEAs. It would be a unique circumstance to pay school staff to participate in this type of training, as proposed in HB 1386.

Finally, HB1386 requires that training guidelines that are developed “incorporate lessons learned from real life incidents of discriminatory bullying, harassment, or intimidation.” (page 3). In the development of training guidelines and in the implementation of antibias training, MSDE and LEAs will need to put safeguards in place to protect student privacy. Any references to cases must protect identifying information.

We respectfully request that you consider this information as you deliberate HB1386. For further information, please contact Dr. Akilah Alleyne at 410-767-0504, or akilah.alleyne@maryland.gov.

MD Catholic Conference_HB 1386_INFO SENATE CROSS.p

Uploaded by: Garrett O'Day

Position: INFO



March 27, 2024

**HB 1386
Education - School Employee Antibias Training - Requirements**

Senate Education, Energy & the Environment Committee

Position: INFORMATION

The Maryland Catholic Conference offers this informational testimony for House Bill 1386. The Catholic Conference is the public policy representative of the three (arch)dioceses serving Maryland, which together encompass over one million Marylanders. Statewide, their parishes, schools, hospitals and numerous charities combine to form our state's second largest social service provider network, behind only our state government.

House Bill 1386 would require the State Department of Education to develop anti-bias training for employees. The bill, as amended encourages nonpublic schools to develop such training.

The Conference appreciates the end goal of this legislation. Teaching about the horrors and historical atrocities of the Holocaust and racism is indubitably important. However, what makes nonpublic schools unique is their instructional autonomy, which includes their teachers. Catholic schools teach units on racism and the Holocaust in their own dedicated way. Accordingly, we respectfully request that the state not dictate their particular curriculum or employee training on these matters as independent schools.

While an unintended consequence, this bill may do a disservice to both teachers and students and the important subject matter that this bill intends to promote. If nonpublic schools have a stronger or more robust curriculum or employee training on the subject matter of this bill, including but not limited to supplemental projects and the like, the state's dictation of curriculum may weaken that. At best, an amendment allowing nonpublic schools flexibility through substantial equivalency with the state guidelines would be a second option. For example, should the state dictate to a Jewish day school what they should teach about the Holocaust to employees?

Nonpublic schools are approved and/or licensed by the State Department of Education and meet all institutional requirements placed on them by law. However, Maryland law regards nonpublic school curriculum as independent of that of our public schools for numerous reasons and this bill mandates particular curriculum on certain nonpublic schools. As most nonpublic schools do already teach about the holocaust in their own way, oftentimes even more comprehensively, we ask that they continue to be given the autonomy to do so.