



PSSAM
Public School Superintendents' Association
OF MARYLAND

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BILL: HB 1363

TITLE: Education - Public Schools - Asian American History Curriculum Requirement

DATE: February 28, 2024

POSITION: Unfavorable

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 public school superintendents, **opposes** House Bill 1363.

This bill requires the State Board of Education (SBE) to adopt curriculum standards and curriculum resources for instructional content on (1) comprehensive antihate education using historical contexts that have led to contemporary racism and prejudice, as specified and (2) the Holocaust. Beginning in the 2025-2026 school year, all public schools and all nonpublic schools that participate in State-funded education programs must include the revised and enhanced instructional content in school curricula. Each local board of education must dedicate a portion of federal Title II funds for substantive professional development on teaching the curriculum developed under the bill. Teachers participating in professional development on the requirements (1) must be paid or reimbursed at locally negotiated rates and (2) may be eligible for continuing professional development credits.

PSSAM has a longstanding policy of opposing efforts by the General Assembly to codify curriculum standards, assessments, or graduation requirements. Local superintendents strongly believe that the role of curriculum development and implementation belongs solely to local boards of education in conjunction with MSDE. Rest assured, PSSAM's opposition to this bill does not rest on an evaluation of the merits of teaching any specified subject matter, but rather opposition to statutorily mandating revisions to content standards and curriculum.

The Maryland General Assembly, in creating the Maryland State Board of Education and local boards of education, has delegated to them the responsibility of delivering a high-quality

statewide system of public education through State standards and accountability measures, as well as locally governed and administered curriculum. The State Board establishes State content frameworks, state assessment standards, and minimum state graduation requirements, while each local board and school system implement locally-developed curriculum to ensure that the state content frameworks are followed, student performance standards are met, and students are prepared to meet graduation requirements.

In the context of educational programming proposed by House Bill 1363, PSSAM emphasizes that many local school systems already incorporate age-appropriate units of instruction into a comprehensive social studies curriculum. Superintendents are committed to providing students with a comprehensive, well-rounded education through history curriculum that is implemented after proper stakeholder input is received and review processes are completed in each individual system. However, seeing as though this bill would require all local systems to expend additional funds in curriculum and assessment creation that are not provided under the bill's current language, this bill serves as an unfunded mandate for all twenty-four local systems.

Again, PSSAM's opposition to this bill does not rest on the merits of the bill's subject matters. Rather, it rests on the implications of curricular mandates on local school systems. House Bill 1363, alongside similar bills which seek to interject or extract piecemeal segments of the curriculum, only serve to weaken the effectiveness of the overall educational curriculum.

For these reasons, PSSAM **opposes** House Bill 1363 and urges an unfavorable report.