

**BILL:** Senate Bill 1091  
**TITLE:** Education - Blind and Visually Impaired Students - Textbook Equity  
**POSITION:** SUPPORT  
**DATE:** March 27, 2024  
**COMMITTEE:** Ways and Means  
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The Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) supports Senate Bill 1091, as amended, to ensure accessibility for vision-impaired students to textbooks and other instructional materials. To be clear, MABE firmly believes that school systems are providing the access called for in this legislation. However, if the legislature believes that greater assurances are needed to guarantee the timely availability of accessible textbooks, then passage of this legislation could advance that cause.

MABE supports the amendments to extend the requirement that all textbooks be elected by January 15<sup>th</sup> of each year to March 15<sup>th</sup> and to limit the scope of this mandate. Similarly, MABE supports the amendment providing a 45-day stop-gap to ensure a timely provision of materials by the beginning of the school year. MABE believes that, with the amendments adopted on Senate Bill 1091, local school systems, the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), and the Instructional Resources Center, should be able to successfully collaborate to ensure the identification and production of accessible materials for all students.

MABE joins all local school systems in the commitment to each student, regardless of disability, having access to challenging instruction from highly qualified professionals that addresses their unique learning needs and differences. Clearly, access to materials that have been converted to formats including Braille and large print makes sense as integral to the learning potential of students with vision challenges.

For this reason, MABE supports the passage of Senate Bill 1091.