



**House Bill 1257 - Public Schools - Restorative Practices Schools - Establishment
Ways & Means Committee- February 28, 2024, 1 PM
Position: Favorable**

The Maryland Out of School Time Network (MOST) is a statewide organization dedicated to closing opportunity gaps by expanding both the quantity and quality of afterschool and summer learning opportunities for school-aged young people. MOST serves as the backbone organization for the Maryland Coalition for Community Schools. The Maryland Coalition for Community Schools, founded in 2016, advocates for student and family success by leading the charge to expand the Community School Model in Maryland.

MOST and MD4CS support House Bill 1257 as Restorative Practices are complementary to both the principles of youth development and the implementation of Community Schools. While the Blueprint for Maryland's Future addresses several critical areas for improvement in Maryland's education system, the law remains largely silent about changing school climate and culture, a necessary precursor to other reforms.

Restorative Practices has been discussed, promoted, and piloted in select schools but no statewide approach that focuses on quality and fidelity of implementation has been proposed before House Bill 1257. We agree that the Consortium for Coordinated Community Supports can provide a logical backbone with alignment to the Blueprint for the statewide roll out of Restorative Practices

It is imperative to create ample opportunities for school districts and leaders to receive comprehensive education on Restorative Practice models and the compelling research substantiating the positive impacts of their implementation. Emphasizing priority for community schools and institutions eager to embrace Restorative Practices is crucial, as dedication to the process is fundamental to its success.

We applaud Delegate Pasteur for sponsoring this bill and urge the committee to provide a favorable report, recognizing the transformative potential of Restorative Practices in fostering a conducive learning environment for Maryland's students.

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