

FAVORABLE
Senate Bill 712
State Board of Education – Membership – Educational Support and Administrator
Members

Senate Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment
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The Maryland State Education Association strongly supports Senate Bill 712, which would designate seats for an elected education support professional and an elected administrator on the State Board of Education.

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).

Six years ago, this body recognized that when the State Board of Education is setting policies and regulations for our schools, they ought to have an educator at the table – someone who is in a classroom every day. Thus, we have a designated teacher member on the State Board, who provides an essential perspective on how Board decisions will affect teachers' day-to-day operations and students' learning.

Yet to fully represent educator voice on the State Board, we must include additional perspectives: that of an education support professional, who keeps schools running smoothly, and an administrator, who is responsible for school culture, coaching educators, meeting testing requirements, and more.

Education support professionals are often underrecognized for their essential contributions to our schools. Imagine a school with no bus drivers dropping kids off,

no front desk staff checking them in, no school nurse responding to scrapes and stomachaches, no food service staff serving breakfast and lunch, and no paraeducators assisting students and teachers. It wouldn't look much like a school at all.

The members in the designated Board roles would be elected by their peers: fellow support professionals and fellow administrators, just as the teacher member of the Board is elected by Maryland's teachers. This way, every educator has a voice.

Importantly, this bill would not increase the size of the State Board, nor would it displace any other specialized appointees. It would simply designate that when the next two Board members exit the Board at the end of their terms, they are to be replaced by an education support professional and administrator member.

Those with firsthand experience working in Maryland schools are uniquely qualified to develop education policies and practices.

We urge the Committee to issue a Favorable Report on Senate Bill 712.