

SB712_Brooks.pdf

Uploaded by: Benjamin Brooks

Position: FAV

BENJAMIN BROOKS
Legislative District 10
Baltimore County

Education, Energy, and the
Environment Committee

Energy Subcommittee

Chair, Joint Electric Universal
Service Program Workgroup



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TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 712
State Board of Education – Membership
Educational Support and Administrator Members

Education, Energy and the Environment Committee
February 21, 2025

Chair Feldman, Vice-Chair Kagan, and members of this committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you on SB712—State Board of Education—Membership—Educational Support and Administrator Members. The purpose of this bill is to alter the State Board of Education membership.

The State Board of Education, consisting of 13 members and one student member, with partial voting rights, is tasked with establishing educational policies and standards for public schools, and overseeing the state's education system. Collectively, they ensure our students have access to a world-class educational system that equips them with the knowledge and skills necessary for post-secondary education, meaningful careers, and success in both society and life.

Currently, the State Board membership only requires the following roles as mandated members: a certified teacher of the State of Maryland, a parent of a student in the State of Maryland, and an enrolled high school student in good standing within the State of Maryland. SB712 further mandates that two of the 13 regular members be an educational support professional (ESP) and an administrator, to be elected under the same procedures already in place for other mandated members. It does not expand the number of members but rather alters the makeup of the board members to ensure the benefit of diverse and unique perspectives when making decision that impact all our students.

Education support professionals include paraeducators, administrative assistants, custodians, bus drivers, security and technology staff, food service workers, and other school employees vital to student and school success. Nationally, support professionals make up more than 40 percent of the total K-12 education workforce, and more than 80 percent live in the same school districts where they work. In Maryland and nationwide, ESPs are a critically important part of the school community. Education support professionals take care of our children every day and make sure they have the tools they need to succeed in our schools and classrooms.

Likewise, administrators include principals, assistant principals, or any other administrative-level professional working in a public school. Effective administrators work to cultivate trust, which supports confidence in the school's leader and sets the stage for any collaborative efforts. They possess the skills needed to manage a complex organization which includes managing budgets and resources, hiring and managing personnel, and setting goals while thinking strategically about how to meet them.

Both of these important professional roles are an intricate part of the school community and often interact with students outside of the classroom. Insight from educational support professionals and administrators would allow for a better understanding and unique perspective of what our educational system currently looks like and what changes we could make for a brighter future for Maryland's education. It's imperative that the Maryland State Board of Education gives a voice to educational support professionals and administrators who have invaluable first-hand experiences with our students.

For these reasons, I am requesting a favorable report on SB712.

With kindest regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Benjamin T. Brooks". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the text "With kindest regards,".

Benjamin Brooks

AFSCME Council 3 SB712 Testimony_FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Christian Gobel

Position: FAV



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Patrick Moran – President

**SB712 – State Board of Education –
Membership Educational Support and Administrator Members
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
February 21, 2025**

FAVORABLE

AFSCME Council 3 strongly supports Senate Bill 712. Senate Bill 712 would alter the composition of the State Board of Education to include an educational support professional who is actively working in a public school as a noncertificated, nonsupervisory, public school employee. Under the bill, the Governor would appoint the educational support member, who received the highest number of votes after an election by education support professionals in the state.

AFSCME Council 3 represents approximately 45,000 public service employees at the state, county, and municipal levels of government across Maryland. Our union is proud to represent education support professionals across the state who work for Baltimore City Public Schools, Baltimore County Public Schools, Allegany County Public Schools, Anne Arundel County Public Schools, Howard County Public Schools, Harford County Public Schools, Carroll County Public Schools, and Charles County Public Schools. AFSCME members are providing critical services that enable the operation of our public schools every day including bus transportation, food service, custodial service, administrative, clerical, and IT support, building and grounds maintenance, and more.

Despite the critical role that education support professionals play in our public education system, often times they are overlooked and forgotten when policy decisions are made that require their dedicated service to making policy decisions happen. Students, families, certificated staff, and our schools rely on education support professionals every day, yet often our members do not feel seen or heard.

Passing Senate Bill 712 would send a strong signal to every education support professional across the state of Maryland that their perspective, insight, and voice matters, that their labor is valued, and that they have meaningful contributions to offer in the improvement of our public education system. A State Board of Education that is reflective of the individuals who make our public education system happen is necessary to formulate a fully informed decision-making environment that promotes the best policies possible for all who have a stake in the success of our public education system.

We urge the committee to issue a favorable report on Senate Bill 712.

SEIU Local 500 Testimony on SB 712 - 2025.pdf

Uploaded by: Christopher Cano

Position: FAV



Testimony - SB 712, State Board of Education – Membership – Educational Support
and Administrator Members

Favorable

Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

February 21, 2025

Christopher C. Cano, MPA

Director of Political & Legislative Affairs on Behalf of SEIU Local 500

Honorable Chairman Feldman & Members of the Senate Education, Energy, and the
Environment Committee:

SEIU Local 500 represents over 23,000 workers across Maryland including family child care providers, educational support staff in our public schools, and college professors. Our members have a role in the lives of Marylanders from cradle to career. We wish to express our support for Maryland Senate Bill 712. The current makeup of the State Board of Education is lacking in expertise to adequately address the challenges of those workers that make our public schools operate. Senate Bill 712 will amend the membership of the State Board of Education to include a school principal and education support professional. We believe these additions to the State Board of Education will provide invaluable insight and perspective to the decision-making process in education policy, ultimately benefiting students, educators, and communities throughout Maryland.

The State Board of Education must be amended to reflect the addition of these other critical educators who contribute to the well being of our children in Maryland.

In conclusion, Senate Bill 712 is a timely and necessary step toward improving the governance and direction of education policy in Maryland. By adding a school principal, and an educational support professional to the State Board of Education, we ensure that the voices of those who make our schools and education of our children run on a daily basis are heard at the highest level of policymaking. We urge you to pass this bill in order to create a more inclusive, practical, and student-centered approach to education in Maryland.

We ask you all to support SB 712 and provide a favorable report.

Thank you for your consideration.

Christopher C. Cano, MPA
Director of Political & Legislative Affairs
SEIU Local 500

SB 712

Uploaded by: John Clark

Position: FAV

**SB712 – State Board of Education – Membership – Educational Support and
Administrator Members
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
February 21, 2025**

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the committee,

My name is John Clark, I serve as the proud Vice President of AFSCME Local 434, and I have worked as a bus driver with Baltimore County Public Schools for 17 years. It has been such an honor and a privilege to not only serve my community by safely transporting young learners to and from school each day, but also to organize with my fellow co-workers through our union to create better working conditions.

AFSCME Local 434 members work in a variety of roles to support the successful operation of Baltimore County Public Schools including transportation, grounds and building operations and maintenance, food service, and more. Our members work to create safe and healthy learning and working environments for students and staff across BCPS every day. Our on the ground experiences provide insight into the challenges and successes our schools face each day. And just like me, there are over 44,000 people working across the state of Maryland in an education support role that make it possible for our schools to function. However, right now we don't have a voice on the State Board of Education.

The State Board of Education is an important education policy making body that enacts important rules, decisions, and guidance that influence the work of our public education system and our schools. The opportunity for an education support professional to serve on the State Board of Education would allow important perspectives and experiences to be lifted up in decisions that impact school support staff across Maryland.

We believe our education system can improve through the inclusion of an education support professional member serving on the State Board of Education. For all these reasons we ask that you support Senate Bill 712, thank you.

We urge the committee to issue a favorable report on Senate Bill 712.

SB712_MSEA_Lemle_FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Paul Lemle

Position: FAV

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

Senate Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment
February 21, 2025

Paul Lemle
MSEA President

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.

LOR CHET.pdf

Uploaded by: Richard Warren

Position: FAV

Dear Senate Executive Nominations Committee,

I am honored to submit this letter of support for Alverne “Chet” Chesterfield as he seeks confirmation to the Maryland State Board of Education. As an esteemed leader in education, public service, and community engagement, Chet embodies the dedication, integrity, and visionary leadership that this position demands.

Chet’s impact on education spans decades, marked by his unwavering commitment to student success, institutional advancement, and equitable access to educational opportunities. His service as Executive Director of the Chincoteague Bay Field Station and his extensive tenure at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES) demonstrate his ability to foster learning environments that empower students and educators alike. Whether serving as an administrator, adjunct professor, or mentor, he has consistently championed initiatives that uplift communities, particularly those in underserved regions.

A historic trailblazer, Chet is the first African American male from Maryland’s Eastern Shore, specifically Somerset County, to serve on the State Board of Education. His confirmation would bring a vital perspective to state-level decision-making, ensuring that the voices of Eastern Shore residents and historically marginalized communities are represented in shaping educational policies. His leadership is characterized by an authentic desire to serve, a collaborative approach to problem-solving, and a forward-thinking vision for improving educational outcomes across Maryland.

Beyond his professional accolades, Chet is a man of integrity, generosity, and humility. He is the kind of leader who would give the shirt off his back to support someone in need. His service extends beyond the classroom and boardroom—he is an engaged member of his church, an advocate for youth mentorship, and a proud member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Incorporated, where he continues to uplift and inspire others.

The Maryland State Board of Education would greatly benefit from Chet’s wealth of experience, strategic leadership, and deep-rooted passion for education. His confirmation would not only honor his decades of service but also fortify Maryland’s commitment to inclusive, impactful, and transformative educational policies.

I strongly urge you to support Alverne “Chet” Chesterfield’s confirmation to the Maryland State Board of Education. His leadership will undoubtedly leave a lasting imprint on the state’s education system, and I am confident that his contributions will be invaluable.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can provide additional insight or further endorsement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard Warren". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Richard" being more prominent than the last name "Warren".

Richard Warren, Ed.D
Professor of Education | University of Maryland Eastern Shore
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Written testimony for HB 923_ State Board of Educ

Uploaded by: Trudy Tibbals

Position: UNF

Written testimony for **HB 923/SB 712**: State Board of Education - Membership - Educational Support and Administrator Members - Please **VOTE NO** on this bill.

Dear Ways and Means Committee and Education, Energy and the Environment Committee:

This bill reads "...Altering the membership of the State Board of Education to include an educational support member who is actively working in a public school as a noncertificated, nonsupervisory public school employee and an administrator member that may be a principal, an assistant principal, or any other administrative level professional who is actively working in a public school; and providing for the qualifications, terms, powers, and elections of the new members..."

MSDE already has 11 regular members and 1 student member, for a total of 12 members, with a President Emeritus as well. I understand the intention of this bill: adding people with different educational backgrounds. However, If we keep adding members to MSDE, where and when will we stop? At 20 members? At 50 Members? I'm sure we can all think of different types of people that could be added to this Board. That does not mean that it should happen. If this Board becomes too large in number, how will any business ever get done? We already have the following members of the Board: a certified teacher that is currently teaching; a parent of a student; and a student that is in good standing in a public high school. The other members include: a PhD President; an EdD Vice President, and members with the following credentials: an MSN, PNP, RN-BC (nurse); a CCC-SLP (speech-language pathologist); an M.Ed; and an attorney. This Board already contains enough people of varying backgrounds and educational experiences. Any more people would just slow down and impede the business that urgently needs to be done.

Therefore, please **VOTE NO** on this bill.

Thank you.

Respectfully,

Trudy Tibbals
A Very Concerned Mother of 3 and Maryland Resident

SB 712 - State Board - LOI.docx.pdf

Uploaded by: Zachary Hands

Position: INFO

TO: Senate Education, Energy, and Environment Committee

BILL: Senate Bill (SB) 712 – State Board of Education – Membership – Educational Support and Administrator Members

DATE: February 21, 2025

POSITION: Letter of Information

Chair Feldman and Members of the Senate Education, Energy, and Environment Committee,

The Maryland State Board of Education (State Board) would like to share the following information regarding **SB 712**, which would alter the appointment mechanism to the State Board for two current members and require the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to adopt regulations for and conduct two separate elections for an educational support and an administrator member of the State Board.

The State Board appreciates the intent of this bill to ensure that the voice and perspectives of education support professionals (ESPs) and administrators are well represented on the State Board. Both perspectives are certainly valuable to the State Board as it carries out its mission. We are fortunate to have current members of the State Board who have served in various capacities in school buildings, including as former administrators.

We have several concerns with the bill as currently drafted. Foremost is the requirement that MSDE conduct additional elections for members of the State Board of Education. MSDE currently manages one electoral process for the teacher member of the State Board. While MSDE has absorbed this administrative burden, this bill would increase the number of elections MSDE manages to three. The agency does not have the resources or expertise to manage multiple elections and we are concerned about a trend towards charging MSDE with this responsibility.

MSDE currently relies on outside vendors to host secure and equitable elections, which requires funding and staff to manage the project. For the teacher member of the State Board, MSDE is able to identify eligible voters through the state licensure system. No such system exists for ESPs. A new collection system and database would need to be developed to accomplish this task. An election for ESPs would require local education agencies to provide Personally Identifiable Information (PII) for all ESPs to ensure that eligible voters are able to participate. To contact eligible voters, MSDE must provide a vendor with the list of email addresses or telephone numbers and enough PII for the voter to verify that they are eligible during the election process.

While we appreciate the thoughtfulness of the bill to ensure a robust and representative process, we are also concerned with the increasing number of State Board members who would not be able to participate in certain matters coming to the State Board as appeals.

Additionally, we have concerns with outlining specific qualifications and appointment processes for additional members of the State Board to ensure that the Governor retains the flexibility to appoint members of the State Board who have a wide array of experiences and skill sets. As drafted, this bill would set that five of the 14 State Board members are selected through different processes than each other and the rest of the State Board. Three would be by elections of different populations within the educational community and two by limited recommendations of individuals by organizations to the Governor.

The State Board requests that the committee consider this information as it deliberates **SB 712**. Please contact Dr. Akilah Alleyne, Executive Director of Government Affairs, Education Policy, and Government Relations, at Akilah.alleyne@maryland.gov or at 410-767-0504 or Zach Hands, Executive Director of the State Board, at Zachary.hands1@maryland.gov or at 443-915-6094, if you would like any additional information.