



**Mary Pat Fannon, Executive Director**

**BILL:** Senate Bill 654 – Comprehensive Health Education on Skin Cancer  
**DATE:** January 25, 2021  
**POSITION:** **Oppose**  
**COMMITTEE:** Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee  
**CONTACT:** Mary Pat Fannon, Executive Director

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This legislation requires each county board of education to provide age-appropriate instruction on skin cancer as part of the comprehensive health education program.

The Public Schools Superintendents' Association of Maryland (PSSAM), representing all twenty-four local school superintendents, opposes SB 654.

PSSAM appreciates the sponsor's efforts to more fully educate children on skin cancer and prevention. We too believe this is important information for students to learn. In fact, many systems include information about skin cancer prevention in their current health curriculum, but also in their required policies regarding the possession and use of sunscreen. House Bill 427 of 2017 required these written policies to authorize a student to possess and use sunscreen in school without written permission from a health care provider. In addition, each local board of education must include information encouraging schools to educate students about sunscreen, sun safety, and the on the use of sunscreen in school.

Superintendents continue to advocate for local governance on all curriculum, even on such well-meaning legislation such as this. As a policy, PSSAM continues to oppose any legislation that impinges on the local authority for school boards and superintendents to develop curriculum that reflect the specific and diverse needs of their system. We firmly believe that these responsibilities belong to local boards of education working together with the State Board of Education.

For the reasons noted above, PSSAM opposes Senate Bill 654 and requests an unfavorable committee report.

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*One Voice, One Vision for Maryland's Students*