

# **Commission on Multicultural Education\_Matthew.pdf**

Uploaded by: Darden, matthew

Position: FAV

## Commission on Multicultural Education – Establishment SB662

Mister Chair, Madam Vice Chair, and members of the Senate Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee.

My name is Matthew Darden I submit this written testimony in favor of the establishment of a Commission on Multicultural Education. I believe that it is time for the teaching to reflect the landscape of this State.

The current curriculum and school climate omits and devalues the contributions of Black and Brown people in our history and culture. Students are often taught about Thomas Edison who is lauded as the creator of the light bulb but there is little mention of Lewis Latimer. Lewis Latimer is the inventor who proposed the use of carbon filament to expand the life of light bulb. As an adult and after my own research this was discovered.

The white washing of America's history is a disparity that I have personally felt as a kid growing up in the south. It is my belief that this educational gap continues to perpetrate the root of all white supremacist, that they are superior and all others are less than. This disparity diminishes the impact people of color have had on this country and perpetuates racial discrimination for our students. Representation matters, this ensures that students see things that look like them, and gives them hope that they can achieve more. Our children must see themselves reflected in the classroom from the pages of the books they are learning from. A complete historical depiction is a must so that clarity and understanding is gained from our rich heritage.

In the closing I am asking for a favorable report on SB662. I believe that this commission would provide a much needed third party review of curriculum across the state. We have to push the needle forward and change the status quo.

Sincerely,

Matthew Darden

[matthew.darden05@gmail.com](mailto:matthew.darden05@gmail.com)

# **Testimony for SB662 - SUPPORT - Multicultural Ed (**

Uploaded by: douglass, sharlimar

Position: FAV



## Maryland Alliance for Racial Equity in Education

### **Testimony for SB662: Education – Commission on Multicultural Education – Establishment** Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

March 9, 2021

*by: Sharlimar Douglas, Chair of MAREE and Frank Patinella, Senior Education Advocate for the  
ACLU of Maryland*

### **POSITION: SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS**

---

The Maryland Alliance for Racial Equity in Education (MAREE) is a coalition of education advocacy, civil rights, and community-based organizations that are committed to eliminating racial disparities in Maryland's education system. To that end, MAREE supports with amendments, SB662 - Education - Commission on Multicultural Education. SB662 would establish a commission to study and make recommendations on multicultural content and perspectives for consideration in the PK-12 curriculum. The bill will also provide training for teachers to deliver the content accurately and effectively. However, we are proposing an amendment to ensure that the members of this commission have extensive knowledge, experience and success in developing and delivering a multicultural education to Black and Brown children.

Maryland's schools are racially and ethnically diverse and it is long overdue for this diversity to be reflected in our school curriculum. Over recent decades, the demographics in Maryland schools have shifted significantly<sup>1,2</sup>. Overall, public school enrollment has increased by approximately 29% since 1990. Latino students made up 2.3% of Maryland's public school enrollment in 1990. Now they are 19.4% of the statewide enrollment and are the largest growing population in Maryland schools. The number of Asian students has doubled since 1990; now 6.6% of Maryland's school population. Black student enrollment has held relatively steady over this time period and make up 33.1% of the enrollment today, while the percentage of White students in Maryland schools is down nearly 50%, respectively.

At a time when our country is facing a reckoning on race, it is more important now than ever to be proactive about including and centering the history, contributions, and current day experiences of all Americans in our public school curriculum. Currently, this is not happening and over the years, members of MAREE who work with students and families have consistently heard complaints about the lack of multicultural content in their schools.

It is important to note that SB662 does not mandate curriculum. However, it would establish a process by which model coursework can be developed that will include historical and current events impacting various ethnic groups, including African Americans, Asian Americans, Latin Americans and Native and Indigenous populations. The process will allow legislators, school officials at the state and local levels, education advocates, content experts, and the public to engage in discussion before any decisions are made. Further, SB662 charges the commission with making recommendations on training framework for teachers on how to deliver a multicultural curriculum. Based on the experiences of the many groups in MAREE, this type of training is critical to ensure that educators have a deep understanding of the lived experiences of Black and Brown students and the appropriate pedagogical approach to teach them.

While we strongly support the passage of SB662, MAREE would like to offer an amendment related to the process by which commissioners are appointed. MAREE wants to ensure that content experts from the community, academia, and government entities are included among the membership of the commission. To ensure that a broad list of potential commissioners are identified and vetted, we ask that the bill be amended to give the certain legislative caucuses the sole authority to provide recommendations to the Governor, Senate President, and House Speaker for appointment. These caucuses should include the Black Caucus, Latino Caucus, Asian-American & Pacific-Islander Caucus, and the Women Legislators of Maryland. MAREE would also like add language to ensure that there are opportunities for all HBCUs in Maryland and experts from other educational institutions to be included in the development of the training and professional development programs for teachers on multicultural education.

We commend the legislature on its work to pass the ~\$4 billion Blueprint for Maryland's Future and we are excited about the new programs and resources that will be available to help students succeed. However, let's not overlook the opportunity to maximize student outcomes and allow inadequacies to persist in other areas of our education system. All children have a right to learn about history, culture, and civics from multiple cultural and racial perspectives. This will not only help affirm the lives of Black and Brown children; it will also help White children gain a deeper understanding of the complexity of our societal challenges and perspectives on how to be agents for unity and change in our world.

With the aforementioned amendments, MAREE urges the committee to give SB662 a favorable vote.

Thank you.

---

1. *Trends in Maryland Public Schools: Enrollment, Maryland Equity Project, February 2015*

2. *Maryland Public School Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity and Gender and Number of Schools, Maryland Department of Education, September 2019*

# **LoS - Commission on Multicultural Education.pdf**

Uploaded by: Dove, Spencer

Position: FAV

# State of Maryland

## Commission on Civil Rights

*“Our vision is to have a State that is free from any trace of unlawful discrimination.”*



### *Officers*

**Alvin O. Gillard, Executive Director**  
**Nicolette Young, Assistant Director**  
**Glendora C. Hughes, General Counsel**

**Governor**  
**Larry Hogan**  
**Lt. Governor**  
**Boyd K. Rutherford**  
**Commission Chairperson**  
**Gary C. Norman, Esq.**  
**Commission Vice Chairperson**  
**Roberto N. Allen, Esq.**  
**Commissioners**  
**Allison U. Dichoso, Esq.**  
**Hayden B. Duke**  
**Janssen E. Evelyn, Esq.**  
**Eileen M. Levitt, SPHR, SHRM-SCP**  
**Rabbi Binyamin Marwick**  
**Jeff Rosen**  
**Gina McKnight-Smith, PharmD, MBA**

March 9, 2021

### **Senate Bill 662 – Education – Commission on Multicultural Education – Establishment POSITION: Support**

Dear Chairperson Pinsky, Vice Chairperson Kagan, and Members of the Senate Education, Health & Environmental Affairs Committee:

The Maryland Commission on Civil Rights (“MCCR”; “The Commission”) is the State agency responsible for the enforcement of laws prohibiting discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, and state contracts based upon race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, familial status, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, physical and mental disability, and source of income.

Senate Bill 662 establishes the Commission on Multicultural Education that will conduct a formal review of multicultural representation in existing social studies and history standards and curricula offered in Maryland. This Commission will make recommendations to enhance these programs so they are more accurate and complete in presenting multicultural perspectives, among other mandates. The Commission is required to issue reports by July 1, 2023 and 2024.

The Maryland Commission on Civil Rights supports SB662 because it seeks to establish uniform interdisciplinary multicultural lessons and ethnic studies course standards offered to all Maryland students for the duration of their career in Maryland’s school systems. These important topics can be an effective means of building a stronger world view and creating a deeper understanding of different communities that reflect the diversity found within our State. Furthermore, it is MCCR’s belief that a robust multicultural education lays a foundation for a more equitable and inclusive Maryland, thereby making strides toward achieving MCCR’s vision of a State that is free from any trace of unlawful discrimination.

For these reasons, the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights urges a favorable vote on SB662. Thank you for your time and consideration of the information contained in this letter. The Maryland Commission on Civil Rights looks forward to the continued opportunity to work with you to improve and promote civil rights in Maryland.

**SB0662 -MCPS-FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Suskind, Danielle

Position: FAV



# MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

*Expanding Opportunity and Unleashing Potential*

850 Hungerford Drive ♦ Room 123 ♦ Rockville, Maryland 20850

**BILL:** SB0662  
**TITLE:** Education – Commission on Multicultural Education – Establishment  
**DATE:** 03/09/2021  
**POSITION:** Support  
**COMMITTEE:** Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs  
**CONTACT:** Danielle M. Susskind, Coordinator, Legislative Affairs  
[Danielle\\_M\\_Susskind@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Danielle_M_Susskind@mcpsmd.org)

The Montgomery County Board of Education (Board) **Supports** SB0662.

SB0662 supports the following Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) views relating to multicultural education.

#### MCPS regulation ACA-RA:

The MCPS community reflects the rich cultural and linguistic diversity of a global society. This diversity requires that MCPS prepare all students and employees to understand how to productively and constructively live and work in a multicultural environment. An environment of mutual respect and high expectations must be proactively created and maintained for all without regard to race, color, gender, religion, ancestry, national origin, marital status, age, disability, or sexual orientation.

#### Mission of the Equity Initiative Unit:

We will advance racial justice and cultural proficiency by interrupting-ting systems of bias, oppression, and inequity in our policies, procedures and procedures.

For these reasons, the Board **supports** this legislation and urges a favorable report.

**SB662 OPPOSE.pdf**

Uploaded by: Williams, Peggy

Position: UNF

SB662 UNFAVORABLE

This legislation is very divisive and separates Americans by skin color, which is RACIST. This country needs to be united right now. I speak as a multiracial person and I have been a victim of racism. We cannot fight racism with MORE RACISM!! It is not the answer! Please oppose this bill.

Peggy Williams

103 Wiltshire Ln

Severna Park, MD 21146

# **SB 662 - Commission on Multicultural Education Est**

Uploaded by: Dove, Tina

Position: INFO

Informational Testimony regarding Senate Bill 662  
Education—Commission on Multicultural Education—  
Establishment

Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

March 9, 2021

1:00 pm

Tina N. Dove, M.Ed.  
Government Relations

The Maryland State Education Association offers this informational testimony on Senate Bill 662, legislation that would establish the Commission on Multicultural Education.

MSEA represents 75,000 educators and school employees who work in Maryland's public schools, teaching and preparing our 896,837 students for careers and jobs of the future. 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).

The history of both our state and our country is far more diverse than is generally reflected in the content and courses currently taught in public schools. As such, many members of the United States and Maryland body politic can progress through their formal primary and secondary education and rarely, if ever, see themselves reflected in the content they are learning or hear about themselves in the stories they read and are told. This lack of inclusivity negatively impacts not only the agency our students perceive in their learning, but it also adversely impacts overall student engagement in their learning. This disconnect is further exacerbated by the dearth of a more diverse field of educators in our schools and by the disproportionate (and sometime inaccurate) representations seen in society and in our culture that ultimately reinforces a sense of "otherness" for the people, communities, and cultures who have been rendered less relevant and less valuable.

MSEA unequivocally believes that our diversity makes us stronger. We recognize the importance of ensuring that all of our students see themselves in the lessons they learn and experiences they enjoy while under our tutelage. There is no doubt that the current history, civics, and cultural standards



required by our state could be more reflective of the myriad people and communities that live in our state and in our country. To that end, MSEA has thrown our support behind a similar effort called for in HB 140—legislation introduced this session by Del. Gabriel Acevero—that calls for the creation of a commission to study the state’s current standards and make recommendations aimed at amending these standards so that they better reflect not only the history of the African American community in Maryland but of other affinity group communities within our state. And while ensuring the diversity of voices is brought forth in our social studies standards, we would be falling short if we did not consider ways in which the myriad of historically underrepresented voices are incorporated into all of the subject areas our students are learning, including those deemed to be core content areas—math, science, English language arts, and social studies—as well as those outside of the core areas, such as the arts, health education, career and technology education, etc.

Finally, MSEA believes unequivocally that educators need to play a significant role in any and all efforts to review learning standards and to suggest curriculum resources and instructional best practices best suited to meet said standards. These educators should come from both the ranks currently serving in our PreK-12 schools and from higher education, particularly those who are responsible for preparing future educators in content-specific instructional methodology. This will ensure that those most keenly aware of the current instructional landscape in our classrooms and the particular learning needs of our students and aspiring educators are positioned to influence and recommend that which is most needed in our schools and communities. We thank the sponsor for bringing this legislation forward and for setting the table for this very important conversation.

# **SB 662 - LOI - Education - Commission on Multicult**

Uploaded by: Hands, Zachary

Position: INFO



**Geography** - Students will inquire about the role of culture, technology, and the environment in the location, distribution, and impact of human activities using geographic tools and spatial thinking in order to demonstrate a significance of place.

**Economics** - Students will inquire about decisions made by individuals and groups using economic reasoning in order to understand the historical development and current status of economic principles, institutions, and processes needed to be effective citizens, consumers, and workers participating in local communities, the nation, and the world.

**History** - Students will inquire about significant events, ideas, beliefs, and themes to identify patterns, trends, and to analyze how individuals and societies have changed over time to make connections to the present in their communities, Maryland, the United States, and the world.

**Skills and Processes** - Students will inquire about civics, geography, economics, history, and people and nations of the world using disciplinary literacy skills and processes to critically evaluate content through a variety of source materials across disciplines and use reading, writing, and other forms of communication to develop, defend, and critique arguments in order to take informed action.

State Supporting Documents, including State Frameworks, provide guidance for implementing the standards adopted by the State Board of Education. They serve as guides for school systems as they develop local curricula. State Frameworks are developed by working groups of teachers, academics, and members of the community and are not legislatively designed or reviewed. As State Supporting Documents, they are developed, reviewed, and revised by teams of Maryland educators and may also include national models as defined by COMAR. Representatives from higher education serve as academic reviewers of the Frameworks. The development of State Frameworks is typically a two year process. The content identified in lines 5 – 8 on page 3 of SB662 is currently included in the State Frameworks in Social Studies. Those State Frameworks can be found on the [marylandpublicschools.org](http://marylandpublicschools.org) webpage for social studies.

Curricula are developed by local school systems and define how teachers will teach the Standards and State Frameworks. Curricula may include methods, scope and sequence, materials, and assessments.

The purpose of SB 662 is to develop “Standards and a model statewide curriculum for multicultural education.” The goal of multicultural studies is to learn about diverse ethnic and racial groups through thematic, comparative, and interdisciplinary studies. Currently, should a local school system want to develop curricula that is interdisciplinary, writers would draw from the existing standards across subject areas. For example, they might pull from Civics in the State Standards for Social Studies and Reading from State Standards in English Language Arts. A set of interdisciplinary standards and statewide curriculum do not exist. Revisions to the COMAR state definitions and Protocol for Developing and Revising Standards would be needed in order to develop new standards and create a statewide curriculum.

SB662 requires MSDE to provide staff for the Commission on Multicultural Education and develop new standards and state curriculum for multicultural education. **Much of the scope of work described in SB662 would not be possible within the two-year timeframe and appears to be beyond that of a typical task force or commission. The associated costs would be exorbitant and are difficult to estimate.** While the development of standards could be accomplished by a commission, followed by public input and approval of the State Board, the amount of time required for the development of curriculum, model lessons, and courses would be prohibitive for members of a typical volunteer commission. It is assumed that the commission would guide a workgroup of educators and experts managed by MSDE. Representatives from multiple curriculum offices at MSDE would be impacted. Coordinators of Social Studies, English Language Arts, Health Education, World Languages, Fine Arts, Equity and Cultural Proficiency, and Professional Learning and Instructional Improvement would be reassigned from current state agency work for the review of standards, development of the interdisciplinary framework, and creation of new professional development courses. The fiscal impact would be the reallocation of those resources, the potential delay and/or cancellation of current projects, salary for additional staff, and stipends for curriculum writers.

SB662/ Education – Commission on Multicultural Education – Establishment  
Ways and Means  
March 9, 2021

SB662 proposes the creation of “courses in ethnic studies for students in grades 6 through 12.” In contrast to multiculturalism, ethnic studies are course specific to one particular group, and culturally responsive to the student population. According to the School Courses for the Exchange of Data (SCED) codes approved for a well-rounded education in Maryland schools, “U.S. Ethnic Studies courses examine the history, politics, economics, society, and/or culture of one or more of the racial/ethnic groups in the United States. These courses may focus primarily on the history of an individual racial/ethnic group or may take a more comprehensive approach to studying the contemporary issues affecting racial/ethnic groups overall.” Requiring additional time, teaching staff, professional development, and materials for the implementation of this course in each of the identified grades in SB662 would have a significant impact on the local school systems. Adding an ethnic studies course to existing course requirements would limit the opportunity for other specialized courses in high school, and could potential extend the school day in grades 6 - 8.

As outlined in COMAR regulations regarding educational equity and teacher preparation programs, MSDE is dedicated to supporting the expansion of high-quality programs that prepare students with the knowledge and skills necessary to be empowered, informed, and socially responsible participants in our nation’s democracy.

We respectfully request that you consider this information as you deliberate **SB 662**. For further information, please contact Zachary Hands, at 410-767-0504, or [Zachary.hands1@maryland.gov](mailto:Zachary.hands1@maryland.gov).