



Delegate Anne R. Kaiser, Chair
Delegate Alonzo T. Washington, Vice Chair
Ways and Means Committee
House Office Building, Room 131
Annapolis, MD 21401

February 22, 2021

Bill: House Bill 1096 – Public Schools – School Psychologist Recruitment Program

Position: Support with Amendments

Dear Chairman Kaiser, Vice Chair Washington, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing on behalf of the Maryland School Psychologists' Association (MSPA), a professional organization representing about 500 school psychologists in Maryland. We advocate for the social-emotional, behavioral, and academic wellbeing of students and families across the state.

School psychologists provide comprehensive psychological services to Maryland's students, including counseling, consultation and assessment. We are acutely aware of the significant mental health needs of many of our students, and we are dedicated to helping to address those needs in our schools. Yet many school psychologists work with very heavy caseloads, and are spread so thinly that they simply cannot help many of the students who need our support. And since there is a severe and increasing shortage of qualified school psychologists available to work in Maryland's public schools, this is a crisis in the making.

HB 1096 will help to fend off this crisis by providing MSDE with a mechanism for recruiting and supporting more school psychologists for our schools. However, while the proposed recruitment program is appropriately situated within MSDE, the bill also includes the State Health Department and one of its Boards. The Health Department has no role with school psychologists, and all references to it and to licensure should be removed from this bill.

For these reasons, we urge a favorable report on HB 1096, with the suggested amendments. If we can provide any additional information or be of any assistance, please contact us at legislative@mSPAonline.org, or Rachael Faulkner at rfaulkner@policypartners.net or (410) 693-4000.

Respectfully submitted,

Kyle Potter, Ph.D., NCSP
Chair, Legislative Committee
Maryland School Psychologists' Association

MSPA Proposed Amendments – HB 1096

AMENDMENT NO. 1

On page 2, strike in their entirety lines 5 through 12, inclusive, and substitute:

“(2) “SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST” MEANS AN INDIVIDUAL WHO IS CERTIFIED TO PROVIDE PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES TO CHILDREN IN A PUBLIC OR STATE-APPROVED NONPUBLIC SCHOOL SETTING.”

AMENDMENT NO. 2

On page 2, in lines 21, 22, and 25, and on page 3, in lines 4, 7, 10,11,14, 18, and 21, in each instance, strike “**CERTIFIED**”.

AMENDMENT NO. 3

On page 2, strike in their entirety lines 15 through 17, inclusive; and strike beginning with “, **IN**” in line 23 down through “**PSYCHOLOGISTS,**” in line 24.

AMENDMENT NO. 4

On page 3, strike in their entirety lines 1 through 3, inclusive.

AMENDMENT NO. 5

On page 4, in line 3, strike “**1,000**” and substitute “**100**”.