

MPA Testimony 2022 - Support - Senate Hearing on H

Uploaded by: Barbara Brocato

Position: FAV



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April 5, 2022

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Senator Paul Pinsky, Chair
Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: House Bill 752 – Public Schools - School Psychologist Recruitment Program

Position: Support

Dear Chair Pinsky and Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Psychological Association (MPA), which represents over 1,000 doctoral-level psychologists from throughout the state, is writing in support of **HB 752 – Public Schools - School Psychologist Recruitment Program**.

School psychologists provide comprehensive psychological services to Maryland's students, including counseling, assessment, and consultation. As school-based mental health professionals, they are acutely aware of the significant mental health needs of the students they work with, and they are instrumental in helping to address those needs in Maryland's schools. Yet many school psychologists are saddled with excessive caseloads and are simply unavailable to help many of the students who need their support. Given the severe and increasing shortage of qualified school psychologists available to work in Maryland's public schools, this is a crisis in the making.

HB 752 will help to fend off this crisis by providing MSDE with a mechanism for recruiting and supporting more school psychologists for our schools. For these reasons, we urge a favorable report on HB 752. If we can provide any additional information or be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact MPA's Government Affairs Representatives Barbara Brocato at barbara@bmbassoc.com or Dan Shattuck at dans@bmbassoc.com if we can be of assistance.

Respectfully submitted,

Sincerely,

Linda McGhee

Linda McGhee, PsyD., J.D.
President

R. Patrick Savage, Jr.

R. Patrick Savage, Jr., Ph.D.
Chair, MPA Legislative Committee

cc: Richard Bloch, Esq., Counsel for Maryland Psychological Association
Barbara Brocato & Dan Shattuck, MPA Government Affairs

HB 0752_jlawson_fav 2.pdf

Uploaded by: Jeffrey Lawson

Position: FAV



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CECIL COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER EDUCATION LEADERSHIP CENTER
201 BOOTH STREET • ELKTON, MD 21921

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Jeffrey A. Lawson, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Diana B. Hawley
President, Board of Education

April 4, 2022

The Honorable Paul G. Pinsky
Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Honorable Pinsky:

Re: *HB752 PUBLIC SCHOOLS – SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST RECRUITMENT PROGRAM*

As Superintendent of Cecil County Public Schools, I am submitting this letter with full support of our five Board of Education members. We strongly support House Bill 752 Public Schools – School Psychologist Recruitment Program, which is scheduled for a committee hearing on April 5, 2022.

The premise of this legislation is to provide support to school psychologists, with the goal of increasing the number of school psychologists available to serve in all Maryland public schools. We have experienced a critical shortage of school psychologist candidates in recent years. Like shortages in other related professions, the school psychologist shortage has the potential to significantly undermine the availability of high quality services to students, families, and schools.

School psychologists are uniquely qualified members of school teams who support students' ability to learn and teachers' ability to teach. School psychologists apply expertise in mental health, learning, and behavior to help students succeed academically, socially, behaviorally, and emotionally. Additionally, they help teachers reach struggling students, improve classroom management skills, and utilize instructional strategies that will engage all types of learners.

House Bill 752 is critical in addressing the school psychologist shortage experienced in all counties across Maryland. Professional development support, along with financial support, toward school psychologists' certification results in supporting every student in Maryland.

Cecil County Public Schools whole-heartedly endorses House Bill 752 and requests your support and assistance in passing this bill.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey A. Lawson, Ed. D.
Superintendent of Schools

Testimony - HB752 Public Schools - School Psycholo

Uploaded by: Sean Bulson

Position: FAV

HB752 PUBLIC SCHOOLS - SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST RECRUITMENT PROGRAM

April 5, 2022

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

SUPPORT

Harford County Public Schools (HCPS) supports **HB752 Public Schools - School Psychologist Recruitment Program**.

This bill establishes the School Psychologist Recruitment Program within MSDE to support school systems in the State of Maryland to recruit, hire, and retain well-trained school psychologists. It also requires the Program to provide professional development programs and aid for a certain certification fee to school psychologists and individuals seeking to become school psychologists and to reimburse school psychologists for professional conference expenses.

The *Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services* (also known as the NASP Practice Model) represents the official policy of the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) regarding the delivery of comprehensive, integrated school psychological services. The model addresses the delivery of school psychological services within the context of educational programs and educational settings. The model describes the responsibilities of individual school psychologists and the responsibilities of school systems to support comprehensive school psychological services. The model promotes a high level of student and systems-level services to meet the academic, social, behavioral, mental health, and emotional needs of all children and youth. The model advocates for the delivery of comprehensive school psychological services to schools, students, and their families across ten domains of practice. The ratio of school psychologists to students is a critical aspect of providing high-quality, comprehensive services and should not exceed one school psychologist for every 500 students. In some situations, the school psychologist-to-student ratio may need to be lower. These include, but are not limited to, situations in which school psychologists are assigned to work primarily with student populations that have intensive special needs (e.g., students with significant emotional or behavioral disorders, or students with developmental disorders) or within communities that are disproportionately affected by poverty, trauma, and environmental stressors. Lower ratios may also be required when school psychologists are itinerant, recognizing the demands inherent in traveling from school to school and in developing and maintaining collaborative relationships in multiple sites.

HCPS recognizes the importance of promoting a robust system of school psychologist recruitment, preparation, and retention so that our students have access to critical mental health supports to enable them to reach academic, social, and developmental benchmarks and be ready for college and/or career success. Student mental health is of particular importance during this time when HCPS students are faced with a global health pandemic and other challenges. School psychologists collaborate with staff, parents/guardians, and the community to help students overcome barriers to learning. The emphasis on multi-tiered systems of support, which also include Section 504 accommodations and restorative practices, further supports this effort and HCPS' Strategic Plan by emphasizing relationships, rigor, and readiness for all students. By removing barriers, providing resources, and teaching appropriate social-emotional skills, school psychologists help students gain the necessary tools to be productive citizens.

The competition for available school psychology candidates each year has become fierce, and school districts are having to become very creative in finding ways to attract interns and school psychology candidates when they are in short supply and highly desired. Competition has also been felt by the surge of private vendors who are getting into the school psychology recruitment business and offering candidates to school districts at greatly inflated prices. School psychology is currently a critical shortage area and local school systems would certainly benefit from a Statewide recruitment effort. For these reasons, we support HB752.

Respectfully Submitted:

Dr. Sean Bulson, Superintendent, Harford County Public Schools

2022 Senate-HB 752 Testimony-Reilly.pdf

Uploaded by: Teresa Reilly

Position: FAV

TERESA E. REILLY
Legislative District 35B
Cecil and Harford Counties

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Rules and Executive
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Subcommittees

Health Occupations and
Long Term Care
Public Health and
Minority Disparities

Chair

Harford County House Delegation



The Maryland House of Delegates
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Teresa.Reilly@house.state.md.us

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

April 5, 2022

**HB 752-Public Schools-School Psychologist Recruitment Program
Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee**

Chair Pinsky, Vice Chair Kagan and members of the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee:

School psychologists are an integral part of a public school system. The majority of Maryland counties, however, do not adhere to the National Association of School Psychologists' recommended ratio of no more than 500 to 700 students per school psychologist. As a result of the passage of my bill in 2019, **Public Schools-School Psychologists-Reports**, each school system submitted an interim report on school psychologists in the local school system. The report included the following information: the ratio of students to school psychologists, wait times for student access, and the need to increase both the recruitment and retention of qualified school psychologists.

This year I am continuing my efforts to address some of the report findings by way of Legislation.

HB 752 establishes the School Psychologist Recruitment Program (SPRP) in the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE). It would provide professional development programs to individuals who are, or are seeking to become, certified school psychologists in Maryland. The program will maintain a clearinghouse of school psychologist best practices, as well as communicate and promote upcoming opportunities and available resources to certified school psychologists. The SPRP will provide support to school psychologists from groups that are historically underrepresented among professional personnel in the State.

This bill will create a program to encourage the recruitment and retention of qualified school psychologists by offering expanded professional development opportunities for school psychologists with financial reimbursement for conferences, etc..

The program must reimburse certified school psychologists for attending professional conferences. The SPRP shall annually select up to 100 individuals for grant aid in an amount equal to the certification fee charged by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP). Priority for awarding reimbursement for the certification fee shall be given to school psychologists from groups historically underrepresented among professional personnel in the State. MSDE shall adopt regulations to carry out the SPR Program.

The amount of students requiring services has risen in the past decade in all categories (suicide, major depression, behavioral and mental health, bullying). There has also been an increase in the number of students that require more accurate assessments for IEPs. When you factor in the added stressors of the past two years that have impacted the daily lives for our students, our school psychologists have become more important than ever.

Our children deserve the best psychologists available and this bill will help in achieving that end.

HB 752 was passed unanimously in the House, and I respectfully ask for a favorable report from the committee.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Teresa E. Reilly", written in a cursive style.

Delegate Teresa E. Reilly
District 35 B, Cecil and Harford Counties

MSPA HB 752 Senate Side (002).pdf

Uploaded by: Sam Ritts

Position: FWA



Senator Paul G. Pinsky, Chair
Senator Cheryl C. Kagan, Vice Chair
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
Miller Senate Office Building, 2 West
Annapolis, MD 21401

Bill: House Bill 752 - Public Schools – School Psychologist Recruitment Program

Position: Support with Amendments

Dear Chair Pinsky, Vice Chair Kagan, 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 throughout Maryland. We advocate for the social-emotional, behavioral, and academic well-being of students and families across the state.

Maryland schools are experiencing crisis level shortages of school behavioral health providers. In 2019, the General Assembly passed legislation (HB 844) to assess the current school psychologist coverage. The reporting resulting from HB 844 **showed that no county in the state has enough school psychologist to meet the nationally recommended standard of one school psychologist for every 500 to 700 students**, 19 counties had one school psychologist for more than thousand students, and two counties had ratios of one school psychologist for more than every two thousand students.ⁱ **This psychologist to student ratios were also recognized in the 2019 report of the Commission on Innovation & Excellence in Education as necessary to address student behavioral health needs.**ⁱⁱ

Although we would greatly appreciate funding to maintain national certification, we believe that there needs to be a significant increase in investment in funding for school behavioral health staffing in order to fully address the state's behavioral health staffing needs. Although the Blueprint did include significant funding for school behavioral health, we are not currently seeing increased investment in recruitment or retention of school behavioral health staff.

MSPA supports HB 752 but strongly believes that the state needs to also consider broader investment in school behavioral health staffing. If we can provide any additional information or be of any assistance, please contact us at legislative@mSPAonline.org or Scott Tiffin at stiffin@policypartners.net.

Respectfully submitted,

Katie Phipps
Chair, Legislative Committee
Maryland School Psychologists' Association

ⁱ [Summary from MSPA of school psychology ratio data in provided in response to HB0844 \(2019\)](#)

ⁱⁱ <https://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/speccol/sc5300/sc5339/000113/023600/023691/20190075e.pdf>

NASW hb 752 Senate Side.pdf

Uploaded by: Scott Tiffin

Position: FWA

Testimony before the Senate Health, Education, and Environmental Affairs Committee
House Bill 752: Public Schools - School Psychologist Recruitment Program

****SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENT****

April 4, 2022

There is a crisis in mental health among Maryland youth. In data reported in 2022, 67,000 Maryland youth had a major depressive episode in the past year (14.93%). Of these youth, 44.7%—32,000 of our children—received no treatment¹. In February 2022, the Hopeful Futures Campaign published *America's School Mental Health Report Card*, which ranked states on a scale of 1 to 3 across eight policy indicators that support school mental health. Their report documented that Maryland does not meet recommended ratios for the school psychologists, school counselors, or school social workers to address our youth's important mental health needs.²

The problem with recruitment and retention being addressed by this bill is not limited to school psychologists. The leadership in Maryland's schools are reporting difficulties with hiring and retaining school mental health personnel in all disciplines. On February 21, 2022 WJLA news reported that Montgomery County was able to hire only two school social workers for the fifty open positions that they had for the current school year.

NASW is the largest national organization of the profession, representing over 120,000 social workers nationwide, with 16,000 licensed in the state of Maryland. Over 500 social workers are currently employed in public schools in our state, assisting students and families so that children can learn, grow, and thrive. As licensed mental health professionals, school social workers are meeting every day with students whose anxiety, depression, or other emotional challenges interfere with their ability to profit from the instruction that their teachers provide. School social workers are the only MSDE-certificated educational professionals who are also universally-licensed mental health providers under Maryland's Health Occupations Code.

The Blueprint for Maryland's Future recognized the need to attract and retain a high-quality teaching workforce and included a career ladder that would provide the means to do so. We have now created a two-tiered wage system for the educational workforce in our state, leaving behind our non-teaching professionals. While we support the goals of HB 752, we would suggest that a more comprehensive approach is critically needed.

Respectfully,

Mary Beth DeMartino, LCSW-C
Executive Director, NASW-MD

¹ <https://mhanational.org/issues/state-mental-health-america>

² Maryland's School Report Card, p. 100 at

<https://onedrive.live.com/?cid=509408956B911AC1&id=509408956B911AC1%217560&parId=509408956B911AC1%215933&o=OneUp>

HB0752 Howard Co BOE Testimony 040522 for EHEA - P

Uploaded by: Staff Howard County

Position: FWA



**Board of Education of Howard County
Testimony Submitted to the Maryland Senate,
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
April 5, 2022**

**Board of Education
of Howard County**

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**HB0752: FAVORABLE W/AMENDMENTS
Public Schools - School Psychologist Recruitment Program**

The Board of Education of Howard County (the Board) supports **HB0752 Public Schools - School Psychologist Recruitment Program** with amendments to ensure sufficient funding is provided to support the goals of the bill.

HB0752 establishes a School Psychologist Recruitment Program with the purpose of providing professional support to school psychologists in the state as well as individuals seeking to become one. Professional development opportunities may include virtual courses or webinars, mentoring or peer collaboration programs, and support materials.

HCPSS School Psychology staff indicate this bill has the potential to attract candidates from out-of-state who wish to work and live in Maryland. As social-emotional well-being of students continues to be a growing area of concern for school systems, the demand for licensed professionals will also increase.

One area of concern with the bill, however, is the provision indicating financial support would come in the form of reimbursement for professional development services and National Association of School Psychologists credentialing subject an indeterminate amount in the State budget. In order to be a true draw for school psychologists, the fees should be covered without need to provide payment upfront and a guarantee of reimbursement.

Specific amendments to address guaranteed coverage of payment include striking “subject to funding availability” in line 9 on page 3 of the amended bill, as well as “consistent with the amount provided in the State budget for the Program” in lines 19 through 20 on page 3. Additionally, a new section inserted after line 13 on page 4 of the amended bill would read:

(G) FOR EACH FISCAL YEAR, THE GOVERNOR SHALL INCLUDE IN THE ANNUAL BUDGET BILL AN APPROPRIATION SUFFICIENT TO FUND THE REIMBURSEMENTS AND PROVISIONS OF THIS SECTION.

For these reasons, we urge a FAVORABLE report of HB0752 from this Committee.

HB752X_MSEA_Lamb_INFO.pdf

Uploaded by: Lauren Lamb

Position: INFO

**Informational Testimony regarding House Bill 752
Public Schools - School Psychologist Recruitment Program**

**Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs
Tuesday, April 5th, 2022
1:00 p.m.**

**Lauren Lamb
Government Relations**

The Maryland State Education Association offers this informational testimony on House Bill 752, which would establish the School Psychologist Recruitment Program within the State Department of Education to provide professional development programs and aid for a certification fee to school psychologists and individuals seeking to become school psychologists and to reimburse school psychologists for professional conference expenses. It would also require the Program to select a maximum of 100 individuals for the Program, giving priority to individuals from groups underrepresented among professional personnel in the State.

MSEA represents 76,000 educators and school employees who work in Maryland's public schools, teaching and preparing our almost 900,000 students for the 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).

Given the ongoing personnel, resource, and support challenges facing our schools and districts, investing in the training and recruitment of student health professionals such as school psychologists is an essential step toward meeting students' needs. Our state does not currently have a sufficient mental and behavioral health professional pipeline to meet professionally recommended student-to-staff ratios, let alone the number of staff required to meet the needs of students. As such, efforts to ensure that we can recruit, train, and deploy additional behavioral and mental health professionals in our schools, especially those from underrepresented communities, are important.



In highlighting the importance of recruiting and preparing school psychologists, we must also emphasize the need to invest in retaining their talents through adequate compensation and advancement opportunities. Though school psychologists and other school health professionals play a critical role in students' wellbeing at school, they are not yet included in the career ladder and pay incentives outlined in the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. To ensure a sustainable workforce that can meet students' needs, it is critical that we both recruit incoming school psychologists and retain current employees.

MSEA believes that concerted efforts must be made to recruit and train school psychologists, especially those from underrepresented groups. We will further continue to advocate for school psychologists and other student health professionals to be compensated as the essential staff they are.