



**Board of Education of Howard County
Testimony Submitted to the Maryland Senate,
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
March 23, 2022**

**Board of Education
of Howard County**

**HB0194: UNFAVORABLE
Education - Family Life and Human Sexuality Curriculum – Sexting**

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The Board of Education of Howard County (the Board) opposes **HB0194 Education - Family Life and Human Sexuality Curriculum – Sexting**.

HB0194 requires that starting in school year 2023 county boards must provide age-appropriate instruction on the risks of sexting (as defined in the existing Courts Article) as part of Family Life and Human Sexuality curriculum in every grade in which the curriculum is taught.

The Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) provides a comprehensive Health Education program that aligns to State curriculum standards. The [State Health Education framework](#) includes standards in grades 6-12 related to “sexually explicit media,” and HCPSS includes sexting as a topic in middle and high school health classes. As the bill requires instruction in every grade in which the Family Life and Human Sexuality curriculum is taught, staff is unsure what additional content would be considered age-appropriate for learners as young as prekindergarten.

As a legislative platform the Board supports local decision making in the development of curriculum that accounts for a balance of educational practices, available resources, public input, and accountability that is informed and guided by State Board established standards and models, rather than legislative mandates as encompassed in HB0194.

For these reasons, we urge an UNFAVORABLE report of HB0194 from this Committee.