



Maryland Education Coalition



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Date: February 24, 2022 - 1:00 p.m.

BILL: [HB0678](#) **POSITION:** SUPPORT **COMMITTEE:** [Ways and Means](#)

TITLE: Education - Fine Arts - Curriculum Requirement, Study, and Report (Arts Equity in Education Act)

The Maryland Education Coalition (MEC) is the oldest, largest, most diverse and experienced public education stakeholder group in Maryland including several members with extensive Music & Art Education and Performance experiences and successes, and we support [HB0678](#) Fine Arts - Curriculum Requirement, Study, and Report (Arts Equity in Education Act). This bill when passed will help ensure that all school systems provide all students adequate, equitable access to all six art forms using experience-based instruction of quality as defined in COMAR and the Blueprint.

Passage of HB 678 would help ensure that all school systems and schools as applicable have supplemental resources, so all students have quality access to Art and Music Education that meets or exceeds the curriculum standards and requirements for implementation. It also includes reporting, review, and accountability requirements with opportunities for improvement. This is needed, because MEC and the Arts Advocacy community often receives reports from across the state that some school systems are schools are not adequately or equitably providing quality Art and Music education students as required. Therefore, MEC also supports an adequacy study to determine costs to implement the Arts and other COMAR requirements to ensure that school systems have the tools implement each.

[The National Association for Music Education \(NAfME\)](#) stated – *“It is imperative that all students have access to an equitable delivery of arts education that includes dance, media arts, music, theatre, and visual arts that support their educational, social, and emotional well-being, taught by certified professional arts educators in partnership with community arts providers.”* MEC and the Arts Education Community in Maryland agrees.

The Arts are the only universal language found among all cultures and the only core subject that has a direct correlation with all of the other core subject areas (*English language arts, math, science, and social studies*) as defined in federal and state policies. They are also a graduation requirement, and some school systems now offer [Arts Integration!](#)

Research finds that Art and Music Education also has other benefits for students of all ages. Art and Music Education:

- supports the social and emotional well-being of students, whether through distance learning or in person
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- helps students develop socially and emotionally including Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness as well as Relationship Skills ([“Music Education and Social-Emotional Learning”](#))

Research also shows that visual arts education is essential to every learner’s educational foundation and training for future employment in an increasingly complex and interconnected world. **When surveyed, CEOs identified creativity as the number one trait sought when hiring.** Since learners are future contributors and creative leaders of tomorrow’s work force, this underscores the importance that every learner must have ongoing access to sequential visual arts education throughout their PreK-12 education.

Therefore, for the reasons above, others shared today by my colleagues and much more found within significant research, MEC urges the General Assembly to vote favorably for HB678, especially if you want what is best for all kids including addressing our current social, emotional, and behavioral issues that have increased throughout the state.

Rick Tyler, writer - former Music Education, Researcher & Performer

American Civil Liberties Union of MD, **Arts Education in Maryland Schools, Arts Every Day**, Attendance Works, CASA, Decoding Dyslexia of MD, Disability Rights Maryland, League of Women Voters of MD, Let Them See Clearly, Right to Read Maryland, Maryland Coalition for Community Schools, Maryland Coalition for Gifted & Talented Ed, Maryland Down Syndrome Advocacy Coalition, Maryland Out of School Time Network, MSC-NAACP, Maryland School Psychologists’ Association, Parent Advocacy Consortium, Public Justice Center, School Social Workers of MD, Strong Schools Maryland, Barbara Dezmon, Kalam Hettleman, David Hornbeck, Dr. Claudia Lawrence-Webb, Shanetta Martin, Sharon Rubinstein, Rick Tyler, Jr.