

**Testimony in Support with Amendments to House Bill 922
Education - Public Schools - Asian American History Curriculum
Requirement**

**Ways and Means
Friday, February 25, 2022
12:00 p.m.**

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The Maryland State Education Association supports, with amendments, House Bill 922. This legislation would require the State Board of Education to develop curriculum content standards for a unit of instruction on Asian American history in public schools in the State, require each county board of education to implement the Asian American history curriculum content standards beginning in the 2023-2024 school year, and require each board to ensure that a unit of instruction on Asian American history is taught at least once during elementary school, middle school, and once in a history course required to graduate from high school.

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).

Students deserve history education that is inclusive, accurate, and complete, and MSEA wholeheartedly agrees with the importance of ensuring that content standards cover Asian American history. It is essential that students receive a comprehensive multicultural education that cultivates respect and appreciation for the contributions of Asian Americans throughout history, which have been too often



omitted or downplayed in curricula. This legislation is especially relevant considering the sharp rise in anti-Asian hate crimes and incidents since 2020.¹

MSEA believes that educators must be involved as professionals throughout the design and implementation process for curriculum and instructional materials. We therefore propose an amendment that would strike the existing language in Subsection (B) and amend it to read: **“Each county board, in collaboration with the local school system, shall develop and implement age-appropriate curriculum guides for Asian American history subject to the content standards established under subsection (A) of this section.”** This amendment language promotes collaborative implementation with local school systems and enables educators to determine the most effective way to incorporate Asian-American History standards and instructional resources by course and grade level.

It is essential that students’ history education includes comprehensive coverage of Asian American history, and that educators are engaged in every step of the implementation process. **We ask the committee to issue a Favorable Report, including the above referenced considerations, on House Bill 922.**

¹ The Associated Press (2021). *More Than 9,000 Anti-Asian Incidents Have Been Reported Since The Pandemic Began*. Retrieved on February 23, 2022, from <https://www.npr.org/2021/08/12/1027236499/anti-asian-hate-crimes-assaults-pandemic-incidents-aapi>