

**Testimony SUPPORT of House Bill 598
Education – Funding for General Education Programs – Definition
Alterations**

**House Appropriations Committee
March 16, 2023**

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Government Relations**

The Maryland State Education Association supports House Bill 598 as amended by the sponsor, change the way student enrollment is calculated for the purposes of education funding.

MSEA represents 75,000 educators and school employees who work in Maryland's public schools, teaching and preparing our almost 900,000 students so they can pursue their dreams. 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).

MSEA supports passage of an adequate, sustainable, predictable revenue stream that will adequately fund both the operating costs of our public schools. A great public school for every child means our students have updated technology, small manageable classes, safe and modern schools, proper healthcare and nutrition, and have highly qualified and highly effective educators. As currently implemented, school funding is based off of enrollment counts from the previous year. This does not do a good job of accounting for growth in enrollment in the current year, but school systems and educators still have to serve all students enrolled in a school whether the funding is there for that student or not. This bill would change the count to the previous enrollment number plus the average increase during the last three years which would help to make sure that funding more accurately reflects the current enrollment in our classrooms. The additional funding that would come with this more accurate enrollment counts would help support students and ensure they get all of the services that they need to thrive.

MSEA also appreciates the sponsor's amendments which would ensure that no school systems lose funding under the new calculation and support it whole heartedly.

MSEA urges a Favorable Report on House Bill 598 as amended by the sponsor.

