



PSSAM
Public School Superintendents' Association
OF MARYLAND

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BILL: HB 375
TITLE: Education - Coaches - Mental Health First Aid Training
DATE: March 9, 2023
POSITION: Oppose
COMMITTEE: Appropriations / Ways and Means
CONTACT: Mary Pat Fannon, Executive Director, PSSAM

The Public School Superintendents' Association of Maryland (PSSAM), on behalf of all twenty-four public school superintendents, **opposes** House Bill 375.

House Bill 375 would require the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to develop guidelines for public schools, and the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) to develop guidelines for public institutions of higher education to train coaches in providing mental health first aid to students who participate in athletic programs in public schools and public institutions of higher education. Additionally, this bill requires that public schools and public institutions offer programs to provide mental health first aid training to coaches.

PSSAM has a longstanding policy of opposing efforts to codify the development of rigid guidelines for any new or existing policy or program; this is especially true when these new requirements do not include a funding source and are ultimately unfunded mandates. Local superintendents strongly believe that the role of content development and implementation of activities described in this bill belong solely to local boards of education in conjunction with MSDE and applicable stakeholders. PSSAM's opposition to this bill is not a reflection of the merits of training athletic staff in mental health practices, but rather opposition to statutorily mandating development of training guidelines, especially those without additional funding appropriated.

For these reasons, PSSAM **opposes** House Bill 375 and requests an unfavorable report.