



Maryland Education Coalition



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House Appropriations Committee

Delegate Ben Barnes, Chair

[HB1122](#) / ([SB0922](#)): Maryland Construction Education and Innovation Fund - Funding - Alteration

POSITION: SUPPORT

The Maryland Education Coalition (MEC) was originally founded over 40 years ago and is made up of over twenty statewide organizations and individual advocates with extensive experiences. (**see below**). We advocate for adequate funding, equitable policies, and transparent accountability for the estimated 900,000 students in Maryland’s public schools, regardless of their academic, cultural, economic, geographic, racial, or other demographic status. (More [HERE](#))

Members of MEC were in the room several years ago, when the former Executive Director of Public School Construction estimated that Maryland needed about \$20 billion to bring all schools up to 21st Century standards. We are unaware of the current estimate, but we assume it will take several years before all Maryland Public School Facilities will meet 21st Century standards, academic program specifications and enrollment capacities statewide.

Therefore, **the Maryland Education Coalition (MEC) strongly supports [HB1122- Maryland Construction Education and Innovation Fund - Funding – Alteration](#)**, which would increase the mandatory minimum appropriation for the Maryland Construction Education and Innovation Fund that is required to be included in the annual budget bill by the Governor. This will raise the amount from \$250,000 to \$625,000 beginning in fiscal year 2025. This will significantly increase the minimum required public school construction needs. We still will have a long way to go to meet all of the needs that will bring all schools up to 21st Century standards. Therefore, we urge that the funding for all public school construction projects remain at the current or increase levels for the foreseeable future when the revenue is available.

MEC also notes, that some school systems have a rapidly increasing inventory of aging schools that may be beyond their useful life and a heightened need for high quality, effective safe and healthy facilities. Other schools are well beyond their enrollment capacity or need to be reconfigured to meet academic program specifications. In addition, an increased investment is needed to meet Early Education or Pre-K program requirements.

MEC also asks for an amendment to tie public school construction to the inflation index. In recent years some projects that may have been well-planned and approved had to be delayed due to significant and sometimes unstable inflation factors. the costs of materials or labor.

Therefore, MEC strongly supports [HB 1122 - Maryland Construction Education and Innovation Fund - Funding – Alteration](#), ask for an amendment to include the Inflationary Index and urges the committee to vote favorably.

ACLU of MD, Arts Education in Maryland Schools, Arts Every Day, Attendance Works, CASA, Children's Behavioral Health Coalition, Free State PTA, Decoding Dyslexia of Maryland, Disability Rights Maryland, League of Women Voters of MD, Let Them See Clearly, Maryland Coalition for Gifted & Talented Ed, Maryland Alliance for Racial Equity in Education, Maryland Coalition for Community Schools, Maryland Down Syndrome Advocacy Coalition, MSC-NAACP, Maryland Out of School Time Network, Maryland School Psychologists' Association, Parent Advocacy Consortium, Public Justice Center, School Social Workers of MD, Strong Schools Maryland, Kalman R. Hettleman, David Hornbeck, Rick Tyler, Jr., Sharon Rubinstein