



**PSSAM**  
Public School Superintendents' Association  
OF MARYLAND

**Mary Pat Fannon, Executive Director**  
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**BILL:** HB 739

**TITLE:** Primary and Secondary Education - Full-Time Equivalent Enrollment Count - Alterations (Truancy Reduction Act of 2023)

**DATE:** March 14, 2023

**POSITION:** Oppose

**COMMITTEE:** House Appropriations Committee

**CONTACT:** Mary Pat Fannon, Executive Director, PSSAM

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The Public School Superintendents' Association of Maryland (PSSAM), on behalf of all twenty-four public school superintendents, **opposes** House Bill 739.

House Bill 739 would alter the definition of "full-time equivalent enrollment" in the calculation for State education aid to include the average number of students enrolled in kindergarten through grade 12 on September 30, December 31, March 31, and the last day of the prior school year. This calculation of education funding would apply to fiscal years beginning after June 30, 2024.

Current law stipulates that of the student enrollment count for the prior year on September 30 and the three year rolling average, the greater would determine the "full-time equivalent enrollment." This legislation aims to change the calculation to the average number of student enrollment on September 30, December 31, March 31 and the last day of school.

PSSAM cautions that this calculation change would present a number of challenges for local school systems. Most alarmingly, it would delay the final State and county funding appropriations until after the prior school year is over, thus delaying implementation of the next school year's budget. Additionally, if a school system were to lose student enrollment throughout the school year, this bill would reduce State and county revenue to that school district. Without knowing future enrollment counts, it is difficult to determine the fiscal impact of this legislation. However, any decrease in student enrollment after September 30 would result in a loss of revenue for school systems, which PSSAM strongly advocates against.

It is clear that this bill aims to serve as a means to rectify student truancy by attaching financial stakes to the success of local truancy reduction. Maryland's superintendents believe that student attendance is essential for academic success, and PSSAM believes that robust attendance requirements should be promoted wherever possible. However, this bill's approach does not meaningfully promote student attendance. Instead, it alters a data snapshot of enrollment that is intended to ensure adequate funding for schools.

For these reasons, PSSAM **opposes** House Bill 739 and requests an unfavorable committee report.