

Sample Testimony on Class Size

Testimony from Ayanna Nesbitt, Educator, Parent, District 41 resident
SB206 - Education - Collective Bargaining - Certificated Employees - Class Size

Before the Senate Finance Committee
February 9, 2023
Position: FAVORABLE

Hello members of the Senate Finance Committee,

My name is Ayanna Nesbitt and I'm a District 41 resident. I want to express my full support of SB206. I am an educator, a parent and a contributing member of my community. I live these three roles daily and witness the effects of overcrowding daily. My son is in school and when he tells me how his day is, it often sounds like the teachers are being overrun by the students. I also teach during the day as well as after care and notice daily how the students are the majority and are able to change the course of a day even with a well trained instructor in front of them. If student safety is our top priority then class sizes must be managed properly. Smaller class sizes and loads would benefit our scores because the teachers would be able to teach to the individual students and the students would retain more information. Smaller class sizes would mean that students could be free to be wrong, ask questions, dig deeper into the curriculum and gain the understanding needed to be able to transfer the knowledge to everyday living. Teachers and students would both benefit from navigating class size and loads. Besides a better understanding of the curriculum our students would also be safer and incidents would be solved faster because proper staff to student ratio would provide extra eyes and ears.

Maryland is one of only **nine states in the country** that does not allow teachers to have a say in class size and caseload. In other states where unions can negotiate class size, the result is not just smaller classes, but more support staff in large classes. Our schools need more staff to support our students academically and emotionally. Removing the ban on negotiating this is an important step in addressing varied student needs.

Research shows smaller classes lead to better outcomes for all kids – especially those who need help the most. Class size reduction has been shown to result in higher test scores, better grades, more engaged students, fewer disciplinary referrals, and less teacher turnover. The quality of the classroom matters. We know the Blueprint funding will pay teachers more and give them more planning time but this is not enough. For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to issue a favorable report on SB206. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Ayanna Nesbitt

Educator and Parent, District 41

