



# Maryland Education Coalition



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HB1155 - Workgroup on Establishing a Youth Codesigned Integrated Behavioral Health Model

Health and Government Operations Committee

Chair: Delegate Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk

POSITION: FAVORABLE

The Maryland Education Coalition (MEC) was originally founded over 40 years ago and comprises over twenty diverse statewide organizations and individual advocates (see below). Our members include former state or local administrators, educators, lawyers, social workers, psychologists, artists, musicians, parents, and community and business leaders. We advocate for adequate funding, equitable policies, and transparent accountability statewide for the estimated 900,000 students in Maryland's schools. (More [Here](#))

Too often, initiatives, programs, and policies impacting young people's lives are designed for them without their input and unique perspectives. As we become adults, even as educators, we cannot fully walk a mile in the shoes of the next generation. Do any adults know what it was like being a teenager during a global pandemic or growing up digital native in the age of social media?

Co-design, increasingly recognized as an evidenced-based practice in health and mental health, is a systemic approach to health and social services that integrates collaboration and reflection with youth recipients. It allows professional expertise to interact and engage with young people's lived experiences. The more empowered and engaged a young person feels, the more likely they are to continue the services necessary to support their health and wellness.

MEC supports House Bill 1155 – Workgroup on Establishing Youth Codesigned Integrated Behavioral Health Model, as a cost effective first step to exploring this innovative approach for Maryland. There are many potential pathways and partnerships for this work, for example with the Consortium on Coordinated Community Supports and working with Community School Coordinators. MEC thanks Delegate Bridges for his forward thinking and commitment to youth voice in sponsoring this bill.

MEC also believes there must be meaningful public education stakeholder participation in the decision-making process at the local, state, and federal level as defined in federal law and believe that are youth can provide meaningful input in the decision-making process, especially on issues that impact them.

MEC urges the Health and Government Operations Committee to provide House Bill 1155 with a favorable report. MEC looks forward to learning more from the Workgroup and supporting additional steps towards implementation.

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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