



Kent County Board of Education

Growing a Community of Leaders

Dr. Karen M. Couch
Office of the Superintendent

February 13, 2023

The Honorable Vanessa E. Atterbeary
Room 131, House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401-1912

RE: **SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS** HB 402/ SB 402 Kent County Board of Education-
Student Member

Dear Chair Atterbeary and Members of the Ways and Means Committee:

The Kent County Board of Education is seeking to revise the Maryland Education Article to recognize the Student Member as a member of the Board of Education. On behalf of the Kent County Board of Education and the Kent County Public Schools, Kent County, Maryland, this letter provides written testimony as support with amendments for House Bill 402/ Senate Bill 402 Kent County- Board of Education- Student Member.

While we support recognizing the student member as a member of the Board of Education, the amendment makes it clear that the Student Member will not be allowed into closed (executive) session. Under the General Provisions Article 3-305 (b), the board has the statutory authority to close the meeting under fourteen (14) exceptions. In reviewing the exceptions for closing a meeting, the Kent County Board of Education determined, as did our legal counsel, that it would not be appropriate for a student member of the board to be included in any of the confidential discussions as outlined in the fourteen (14) exceptions for closing a meeting.

The Kent County Board of Education and Kent County Board of Education respectfully supports House Bill 402 and Senate Bill 402 as amended.

Respectfully,

Dr. Karen M. Couch
Superintendent

cc: The Honorable Stephen S. Hershey, Jr.
The Honorable Jay A. Jacobs
The Honorable Steven J. Arentz
The Honorable Jefferson L. Ghrist
The Kent County Board of Education