



Maryland Education Coalition



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Ways and Means Committee

Chair: Vanessa Atterbeary

SB1219 - Maryland Educator Shortage Act of 2023

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](#))

Teachers make schools. Simply put, without teachers, there is no instruction. And yet, across the country, education is at a crossroads with historic teacher shortages. In Maryland alone, more than 5,500 left the profession last year, and the pipeline is also shrinking. Total enrollment in Maryland teacher preparation programs has declined by 33% since 2012. ([Maryland State School Board, June 2022](#)). Every district in Maryland is impacted; however, teacher shortages are more likely to occur in schools with high concentrations of poverty, and teachers of color are more likely to leave the profession, complicating further the existing diversity gap. While there are promising elements focused on teachers in the Blueprint for Maryland’s future, we also need new and innovative solutions now to address the current and future teacher cliff.

Senate Bill 1219 takes proactive and positive steps to recruit, train, and support new and diverse teachers, set goals, and carefully track progress and challenges. The Maryland Educator Recruitment, Retention, and Diversity Dashboard is important for transparency and accountability. We also agree that Maryland should join the Interstate Teacher Mobility Compact.

MEC is particularly encouraged and enthusiastic about the Teacher Fellows for Maryland, Grow Our Own Educators and Education Internship Stipend Scholarship programs. These initiatives will provide clear incentives for students to pursue degrees and careers in education, increase the number of students from Maryland who stay and become educators in our state, and improve the diversity of teachers by making education careers more desirable and accessible. MEC also supports the focus on providing standards and accountability for education training programs and alternative pathways to teacher certification.

We applaud the Speaker and the co-sponsors for acting on this urgent crisis. The Maryland teacher shortage has educational and economic implications, making the investment proposed in Senate Bill 1219 both reasonable and cost-effective in the long term.

Therefore, MEC urges the Ways and Means Committee to provide a favorable report for Senate Bill 1219 (Maryland Educator Shortage Act of 2023). With each day that passes when more teachers leave and fewer people sign up to become educators, the more we put our children at risk of never receiving an effective education.

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