



Maryland Education Coalition



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House Ways and Means Committee

Delegate Vanessa E. Atterbeary, Chair

[HB1164](#)-Public Schools - Expanded American History-Development of Content Standards and Implementation

POSITION: INFORMATIONAL

The Maryland Education Coalition (MEC) was originally founded over 40 years ago and is made up of over twenty diverse statewide organizations and individual advocates with extensive experience (**see below**). We advocate for adequate funding, equitable policies, and transparent accountability for the estimated 900,000 students in Maryland's public schools, regardless of their academic, cultural, economic, geographic, racial, or other demographic status. (More [HERE](#))

MEC supports American History education, believes it should be a life-long learning tool, but we have several concerns and questions with [HB1164](#). It appears that the intent of this bill already exists in state policies and practices, so we are unsure why this legislation was introduced unless it was a request from the Maryland State Department of Education or State Board of Education to codify, what already exist in the education departments policies and practices.

Two years ago, [Maryland History and Civics Curricula Receive High Praise from National Organization!](#) In summary, they said - The Maryland High School United States History Framework has the objective that "students will understand that women, African Americans, Native Americans, those with disabilities, those who identify as LGBTQ+, and other racial and religious minorities possess historical agency. Awareness of these perspectives assist student comprehension of the complicated nature of the American story." They went on to say - "the high school courses in American Government and modern U.S. History are particularly strong" and that "Maryland's civics standards for the early grades are unusually substantive and thoughtful."

Below, you will find examples of existing policies:

- [State Standards and Frameworks in Social Studies](#) - Standards and Frameworks in All Grades and Disciplines
- [High School United States History Framework](#), page 2 Course Overview (excerpt)

Students will analyze the processes and mechanisms that increased the body politic and the impact of different cultures on the development of an American identity. By considering events from multiple perspectives, students will understand that women, African Americans, Native Americans, those with disabilities, those who identify as LGBTQ+, and other racial and religious minorities possess historical agency. Awareness of these perspectives assist student comprehension of the complicated nature of the American story. **The story of American History is not one of inevitable progress but that of an ongoing struggle marked by improvement and regression as the nation moves toward the goal of perfecting the union.**

- [Middle School United States History](#)
- [Elementary Social Studies](#)

Finally, MEC believes that MSDE with approval from the State Board of Education should do the research, development, implementation, and oversight of all public education policies, especially if they include meaningful stakeholder participation and highly qualified, outside experts in the process. The one exception may be if MSDE and the State Board makes a request to codify it in law. Therefore, we urge the committee to take this under advisement, before acting on this legislation.

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