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BILL: HB 1164
TITLE: Public Schools - Expanded American History - Development of Content Standards and Implementation
DATE: March 8, 2023
POSITION: Oppose
COMMITTEE: Ways and Means
CONTACT: Mary Pat Fannon, Executive Director, PSSAM

The Public School Superintendents' Association of Maryland (PSSAM), on behalf of all twenty-four public school superintendents, **opposes** House Bill 1164.

House Bill 1164 would require the Maryland State Board of Education (MSDE) to develop content standards for an expanded American history curriculum before December 1, 2023. Additionally, this bill requires each local school system to update and implement expanded curriculum and guidelines for American history beginning in the 2024-2025 school year.

PSSAM has a longstanding policy of opposing efforts by the General Assembly to codify curriculum standards, assessments, or graduation requirements. Local superintendents strongly believe that the role of curriculum development and implementation belongs solely to local boards of education in conjunction with MSDE. Rest assured, PSSAM's opposition to this bill is not an evaluation of the merits of teaching any specified subject matter, but rather opposition to statutorily mandating content standards and curriculum.

The Maryland General Assembly, in creating the Maryland State Board of Education and local boards of education, has delegated to these entities the responsibility of delivering a high-quality statewide system of public education. The State Board establishes State content frameworks, state assessment standards, and minimum state graduation requirements, while each local board and school system implements locally-developed curriculum to ensure that the state content frameworks are followed, student performance standards are met, and students are prepared to meet graduation requirements.

Superintendents are committed to providing students with a comprehensive, well-rounded social studies curriculum that includes the teaching of American history through multiple core and elective courses in grades K-12 that is implemented after proper stakeholder input and review processes. In addition to creating a mandated curriculum, this bill would also require local systems to use existing funds to implement the bill with no new funding source, therefore creating an unfunded mandate for all twenty-four local systems.

House Bill 1164, alongside similar bills that seek to interject or extract piecemeal segments of the curriculum, only serve to weaken the effectiveness of the overall educational curriculum. Again, PSSAM's opposition to this bill does not rest on the merits of instruction pertaining to American history, but the bill's imposition of curricular mandates on local school systems.

For these reasons, PSSAM **opposes** House Bill 1164 and requests an unfavorable report.