

**Testimony in Opposition to House Bill 69  
Education - Student Behavior - Parent and Guardian Notice and Required  
Counseling (Parent and Guardian Accountability Act)**

**House Ways and Means Committee  
February 1, 2023**

**Lauren Lamb  
Government Relations**

The Maryland State Education Association opposes House Bill 69, which would establish that it is unlawful for a parent or guardian of a student in a public school to fail to seek and participate in counseling with their child after receiving notice of violent and disruptive behavior and require a public school principal to provide written notice to the parent or guardian of a student who engages in two or more number of incidents of violent and disruptive behavior in a public school during the school year.

MSEA represents 75,000 educators and school employees who work in Maryland's public schools, teaching and preparing our almost 900,000 students for the careers and jobs of the future. MSEA also represents 39 local affiliates in every county across the state of Maryland, and our parent affiliate is the 3-million-member National Education Association (NEA).

Access to counseling is undoubtedly beneficial for students and families, and MSEA has supported efforts to increase the number of behavioral health professionals in schools. However, this bill does not address the ongoing shortage of providers or potential social, financial, linguistic, and logistical barriers to accessing counseling, and instead imposes penalties on those who require support. This legislation criminalizes families for a lack of resources and would have a profound detrimental effect on communities and students' wellbeing.

**We urge the committee to issue an Unfavorable Report on House Bill 69.**