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**TO:** Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

**BILL:** Senate Bill (SB) 266 – State Retirement and Pension System – Immediate Vesting

**DATE:** January 25, 2024

**POSITION:** Support

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**Chair Jackson and Members of the Senate Pensions Subcommittee,**

The Maryland State Board of Education (State Board) would like to express its support for **SB 266**, which adds the State Superintendent of Schools to the list of individuals who receive immediate vesting rights in the State Retirement and Pension System.

In addition to their role as Chief Executive Officer and Secretary/Treasurer of the State Board, the State Superintendent of Schools is a member of the Governor’s Cabinet and serves as a de facto secretary of Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), a department within State government. The position is not currently included on the list of individuals who receive immediate vesting rights due to the State Board’s designation as the principal head of the MSDE. Through the State Superintendent, the State Board, in its role as the head of MSDE, exercises general control and supervision over public schools and educational interests.

Adding the State Superintendent as a beneficiary of immediate vesting rights will make the position consistent with other Cabinet-level leaders in Maryland and provide the State Board with a significant tool as it seeks to recruit and retain high-quality candidates for State Superintendent in the future. As the market for school superintendents becomes increasingly competitive both locally and nationally, it is critical that the State Board have several recruiting tools at its disposal to bring the best candidates to Maryland.

The State Board requests that the committee issue a favorable committee report on **SB 266**. Please contact Zach Hands, Executive Director of the State Board, at [Zachary.hands1@maryland.gov](mailto:Zachary.hands1@maryland.gov) or at 443-915-6094, if you would like any additional information.