

Witness: Katherine Strauch Sullivan
Jurisdiction: Baltimore County
Bill: HB0558 Primary and Secondary Education - Comprehensive Health Education Framework -Established
Sponsor: Delegate [Atterbeary](#)
Position: AGAINST

Dear Committee,

I can't sugar coat this: According to the Maryland State Department of Education's own "Report Card" data, the 2022-2023 school year assessment results were abysmal. Here is a small sampling:

The 2022-2023 School assessments:

- Elementary School:
 - Only 46.7% of all elementary students were proficient in ELA
 - Only 34.1% of all elementary students were proficient in Math.
 - **Out of 3 potential measures for academic performance (Academic Achievement, Academic Progress, and School quality and Student Success), *not one target was met***
- Middle School:
 - Only 47.9% of all middle school students were proficient in ELA
 - Only 19.8% of all middle school students were proficient in Math.
 - **Out of 3 potential measures for academic performance (Academic Achievement, Academic Progress, and School quality and Student Success), *not one target was met***
- High School:
 - Only 56.1% of all high school students were proficient in ELA
 - Only 34.9% of all high school students were proficient in Math.
 - **Out of 3 potential measures for academic performance (Academic Achievement, Academic Progress, and School quality and Student Success), *not one target was met***

We must prioritize reading, writing, and math. We must not be distracted by side programs that will divert our eyes off our children's proficiency in ELA and Math. It is not the job or duty of public education to offer a comprehensive health plan for our children.

All programs which are not created for the purpose of teaching students reading, writing, and math should be optional programs parents can opt *into* if they are interested.

And finally, it is distinctly un-American to diminish local control through centralized government power. We are not living under authoritarian rule. Local jurisdictions should always have the latitude to create educational goals consistent with the local values of the citizens in their community.

Sincerely,
Katherine Sullivan, Mother of 4 Public School Children
Baltimore County