

SJ0005_RichardKaplowitz_FAV

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TESTIMONY ON SJ#0005 - POSITION: FAVORABLE
Elementary and Secondary Education - Curriculum - Importance of Diversity

TO: Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the Education, Energy and the Environment Committee

FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in support of/ **SJ#/0005, Elementary and Secondary Education - Curriculum - Importance of Diversity**

The School of Education at The American University has studied and documented *The Benefits of Inclusion and Diversity in the Classroom* ¹

- Diversity Improves Cognitive Skills and Critical Thinking
- Exposure to Diversity Helps Students Enter Adulthood
- Diversity Prepares Students for Citizenship
- Diversity Promotes Creativity
- Allows Students to Learn about Their Community
- Establishes a Zero-Indifference Negative Behavior Policy

[Benefits for Educators]

- Discover How to Encourage Inclusivity and Diversity as an Educator
- Learn about Students' Cultural Backgrounds
- Create a Culturally Responsive Learning Environment
- Learn How to Foster Cultural Diversity in the Classroom

Diversio.com has also studied Diversity in Education and come to these conclusions: ²

DEI in education refers to the commitment to creating a learning environment that embraces **diversity** by representing different identities and perspectives, **equity** by providing the necessary resources for all students to succeed, and **inclusion** by ensuring that everyone feels valued and engaged in the educational experience. It aims to prepare students for a diverse world while addressing systemic barriers.

¹ <https://soeonline.american.edu/blog/benefits-of-inclusion-and-diversity-in-the-classroom/>

² <https://diversio.com/industries/dei-education/#:~:text=Challenging%20conventional%20views%3A%20DEI%20encourages,sharpening%20their%20critical%20thinking%20skills.>

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This bill makes Maryland a leader in the resistance to the attack at the Federal level on DEI in education. It accomplishes that by acknowledging the importance of teaching a culturally diverse curriculum in elementary and secondary schools in the State. It says that everyone in Maryland is part of the fabric of our society and needs to know the full panoply of the history and cultures of any minority that is part of our community. This bill will provide that curricula taught in elementary and secondary schools should include the history of communities that have experienced discrimination. This bill proudly affirms the State of Maryland's commitment to a complete education.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on SJ0005.