



House Rules and Executive Nominations Committee

SJ 5: Elementary and Secondary Education – Curriculum Importance of Diversity

March 7, 2025

Position: Support

The Arc Maryland and Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council (Council) are statewide organizations that work to protect and advance the rights and quality of life of people with disabilities. As such, we support Senate Joint Resolution 5.

WHAT does this Joint Resolution do?

- Acknowledges the importance of teaching a culturally diverse curriculum in schools
- Provides that curricula taught in schools should include all communities that have experienced discrimination, including people with disabilities
- Reaffirms that Maryland is committed to providing a robust civic, cultural, and history education so that all Marylanders are engaged and informed members of the community

WHY is this important?

- **It is important to highlight and promote the history, culture, and diversity of Maryland, including people with disabilities.** Over 114,000 students with disabilities receive special education services and supports, and represent 12.8% of the student population in Maryland.
- **The disability community is diverse and our history is full of rich stories of people with disabilities who have paved the way for greater equity, inclusion, and access for all.** Unfortunately, disability history also includes institutions, maltreatment of people throughout time, denial of human rights, and other injustices. Missing from our history books are in-depth lessons on how people with disabilities were treated in important periods of history, and information about historical figures with disabilities who shaped the world in which we live.
- **It promotes diversity and equity, and encourages safe, welcoming, and inclusive environments for all students.** It is important that our academic standards are built to reflect the historical and intellectual contributions of diverse populations, and encourage environments that respect and welcome all people, including people with disabilities.

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