

January 29, 2025

Dear Members of the Education, Energy & the Environment Committee,

Good afternoon, my name is Dr. Rachel Edoho-Eket, and I am an elementary school principal with 20 years of experience in public education. I am here today representing both my own experiences and the collective voices of the Maryland Association of Elementary School Principals (MAESP) and the Maryland Association of Secondary School Principals (MASSP) to strongly support Bill SB0113, which would include a principal on the State Board of Education.

As principals, we are uniquely positioned to bridge the gap between policy and practice. Every day, I have the opportunity to witness the incredible work happening in our schools. For example, our school is currently implementing Pillar 1 of the Blueprint, which includes the expansion of high-quality pre-kindergarten. Our 4-year-olds are soaring academically thanks to the policy which includes an enhanced curriculum and the recruitment and retention of highly-qualified teachers. In order to support students, it is important to have practical input from principals to help ground ambitious policies in the realities of the classroom.

In conversations with my colleagues across the state, there is a shared passion for working hand-in-hand with our State Board of Education. Including a principal on the board would ensure that the voices of those working closest to students, staff, and families are represented when decisions are being made that impact our school communities. Having our perspective at the table can help craft policies that are both visionary and practical to ensure success.

This bill isn't just about adding another voice; it's about ensuring that voice belongs to someone who sees the faces behind the data and the stories behind the statistics every single day. I urge you to provide a favorable report to bill SB0113 and help ensure that principals can continue to meaningfully contribute to shaping the future of education in our great state!

Thank you for your time and for considering this important step forward for education,

*Rachel Edoho-Eket*

Dr. Rachel Edoho-Eket

Principal, Waterloo Elementary School

President-Elect, Maryland Association of Elementary School Principals