

SB 0113 Testimony Jan 2025 Truffer MASSP.pdf

Uploaded by: Chris Truffer

Position: FAV



January 29, 2025

Good afternoon Mr. Chairman, Madam Vice Chair, and Education, Energy, and Environment Committee members. My name is Chris Truffer, and I am the Executive Director for the Maryland Association of Secondary School Principals, representing secondary level school administrators across the entire state of Maryland. We work to ensure that school leaders are empowered, developed and connected and advocate on their behalf for the betterment of our students, schools and communities. It is a pleasure and honor to provide testimony in support of SB0113.

The success of our schools rests on the ability of principals to fully understand and effectively execute policies, regulations and laws related to a wide variety of topics including but not restricted to school safety, security, student academic achievement, health and well-being, curricular implementation, implementation of Blueprint and myriad additional issues and challenges that face the state educational system and in turn each of the local districts.

Having a principal on the State Board of Education can create greater synergy between policy makers and implementers and can foster more productive collaboration, enhance communication and help craft better informed decisions. Including the vital perspectives of principals, as a conduit of not only information but their knowledge, expertise and a worldview that spans across the educational landscape, can only enhance and strengthen what is ultimately implemented at the school level.

Principals have a deep and thorough understanding of the needs of Maryland's diverse student populations, including those with disabilities, English language learners, students from low-income families, advanced learners and those with other needs requiring a varied and broad set of supports. Their input can guide the development of equitable policies that address the varied needs of Maryland's eclectic student body. In this way, having a principal on the Maryland State Board of Education ensures that decisions are made with a comprehensive understanding of the on-the-ground realities of running a school and supporting students' success.

Thank you, Senator Kramer, for sponsoring this bill and thank you to the Senate Education, Energy and Environment Committee for holding today's hearing. We are grateful for your collective advocacy on behalf of students, parents, teachers, staff and our dedicated principals and administrators who will greatly benefit from this bill's passing. We hope you will give a favorable report for SB0113.

Sincerely,

Chris Truffer

Executive Director, Maryland Association of Secondary School Principals

228 Cloister Road, Arnold, MD, 21012

443-545-9988

SB113 testimony 1-29-25 Wooleyhand.pdf

Uploaded by: Christopher Wooleyhand

Position: FAV



Maryland Association of
Elementary School Principals

Maryland Association of Elementary
School Principals
7467 Ridge Road, Suite 310
Hanover, MD 21076
410-994-8768

January 29, 2025

Good morning, Mr. Chairman, Madam Vice Chair, and (Education, Energy, and the Environment) committee members. My name is Christopher Wooleyhand, I am the executive director of the Maryland Association of Elementary School Principals, a professional organization with members from all 24 Maryland districts. Our organization provides service, support, and advocacy for current and aspiring school leaders across this great state. I am here to speak in favor of SB113.

We believe Senate Bill 113 should be an easy decision for Maryland lawmakers. The current state board includes students, parents, and teachers. It is time to add a sitting principal. Having a school principal on the state board of education will offer valuable perspectives and insights into the practical realities of running schools.

Principals are on the front lines of education, dealing with daily challenges, interacting with students, teachers, and parents, and implementing educational policies at the ground level. Their experiences will provide a crucial link between policymaking and its actual impact on schools and students.

The Blueprint for Maryland's Future has placed significant responsibilities at the feet of Maryland principals. They accept those responsibilities with grace and a firm commitment to their students. The reality is that there has been a disconnect in Maryland between building level school administrators and state level decision-makers.

Including a principal on the state board of education will help foster collaboration and communication between policymakers and practitioners, leading to more informed decision-making and improving the quality of education statewide.

Principals can offer firsthand knowledge of the needs and challenges faced by schools in their communities. This can help ensure that education policies are relevant, effective, and responsive to the diverse needs of students and schools across the state.

Thank you to Senators Kramer for sponsoring this bill and thank you to the Senate Education, Energy, and Environment Committee for holding today's hearing. We are grateful for your advocacy on behalf of students, parents, teachers, and, of course, **PRINCIPALS**. We hope you'll give a favorable report for SB113.

Christopher Wooleyhand, Ph.D.
Executive Director
Maryland Association of Elementary School Principals

SB113 Testimony 1.29.25 R.EdohoEket.pdf

Uploaded by: Dr. Rachel Edoho-Eket

Position: FAV

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

Testimony for SB0113 1.29.25 Fine MAESP.pdf

Uploaded by: Joshua Fine

Position: FAV



Maryland Association of
Elementary School Principals

Dr. Joshua Fine's Testimony to the Maryland Senate Committee on Education, Energy, and Environment

Good afternoon, Senator Feldman, Senator Kagan, and members of the Education, Energy, and Environment Committee of the Maryland State Senate.

My name is Dr. Joshua Fine, an elementary school principal in Montgomery County, Maryland, and the President of the Maryland Association of Elementary School Principals (MAESP). I am here to share the many voices of my principal colleagues to advocate for this committee to move forward bill SB0113 which will place a principal on the State Board of Education.

MAESP is a professional organization; not a union; that serves hundreds of principals across the state, supporting their leadership capacity. As the leader of this organization, I've heard a desire from my colleagues to work more closely with state leaders around policy initiatives to ensure the success of our schools and students. In this time where we are evaluating the Blueprint for Maryland's Future, I stand before you to emphasize that a principal's perspective is more crucial now than ever. It is essential to connect the policies emanating from Annapolis to the realities faced in classrooms throughout Maryland.

Principals lead diverse communities in both urban and rural settings, with a variety of cultures, languages, and family priorities. Our role as principals involves interpreting state policies and laws daily, ensuring they are executed with fidelity to provide a world-class education for all Maryland students. For example, at my school, we have benefited from state guidance and resources to promote early literacy and emphasize the science of reading, which has resulted in more of our students reading on grade level by the time they reach third grade.

Throughout my tenure as principal, we have navigated a pandemic, a shifting political landscape, and an ever-evolving public education environment. During this time, there have been instances where well-intentioned policies or initiatives from the state have been inconsistently implemented. This often occurred because there wasn't a school leader's voice at the table to discuss the practical implications of these initiatives, including identifying potential benefits and pitfalls before they were enacted.

Principals are the critical intersection of policy and educational practice. Having a principal on the State Board of Education would provide the necessary perspective to advance the work of the Blueprint and other initiatives, ultimately benefiting families and children in Maryland. Therefore, I wholeheartedly advocate for this committee to move forward with bill SB0113 to place a principal on the State Board of Education.

Together, we can ensure that our policies not only reflect our aspirations but also lead to meaningful improvements in our schools. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Testimony SB0113.docx.pdf

Uploaded by: Kaitlyn Vander Roest

Position: FAV

BILL: SB0113

TITLE: State Board of Education - Membership - School Principal

DATE: January 27, 2025

POSITION: Favorable

Good Afternoon, members of the committee of Education, Energy, and the Environment. We are a group of five students out of South River High School, and we are honored to address you today. We hope to represent the student body in hopes of representing a group that is not often heard.

We are hoping to advocate for the Senate Bill 113 for the inclusion of a principal on the State Board of Education. The current Maryland State Board of Education is composed of various stakeholders such as parents, students, and teachers. However, it would be critical to include a principal on Board of Education because of their essential role in the student environment. Principals are leaders in our school who directly engage with the student body on a frequent basis. With the implementation of the Blueprint for Maryland's future, principles are tasked with many new tasks on a daily basis. The future of Maryland's education system is being made by the Maryland State Board of Education which only includes members such as a student member, a parent member, and a teacher member.

If implemented, the principal that is elected will have a voice on the Board of Education which will allow for the board to make better informed decisions surrounding the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. In addition to this, principals are close with the student body and can represent their needs along with the student members. The addition to the Maryland Board of Education will improve students' education because principals can help to represent students and help provide ideas for the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. Principals can bring different experiences and insights that can be invaluable to the Maryland Board of Education.

Implementation of this bill would also align with other states goals to include principals on the State Board of Education. States such as North Carolina and New Jersey have both implemented a principal member onto their boards.

We hope that the committee considers the need for the insights that principals can bring to the Maryland Board of Education and the Blueprint for Maryland's future. The inclusion of principals can allow school administration to have more of a say about what is being implemented with the plans for Maryland's educational future.

We want to thank the members of the committee for their time and consideration for the bill. We are hopeful for the favorable report on Senate Bill 113.

Sincerely,

Kaitlyn Vander Roest, Gabriella Assante, Alexis Daily, Ryan Mioduszewski, and Dominick Berardi

SB 113 SBOE Membership - School Principal.pdf

Uploaded by: Mary Pat Fannon

Position: FAV



PSSAM
Public School Superintendents' Association
OF MARYLAND

Mary Pat Fannon, Executive Director
1217 S. Potomac Street
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BILL: SB 113
TITLE: State Board of Education - Membership - School Principal
DATE: January 29, 2025
POSITION: Support
COMMITTEE: Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
CONTACT: Mary Pat Fannon, Executive Director, PSSAM

The Public School Superintendents' Association of Maryland (PSSAM), on behalf of all twenty-four public school superintendents, **supports** Senate Bill 113.

Senate Bill 113 would add an active, certified principal to the Maryland State Board of Education (MSDE). This bill would require a state-wide election to be held for all active and certified principals in the State, as well as require that the principal member who receives the highest number of votes be appointed to the vacancy by the Governor. Additionally, Senate Bill 598 provides parameters for the voting capacity and term length of the principal member.

Maryland's superintendents have found value in the distinct voices on the State Board through elections, such as the teacher and student members. PSSAM sees this legislation as a natural extension of the diverse membership goals of the Board, as well as a vehicle for adequate representation of school leadership, which is essential for equitable outcomes in education.

PSSAM understands amendments may be under discussion between the sponsor and the State Board, and we certainly yield to the wisdom and direction of those discussions and decisions by this Committee.

For these reasons, PSSAM **supports** Senate Bill 113 and urges a **favorable** committee report.

Shindel Witness Statement to State Board Jan 2025.

Uploaded by: Melissa Shindel

Position: FAV



January 29, 2025

Dear Chairman Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and the Education, Energy, and Environment Committee,

Mr. Chair and committee members, I am Melissa Shindel, and I am here on behalf of principals across the State of Maryland to urge favorable passage of Senate Bill 113. First and foremost, I am the proud principal of Glenwood Middle School in Howard County, Maryland. I have been an administrator in both Prince George's County Public Schools and the Howard County Public School System. I have been the principal of four very different schools, and this is my 16th year as a middle school principal. Further, I serve as the State Coordinator for Maryland to the National Association of Secondary School Principals, interacting with and representing secondary school administrators across the state of Maryland.

As school principals, we have firsthand experience with the day-to-day operations of schools. Our perspective is global; we have a keen understanding of the complex inner workings of a school community, which balances the whole needs of children with the implementation of educational decisions and policies. We make hundreds of decisions each day, and we understand the opportunities and challenges associated with implementing new initiatives, mandated policies, and exciting opportunities at the school level. Our experiences and perspectives consider all voices - not only those of school leaders, but also those of teachers, students, parents, support staff, and community stakeholders.

Principals are charged with implementing the policies, programs and initiatives of the State Board of Education (in addition to those of federal, state and local Boards and legislators). We ensure compliance. Accountability falls on our shoulders. We ensure our teachers and students are prepared, and we do everything we can to ensure the highest levels of success and achievement for our children. Having a principal on the State Board of Education brings our breadth and depth of experience into critical decisions that are impacting our schools, teachers, administrators, communities and most of all - our students. Our voice and perspective can only help strengthen the multitude of programs and initiatives in our schools that will ultimately make public education in Maryland world class.

If we are truly committed to providing the very best for our children, then It is crucial that a principal have a position on the Maryland State Board of Education, and I urge favorable passage of Senate Bill 113. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Melissa Shindel

SB 0113 Testimony.1.2025.MCB.MASSP.pdf

Uploaded by: Michael Brown

Position: FAV



January 29, 2025

Good afternoon Mr. Chairman, Madam Vice Chair, and members of the Education, Energy, and Environment Committee members.

My name is Michael C. Brown, and I am the President of the Maryland Association of Secondary School Principals (MASSP). It is an honor to represent secondary school leaders across the state and to provide testimony in support of SB 0113.

As principals, we are at the forefront of education, working tirelessly to implement policies, regulations, and programs that impact the lives of students, staff, and communities. Our work spans critical areas such as school safety, student achievement, mental health, equity, and the implementation of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. Having a principal's voice on the Maryland State Board of Education is not just beneficial—it is essential.

Principals are uniquely positioned to provide valuable insights into the day-to-day realities of running schools. We understand the challenges and opportunities that come with educating Maryland's diverse student populations, including English language learners, students with disabilities, and those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Our perspective ensures that policies are not only well-informed but also practical and equitable in their application.

Including a principal on the State Board would foster stronger collaboration between policymakers and practitioners, bridging the gap between decision-making and implementation. It would enhance communication, provide a clearer understanding of the needs of schools, and ultimately lead to more effective and impactful policies.

I want to thank Senator Kramer for sponsoring this important bill and the members of this committee for your dedication to Maryland's students and educators. On behalf of MASSP and the principals I represent, I urge you to give SB 0113 a favorable report.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Michael C. Brown
President

Maryland Association of Secondary School Principals

SB113_MSEA_Lamb_FWA.pdf

Uploaded by: Lauren Lamb

Position: FWA

FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS

Senate Bill 113

State Board of Education - Membership - School Principal

Senate Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment

January 29, 2025

Lauren Lamb

Government Relations

The Maryland State Education Association supports, with an amendment, Senate Bill 113, which would alter the membership of the State Board of Education to include a school principal as a member and provide for the initial term of the principal member.

MSEA represents 75,000 educators and school employees who work in Maryland's public schools, teaching and preparing our almost 900,000 students so they can pursue their dreams. MSEA also represents 39 local affiliates in every county across the state of Maryland, and our parent affiliate is the 3-million-member National Education Association (NEA).

Including a teacher and principal on the State Board of Education provides valuable insight into the daily operations and needs of Maryland's schools. However, we continue to lack the perspective of a non-supervisory, non-certificated education support professional, such as a paraeducator, food service staff member, or one of the many other roles that keep our schools functioning. Such a member would bring a unique and essential perspective to the State Board's role in the oversight and regulation of education policy.

We therefore urge an amendment to add an elected non-supervisory education support professional to the State Board with the same voting rights and restrictions as the teacher member and principal member. The education support professional member should be elected in a manner and to a term comparable to the teacher member, with voting made available to all non-supervisory, noncertificated school employees in the state.

With the inclusion of the proposed amendment, we urge the Committee to issue a Favorable Report on Senate Bill 113.

SB 113 - State Board - LOI.docx.pdf

Uploaded by: Zachary Hands

Position: INFO

TO: Senate Education, Energy, and Environment Committee

BILL: Senate Bill (SB) 113 – State Board of Education – Membership – School Principal

DATE: January 29, 2025

POSITION: Letter of Information

Chair Feldman and Members of the Senate Education, Energy, and Environment Committee,

The Maryland State Board of Education (State Board) would like to share the following information regarding **SB 113**, which would add an additional member to the State Board who is required to be a certified, active school principal in Maryland, and who would be selected through an election conducted by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE).

The State Board appreciates the intent of this bill to ensure that the principal voice is well represented on the board. We concur that the experience, knowledge, and perspective of an active principal would be valuable. We are fortunate to have current members of the State Board who have served as principals in our public schools.

We are concerned with continued growth of the size of the State Board, which is already one of the largest [state boards of education](#) in the United States at 14 members. Additionally, we have some concerns with outlining specific qualifications for additional members of the State Board to ensure that the Governor retains the flexibility to appoint members of the State Board who have a wide array of experiences and skill sets. We also register hesitation about the additional administrative and fiscal impact of requiring MSDE to manage another election process (as they already do for the teacher member of the State Board).

The State Board does not oppose an active, certified principal serving as a member of the State Board and requests that if the committee consider this legislation that flexibility be maintained without increasing the size of the State Board.

The State Board requests that the committee consider this information as it deliberates **SB 113**. Please contact Dr. Akilah Alleyne, Executive Director of Government Affairs, Education Policy, and Government Relations, at Akilah.alleyne@maryland.gov or at 410-767-0504 or Zach Hands, Executive Director of the State Board, at Zachary.hands1@maryland.gov or at 443-915-6094, if you would like any additional information.