

SB0845- State Board- Support.pdf

Uploaded by: Carey Wright

Position: FAV

TO: Senate Committee on Energy, Education, and the Environment

BILL: Senate Bill (SB) 0845 Local Education Agencies - Educator Screening - NASDTEC Clearinghouse (School Personnel Vetting and Hiring Transparency Act)

DATE: March 05, 2025

POSITION: Support

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and the State Board of Education support SB0845- Local Education Agencies - Educator Screening - NASDTEC Clearinghouse (School Personnel Vetting and Hiring Transparency Act).

The State Board and MSDE are dedicated to ensuring the safety of Maryland students. SB0845 requires Maryland local education agencies to become members of the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC) and use the NASDTEC Educator Identification Clearinghouse to screen employees. The Educator Identification Clearinghouse is a national database that provides a mechanism for licensing agencies to exchange names of educators whose certificates, licenses, or similar credentials authorizing them to engage in school professions have been denied, revoked, suspended, surrendered, or otherwise adversely acted upon.

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) is a state member of the NASDTEC. MSDE relies on the Educator Identification Clearinghouse to identify applicants for educator licensure who have disciplinary action taken against their license in a member state. It is a critical tool that ensures individuals who are not eligible for licensure based on action taken in another state are not provided with a Maryland educator license. In Maryland, each local education agency has licensure partners who are employed by the county board and are trained by MSDE to process licensure applications. It is critical that each local education agency access the Educator Identification Clearinghouse when recruiting employees to ensure that those who have had action taken in another state are investigated before receiving an offer of employment.

SB0845 will have a minimal fiscal impact on some local education agencies (LEAs). Maryland LEAs that are not currently associate members of NASDTEC will be required to pay for an associate membership and access to the Clearinghouse. The cost structure is as follows:

# FTE Teachers	Membership Fee	Subscription Fee	TOTAL
< 300	500	100	\$600
300 - 599	500	200	\$700
600 - 999	500	300	\$800
1000 - 1999	500	400	\$900
2000 - 2999	500	500	\$1,000
3000 - 3999	500	600	\$1,100
4000 -9,999	500	700	\$1,200
>9,999	500	.12 per FTE teacher	

We respectfully request that you consider this information as you deliberate **SB0845**. Please contact Dr. Akilah Alleyne (Executive Director of Government Affairs), at akilah.alleyne@maryland.gov for any additional information.

SB845_Hettleman_FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Shelly Hettleman

Position: FAV

SHELLY HETTLEMAN
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Chair, Rules Committee
Budget and Taxation Committee

Subcommittees
Capital Budget
Health and Human Services
Chair, Pensions

Joint Committees
Senate Chair, Audit and Evaluation
Senate Chair, Pensions

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

TESTIMONY OF SENATOR SHELLY HETTLEMAN
SB 845 – LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCIES – EDUCATOR SCREENING – NASDTEC
CLEARINGHOUSE (SCHOOL PERSONNEL VETTING AND HIRING TRANSPARENCY ACT)

SB 845, the School Personnel Vetting and Hiring Transparency Act, is a commonsense measure to enhance transparency, accountability, and safety in Maryland's schools by ensuring that all local education agencies (LEAs) utilize the NASDTEC Educator Identification Clearinghouse when hiring and vetting educators.

The urgent need for this legislation became painfully clear following recent events at Pikesville High School, where the former athletic director was charged with multiple serious offenses. His ability to obtain a position at Pikesville High without adequate vetting highlights critical weaknesses in Maryland's educator hiring and oversight processes. This failure of accountability puts students at serious risk and underscores the urgent need for stronger statewide vetting standards to prevent potential lapses within Maryland and across state lines.

We entrust teachers and school personnel with our most precious resource—our children. The individuals we place in classrooms across the state have a profound impact on students' development, well-being, and safety. Unfortunately, gaps in educator screening processes have allowed individuals with histories of misconduct to move between school systems undetected. We must close those gaps to ensure that only qualified, ethical, and responsible educators serve in our schools.

SB 845 strengthens the educator screening process statewide by requiring all LEAs to first become associate members of the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC). Then they must utilize the NASDTEC Educator Identification Clearinghouse to screen all current educators and new applicants for educator positions in Maryland schools.

NASDTEC's Clearinghouse is a trusted, nationwide database that allows states and school systems to share critical information about educators, including any certification revocations, disciplinary actions, or ethical violations that may not otherwise be disclosed in standard background checks. By requiring its use, SB 845 ensures that every Maryland school system has access to the most complete and up-to-date records before hiring or continuing employment.

This commonsense bill does not add burden to school districts. It raises potential red flags that require further investigation. SB 845 is about protecting students, supporting responsible hiring decisions, and upholding the integrity of Maryland's education system. A statewide approach to educator screening ensures that all school systems adopt best practices for vetting employees.

Every child deserves to learn in a safe and nurturing environment, and every parent deserves to know that those entrusted with their child's education have been thoroughly and properly vetted. SB 845 helps achieve that by providing another tool for administrators to use in their hiring process to add another element of security to prevent individuals with a history of misconduct from slipping through the cracks and harming students or school personnel.

SB 845 - Local Education Agencies - Educator Scree

Uploaded by: Mary Pat Fannon

Position: FWA



Mary Pat Fannon, Executive Director
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BILL: SB 845

TITLE: Local Education Agencies - Educator Screening - NASDTEC Clearinghouse (School Personnel Vetting and Hiring Transparency Act)

DATE: March 5, 2025

POSITION: Favorable with Amendments

COMMITTEE: 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 local school superintendents, **supports** Senate Bill 845 **with a requested amendment to remove the requirement to retroactively screen all current educators using this clearinghouse.**

This bill requires that each local school system become an associate member of the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC) and use its Educator Identification Clearinghouse to screen all current and prospective educators, beginning July 1, 2025.

While the administrative costs for NASDTEC are minimal and, as indicated in the fiscal note, many Maryland school systems are already members, we oppose the bill's requirement that systems retroactively screen all current educators. For systems with thousands of employees, this requirement is unreasonable, especially due to the existing and extensive security clearances and background checks required for school employees.

While the NASDTEC is a national collection point for professional educator discipline actions, it is a self-reporting database that should be seen as one tool, but not the epitome in the employment vetting process.

For the Committee's information, below is information PSSAM solicited from the 24 LEAs last fall regarding background and clearance tools; approximately 16 school systems provided feedback. The survey did not include the following methods as they are currently required by law:

- Fingerprinting: State and FBI results (note: these include a criminal check, but also the Adam Walsh Background Clearance Request form (DHR/SSA 1279A (03/2017 edition))
- Form I-9 (by paper and by E-Verify where available)
- Md. Code, Educ. §6-113.2 Child Sexual Abuse and Sexual Misconduct review (“HB 486 review”)
- Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) TEACH database review

Other screening tools used, not listed above included:

- MD Judiciary Case Search as an additional inquiry when applicable
- CJIS fingerprinting
- Workday Recruiting
- MSDE Disqualified Substitute List and Department of Social Services for any claims of child abuse
- AppliTrack (Unified Talent/PowerSchool)
- Talent Ed (PowerSchool) (an application and form tracking system that can be used to keep forms such as 6-113 requirement)
- Frontline
- Basic Google search
- Drug testing; Internal database review

In addition, it was reported by one school system that the MSDE-managed TEACH portal cross references data from the NASDTEC system; but PSSAM has been unable to verify this at this time.

As you can see, Maryland school systems take their responsibility to ensure the safety of students and staff very seriously, as well as ensuring the validity of teaching credentials.

Therefore, PSSAM **supports** Senate Bill 845 but kindly requests **an amendment to remove the requirement that school systems retroactively screen all current educators using the NASDTEC.**

SB 845 - Local Ed Agencies-Ed Screening-NASDTEC CI

Uploaded by: Brian Dulay

Position: UNF



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BILL: Senate Bill 845
TITLE: Local Education Agencies – Educator Screening – NASDTEC Clearinghouse (School Personnel Vetting and Hiring Transparency Act)
HEARING DATE: March 5, 2025
POSITION: UNFAVORABLE
COMMITTEE: Education, Energy, and the Environment
CONTACT: Brian Dulay, Government Relations Director, (bdulay@mabe.org)

The Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE), representing all the state’s local boards of education, opposes Senate Bill 845, Local Education Agencies – Educator Screening – NASDTEC Clearinghouse (School Personnel Vetting and Hiring Transparency Act).

MABE believes the principle of local governance by boards of education is fundamental to a sound system of public education. This bill imposes a local government mandate. This legislation would require each local education agency in the State to become an associate member of the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC) to utilize the Educator Identification Clearinghouse for screening educators and individuals who apply to be educators. It would also require each educator employed within the local school system to become a member of NASDTEC by July 1, 2025.

The needs of local school districts vary greatly from one school system to another and the local governance authority of boards of education in Maryland is continuously challenged by state initiatives. That authority is also challenged by unfunded mandates, as the new requirements of this legislation do not include a budget allocation for the state to support local usage of this Clearinghouse.

For these reasons, **MABE respectfully requests an unfavorable report on Senate Bill 845.**



Letter Explaining Clearinghouse.pdf

Uploaded by: Jimmy Adams

Position: INFO



I am writing to introduce the NASDTEC Educator Identification Clearinghouse (Clearinghouse), a vital resource for ensuring the integrity of the educator workforce across jurisdictions. Established in 1985, the Clearinghouse enables state licensing agencies, local school districts, and colleges of education to verify whether an individual has had administrative actions taken against a license they held before issuing a new license in another state, being employed by a school district, or admitted into an education preparation program.

Unlike criminal background checks, the Clearinghouse contains records of administrative actions, which may include admonishments, suspensions, or revocations—depending on respective state statutes and regulations. Since most misconduct cases are handled administratively rather than through criminal courts, these incidents often do not appear in standard background checks unless they were the result of criminal charges. This makes the Clearinghouse an essential tool for identifying individuals who may pose a risk to students but would otherwise go undetected through traditional screening methods.

The Clearinghouse is supported by all 50 U.S. states, the Department of Defense Education Activity (DODEA), Ontario, and Guam. Local school districts and colleges of education can access this resource by becoming associate members of NASDTEC and subscribing to the service. By incorporating the Clearinghouse into background screening procedures, local school districts can make more informed hiring and admission decisions, strengthening their risk management strategies and safeguarding students.

Each year, approximately 6,000 educators face adverse actions against their licenses. While these cases represent only a fraction of the total educator workforce, the impact of even a single failure in the screening process can be significant. The Clearinghouse provides a proactive approach to preventing individuals with prior infractions from moving undetected between states and positions.

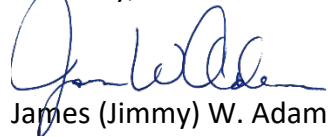
To maximize the effectiveness of the Clearinghouse, it is recommended that hiring managers and educator preparation programs:

- Conduct thorough reference checks, including with previous employers.
- Ask applicants whether they have ever faced administrative actions against any professional license.
- Implement ethics training for all school district staff, within educator preparation curricula, and as a requirement for licensure renewal.

By leveraging the Clearinghouse, local school districts and colleges of education can better protect students and uphold the high standards of the teaching profession. If you have any

questions or would like further information about accessing the Clearinghouse, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jimmy Adams", written over a light blue horizontal line.

James (Jimmy) W. Adams

Executive Director

NASDTEC

