

# **SB 916 JCRC Educate to Stop the Hate Act.pdf**

Uploaded by: deborah miller

Position: FAV



**Testimony in SUPPORT of *Senate Bill 916 –***  
***Education - Curriculum Standards – Antihate and Holocaust Education***  
***(Educate to Stop the Hate Act) –***  
**Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee**  
**March 5, 2025**

The Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Washington (JCRC) serves as the public affairs and community relations arm of the Jewish community. We represent over 100 Jewish organizations and synagogues throughout Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia. The JCRC is strongly committed to cultivating a society based on mutual respect, justice, and equity. We work throughout the region to advocate for our agencies that serve the most vulnerable residents on a non-sectarian basis and to campaign for important policy interests on behalf of the Jewish community and all Marylanders.

Senate Bill 916 requires that the State Board of Education develop curriculum standards and resources for antihate and Holocaust education. The Bill applies to elementary, middle and high school classrooms in all public and nonpublic schools that receive state funding. Additionally, the curriculum would include utilizing historical contexts that have led to contemporary racism and prejudice and the Holocaust. It also will revise the high school history framework to include the contributions of historically disadvantaged racial and ethnic groups.

We are living in a time of heightened hate where every marginalized community seems to be under attack. Senate Bill 916 is a critical piece of legislation to combat such hatred. Students of all ages need to understand history, including bigotry and prejudice, so that horrific events of the past - like the Holocaust - will never be repeated. We are grateful that in the last year, the Maryland State Department of Education's Educate to Stop the Hate Committee has recommended improvements to the Social Studies curriculum. In fact, several JCRC suggestions have been incorporated such as including the Holocaust when talking about authoritarian regimes in the 1900s, including antisemitism when discussing the Bubonic Plague, and when analyzing cultural norms in the 1920s, discussing perpetuating various forms of discrimination such as antisemitism.

While we recognize the importance of these curriculum changes, the JCRC also supports codifying Holocaust Education, especially as antisemitism continues to rise to unacceptable and unprecedented levels. According to the ADL, Maryland ranked 7th in the nation for the highest number of antisemitic incidents, and since October 7th, 2023, there has been a 300% increase in antisemitic incidents, many of these in Montgomery County Public Schools. SB 916 is not a panacea, but it certainly is a necessary step to help stem the tide and fight back against the

harmful impact of hatred which undermines the very fabric of our society. For these reasons, we ask for a favorable report on SB 916.

# **SB0916 Education - Curriculum Standards - Requirem**

Uploaded by: Jeremy Browning

Position: FAV



**Maryland Commission  
on LGBTQIA+ Affairs**

**Bill Title:** Education - Curriculum Standards - Requirements (Educate to Stop the Hate Act)

**Bill Number(s):** [SB0916](#)

**Position:** FAVORABLE

**Date:** March 3, 2025

**Submitted by:** Jeremy Browning, Director of the Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs

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**To:**

**Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee**

The Hon. Brian J. Feldman, Chair  
The Hon. Cheryl C. Kagan, Vice Chair

**Testimony on behalf of the Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs:**

The Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs, created by the Maryland General Assembly, works to serve LGBTQIA+ Marylanders by galvanizing community voices, researching and addressing challenges, and advocating for policies that advance equity and inclusion. The Commission envisions a Maryland where all LGBTQIA+ people can live full and authentic lives. As a vital resource, the Commission collaborates with public officials, agencies, and community partners to ensure the rights and dignity of LGBTQIA+ Marylanders are protected and respected.

The Commission strongly supports SB 916, which establishes robust curriculum standards to counteract hate, bigotry, and prejudice in Maryland's schools. The Educate to Stop the Hate Act ensures that students learn about the historical roots and modern consequences of discrimination, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to foster an inclusive and just society.

A diverse and inclusive curriculum is essential to student success and well-being. Studies consistently show that when students see their identities represented in education, they experience higher levels of engagement, improved academic performance, and greater self-esteem. The [2021 GLSEN National School Climate Survey](#) found that LGBTQIA+ students in schools with LGBTQIA+-inclusive curricula had:

- Higher GPAs,
- Lower levels of depression,
- Greater interest in post-secondary education, and
- Decreased exposure to biased language and victimization.

Despite these benefits, only 26.7% of LGBTQIA+ youth in Maryland reported learning about positive representations of LGBTQIA+ history or contributions in school. Hate and discrimination thrive in environments where people lack knowledge of diverse experiences. SB 916 takes a critical step toward addressing this gap by mandating history and social studies instruction that includes the histories of historically marginalized communities, including LGBTQIA+ individuals.

For these reasons, the Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs urges a favorable report on SB 916.

### **References:**

GLSEN. (2022). *The 2021 National School Climate Survey: The experiences of LGBTQ+ youth in our nation's schools*. Retrieved from:  
<https://www.glsen.org/research/2021-national-school-climate-survey>

# **SB916\_MSEA\_Lamb\_FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Lauren Lamb

Position: FAV

**FAVORABLE**  
**Senate Bill 916**  
**Education - Curriculum Standards - Requirements**  
**(Educate to Stop the Hate Act)**

**Senate Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment**  
**March 5, 2025**

**Lauren Lamb**  
**Government Relations**

The Maryland State Education Association supports Senate Bill 916, which would establish the Department's process for developing, reviewing, and adopting content standards, curriculum standards, and curriculum resources routinely and in a manner that reflects the history of marginalized groups. It would also require that local curriculum guides and courses of study established by county boards of education be aligned with State content standards, curriculum standards, and curriculum resources.

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).

Students deserve an education that is inclusive, historically accurate, and values dignity for all. Comprehensive, multicultural curricula that grapple honestly with history is essential to developing students who are aware of, appreciate, and respect the history and contributions of all people.

This legislation brings necessary attention to the contributions and histories of groups that have for too long been obscured or omitted in curricula. Standards revisions that focus on the root causes and historical context of marginalization will help ensure that students understand the dangers of prejudice, discriminatory policies, and abuses of power. By including stakeholder input – such as that of educators, families, and members of

underrepresented communities – we can ensure that school curricula reflect the experiences of groups as diverse as Maryland's student body.

We appreciate the language in this bill ensuring that updated content is incorporated into the frameworks rather than expanding the quantity of instruction required. Educators have finite instructional time in the school year, and in improving the accuracy and depth of our curricula, we do not want to reduce the overall time available for each standard. In cases where local boards are not in compliance with aligning standards, we would urge remedies other than withholding funds, which harms students and educators.

Going forward, we would support the provision of substantive, paid, and possibly credit eligible professional development to enhance educators' content knowledge on teaching the revised standards. It is essential that students receive an accurate and complete account of history so that they can work toward a better future, and educators must be empowered with the support they need to teach that history effectively.

**We urge the committee to issue a favorable report on Senate Bill 916.**

# **Curriculum Standards - Requirements (Educate to St**

Uploaded by: Nicole Hollywood

Position: FAV



## LEGISLATIVE TESTIMONY

Bill: **SB916 Education - Curriculum Standards - Requirements (Educate to Stop the Hate Act)**

Organization: PFLAG Salisbury Inc., PO Box 5107, Salisbury Maryland 21802

Submitted by: Nicole Hollywood, Board Member

Position: **FAVORABLE**

This testimony is being submitted in FAVOR of SB 916 on behalf of PFLAG Salisbury. SB 916 would involve the development of grade-level appropriate evidence-based content and curriculum standards and resources to promote antihate education using associated historical contexts that have led to racism and prejudice in society.

Hate speech and bullying has a deleterious impact on young people jeopardizing adolescents' well-being and social integration. Compounding matter hate in our schools is on the rise. In early 2024, the FBI released a special report about hate crimes in schools finding that hate crime offenses at elementary and secondary schools more than doubled from 2018 to 2022.

Anti-hate education is important because it helps build tolerance, prevent violence, fosters safer schools and communities, promote respect and understanding, increases bystander intervention, and empowers individuals to actively challenge harmful stereotypes and discriminatory behaviors.

Hate crimes and bullying can be prevented by teaching students to recognize and respond to hate speech and behaviors. Further, educating learners about hate helps create environments where everyone feels welcome and safe. Finally, by countering hate speech with truthful information, we can promote mutual understanding and respect for diversity.

According to the National Crime Prevention Council "Educating police, schools, students, and communities about hate and bias helps create healthy, safe, and violence-free environments in which children can learn. "

A 2023 study published in the Journal of Adolescent Health (Wachs et al., 2023) examined the impact of the newly developed anti-hate speech prevention program, "HateLess. Together against Hatred", on adolescents' empathy, self-efficacy, and counter-speech. The researchers found that antihate education is an effective, cost-efficient approach to enhance adolescents' counter-speech directly and indirectly by altering the skills they need to become informed citizens in democratic societies.

Greenblatt and Koss (2024) explored the impact of multicultural, culturally responsive and anti-bias education as well as critical theory finding that education is the best tool in fighting hate, reducing antisemitism, and influencing policy and practice.

In conclusion, Senate Bill 916 is an important bill that aligns in ensuring that Maryland Schools are safe inclusive environments for all learners, and we recommend a favorable report in committee.

Greenblatt, D. and Koss, M.D. (2024), "Antisemitism as an integral part of anti-bias educational policies and practices", *Journal for Multicultural Education*, Vol. 18 No. 4, pp. 385-395.  
<https://doi.org/10.1108/JME-08-2023-0072>

Wachs, S., Krause, N., Wright, M. F., & Gámez-Guadix, M. (2023). Effects of the Prevention Program "HateLess. Together against Hatred" on Adolescents' Empathy, Self-efficacy, and Countering Hate Speech. *Journal of youth and adolescence*, 52(6), 1115–1128. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-023-01753-2>

# **MDCAPE - ED TO STOP HATE - FAV w AMEND - 25.pdf**

Uploaded by: Ariel Sadwin

Position: FWA



## SENATE EDUCATION, ENERGY, AND THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

MARCH 5, 2025

### SENATE BILL 916 EDUCATION - CURRICULUM STANDARDS - REQUIREMENTS (EDUCATE TO STOP THE HATE ACT) FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS

Maryland CAPE is our state's chapter and one of 40 state chapters of the Council for American Private Education. Our network includes the Catholic, Christian, Evangelical Lutheran, Friends, Independent, Jewish, Lutheran, Montessori, Muslim, and Seventh Day Adventist school communities. We speak on behalf of over 135,000 nonpublic school students attending over one thousand nonpublic schools across our great state of Maryland.

Senate Bill 916 recognizes that “hate, bigotry, and prejudice undermine the very fabric of our society,” and that “hateful sentiment is reaching unprecedented levels in contemporary society.” As an attempt to combat this alarming trend, SB 916 would require various curriculum standards focusing on the teaching of the historical context of prejudice and persecution, the history and contributions of minorities, and the history of marginalized groups.

Following developments from last year's legislation, this year's bill would require some, but not all, nonpublic schools to follow the curriculum requirements. As currently amended, the bill includes nonpublic schools holding a Certificate of Approval from the Maryland State Department of Education in its requirements, but exempts nonpublic schools that are operated by a bona fide church organization, commonly referred to as “church exempt” schools.

We share the concern about the rise of hate, and support efforts to combat it. At the same time, we view it as imperative that the operational and educational independence of Maryland's nonpublic school community be maintained. Our schools provide proper historical education on the educational subjects outlined by the bill. At the same time, our schools tailor their lessons to meet their students' needs. The value of allowing Maryland's nonpublic schools to craft their curriculum independently (while ensuring they meet State licensing, approval, and institutional requirements) is long recognized, and should not be compromised, admirable as the intent may be.

Many of our schools hold a Certificate of Approval from the Department of Education but are not classified as “church exempt,” and it is important that these schools too are allowed to retain their educational integrity. As such, we respectfully ask that the bill be **amended** to “encourage” (rather than require) all nonpublic schools to include the curriculum, expanding the current language of page 6, line 24 – Section (B)(2) – to allow

educational independence for all nonpublic schools, whether church-exempt or simply holders of a Certificate of Approval, and striking the language requiring certain nonpublic schools to follow the curriculum.

Alternatively, we would respectfully ask that all references to nonpublic schools be removed entirely from the bill, allowing them to retain their educational independence.

### **Amendment to Senate Bill 916**

#### **Amendment No. 1**

On Page 6, line 59, strike: “and all nonpublic schools in the State that hold a Certificate of Approval issued by the State Board of Education under § 2–206 of the Education Article”

#### **Amendment No. 2**

On Page 6, line 24, strike: “A nonpublic school that is operated by a registered bona fide church organization or that has not been approved by the State Board under § 2–206 of the Education Article, is” and insert: “NONPUBLIC SCHOOLS ARE”

# **MD Catholic Conference\_SB 916\_FWA.pdf**

Uploaded by: Garrett O'Day

Position: FWA



**March 5, 2025**

**SB 916**

**Education - Curriculum Standards - Requirements (Educate to Stop the Hate Act)**

**Senate Education, Energy and the Environment Committee**

**Position: FAVORABLE w/ AMENDMENT**

The Maryland Catholic Conference offers this testimony in support of Senate Bill 916, with amendments. We offer this testimony on behalf of the families of approximately 50,000 students served by more than 150 PreK-12 Catholic schools in Maryland. The Catholic Conference is the public policy representative of the three (arch)dioceses serving Maryland, which together encompass over one million Marylanders. Statewide, their parishes, schools, hospitals and numerous charities combine to form our state's second largest social service provider network, behind only our state government.

Senate Bill 916 would require the State Department of Education to develop guidelines on instructional content on the Holocaust and other historical contexts that have led to contemporary racism and prejudice. Based on amendments to this legislation from last year that have been retained in the 2025 version, nonpublic schools would be required to include this instructional curriculum *only if they hold a Certificate of Approval through the State Department of Education, as opposed to being a "church exempt", operated by the bona fide church organization.* The rationale behind this amendment likely presumes that nonpublic schools holding a Certificate of Approval church exempt schools are not operated by a bona fide church organization, which is not the case. A significant number, if not a majority, are in fact operated or affiliated by a church organization. (See MSDE Nonpublic School Approval Branch)

**Thus, we respectfully urge this committee to AMEND this legislation to reflect that all nonpublic schools are "encouraged" to include the curriculum, as reflected starting on page 6, line 24 (Section (B)(2)) pertaining to the church exempt schools, whether the schools hold a Certificate of Approval or are church exempt. Alternatively, nonpublic schools could be removed entirely from the legislation, as curriculum upon them should never be mandated or dictated by the state.**

The Conference appreciates the end goal of this legislation. Teaching about the horrors and historical atrocities of the Holocaust and racism is indubitably important. However, what makes nonpublic schools unique is their instructional autonomy. Catholic schools teach units on racism

and the Holocaust in their own dedicated way. Accordingly, we respectfully request that the state not dictate their particular curriculum as independent schools.

While an unintended consequence, this bill may do a disservice to both students and the important subject matter that this bill intends to promote. If nonpublic schools have a stronger or more robust curriculum or teaching on the subject matter of this bill, including but not limited to supplemental projects and the like, the state's dictation of curriculum may weaken that. At best, an amendment allowing nonpublic schools flexibility through substantial equivalency with the state guidelines would be a second option. For example, should the state dictate to a Jewish day school what they should teach about the Holocaust?

Nonpublic schools are approved and/or licensed by the State Department of Education and meet all institutional requirements placed on them by law. However, Maryland law regards nonpublic school curriculum as independent of that of our public schools for numerous reasons and this bill mandates particular curriculum on certain nonpublic schools.

To the extent that curriculum is more than encouraged, but is rather mandated, on nonpublic schools in the state, we respectfully disagree. As most nonpublic schools do already teach about the holocaust in their own way, oftentimes even more comprehensively, we ask that they continue to be given the autonomy to do so.

## **Amendment to Senate Bill 916**

### **Amendment No. 1**

On page 6, line 19, strike: "and all nonpublic schools in the State that hold a Certificate of Approval issued by the State Board of Education under § 2–206 of the Education Article"

### **Amendment No. 2**

On page 6, line 24, strike: "A nonpublic school that is operated by a registered bona fide church organization or that has not been approved by the State Board under § 2–206 of the Education Article, is" and insert: "NONPUBLIC SCHOOLS ARE"

# **SB916.Favorable with Amendments.WCFS.pdf**

Uploaded by: Joel Fischer

Position: FWA

# Wellspring Christian Family Schools

Formerly Walkersville Christian Family Schools

16827 Sabillasville Rd, Sabillasville, MD 21780; Phone: 301-241-2072

Fax: 301-241-2073; Email: [admin@wcfs.edu](mailto:admin@wcfs.edu); [wcfs.edu](http://wcfs.edu) Established 1983

*"God forbid that I should forsake the inheritance of my Fathers." (1 Kings 21:3)*



March 5, 2025

The Maryland Senate  
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee  
Honorable Chair, Senator Brian J. Feldman  
Honorable Vice Chair, Senator Cheryl C. Kagan  
Members of the Committee


## Re: SB0916-Maryland "Educate to Stop the Hate" Act; Favorable with Amendments Testimony

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Committee:

I am the administrator for Wellspring Christian Family Schools. Operating since 1983, Wellspring Christian Family Schools is an educational institution operated by Walkersville Christian Fellowship, Inc. Wellspring is recognized by the MSDE as a church-exempt, K-12 nonpublic school and homeschool umbrella.

As a Christian school that firmly believes that every person is made in the image of God, we are supportive of the objective of SB 916 to educate Maryland students about the horrific consequences (such as the transatlantic slave trade and the Holocaust) that occur when that fundamental principle is disregarded. We see SB 916 as a substantive attempt to implement the oft-quoted maxim: "Those who don't know their history are doomed to repeat it." This is why Wellspring students are exposed to and educated about these issues in the regular course of their studies.

Our one structural concern about SB 916 is the language in Section 2(b)(2): "A nonpublic school that is operated by a registered bona fide church organization or that has not been approved by the State Board under § 2-206 of the Education Article **is encouraged** to include in the school's social studies and history curriculum at least a unit of instruction on the topics described in subsection (a) of this section or based on the content standards and curriculum standard adopted by the State Board under subsection (a) of this section." Maryland Education Article 2-206(e)(4) clearly exempts educational institutions operated by bona fide church organizations from State program and curriculum requirements. The language of SB 916 unnecessarily infringes on the recognized autonomy of Maryland church-exempt schools in developing and implementing their curriculum. We would therefore respectfully request that **SB 916 be amended to remove Section 2(b)(2), and that language be added to Section 2(b)(1) that states that nonpublic schools operated by registered bona fide church organizations are exempted from the requirements, as their legal status requires.**

Sincerely,  
  
Joel Fischer, J.D.

Administrator  
Wellspring Christian Family Schools

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Gary Cox  
Superintendent

Becky Wyand  
Academic Supervisor

Joel Fischer  
Administration

# **Agudah Testimony - SB916 - ED TO STOP HATE - FAV w**

Uploaded by: Rabbi Ariel Sadwin

Position: FWA



**Rabbi Ariel Sadwin**  
Executive Director

**Mr. Avi Lencz**  
Associate Director

**SENATE EDUCATION, ENERGY AND THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

**SENATE BILL 916**

**EDUCATION - CURRICULUM STANDARDS - REQUIREMENTS**

**(EDUCATE TO STOP THE HATE ACT)**

**MARCH 5, 2025**

**FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS**

Agudath Israel of Maryland speaks on behalf of the Orthodox Jewish communities across Maryland, on behalf of the 10,000 students attending 30 Jewish day schools in our great state, and on behalf of the many but dwindling number of survivors of the Holocaust and their families, who are such an important part of our communities.

We are fully supportive of the intent of the sponsors of this bill and applaud their great sensitivity to these issues. We fully concur with the statements in the preamble to this act, that “hate, bigotry, and prejudice undermine the very fabric of our society,” and we share the deep concern voiced in the preamble that “hateful sentiment is reaching unprecedented levels in contemporary society.” As an attempt to combat this alarming trend, Senate Bill 916 would require various curriculum standards focusing on the teaching of the historical context of prejudice and persecution, especially in the context of the impact on marginalized groups.

In its current, revised form, SB 916 would require some, but not all, nonpublic schools to follow the curriculum requirements. Based on amendments from last year’s legislation, the bill includes nonpublic schools holding a Certificate of Approval from the Maryland State Department of Education in its requirements, but exempts nonpublic schools that are operated by a bona fide church organization, commonly referred to as “church exempt” schools.

We share the concern about the rise of hate, and support efforts to combat it. At the same time, we do wish to voice the following perspective: the state should not dictate the particulars of curriculum to its nonpublic schools. Very many of our students are themselves from historically marginalized communities. Our students do receive proper historical education on the subjects of the historical contexts leading to discrimination and prejudice, on the Holocaust and other horrific crimes of history, and on the contributions of minorities (in addition to education opportunities outside of school); other nonpublic school students in Maryland do so as well. The value of allowing Maryland’s nonpublic schools to craft their curriculum independently (while ensuring they meet State licensing, approval, and institutional requirements) is long recognized, and should not be compromised, admirable as the intent may be. Many of our schools hold a Certificate of Approval from the Department of Education but are not classified as “church exempt,” and it is important that these schools too are allowed to retain their educational integrity.

As such, we respectfully ask that the bill be amended to preserve the autonomy of nonpublic schools, either by changing the language to “encouraging” nonpublic schools to include these units in their curriculum, or simply by striking the nonpublic school language entirely. Thank you.

### **Amendment to Senate Bill 1058**

#### **Amendment No. 1**

On Page 6, line 19, strike: “and all nonpublic schools in the State that hold a Certificate of Approval issued by the State Board of Education under § 2–206 of the Education Article”

#### **Amendment No. 2**

On Page 6, line 24, strike: “A nonpublic school that is operated by a registered bona fide church organization or that has not been approved by the State Board under § 2–206 of the Education Article, is” and insert: “NONPUBLIC SCHOOLS ARE”

# **SB0916-Unfavorable-Educate to Stop the Hate Act.pd**

Uploaded by: Jade Chang

Position: UNF

SB0916-Unfavorable-Curriculum Standards Requirements (Educate to Stop the Hate Act)  
WOKE Political Indoctrination

The bill takes away parental rights and limit parental input in choosing or opting out sensitive topics. It is an overreach in curriculum mandates. To focus on students' academic subjects such as English and Math first before we add any more subjects is more practical.

# **Oppose SB916 Woke Indoctrination.pdf**

Uploaded by: Nancy Shih

Position: UNF

I strongly oppose SB916 Woke Indoctrination

Maryland's schools are already failing too many students in math and reading, well below national levels; the State should prioritize fixing these core deficiencies over aligning curricula to new, possibly ideologically charged standards

The bill is an overreach! It dictates specific narratives rather than allowing local school boards, educators, and parents to determine age-appropriate and balanced instruction. It shifts focus away from core academic subjects, adding to the burden of already packed curricula.

Please vote No/Unfavorable to SB916!

Nancy Shih

Howard County

# **Montgomery County Board of Education Testimony\_SB**

Uploaded by: Patricia Ursprung

Position: UNF



# MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

*Expanding Opportunity and Unleashing Potential*

15 West Gude Drive ♦ Suite 100 ♦ Rockville, Maryland 20850

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BILL: SB 916

TITLE: Education - Curriculum Standards - Requirements (Educate to Stop the Hate Act)

DATE: March 5, 2025

POSITION: Oppose

COMMITTEE: Education, Energy, and the Environment

CONTACT: Patricia Ursprung, Coordinator, Legislative Affairs

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The Montgomery County Board of Education opposes Senate Bill 916.

This bill requires that certain curriculum guides and courses of study established by county boards of education be aligned with certain content standards, curriculum standards, and curriculum resources, and dictates what those content standards, curriculum standards, and curricular resources must contain.

On September 26, 2024, the Montgomery County Board of Education adopted a legislative platform that contains priority issues and ongoing concerns. One of the ongoing concerns is preserving local autonomy. Based on this platform position, the Montgomery County Board of Education opposes legislation that would infringe on local control. Bills that fall into this category require specific school system action and may impact areas such as school calendars, school start times, curriculum, testing, procurement, and other operational decision-making.

Senate Bill 916 infringes on local control because it imposes a curricular mandate. As a result, the Montgomery County Board of Education opposes Senate Bill 916.

## **No on SB0916.pdf**

Uploaded by: Rebekah Esko

Position: UNF

No on SB0916

Hate crimes must be condemned in the strongest terms and prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. This bill, however, is not going to solve or prevent hate crimes.

Every school is already required to teach history including the Holocaust and contributions of diverse and marginalized populations. Top-down ideologically-driven mandates for academic subjects like this are not helpful. There is no need for this bill and it will cause more harm than good. It creates an adversarial relationship between legislators and the dedicated teachers, school boards, communities, and others involved in education.

Teachers and school districts already have curricula and course materials. The process of reviewing and rewriting and verifying that the plans have the exact focus mandated in this bill disrespects professional educators and the work they have already done and are doing to teach students an accurate and balanced view of history.

The bill specifically focuses on the Holocaust, which is important subject that is already taught in history classes. Additional emphasis on the Holocaust means less time for other significant historical events including China's cultural revolution and the effects of communism and Marxism.

This bill threatens schools with withholding funds and establishes a dangerous precedent of legislative micromanagement and investigation of school curriculum and classroom teaching. Which topics will be next? How many times will teachers have to prove their lesson plans meet this or that new detailed mandate? If the political/ideological balance of the legislature changes, the mandates will swing in the opposite direction.

I urge an unfavorable report on SB0916

# **SB0916 Howard Co BOE Testimony 030525 for EEE - St**

Uploaded by: Staff Howard County

Position: UNF



**Board of Education  
of Howard County**

Jolene Mosley, *Chair*

Linfeng Chen, Ph.D., *Vice Chair*

Andrea Chamblee, Esq.

Jennifer Swickard Mallo

Jacky McCoy

Meg Ricks

Antonia Watts

James Obasiolu  
*Student Member*

William J. Barnes  
*Superintendent,  
Secretary/Treasurer*

**Board of Education of Howard County  
Testimony Submitted to the Maryland Senate,  
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee  
March 5, 2025**

**SB0916: UNFAVORABLE**

**Education - Curriculum Standards - Requirements (Educate to Stop the Hate Act)**

The Board of Education of Howard County (the Board) oppose **Education - Curriculum Standards - Requirements (Educate to Stop the Hate Act)** as a curriculum mandate.

SB916 broadly encompasses curriculum development and school system requirements around the use of updated standards developed by the State for all subject levels. Initially, the bill defines “content standards” as the statements for the program of instruction that describe the knowledge and skills students are expected to attain for each content area and grade level, “curriculum resources” as guidance documents and frameworks used by a county board to develop curricula to implement content standards, and “curriculum standards” as the statements that outline approaches to learning for each content area across grade levels. Based on these definitions, the bill requires content standards and curriculum standards developed by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to: include evidence-based practices and the science of instruction to ensure that all students meet their full potential; consider the impact on all students with a strategic focus on marginalized student groups; and reflect the history of marginalized groups with particular consideration of the associated historical context and root causes. Content standards and curriculum standards must be reviewed and updated by MSDE at least every eight years. Lastly, if a county board fails to establish curriculum resources and courses of study aligned with the content standards and curriculum standards developed by MSDE, the State Superintendent may withhold funds.

These amendments have the effect of tipping the traditional balance between State oversight and local control over the delivery of education in Maryland to a one-sided authority. Staff reads the definition of “curriculum standards” as the indicators and objectives found in the current [MSDE Social Studies Framework](#). While these are used as guidance at the local level, professional curriculum staff employed by the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) use their expertise to determine the best approach to teaching the broader subject requirements in a way that fits local needs. As a legislative platform the Board supports local decision making in the development of curriculum that accounts for a balance of educational practices, available resources, public input, and accountability that is informed and guided by State Board established standards and models, rather than legislative mandates to strictly follow every element of the guidelines established by the MSDE. Legislation which limits local board decision-making authority may weaken the Board’s bond with the local community and adversely impact the community’s participation in the governance and operation of the school system.

In the preamble to the bill, the sponsors address the fact that overreach into school system operations through legislation is not the norm, stating “WHEREAS, It is a policy of the General Assembly to avoid legislating the instruction of the public school system, but the unprecedented expressions of hate, bigotry, and prejudice have reached a critical and alarming mass requiring that the General Assembly take unprecedented policy action to best achieve outcomes for the people of the State.” While staff agrees with the intent of SB0916, the bill reflects a fundamental flaw in root

cause analysis. Data around the rise of hate crimes can and should be tied to causes outside the control of schools.

Within the uncodified language of the bill, SB0916 includes curriculum mandates for social studies at all grade levels to include specific focus on racism, prejudice, and the Holocaust. By the 2026-2027 school year, the bill indicates the General Assembly intends to have all county boards of education establish curriculum resources aligned with the new content standards and curriculum standards to be established above.

While the extent is unable to be estimated, any changes to State standards will result in changes to local school system materials as well as time and resources involved in teacher preparation on the new content. Curriculum staff are already inundated with changes from the current 10-year cycle of review by the State. The Grades 6 and 7 Social Studies Framework linked above, for instance, was recently released. Staff also does not believe MSDE has the resources to do the mandated review within a six-month period, nor would local school systems be able to implement resulting changes within six months after MSDE adopts. It is also unclear how some of the topics would be taught as specified. What type of standard would be written to address “torture” for instance? While curriculum might address historical actions of genocide and crimes against humanity, a standard that specifically outlines these topics is not reflective of best practices for either a culturally responsive or trauma informed classroom.

While staff opposes this section of the bill because of both the unfunded mandate and the removal of local discretion, many of the topics outlined are already taught by HCPSS.

At the high school level, the Holocaust and genocide are dealt with in multiple places throughout current HCPSS curriculum. In 9th grade students evaluate the U.S. response to the Holocaust during and after World War II. The 10th grade American Government curriculum includes a performance task on the U.S. response (non-response) to the genocide in Rwanda as a case study of U.S. foreign policy. Students also have an opportunity to evaluate how the genocide in Rwanda impacted Burundi and how governments develop out of global crises. In Modern World History (11th grade) the content standards are very specific and taken from national history standards.

In middle school, teachers often include the Holocaust in the 7th grade unit on modern Europe and the Rwandan genocide in the 6th grade unit on Africa. These are handled with sensitivity to the age and maturity of the students. The 8th grade curriculum (and now assessment limits) includes the American treatment and removal of Native Americans during the Jacksonian Era, which falls into this category.

In elementary school, several lessons focus on “marginalized groups with particular consideration of the associated historical context and root causes of marginalization.” Students study about this marginalization by analyzing the past that begins with the enslavement of Native Americans and Africans. It then continues through the study of the civil rights movement leading to the study of the present struggle to expand civil rights to more people.

For these reasons, we urge an UNFAVORABLE report on SB0916 from this Committee.

# **Oppose SB 916.pdf**

Uploaded by: Suzie Scott

Position: UNF



**Moms for Liberty Maryland Legislative Committee urges an unfavorable report for Senate Bill 916, *Education - Curriculum Standards - Requirements (Educate to Stop the Hate Act)*** which mandates the development and enforcement of specific content standards and curriculum resources for all Maryland schools, with the potential for withholding state funds from non-compliant districts. While we recognize the importance of combating hate, bigotry, and prejudice, this bill raises significant concerns regarding educational freedom, local control, and the potential for overreach in curriculum development.

The bill gives the State Department of Education substantial control over curriculum development. This could undermine local school boards' ability to make decisions based on their unique student populations, values, and needs. Local communities should retain the flexibility to adapt educational content to reflect their particular contexts rather than being subjected to a one-size-fits-all approach dictated by the state.

The bill's broad mandate to align all curricula with certain content standards poses the risk of politicizing education. Determining what constitutes "hate" or "prejudice" may lead to the imposition of subjective or politically driven content, undermining the objectivity that should characterize our educational system.

The pressure on schools to align teaching with mandated curriculum guides and risk losing funding if they fail to comply creates unnecessary administrative burdens. It diverts attention and resources away from addressing fundamental educational needs and fostering an environment of free and open academic inquiry.

Teachers, as trained professionals, should be entrusted with the responsibility to adapt their lessons based on their expertise and understanding of students' needs. The proposed restrictions and the imposition of standard curriculum resources could stifle creativity and limit teachers' autonomy to innovate in the classroom. For these reasons, **we strongly oppose SB 916**. It is crucial that education policy respects the rights of local communities, educators, and parents to shape curricula in a way that best serves their children's educational development without undue state interference. Thank you for considering our views on SB 916.

# **SB916.Curric.Hate.25.pdf**

Uploaded by: Virginia Crespo

Position: UNF



## Maryland Retired School Personnel Association

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### **Senate Bill 0916**

### **In Opposition Of**

**Education – Curriculum Standards – Requirements**

**(Educate to Stop the Hate Act)**

**Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee**

**Hearing: March 5, 2025 – 1:00 p.m.**

Dear Honorable Senator Brain Feldman, Chair, and Honorable Senator Cheryl Kagan, Vice Chair, and distinguished Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee members,

**Maryland Retired School Personnel Association (MRSPA) opposes SB 0916 Education – Curriculum Standards – Requirements (Educate to Stop the Hate Act).**

We oppose this legislation mainly because the legislature should not be involved in mandating curriculum either for school systems, teachers or students. This should be the function of state and local school boards.

Although education against racism and prejudice in society is a worthy goal, we cannot condone legislators dictating curriculum. MRSPA is not opposed to comprehensive antihate education using the associated historical contexts that have led to racism and prejudice in society. This likely is already included in the statewide social studies curriculum. We suggest that legislators contact the appropriate staff at MSDE to learn what is already included in the social studies curriculum.

On behalf of the almost 12,000 members of the Maryland Retired School Personnel Association, we urge strong opposition to SB 0916.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth H. Weller  
President

Virginia G. Crespo  
Legislative Aide

## **SB0916- State Board- LOI.pdf**

Uploaded by: Carey Wright

Position: INFO

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

BILL: Senate Bill 0916- Education - Curriculum Standards - Requirements (Educate to Stop the Hate Act)

DATE: March 5, 2025

POSITION: Information

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The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) is providing information for consideration regarding Senate Bill (SB) 916 – Education - Curriculum Standards - Requirements (Educate to Stop the Hate Act), which requires the MSDE to create standards, update frameworks, create curricular resources, establish an aligned system of assessments, and provide technical assistance to local education agencies (LEAs) on the revision and enhancement of antihate and Holocaust instruction in Maryland’s elementary, middle, and high schools.

MSDE is appreciative of the collaboration with members of the Maryland General Assembly (GA) during the 2024 Maryland Legislative Session to address requirements included in this bill. Stemming from this collaboration, the Maryland State Board of Education (State Board) and MSDE established a process for reviewing, revising, and adopting standards, frameworks, and curricular resources on January 23, 2024. Both entities are strident in ensuring that the development of standards, frameworks, and curricular resources is conducted through this process, which includes collaboration between the State Board, MSDE, LEAs, and community members through the convening of a Standards and Frameworks Validation Committee (SFVC).

Guided by this process, SFVCs have and will continue to be convened to review and propose revisions to State Standards and Frameworks. This includes the Social Studies SFVC also known as the Educate to Stop the Hate Committee, which was initiated on June 28, 2024, to review and propose revisions to the current Maryland Social Studies Frameworks. This process aligns with the actions and principles outlined in this legislation. Changes to this established process would be duplicative and alter the timeline in which the standards will be updated, thus impacting the associated alignment of curricular resources implemented in LEAs and requiring substantial efforts to realign them.

The work of the SFVC, along with past collaboration with Maryland community members, has ensured the emphasis of antihate and Holocaust objectives within the State Social Studies Frameworks. In 2019 MSDE conducted a review of the State Social Studies Frameworks for the inclusion of Holocaust objectives. As a result of that review, MSDE revised objectives in the High School United States History and Modern World History State Frameworks with explicit language that detailed the importance of teaching the causes, course, and the consequences of the Holocaust in Modern World History as well as the origins of the Holocaust and the motives, pressures, and fears that shaped the American Response in High School US history. Additionally, in January 2024, the State Board adopted further updates to the 6th and 7th grade State Frameworks. These updates include an explicit examination of the origins of antisemitism in 6th grade and an in-depth study of the Holocaust’s role in the founding of Israel in 7th grade. Following these revisions, MSDE worked in partnership with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and the Jewish Museum of Maryland to provide professional development for LEA staff.

Further, the existing Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) 13A.01.06.04 has established regulations that address aspects of the legislation. COMAR 13A.01.06.04 provides requirements for LEAs related to curriculum development and implementation in all contents that are in alignment with the principles of this legislation related to the lens through which curriculum, pedagogy, professional learning, instructional materials, and assessment design are developed.

We respectfully request that you consider this information as you deliberate **SB 916**. Please contact Akilah Alleyne, Ph.D. (Executive Director of Government Affairs) [akilah.alleyne@maryland.gov](mailto:akilah.alleyne@maryland.gov) for any additional information.

# **SB916 Educate to Stop the Hate Act.pdf**

Uploaded by: Howard Libit

Position: INFO



**Baltimore Jewish Council**

*An agency of The Associated*

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Suburban Orthodox Congregation  
Temple Beth Shalom  
Temple Isaiah  
Zionist Organization of America  
Baltimore District

## WRITTEN TESTIMONY

### Senate Bill 916 - Education - Curriculum Standards - Requirements (Educate to Stop the Hate Act)

**March 5, 2025**

### Informational Testimony

**Background:** This legislation seeks to require a number of changes to the Maryland State Department of Education's content standards, curriculum standards, and curriculum resources, focused in the areas of Holocaust education and antisemitism, disadvantaged racial and ethnic groups, and hate. The legislation also would explicitly allow the State Superintendent to withhold funds from any local jurisdiction that fails to update its curriculum in response to changes required by the Maryland State Department of Education. Senate Bill 916 is similar to legislation introduced in the 2024 session, Senate Bill 1058.

**Written Comments:** The Baltimore Jewish Council (BJC) represents The Associated: Jewish Federation of Baltimore and all its agencies and programs, as well as the organized Jewish Community of Baltimore. The BJC strongly agrees with the underlying sentiment of the proposed legislation, that more needs to be done in public and nonpublic schools to teach about racism, prejudice, hatred, and the Holocaust.

In direct response to last year's similar legislation, MSDE established the Social Studies Standards & Frameworks Validation Committee – also known as the Educate to Stop the Hate Committee – to undertake a comprehensive review of Maryland's social studies frameworks for pre-kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. The Executive Director of the Baltimore Jewish Council served as committee co-chair.

The committee spent months reviewing the frameworks, meeting with key stakeholders, and developing recommended changes – including adding a number of specific places for expanded instructional requirements on the Holocaust and antisemitism. The 30-day public comment period on those recommendations just closed, and it is expected that the Maryland State Board of Education will be considering the recommendations at its meeting later in March. Here is a link to learn more about the changes:

<https://marylandpublicschools.org/about/Pages/DCAA/Social-Studies/SFVC.aspx>

**As the committee considers SB916, we hope this information about the social studies frameworks changes already underway will be helpful.**

*The Baltimore Jewish Council, a coalition of central Maryland Jewish organizations and congregations, advocates at all levels of government, on a variety of social welfare, economic and religious concerns, to protect and promote the interests of the Associated Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore, its agencies and the Greater Baltimore Jewish community.*