

# **2025 HB1127 Testimony For 2025-04-02.pdf**

Uploaded by: Alan Lang

Position: FAV

# Testimony For HB1127

Honorable Senators

Please enter a favorable report for HB1127.

I support

- Requiring each county board of education to develop certain instructional content on water safety for public school students in the county; and
- requiring that the instructional content be offered to students in elementary, middle, and high school.

Anne Arundel County residents are fortunate to have so much water access via the Bay, rivers or pools. Every year we hear about some school age children drowning. Hopefully this bill would help prevent drowning or greatly reduce the frequency.

I am curious about the need for such a bill. All three of my kids had a drown-proofing class as fifth graders in the early 2000s at the pool near Annapolis High School. Does this program still exist?

I lived in New York State for 2 years and being able to swim was required to graduate high school. So in the summer between 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade, I took the required class. Perhaps, swimming could be made a requirement for graduation in Maryland. Unlike Maryland, I believe all high schools in New York had a pool, so the requirement was easier to accomplish.

Regardless, please enter a favorable report for HB1127.

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April 2, 2025

## **HB1127 Public Schools (2)- Water Safety and Swimmi**

Uploaded by: Dawana Sterrette

Position: UNF

**Testimony of the  
Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners  
In Opposition of  
House Bill 1127  
Public Schools – Water Safety and Swimming – Instructional Content,  
Plan, and Reporting**

**April 2, 2025**

The Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners understands the sponsors concern about water safety and swimming and wanting to integrate instructional content on this subject in the health or physical education curriculum. The concern about access to swimming pools and the ability to take swimming and water safety courses in a pool has been removed, but we are unsure how such an instructional program can be beneficial without actual time in water.

Understanding that actual water time is essential, most schools in Baltimore City swimming pools. There are not enough recreation and parks facilities with indoor pools for students to have access in the colder months and few outdoor recreation and park facilities in the City of Baltimore to allow outdoor swimming courses.

Costs would be incurred with partnering with public and private facilities to ensure student access such as rental fees. There may also be fees associated with using the City of Baltimore swimming pools for maintenance. There would be a need to ensure there are lifeguards and a Water Safety Instructor certification for persons if schools do not currently have such a certified person on staff.

The other issue in an urban environment is transportation costs. The Board would need to bus students to and from swimming locations, which would add significant costs.

There would be costs associated with development of an age appropriate instructional content, along with professional development for physical education teachers. And, to ensure that our students with disabilities have access to water safety, in some instances, specialized equipment (e.g. pool lifts, water wheelchairs) would be needed.

While the bill does not specify the need for actual time in the water, it seems nearly impossible to have a robust curriculum that would not require time in the water.

For the foregoing reasons, the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners opposes House Bill 1127 and urges an UNFAVORABLE report.

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# **HB 1127 - xover- Public Schools - Water Safety and**

Uploaded by: Nia Callender

Position: UNF



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BILL: HB 1127  
TITLE: Public Schools - Water Safety and Swimming - Instructional Content  
DATE: April 2, 2025  
POSITION: Unfavorable  
COMMITTEE: Education, Energy and the Environment Committee  
CONTACT: Mary Pat Fannon, Executive Director, PSSAM

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The Public School Superintendents' Association of Maryland (PSSAM), on behalf of all twenty-four public school superintendents, **opposes** House Bill 1127.

This bill requires each local board of education to develop water safety instructional content by July 1, 2026, and implement it during the 2026-2027 school year. The content must (1) be integrated into the health or physical education curriculum; (2) be age-appropriate for students in elementary, middle, and high school; (3) offered at least once in elementary, middle, and high school; and (4) include opportunities for students with disabilities, if practicable.

Local superintendents recognize the importance of water safety for the health and well-being of Maryland's students. PSSAM's opposition to this bill is not based on the merits of teaching water safety, but rather opposition to statutorily mandating content and curriculum standards. PSSAM has a longstanding policy of resisting efforts to codify curriculum standards, assessments, or graduation requirements and believes the role of instructional mandates and implementation belongs to local boards of education in conjunction with MSDE.

The Maryland General Assembly, in creating the MSDE and local boards of education, has delegated to these entities the responsibility of delivering a high-quality statewide system of public education. The State Board establishes State content frameworks, state assessment standards, and minimum state graduation requirements, while each local board and school system implements locally-developed curriculum to ensure that the state content frameworks are followed, student performance standards are met, and students are prepared to meet graduation requirements.

For these reasons, PSSAM **opposes** House Bill 1127 and requests an **unfavorable report**.



# **HB1127 Howard Co BOE Testimony 040225 for EEE - Wa**

Uploaded by: Staff Howard County

Position: UNF



**Board of Education  
of Howard County**

Jolene Mosley, *Chair*

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Jennifer Swickard Mallo

Jacky McCoy

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*Superintendent,  
Secretary/Treasurer*

**Board of Education of Howard County  
Testimony Submitted to the Maryland House Senate,  
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee  
April 2, 2025**

**HB1127: UNFAVORABLE  
Public Schools - Water Safety - Instructional Content**

The Board of Education of Howard County (the Board) opposes **Public Schools - Water Safety - Instructional Content** as a mandate on educational curriculum that goes beyond the scope of what school systems are able to provide.

HB1127 requires local school systems to develop instructional content on water safety that would be incorporated into the health or physical education curriculum for each school in the county. The content must be age-appropriate for students at all levels and include opportunities for students with disabilities if practicable. Beginning in school year 2026-2027 each county board shall implement the instructional content by offering at least once in elementary, middle and high school.

New National Standards for Physical Education (PE) do include outcomes related to water safety as indicated in this bill. The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) recently formed a Standards Framework Validation Committee to determine the best approach for updating the State PE Standards based on the new National Standards. 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 as encompassed in HB1127.

Amendments made by the House prior to the passage of HB1127 removed requirements related to swimming and development of a plan for in-water training, which would have posed additional costs to local school systems including liability and teacher certification or extensive professional development to ensure staff have the proper training in swim instruction/safety when monitoring their class. While improved, the bill maintains a curriculum mandate.

For these reasons, we urge a UNFAVORABLE report on HB1127 from this Committee.

# **XHB1127\_MSEA\_Lamb\_INFO.pdf**

Uploaded by: Lauren Lamb

Position: INFO

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**INFORMATIONAL**  
**House Bill 1127**  
**Public Schools – Water Safety and Swimming – Instructional Content, Plan, and Reporting**

**Senate Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment**  
**April 2, 2025**

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

The Maryland State Education Association offers this informational testimony on House Bill 1127, which would require each county board of education to develop instructional content on water safety for public school students and require that the instructional content be offered to students in elementary, middle, and high school.

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).

MSEA tenaciously advocates for the policies and programs that will give our students access to the resources and knowledge they need to achieve their full potential, and we recognize the value of ensuring that students are informed on how to stay safe in and around water. Simultaneously, we have longstanding concerns about legislatively mandating curriculum. With finite instructional time in the school year, adding content without a comprehensive review of existing standards risks reducing the time available for each topic. We believe that it is the purview of the MSDE and the State Board of Education to develop and implement curriculum standards to meet the academic needs of the students served in Maryland's public schools. It is then the responsibility of local districts to determine how best to implement a program of study that best serves the needs of their students.

We appreciate the intent of this legislation and the goal of ensuring that all students have access to water safety instruction, and we support efforts to increase community access to swimming facilities. We believe that the State Board and local boards are best suited to determine when and how best to address this issue in currently required course content.