

HJ 5 SUPPORT

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Elementary and Secondary Education – Curriculum – Importance of Diversity

House Committee on Rules and Executive Nominations
Monday, March 3, 2025 at 12:00pm

Dear Chair Healey, Vice Chair Holmes, and members of the House Rules and Executive Nominations Committee,

My name is Kellen Sweeney. I live in Baltimore City with my husband and four-year-old child. I work in public health when I am not busy with my favorite job – being Teagan’s mama. **I am in support of House Joint Resolution 5.**

We are a gender expansive family. Our child has run into challenges at pre-kindergarten due to a lack of curriculum around diversity of family types. We were told by a school administrator that “some kids aren’t ready to hear those topics”. But the fact is that kids hear about these topics anyway – because they reflect the reality of our community. Whether the school teaches about it or not, there are still gender diverse kids and kids with gender diverse parents or siblings present. If the school does not discuss it in the curriculum, it then falls to my four-year-old to do the educating on the playground. Kids will tell them that there’s no such thing as nonbinary, that there are only boys and girls.

We can’t prevent kids from ever saying mean or invalidating things on the playground – it’s part of their learning. But we can teach kids how to be respectful, how to listen, and introduce them to concepts so that it doesn’t fall to already marginalized kids to do the educating. Does it really make sense for my four year old to teach kids about gender diverse families? Wouldn’t we all rather a trained educator introduce those concepts?

I urge the House to pass HJ 5. Especially now, we need to affirm our commitment to our community, including recognizing and respecting all members of our community.