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**HB0129 "State Board of Education - Membership - School Principal"**

**Position: Favorable**

**To: Chair Atterbeary and Members of the Ways & Means Committee**

Arts Education in Maryland Schools supports SB0113 / HB0129, which alters the membership of the State Board of Education to include a school principal as a member; and provides that the initial term of the principal member of the State Board begins July 1, 2026. [Arts Education in Maryland Schools \(AEMS\)](http://www.aems-edu.org) is a statewide nonprofit 501c(3) organization based in Baltimore City, committed to ensuring that all students in the state of Maryland have equitable access to quality arts education. As an organization invested in the success of Maryland's public schools, we ask you to give a favorable report for SB0113 / HB0129 so it can be voted on by the Senate and House of Delegates.

Research shows that principals are key to student success. Principals are also key to successful school arts programs; strong administrative support helps programs to flourish while lack thereof can cause unintended and harmful consequences such as limiting student access to this critical component of their education. Principals set the school culture and make administrative decisions that impact the arts, including scheduling, staffing, and funding allocations.

By including a principal on the State Board of Education, the Board's policies and conversations will be better informed by the lived experiences of that principal and their colleagues. With consistent input from the principal perspective, the connection between the Board's policies and school practices will be strengthened. Thank you in advance for your consideration and support.

Sincerely,

Rachel McGrain

Executive Director

Arts Education in Maryland Schools (AEMS)