

BILL: HB0129 - State Board of Education – Membership – School Principal

DATE: January 27, 2025

POSITION: Favorable

Good afternoon, members of the Ways and Means Committee,

We are a group of four students out of South River High School. We are honored to address you today as representatives of the student body. As students, our voices are not often heard in discussions about education policy, yet the decisions made by this committee and the Maryland State Board of Education directly impacts our academic experiences and futures.

We are here to advocate for House Bill HB0129, which seeks to include a principal as a member of the Maryland State Board of Education. While the current board consists of various stakeholders, including parents, students, and teachers, it lacks representation from school administration. Given their essential role in shaping the student experience and implementing education policies, it is critical that a principal has a seat at the table.

As school leaders, principals work closely with students, teachers, and staff daily, making them uniquely positioned to provide valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities within Maryland's education system. With the implementation of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future, principals are tasked with significant responsibilities, and their firsthand knowledge can help ensure that board decisions are well-informed and effectively executed.

The inclusion of a principal on the Board of Education would strengthen decision-making processes by bringing a perspective that bridges policy and practice. In addition to complementing the contributions of student, parent, and teacher representatives, an administrative member would enhance discussions on curriculum, school safety, student support services, and overall educational outcomes.

Furthermore, Maryland would be aligning with a state such as North Carolina, which have successfully integrated representation of a principal onto their state education boards.

We respectfully urge the committee to recognize the importance of principal representation and the valuable contributions they can make to shaping Maryland's education policies. Their inclusion will help ensure that the Blueprint for Maryland's Future is implemented with the insight and experience necessary to best serve students and schools.

With Maryland's diverse demographics and social landscape, adding a principal to the State Board of Education would enhance inclusivity and ensure a broader range of perspectives in decision-making.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We appreciate your dedication to improving education in Maryland and strongly encourage a favorable report on HB0129.

Sincerely,

Kaitlyn Vander Roest, Gabriella Assante, Alexis Daily, Ryan Mioduszewski