

BILL: House Bill 1492
TITLE: Collective Bargaining - Public Employees - Revocation of Certification and School and Library Employees' Right to Strike
HEARING DATE: March 11, 2026
POSITION: UNFAVORABLE
COMMITTEE: Ways and Means
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The Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE), representing all 24 local boards of education in Maryland, respectfully **opposes House Bill 1492 Collective Bargaining - Public Employees - Revocation of Certification and School and Library Employees' Right to Strike.**

House Bill 1492 would establish a right to strike for public school employees. The bill prohibits a public school employer from taking certain actions against a public school employee for supporting or participating in a strike, such as permanently replacing the employee, suspending the employee, and discriminating against the employee.

In the Federal government and in the vast majority of states, public-sector strike activity, which includes public schools, is prohibited, and this includes Maryland, where public employees have been prohibited from striking since the 1960s. School systems are unique public institutions, in that they provide education, supervision, meals, special education services, and even a safe-haven for millions of students. If public school employees were permitted to strike, all students would be affected, but most acutely, students with disabilities, English learners, and low-income students would be disproportionately harmed because they rely most heavily on school services.

In the private sector, strikes primarily affect the employer's operations or profits. However, in public education, the direct impact falls on students and families. The unintended consequences of permitting public school employees to strike would touch everything from lost instructional time to delayed special education services (potentially impacting the ability to meet FAPE under the IDEA) to potentially interrupted testing schedules to lost childcare for families. Further, for those students that rely on school for free and reduced-price breakfast, lunch, and even supper, these students would potentially go hungry on days that schools have to close due to employee strikes. This is why most states prohibit teacher strikes and instead require collective bargaining and mediation processes.

Under Education Article § 7-103, school systems must have 180 school days and a minimum of 1,080 school hours during a 10-month period in each school year. If public school employees were permitted to strike, the ability to meet this statutory requirement would be jeopardized. Schools this year are already struggling to make up days and lost instructional time due to the significant number of snow days this winter. Imagine adding make-up days for strikes on top of this.

School systems are unique and carry the weight of educating and caring for millions of children. As such, the proper avenue for resolving disputes for public school employees is the well-established collective bargaining process. For these reasons, **MABE respectfully requests an unfavorable report on House Bill 1492.**