

UNFAVORABLE
House Bill 459
State Board of Education and State Superintendent of Schools – Enforcement
Procedures – Alterations

House Ways and Means Committee
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The Maryland State Education Association opposes House Bill 459, which would dramatically shift the standard that the State Board of Education must use when considering an appeal of certain actions taken by a county board of education, such that the State Board would have incredibly narrow authority to override county board decisions. It would also establish a limit of 90 days on the duration of a stay ordered by the State Superintendent of Schools of a certain action taken by a county board.

MSEA represents 75,000 educators and school employees who work in Maryland's public schools, teaching and preparing our almost 900,000 students for the careers and jobs of the future. MSEA also represents 44 local affiliates in every county across the state of Maryland, and our parent affiliate is the 3-million-member National Education Association (NEA).

The subjective and unusually high standard of review established by this bill would effectively neutralize many efforts to appeal decisions to the State Board of Education. This represents an erosion of due process for school employees and creates a vacuum of state oversight for education policy decisions. We value local control of education decisions; it is simultaneously important to have an appeal mechanism to ensure fairness in personnel decisions and consistency with the letter and intent of statewide education policies.

We urge the committee to issue an unfavorable report on House Bill 459.