

POSITION BRIEF

SB 204 — Civic Education Enhancement Act

Submitted to the Ways and Means Committee | Maryland General Assembly, 2025 Session

Submitted by: **State Policy Lead, iCivics | In Partnership with the Maryland Civic Education Coalition (MD-CEC)**

OUR POSITION

iCivics strongly supports a favorable report on SB 204. This legislation advances Maryland's commitment to preparing all young people to be informed, engaged civic participants — an outcome that is foundational to our democracy and central to iCivics' national mission.

Maryland holds a unique position of civic education leadership nationally. SB 204 codifies and elevates that leadership — ensuring civic learning is an intentional, resourced, and assessed part of the K–12 experience for every student in the state.

As the State Policy Lead at iCivics with Maryland as part of my active portfolio, I have had a direct view of the sustained, strategic effort that has made this moment possible. The work is real. The momentum is real. The urgency is real.

ABOUT iCIVICS

iCivics is the nation's leading nonprofit dedicated to civic education. Our free, game-based learning tools reach more than 9 million students annually across all 50 states.

Through our State Policy Program, we partner with state coalitions and policymakers to advance high-quality civic education legislation and standards.

Maryland is an active part of our state portfolio. iCivics has been a sustained partner of the Maryland Civic Education Coalition (MD-CEC) in its legislative strategy and advocacy work.

THE PARTNERSHIP: iCIVICS & MARYLAND CIVIC EDUCATION COALITION

The Maryland Civic Education Coalition has grown into one of the most powerful state civic education advocacy coalitions in the country — now representing more than 70 organizations across the state. This coalition did not happen by accident. It is the product of intentional relationship-building, strategic stakeholder engagement, and a shared conviction that civic education must be central — not peripheral — to K–12 learning.

iCivics has been a committed partner in this work — lending national policy expertise, resources, and coordination support to MD-CEC's efforts. As State Policy Lead, I have worked alongside coalition members to support their advocacy days in Annapolis, strengthen their policy framework, and connect Maryland's progress to national best practices in civic education reform.

A RECORD OF RESULTS: MARYLAND'S CIVIC EDUCATION WINS

The case for SB 204 is strengthened by what Maryland has already demonstrated: that with political will, coalition power, and strategic advocacy, civic education progress is achievable. The wins below reflect the foundation on which SB 204 builds.

WIN	SIGNIFICANCE
Civic Seals Bill	Passed the Senate unanimously in 2023, 2024, and 2025 — with 26 co-sponsors including Senate President Ferguson. This unprecedented,

	sustained bipartisan support signals that civic education is not a partisan issue in Maryland. It is a shared value.
Civics Project = State Assessment	Maryland's Civics Project has been officially classified as a state assessment — a critical step in elevating civic learning to the same level of intentionality and accountability as other core academic disciplines.
Freedom to Read Act	Signed by Governor Moore in April 2024, this law protects classroom resources and student access to information — ensuring that civic education can be taught in safe, open, intellectually honest learning environments.
Media Literacy Standards	Maryland's Digital Learning Standards (2022) were adopted and are now in effect under COMAR 13A.05.04.01 — embedding media literacy into the civic education ecosystem and equipping students to navigate the modern information landscape.
Coalition Power	MD-CEC has grown to 70+ organizations — uniting educators, advocates, nonprofits, and community leaders under a single civic education vision. Annual Advocacy Days in Annapolis have amplified constituent voices and demonstrated the depth of public support for this work.

WHY SB 204 — AND WHY NOW

SB 204 is the logical legislative expression of everything Maryland has been building. It advances civic education as an

intentional component of K–12 instruction

— not an add-on, not a nice-to-have, but a structured, supported, and measurable learning experience for every young civic participant in Maryland.

- Students deserve civic education that is sequenced and sustained across their K–12 experience — not sporadic or dependent on individual teacher initiative.
- Maryland has already demonstrated political will and coalition depth. SB 204 is a natural next step — not a leap, but a stride.
- iCivics' national experience confirms: states that codify civic education expectations in law see stronger implementation, better resource alignment, and more equitable outcomes for students.
- **The moment is right. The coalition is ready. The record of results is undeniable.**

iCivics urges a **FAVORABLE report on SB 204.**

Maryland's students, educators, and civic future are counting on this body to act.