
TO: House Ways and Means Committee

BILL: House Bill (HB) 627 - Commission on History, Culture, and Civics in Education - Establishment

DATE: February 18, 2026

POSITION: Letter of Information

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) is providing information regarding **HB 627**, Commission on History, Culture, and Civics in Education, which will create a Commission to make recommendations to MSDE and the Maryland State Board of Education (State Board) to further the discovery, interpretation, and learning of the history, culture, and civics of the United States and Maryland. MSDE will be responsible for staffing the commission, making all activities and materials available on its website, reimbursing members for travel expenses, and submitting an annual report on the commission's findings and recommendations to the State Board, the Governor, and the General Assembly. Additionally, the State Board must review the Commission's findings and, if appropriate, make annual changes to the pre-kindergarten through 12th-grade standards.

MSDE is firmly committed to ensuring that students learn about the diverse histories, cultures, and contributions of communities that have shaped the United States and Maryland, including Native Americans, African Americans, Latinos, Asian Americans, religious minorities, individuals with disabilities, women, and the LGBTQ+ community, as well as the intersectionality that defines many lived experiences within these communities. These perspectives are essential to a comprehensive and accurate understanding of our shared history and civic life.

While the State Board and MSDE are supportive of the fundamental principles outlined in the requirements of the bill, the State Board and MSDE established a process for reviewing, revising, and adopting standards, frameworks, and curricular resources in January 2024. Both entities are steadfast in ensuring that the development of standards, frameworks, and curricular resources is conducted through this process, which includes collaboration between the State Board, MSDE, LEAs, and community members through the convening of a Standards and Frameworks Validation Committee (SFVC).

The goal of the SFVC related to Social Studies is to improve student outcomes by ensuring curricular resources address the diverse needs, abilities, and interests of all students, while actively challenging racism and hate, through the alignment of educational resources and emergent needs. Guided by this process and goal, the Social Studies SFVC reviewed and proposed revisions to the Maryland Social Studies Frameworks. The revisions were adopted by the State Board on June 24, 2025, and August 26, 2025. The mission and work of the SFVC closely align with the actions and principles outlined in this legislation.

Given that the Social Studies framework was recently revised and adopted, LEAs and educators are currently engaged in implementation and alignment of instructional materials, professional learning, and local curricula. Stability during this implementation phase is critical. Introducing additional review structures or parallel processes at this time may create duplication, require substantial realignment of curricular resources, and limit educators' ability to fully implement the updated frameworks with fidelity. Allowing time and space for the recently adopted revisions to take root will better support improved student outcomes.

Further, the existing Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) 13A.04.08.01 and 13A.01.06.04 have established regulations that address aspects of the legislation. COMAR 13A.04.08.01 provides requirements for social studies instructional programs from prekindergarten through grade 12, including those in alignment with the

principles of this legislation related to meeting the instructional needs of students. The Commission's role may be additionally duplicative and in conflict with the work of identifying High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) as required by Objective 3.1 of Pillar 3 of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future.

We respectfully request that the committee consider this information as it deliberates **HB 627**. Please contact Laurel Cratsley, Interim Executive Director of Government Affairs, at Laurel.cratsley@maryland.gov if you would like any additional information.