
TO: House Ways and Means Committee

BILL: SB0648 - Local School Systems - Educator Screening - Educator Identification Clearinghouse (School Personnel Vetting and Hiring Transparency Act)

DATE: April 1, 2026

POSITION: Support

The Maryland State Board of Education (State Board) and Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) extend their support for SB0648 - Local School Systems - Educator Screening - Educator Identification Clearinghouse (School Personnel Vetting and Hiring Transparency Act). MSDE and the State Board value the bill's intent to reinforce the integrity of the licensure process and to enhance student safety by requiring local education agencies (LEAs) to utilize the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC) Educator Identification Clearinghouse.

The NASDTEC Educator Identification Clearinghouse, a national database, is a vital and cost-effective tool for identifying applicants who have faced disciplinary actions in other states. This tool, together with Maryland's licensure application process, provides a cost-effective, pre-screening system that helps ensure qualified educators are placed in classrooms. HB 856 is expected to have a minimal fiscal impact on the State. With 64,191 teachers currently working in Maryland public schools, NASDTEC charges a modest subscription fee based on each LEA's total full-time equivalency (FTE) of teachers, along with a \$500 annual membership fee per LEA. Even for the largest districts, these fees represent a reasonable investment in student safety and are well within the capacity of LEAs to implement.

The State Board and MSDE fully support the goal of preventing individuals with revoked or suspended licenses from entering Maryland classrooms, and believe the bill, as amended, will further strengthen existing safeguards, reinforcing Maryland's commitment to maintaining a highly qualified educator workforce and ensuring the safety and well-being of all students.

The State Board and MSDE extend their support for SB0648. For further information, please contact Laurel Cratsley, Interim Executive Director of Government Affairs, at Laurel.Cratsley@maryland.gov.