



Renee McGuirk Spence, Executive Director
9 Trotters Ridge Court, Catonsville, MD 21228
410-925-2183
pssamed@gmail.com
www.pssam.org

BILL: House Bill 1229
TITLE: Restorative Schools Fund and Grants - Establishment
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POSITION: SUPPORT
COMMITTEE: Education, Health and Environmental Affairs
CONTACT: Renee McGuirk Spence, Executive Director, PSSAM
Email: pssamed@gmail.com; Cell: 410-925-2183

House Bill 1229 establishes the Restorative Schools Fund as a special, nonlapsing fund; specifying the purpose of the Fund; requiring the State Department of Education to administer the Fund; requiring the State Treasurer to hold the Fund and the Comptroller to account for the Fund; specifying the contents of the Fund; requiring the Governor to include at least \$3,000,000 for the Fund in each annual budget submission; specifying the purpose for which the Fund may be used; specifying the purpose for which certain grants may be used; etc.

PSSAM fully **supports** House Bill 1229.

As local superintendents, we fully recognize the importance of fostering positive, healthy school climates and helping students learn from their mistakes. We also understand the rationale behind moving away from zero-tolerance discipline policies toward proven restorative approaches to addressing conflict in schools.

In order to successfully implement effective restorative approaches, every school principal and key staff in every public school would need to receive extensive, in-depth training on implementation practices, strategies, and policies. This would be a large financial burden on school systems to implement.

PSSAM believes that House Bill 1229 Restorative Schools Fund and Grants – Establishment offers a realistic and financially sound alternative to this issue. The purpose of the Fund “is to provide grants to local school systems and individual schools for training on and implementation and evaluation of restorative approaches that build and sustain positive learning communities.” This proposed legislation is comprehensive and recognizes the complexity of establishing restorative approaches to school discipline must include costly extensive and ongoing training, technical assistance, and support to schools that implement this program.

For the reasons stated above, PSSAM **supports** HB 1229 and requests a favorable committee report.