



BILL: House Bill 357
TITLE: Appointment of County Superintendent of Schools – Disapproval by State
Superintendent of Schools
DATE: February 14, 2019
POSITION: SUPPORT
COMMITTEE: Ways and Means
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House Bill 357 establishes that the State Superintendent of Schools may disapprove an appointment of a county superintendent of schools only if the appointee does not meet the qualifications specified for the position.

PSSAM **supports** House Bill 357.

Maryland law provides for the legal framework establishing the roles and responsibilities of local boards of education. One of the major responsibilities of a county board of education is the appointment of a county superintendent of schools. The selection of a local superintendent is contingent upon the approval of the State Superintendent. The role of the State Superintendent is to ensure that the proposed local superintendent candidate meets the state qualifications to hold the office.

The role of the local board of education is to conduct an extensive search when it becomes necessary to fill the position and select the best candidate for their local school system. The search for a superintendent is both lengthy and expensive generally taking approximately one year. The final selection by the local board follows extensive input from educators, students, parents, and community as well as an indepth review of credentials of the candidate.

The State Superintendent may disapprove the appointment of a county superintendent only under certain conditions. An individual may not be appointed as county superintendent unless “the individual is eligible to be issued a certificate for the office by the State Superintendent; has graduated from an accredited college or university; and has completed 2 years of graduate work at an accredited college or university, including public administration, supervision, and methods of teaching.” PSSAM’s position is that the State Superintendent should only have the authority to approve or wave the credentials as stated above.

PSSAM strongly believes that Maryland law has struck the right balance. The roles, responsibilities, and authority of local superintendents are clearly defined as are the policy role and authority of school boards. The role of the State Superintendent relative to the appointment of a local superintendent should be codified as required by this legislation.

For the reasons stated above, PSSAM **supports** House Bill 357 and requests a favorable committee report.