



BILL: Senate Bill 221
TITLE: Workgroup on Establishing an Independent School Board for the Juvenile Services Education System
DATE: February 6, 2019
POSITION: SUPPORT
COMMITTEE: Education, Health and Environmental Affairs
CONTACT: Renee McGuirk Spence, Executive Director, PSSAM
Email: pssamed@gmail.com; Cell: 410-925-2183

Senate Bill 221 establishes a Workgroup on Establishing an Independent School Board for the Juvenile Services Education System to determine whether to create an independent school board for the Juvenile Services Education System and identify ways to reform and improve juvenile education services; requiring the Workgroup to convene on or before September 1, 2019; requiring the Workgroup to submit a certain report to the Governor and the General Assembly in a certain format by December 20, 2020; etc.

PSSAM supports Senate Bill 221.

The Juvenile Services Education System (JSES), under the Maryland State Department of Education, provides educational services to youths detained and committed to the Maryland Department of Juvenile Services (DJS). JSES administers education services in thirteen DJS facilities statewide. For local superintendents, the growth of all students matters whether the student is enrolled in a local public school or being provided services by a DJS facility. The goal for all JSES students is to be able to re-enter our public schools. Upon re-entry, PSSAM is committed to providing specific academic, social, and emotional learning supports to meet the needs of the individual student.

To that end, we support the establishment of a Workgroup on Establishing an Independent School Board for the Juvenile Services Education System. We are pleased that PSSAM will be able to appoint two local superintendents to serve on this important Workgroup. We believe they will have valuable input, expertise, and indepth knowledge that will help the Workgroup delve into the complex educational, instructional, and special education issues relative to students being served in Maryland's Juvenile Services Education System facilities.

For the reasons stated above, PSSAM **supports** Senate Bill 221 and urges a favorable committee report.