



Mary Pat Fannon, Executive Director

BILL:	House Bill 465
TITLE:	State Superintendent of Schools - Qualifications and Senate Confirmation
DATE:	February 3, 2021
POSITION:	OPPOSE
COMMITTEE:	Ways and Means
CONTACT:	Mary Pat Fannon, Executive Director, PSSAM

This emergency bill requires the State Superintendent of Schools to be appointed by the State Board of Education with the advice and consent of the Senate. The State Superintendent may not be a current member of the State board at any time during the year immediately preceding the appointment.

PSSAM opposes House Bill 465.

The Maryland State Board of Education (State Board) was organized in 1864 and has general control and supervision over public schools and the educational interests of the State. The State Board consists of a 13 regular member body, and 1 student member, all appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the State Senate. The State Board also appoints the State Superintendent of Schools, who serves a four-year term. The Superintendent is responsible for the administration of the State Department of Education and carries out the educational policies of the State Board.

Among other responsibilities, the State Board sets the educational policy and standards for pre-kindergarten through high school, passes regulations that have the force of law, and interprets the meaning and intent of the law. In addition, through an appeal process, the State Board also reviews and makes decisions on controversies and disputes that arise from each of Maryland's 24 school system. Members of the State Board come from all regions of the State. It is important that they have outstanding credentials with various backgrounds and expertise that will fully represent Maryland's public-school educators, advocates, students, parents, and the community-at-large.

Local superintendents believe that it is unnecessary to change the hiring and appointment process of the State Superintendent, especially during the current pandemic and over year-long executive search for a new Superintendent. We do not see any benefit in potentially politicizing the process by requiring confirmation by the Senate. The Legislature already has some oversight of the State Board through the Senate confirmation of each Board member.

For the reasons stated above, **PSSAM opposes** House Bill 465.

One Voice, One Vision for Maryland's Students

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