



*The Maryland Education Coalition is dedicated to raising the academic achievement of students in Maryland public schools by promoting adequate funding and systemic accountability for improving results.*

**SENATE BILL 691 - Maryland After-School and Summer Opportunity Fund Program – Funding – Hearing 3/4/2015, 1 p.m.  
SUPPORT WITH ADMENDMENT**

**Board of Directors:**

Rick Tyler, Co-Chair

Bebe Verdery, Co-Chair

Charlie Cooper, Secretary

Advocates for Children and Youth

American Civil Liberties Union of Maryland

Maryland Disability Law Center

Maryland PTA

Carl Stokes, Individual Member

Sharon Rubinstein, Individual Member

**Organizational Members**

ABC Schools

Arts Education in Maryland Schools

Casa de Maryland

Maryland Out of School Time Network

Public Justice Center

Maryland Education Coalition (MEC) members are organizations and individuals committed to improving public education in Maryland. Collectively, we represent about 200,000 parents, educators & community members and advocate for over 867,000 students statewide

**MEC supports funding for the Maryland Afterschool and Summer Opportunity Fund, however opposes the use of the Maryland Education Trust Fund as the source of funding.** We also would oppose any proposals that may decrease the percentages of the casino revenue as currently defined in law.

MEC recognizes that afterschool and summer programs provide important educational opportunities for Maryland's youth. There is promising evidence from the field that students who participate in afterschool programs attend school more regularly, have improved academic performance, and increased pro-social behavior (Durlak & Weissberg, 2011) Currently there are insufficient programs to meet the need and demand. According to the Afterschool Alliance's Maryland After 3 Report, just 16% of school age of young people in Maryland participate in afterschool programs, 21 % of school age children are unsupervised nearly 10 hours per week, and 36% (280,319) young people would participate in an afterschool program if one were available to them.

The Maryland Afterschool and Summer Opportunity Fund, originally funded at 10 million dollars, has been unfunded since 2005. In 2012, legislation reappointed the Advisory Board which has examined the landscape of out of school time in Maryland and issued recommendations to the Governor and Legislature which include creating a dedicated and sustainable source of funding to expand the availability of afterschool and summer programs.

While we support funding for MASOF, we believe its funding should come from non-Education Trust Fund, casino revenue. Despite the original intention to use casino revenue to augment education funding, the governor and legislature have regularly used the Education Trust Fund to supplant rather than supplement education funding.

Therefore, we urge the Maryland General Assembly to support Senate Bill 691 with an amendment that identifies a different and sustainable funding source for the Maryland After-School and Summer Opportunity Fund.

Bebe Verdery, Co-Chair

Rick Tyler, Co-chair

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