



Renee Spence, Executive Director  
9 Trotters Ridge Court, Catonsville, MD. 21228  
410-925-2183  
[pssamed@gmail.com](mailto:pssamed@gmail.com)

---

BILL: House Bill 1297  
TITLE: Education – Public High Schools – Agriculture Science  
DATE: March 10, 2016  
POSITION: OPPOSE  
COMMITTEE: Ways and Means  
CONTACT: Renee McGuirk Spence, Executive Director, PSSAM  
Email: [pssamed@gmail.com](mailto:pssamed@gmail.com); Cell: 410-925-2183

House Bill 1297 requires each county board of education, beginning in the 2018-2019 school year, to implement a specified agriculture science curriculum in at least one public high school in each county or at least one career and technology education center in each county; and requires that the agriculture science curriculum be selected from existing curricula developed by the State Department of Education or be developed by a county board and approved by the Department.

PSSAM strongly **opposes** this bill. We understand the intent of House Bill 1297. Local superintendents appreciate the value of an agriculture science curriculum and currently 21 local school systems offer this course. However, local superintendents continue to advocate for local board of education governance of teaching and learning. We strongly believe that it is critical that locally-governed education policies and procedures remain under the authority of local boards of education. Each local school board must have the flexibility to develop individual curriculum policies and practices that reflect the specific and diverse needs of their system.

PSSAM again reiterates that we will continue to oppose all attempts to legislate curriculum, courses of study, or graduation requirements. We firmly believe that this role belongs to local boards of education working together with the State Board of Education.

For the reasons noted above, PSSAM **OPPOSES** House Bill 1297 and requests an **unfavorable** committee report.