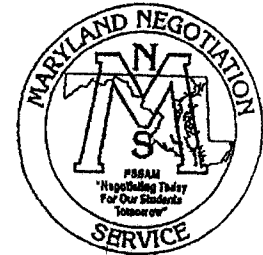




## Public Schools Superintendents' Association of Maryland

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[www.mrismd.org](http://www.mrismd.org)

December 6, 2011

Dr. Leonard Wheeler, Board President  
Dr. Robert M. Tomback, Superintendent of Schools  
Harford County Board of Education  
102 South Hickory Avenue  
Bel Air, MD 21014

Dear Dr. Wheeler and Dr. Tomback:

On behalf of the members of the Public School Superintendents Association of Maryland (PSSAM) and the Maryland Negotiation Service (MNS), I am writing to provide our formal endorsement of the Supplemental Brief filed by the Harford County Board of Education with the Public School Labor Relations Board (PSLRB) in your dispute with the Harford County Education Association. Please feel free to share our endorsement of your Supplemental Brief with the PSLRB, as we believe the items in question contain major implications for the entire state.

We concur with the major points you have raised and note that any decision rendered by the PSLRB in your case will become precedent for all Maryland school systems. Therefore, it is critical that the Harford Board maintain and pursue the arguments you have raised in the Supplemental Brief:

- The PSLRB's interim decision on renegotiations is ambiguous and promises to establish a state of continuous or perpetual negotiations. It is our specific concern that this decision, interpreted broadly, may result in renegotiations being required to occur during the term of settled contracts whenever funding levels are adjusted upward or downward. The consequence, as you have noted, will be labor instability throughout the state;
- The significance of the "timetable and procedure" for renegotiations that the PSLRB will define in your case has ramifications for all school systems and the potential to impinge upon the local board's final determination authority. Should the PSLRB establish a procedure that is too cumbersome or prescriptive it may attenuate the clear, legislative intent that the local board of education retains the full, final decision-making authority following a renegotiations effort; and

- The PSLRB must respect and leave undisturbed the statutory, fiscal relationship between the county funding authority and the local board of education. Moreover, the PSLRB must refrain from any encroachment beyond its statutory authority into the prerogative of the Maryland State Board of Education (MSBOE). The jurisdictional challenge you have raised on the budgetary questions is perhaps the preeminent issue for the December 16, 2011 hearing.

All of the concerns raised in your brief are critical issues for which we must receive reasonable and appropriate answers from the PSLRB at this early stage of their governance. We know that you will raise them effectively during the oral argument on December 16, 2011. The potential consequences for the instructional programs and student services in our respective systems require our stern attention to these matters. Our representatives will attend the hearing in support of the Harford County Board of Education.

Sincerely,



Carl D. Roberts, Ed.D.  
Executive Director

cc: PSSAM Executive Board  
MNS Executive Board