



Briefing Paper: Fair Treatment for State Employees at the Maryland School for the Deaf

Fixing the Problem of Employee Misclassification at the Maryland School for the Deaf

The Maryland School for the Deaf is in crisis. The former governor has starved this state agency, which serves Maryland students from every county in the state who are hard of hearing, and the staffing model they've been forced to resort to is broken.

- Out of 350 faculty and staff at MSD, more than 150 are "contractual" staff. Contractual staff have the exact same job duties as PIN employees, serving as dorm counselors, teacher aides, speech pathologists, and teachers. **No other K through 12 public school system in the state has this high a percentage of its workforce as temporary or "contractual."**
- Most contractual workers at MSD have been working at the school for more than a year, some for far longer than that.
- Contractual employees at the school are denied the state employee pension and retirement benefits, as well as any paid vacation leave.
- Contractual employees are excluded from the union and the protections afforded school employees via a collectively bargained contract.
- Unlike most employees of local school systems, contractual employees at MSD have no due process rights, but are all instead at will employees.
- The lack of basic, fundamental rights for these workers serving special needs student in our state has meant many high quality educators and employees find jobs elsewhere where they are treated with the respect they deserve.
- The state legislature passed several laws in recent years designed to ensure that all MSD employees had union rights, but the unelected officials at DBM have decreed that the law doesn't apply to these workers. Why? Because they are contractual.

It's not a coincidence that the contractual workforce is made up of more women and people of color than the rest of the school. The school desperately needs to hire more BIPOC staff to better serve the student population, but the starvation and divestment of MSD by the previous governor has caused morale and retention issues that cause the school to struggle even more.

The state legislature should pass a budget that assures positions at MSD follow the law and are considered permanent, not contractual, employees.



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