The Anne Arundel County Board of Education OPPOSES House Bill 1268 - Education - Student Achievement Gap Standard - Establishment (Maryland Student Achievement Act). This bill would

The Anne Arundel County Board of Education’s single strategic goal is to accelerate the academic learning and engagement of all students while eliminating all achievement, experience, and opportunity gaps. Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) supports an equitable learning environment that promotes an atmosphere of respect and nondiscrimination for all students and staff members regardless of actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, sexual orientation, genetic information, gender identity, or disability.

It is the mission of AACPS to educate all of our students to be well-prepared for college and the workforce, and to empower them to create a better quality of life for themselves, their communities, and the next generation. Leading the effort to eliminate all gaps at AACPS is our Department of Equity & Accelerated Student Achievement which was established to work with schools, parents, and the community in order to elevate all students and eliminate all gaps. The Department aims to maximize student achievement by offering multi-faceted supports designed to help schools develop a responsive and equitable school culture, implement quality instruction that is research-based, differentiated and relevant, and provide enrichment opportunities for all AACPS students. In addition to maintaining its existing relationships with partners within and beyond the school system, the Department's mission is to expand its partnerships through innovative initiatives designed to increase community involvement and empower school and community leaders to effect lasting positive change.

AACPS has already taken the initiative to address the issues House Bill 1268 seeks to ameliorate. While well-intentioned, House Bill 1268 is unnecessary and interferes with local board authority and governance. Maryland statute provides that “educational matters that affect the counties shall be under the control of a county board of education” and that local boards “determine, with the advice of the county superintendent, the educational policies of the county school system.” Local boards of education exercise this governance authority in compliance with state and federal laws and in conjunction with the State Board of Education, which adopts statewide regulations and policies in accordance with state and federal statutory authority. Each local board plays a vital role in governing the local school system and engaging local
communities and promoting participation by parents and other community members in the education process. Local boards are the primary advocates for local, State and federal funding to support the teaching and learning of students and efficient and effective school system administration.

Accordingly, the Anne Arundel County Board of Education respectfully requests an UNFAVORABLE committee report on House Bill 1268.