The Board of Education of Anne Arundel County opposes HB351 **PROTECT OUR STUDENTS ACT OF 2018**. This emergency Administration bill would require 80%, rather than 65%, of the composite score for the accountability system required under the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) be composed of academic indicators. The bill would also remove the requirement that no indicator may be weighted as less than 10% and changes the classification of a specified indicator from an academic to a school quality indicator.

While SB301 is well-intentioned, Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) has concerns with furthering altering current State law regarding Maryland’s responsibilities under ESSA. The Maryland ESSA Plan has already been approved by the U.S. Department of Education. As such, we oppose any additional change at this time as any additional changes would only delay the ability of schools to begin their work on the new accountability system in Maryland.

While we appreciate the provision in the bill that would make the combined total of the academic indicators up to 80% of the composite score, we do have concerns regarding the use of percentile ranking for the composite ranking. Specifically, in an era when we clearly define success as students being able to master standards and all schools being an environment in which this can take place, it is then contradictory to rank the schools by percentile. In such a system, the score only yields a comparison of a school to other schools and does not yield how well the school actually performed against the standards and indicators. Additionally, the provision in SB301 to incorporate a survey question regarding “the receipt of critical instruction feedback” is quite vague and dependent upon the receiver.

Accordingly, the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County respectfully requests an **UNFAVORABLE** committee report on HB351.