



HB59 ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY - BOARD OF EDUCATION BUDGET - EQUITY CATEGORY

March 4, 2020

WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

OPPOSE

Jeanette Ortiz, Esq., Legislative & Policy Counsel (410.703.5352)

Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) opposes **HB59 Anne Arundel County - Board of Education Budget - Equity Category**. This bill requires the Anne Arundel County Board of Education to include an equity category, in addition to all other categories that are currently required, in its annual budget.

HB59 would have an adverse impact on AACPS. First, it would require hours of staff time to recalibrate the accounting structure for FY2021 and beyond to meet the requirements of this legislation. New reports would have to be written and training would be required for all staff who manage any of the programs that fit into the new category. Second, the legislation would change the current uniform financial reporting requirements by State Category for all 24 jurisdictions because it would add a 16th category for Anne Arundel County only. This would make it difficult, if not impossible, to do cross-jurisdiction spending comparisons and would complicate reporting requirements to the Federal Government. In addition, The Blueprint for Maryland's Future, which AACPS supported in the 2019 Legislative Session, requires extensive financial reporting on each line item outlined in the legislation. Equitable funding was an overriding goal in that legislation as well as the larger Kirwan Commission recommendations. Additional reporting and accountability requirements are already outlined in the Kirwan Commission recommendations and may overlap the reporting requirements prescribed in HB59. It would be prudent to wait until the legislative work on the larger Kirwan Commission recommendations is complete before adding more requirements for Anne Arundel County specifically.

HB59 would have a direct fiscal impact on AACPS. The bill would require numerous hours of budget, technology, and accounting staff time to recalibrate the accounting structure for FY2021 and beyond to meet the established requirements. Hiring an accountant alone would incur a cost of over \$123,000 a year. New reports would have to be written and training would have to be provided for all staff who would manage any of the programs that fit into the new category. Additionally, AACPS would likely need to hire a temporary technology consultant to help recode the Enterprise financial reporting program system.

Accordingly, AACPS respectfully requests an **UNFAVORABLE** committee report on HB59.