



## HB1372/SB965 BLUEPRINT FOR MARYLAND'S FUTURE - REVISIONS

March 15, 2021

APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

BUDGET AND TAXATION COMMITTEE

EDUCATION, HEALTH, AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

### SUPPORT

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Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) supports **HB1372/SB965 Blueprint for Maryland's Future - Revisions**. These emergency bills alter certain policy and funding provisions relating to the Blueprint for Maryland's Future, mainly certain implementation dates. The legislation also outlines the acceptable uses of funds for summer enrichment for students in grades 4 through 12, tutoring, and other learning loss programs and sets specific dates to report on such spending for both Blueprint funding and funding from the federal Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund.

Strong State and county funding support of Pre-K–12 public education will ensure that all students have the programs, services, and instructional support needed to meet rigorous standards established for student performance. AACPS supports the charge of the Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education to review and address Maryland education funding issues, particularly the enormous statewide education funding gap, which lags by nearly \$3 billion in State funding and nearly \$1 billion in local government investments.

AACPS is pleased that Maryland has chosen to move forward by adopting meaningful changes to the current school funding formulas, which now date back to 2002. Accordingly, we have supported comprehensive changes to enhance our school funding formulas by increasing the base amount of funding for all students, sustaining and increasing the additional weighted per pupil funding for our English Language Learners and students living in poverty, and significantly increasing the weighted funding amount for students receiving special education services. AACPS has also supported adoption of per pupil funding allocations for current and expanded Pre-K programs. As such, we greatly appreciate the work of the Kirwan Commission to tackle these difficult but important education issues.

AACPS supports the revisions and technical amendments in this legislation. Among the many impacts of COVID-19 this past year has been the decline in student enrollment at AACPS and school systems across the State. Student enrollment has declined as AACPS families have selected alternative academic options that best fit their schedules and needs during this pandemic. AACPS experienced a decrease in enrollment of nearly 1,500 K-12 students which translates to a potential federal, State, and local revenue loss of more than \$22 million in per pupil funding. Such a loss in per pupil funding would have a negative impact on AACPS and our students as we would be forced to make cuts to much needed programs and positions. In addition, such funding reductions could disproportionately impact students who qualify for special education, our English Language Learners, or our youngest early education students. Accordingly, we greatly appreciate that the legislation addresses the issue of declining enrollment to help ensure that school systems across the State do not lose millions of dollars in State funding.

Accordingly, AACPS respectfully requests a **FAVORABLE** committee report on HB1372/SB965.