

BILL: Senate Bill 1000 and House Bill 1300
TITLE: Blueprint for Maryland's Future – Implementation
DATE: February 17, 2020
POSITION: SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS
COMMITTEES: Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
House Ways and Means Committee
House Appropriations Committee
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The Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE), representing all of the state's local boards of education, supports the Blueprint for Maryland's Future legislation (Senate Bill 1000/House Bill 1300) to launch 10 years of continuous improvement and innovation in the delivery of elementary and secondary education in Maryland's public schools. Our nearly 1 million public school students deserve nothing less.

MABE led the advocacy effort to create the Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education precisely so that an updated adequacy study and other funding and accountability issues could be debated and transformed into legislation to update and improve Maryland's school finance system. The Blueprint for Maryland's Future Act represents the culmination of these efforts.

MABE views the Kirwan Commission's recommendations and the Blueprint for Maryland's Future as a "Call to Action" for the building of a world class education system in Maryland. MABE supports the focus on policy and funding recommendations in the following major policy areas, to ensure that each student is provided with:

- High-quality early childhood education programs;
- High-quality and diverse teachers and principals;
- Access to college and career readiness pathways (including advanced college prep programs and career and technical education that leads to employment); and
- The significant additional state and local resources needed to ensure that each and every student is afforded every opportunity to succeed.

MABE believes that significant funding increases and policy reforms are needed to support equitable access for all students to an excellent education. MABE also believes that local boards must be at the helm, fulfilling the responsibility to govern school systems in the best interests of all students, and that the Blueprint for Maryland's Future Act must be consistent with the principle of adequately funding educational programs and preserving the role of local board governance. In this context, MABE is requesting amendments to the bill as introduced to ensure that the final bill is much more aligned with these same principles.

Maryland must renew its commitment to fulfilling its constitutional mandate to fully and equitably fund an excellent education for each of Maryland's nearly 1 million public school students. MABE is confident that this legislation can achieve these goals. For these reasons, MABE requests a favorable report on the Blueprint for Maryland's Future legislation, with amendments to ensure a smooth transition to new fiscal and academic reporting requirements and to adopt accountability measures that better reflect the governance authority of local boards of Education.