



ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE † ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON † DIOCESE OF WILMINGTON

February 17, 2020

SB 1000 & HB 1300

Blueprint for Maryland's Future – Implementation (Policy Area One - Prekindergarten)

**House Ways & Means Committee / House Appropriations Committee
Senate Budget & Taxation Committee / Senate Education, Health & Environmental Affairs
Committees**

Position: SUPPORT w/ Amendments

The Maryland Catholic Conference has offered separate testimony in SUPPORT of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future legislation as a whole. Specifically, the Conference offers this testimony in SUPPORT of prekindergarten expansion in the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. The Conference represents the three (arch)dioceses serving Maryland, the Archdioceses of Baltimore and Washington and the Diocese of Wilmington, which together encompass over one million Marylanders. There are approximately 50,000 students served by over 150 PreK-12 Catholic schools in Maryland.

Mixed delivery prekindergarten expansion is not a new concept to the state of Maryland. It has been a successful model of delivery in Maryland since 2014 and has provided a model for quality prekindergarten access in other states, as well. When the General Assembly passed the Prekindergarten Expansion Act of 2014, it was acknowledged that Maryland would not be able to achieve a robust expansion of prekindergarten services to Maryland's children without the participation of private providers.

Since the beginning in Maryland, Catholic providers have participated in that expansion, winning competitive grant bids for programs to provide prekindergarten to four-year-old children whose family income is 300% of the federal poverty level (FPL) or lower. Catholic schools and other providers have the capacity to offer high quality seats at our programs and stand at the ready to partner with the state of Maryland in advancing the educational vision of the Kirwan Commission through the Blueprint for Maryland's Future legislation.

All three of (arch)dioceses serving Maryland have a strong commitment to education and recognize the important role that kindergarten-readiness plays in a child's educational development. Within the State of Maryland, there are approximately 120 prekindergarten programs in Catholic schools or parishes, in addition to Headstart programs. Nearly all are accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by MSDE and a vast majority of them employ state-certified prekindergarten teachers.

Through input from high quality Catholic prekindergarten providers and in conjunction with a coalition of largest provider associations, we offer the attached amendments that will hone the framework laid by SB 1000 / HB 1300 to provide a world-class system of mixed delivery for Maryland's three and four-year-old children.



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Proposed Amendments to SB 1000 & HB 1300

Blueprint for Maryland's Future – Implementation (Policy Area One - Prekindergarten)

AMENDMENT No. 1

On page 128, line 17, after “(A)” insert:

“(1) SUBJECT TO THE REQUIRMENTS OF PARAGRAPH (2) AND (3) OF THIS SUBSECTION,”;

AMENDMENT No. 2

On page 128, line 18, insert:

“(2) A COUNTY MAKING A REQUEST UNDER SUBSECTION (A) SHALL HAVE THE BURDEN OF DEMONSTRATING THE LACK OF AVAILABLE PREKINDERGARTEN SLOTS IN ELIGIBLE PRIVATE PROVIDER PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAMS.”

(3) IN PRIORITIZING PUBLIC SCHOOL CONTRUCTION REQUESTS, THE STATE SHALL CONSIDER WHETHER:

(I) A WAIVER UNDER 7-1A-03 OF THIS SUBTITLE HAS BEEN REQUESTED BY THE COUNTY; AND

(II) THE COUNTY HAS MET THE BURDEN OF DEMONSTRATING THE LACK OF AVAILABLE PREKINDERGARTEN SLOTS IN ELIGIBLE PRIVATE PROVIDER PROGRAMS IN THAT COUNTY FOR A CHILD TO ATTEND A PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAM”

AMENDMENT No. 3

On page 128, line 19, after “(B)”, insert:

“AFTER DEMONSTRATING TO THE DEPARTMENT A LACK OF AVAILABLE PREKINDERGARTEN SLOTS IN ELIGIBLE PRIVATE PROVIDER PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAMS,”

AMENDMENT No. 4

On page 42, line 20, after “ARTICLE”, insert:

“AND REGULATIONS ADOPTED BY THE DEPARTMENT AFTER JULY 1, 2020”

Amendment No. 5:

On page 43, line 1, strike: “~~EACH COUNTY BOARD~~” and insert: “THE DEPARTMENT”

Amendment No. 6:

On page 43, line 3, strike: “~~COUNTY BOARD~~” and insert: “THE DEPARTMENT”

Amendment No. 7:

On page 43, line 4, strike: “~~COUNTY BOARD~~” and insert: “THE DEPARTMENT”

Amendment No. 8:

On page 43, line 19, strike: “~~EACH COUNTY BOARD~~” and insert: “THE DEPARTMENT”

Amendment No. 9:

On page 43, line 20, strike: “~~EACH COUNTY BOARD~~” and insert: “THE DEPARTMENT”

Amendment No. 10:

On page 43, line 23, strike: “~~COUNTY BOARD~~” and insert: “THE DEPARTMENT”

Amendment No. 11:

On page 43, line 24, strike: “~~COUNTY BOARD~~” and insert: “THE DEPARTMENT”

Amendment No. 12:

On page 43, line 24, strike: “2026” and insert: “2023”

Amendment No. 13:

On page 43, line 28, strike: “2026” and insert: “2023”

Amendment No. 14:

On page 123, strike in its entirety lines 10 – 33 and on page 124, strike in its entirety lines 1-5 and insert:

“(A) (1) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ACHIEVE AN EQUITABLE MIXED DELIVERY OF PREKINDERGARTEN SLOTS ALLOCATED TO ELIGIBLE PUBLIC PROVIDERS AND ELIGIBLE PRIVATE PROVIDERS:

- (1) BY SETTING A GOAL OF AT LEAST 30% OF PREKINDERGARTEN SLOTS ALLOCATED TO ELIGIBLE PRIVATE PROVIDERS BEGINNING IN FISCAL YEAR 2021; AND,
- (2) BY SETTING A GOAL OF AT LEAST 50% OF PREKINDERGARTEN SLOTS ALLOCATED TO ELIGIBLE PRIVATE PROVIDERS BEGINNING IN FISCAL YEAR 2025 AND FOR ALL FISCAL YEARS THEREAFTER.”

Amendment No. 15:

On page 124, on line 15, strike beginning with “~~RESIDENCY THROUGH THE MARYLAND APPROVED ALTERNATIVE PREPARATION PROGRAM~~” and substitute “CERTIFICATION THROUGH THE MARYLAND APPROVED ALTERNATIVE PREPARATION PROGRAM OR CERTIFICATION APPROVED BY THE DEPARTMENT.”

Amendment No. 16:

On page 124, line 18, before “TEACHING ASSISTANTS”, insert: “BEGINNING IN FISCAL YEAR 2026,”

Amendment No. 17:

On page 126, line 14, before “EXPLICITLY”, insert: “NON-INCIDENTAL,”

Amendment No. 18:

On page 126, line 17, strike: “~~AND LOCATION~~”

Amendment No. 19:

On page 127, line 4, before “SHALL”, insert: “UPON A FINDING OF ACTUAL DISCRIMINATION, AFTER REVIEW BY THE DEPARTMENT AND AN ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING ON THE MANNER,”