



THE BLACK AND BROWN
COALITION FOR
EDUCATIONAL EQUITY
AND EXCELLENCE

HB1421

Esteemed State Delegates,

We, the Black and Brown Coalition for Educational Equity and Excellence, offer this testimony in wholehearted support of House Bill 1421. As a grassroots collective of advocacy partners and community leaders, representing thousands of young people in Montgomery County, the Coalition is united in our work to end systemic and institutionalized resource inequities for Black, Brown and low-income students in Montgomery County and across the state. As the research shows, which you will find in the attached one-pager that outlines the Coalition's asks, Black and Brown students are significantly less likely to be enrolled in advanced math classes, even when these students score equally as well on standardized math assessments. In Montgomery County, only 71% of Latino students from low-income families who get the highest score on the 6th grade year-end assessment are enrolled in Algebra 1 in 7th grade, compared to 92% of their higher income, non-Black or Latino peers. Practices like these mean that low-income Latino and Black students make up a very small percentage (5% and 8%, respectively) of those enrolled in Algebra I in seventh grade. By 12th grade, more than half of all low-income Black and Latino students are enrolled in the LEAST rigorous math courses which adversely impacts their college and career opportunities and hinders their future ability to participate in rapidly growing economic sectors.

Research shows that students work harder and engage more with school when given access to advanced coursework. That hard work and engagement helps lead to higher graduation rates, lower absenteeism and lower suspensions. We also know that when advanced coursework opportunities are extended to students of color and when teachers receive training and resources, these students thrive alongside their peers. All students, particularly Black and Brown students, must be engaged in and supported to master rigorous coursework to ensure success in college and careers.

We applaud Delegates Cain, Guyton, Mosby, and Wilkins for introducing this Bill to the House, and we offer our unqualified support to all those courageous enough to put children before politics and to ensure we take the necessary steps to create a truly equitable system where all students succeed.

You are in a unique position to make meaningful change. We urge you to take action now in support of HB 1421.