



## HB1157 EDUCATION - MARYLAND HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA - CIVICS TEST REQUIREMENT

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WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

### OPPOSE

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Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) opposes **HB1157 Education - Maryland High School Diploma - Civics Test Requirement**. This bill requires a high school student to take a civics test and achieve a passing score by correctly answering at least 60% of the questions, in order to, on or after January 1, 2023, graduate from a public high school, meet alternative requirements for obtaining a Maryland high school diploma, or qualify for a Maryland high school diploma by examination. It requires MSDE to determine the means of providing each high school student an opportunity to take the required civics test.

AACPS supports local decision-making authority in developing curriculum and AACPS opposes efforts by the General Assembly to legislate curriculum, courses of instruction, assessments, or graduation requirements, firmly believing that this role belongs to local boards of education in conjunction with the State Board of Education. Accordingly, AACPS incorporates civics education throughout our curriculum – from elementary school to high school. In accordance with the Maryland Social Studies Civics Standard 1.0, our curriculum ensures that students will understand the historical development and current status of the fundamental concepts and processes of authority, power, and influence, with particular emphasis on the democratic skills and attitudes necessary to become responsible citizens.

In creating the State Board and local boards of education, the General Assembly has delegated to them the responsibility for guiding and delivering a high-quality statewide system of public education through State standards and accountability measures, and locally governed and administered curriculum, teaching, and learning. The program of studies in each school system is developed as a whole and aligned with the State and local standards and assessments. Accordingly, the authority to establish curriculum and assessments is the domain of the State Board of Education and the local boards of education. We are the same entities charged with the responsibility to research, investigate, and evaluate both curriculum and assessments. Legislation such as HB1157, which seeks to interject piecemeal segments into the curriculum or to extract portions of the testing, only serve to weaken the effectiveness of the entire educational program.

Accordingly, AACPS respectfully requests an **UNFAVORABLE** committee report on HB1157.