



Board of Education of Howard County
Testimony Submitted to the Maryland House of Delegates,
Ways and Means Committee
March 22, 2023

Board of Education
of Howard County

Antonia Watts, *Chair*

Yun Lu, Ph.D., *Vice Chair*

Linfeng Chen, Ph.D.

Jennifer Swickard Mallo

Jacky McCoy

Jolene Mosley

Abisola Ayoola
Student Member

Michael J. Martirano, Ed.D.
*Superintendent
Secretary/Treasurer*

SB0127: FAVORABLE

Maryland Longitudinal Data System Center - Student FAFSA Data - Reporting Requirement

The Board of Education of Howard County (the Board) supports **SB0127 Maryland Longitudinal Data System Center - Student FAFSA Data - Reporting Requirement** to correct the flow of student Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) data.

SB0127 alters the 2021 change in Maryland statute that required local school systems to assist high school seniors with completion and submission of FAFSA through outreach plans. The 2021 law also required reporting by local school systems on student completion of FAFSA. SB0127 shifts that reporting responsibility to the Maryland Longitudinal Data System (MLDS) Center.

According to the bill's fiscal and policy note: "The bill aligns the reporting of FAFSA data to produce reports with the operation of the MLDS Center by requiring the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) to provide the MLDS Center access to already available data rather than requiring local boards of education to collect and submit additional data. The MLDS Center can produce the required report using existing resources. The MLDS Center advises that, under the bill, it can incorporate FAFSA completion data into MLDS and match those data against student data already submitted to the center by the Maryland State Department of Education. MHEC advises it can provide the data access required using existing resources as it routinely imports Maryland resident Institutional Student Information Records into its student financial aid system. In addition, the MLDS Center advises that the reporting method established under the bill allows for more in-depth analysis of FAFSA completion data than can be completed under current law."

The Board supports this shift as Howard County Public School System staff indicates obtaining the data required for the reporting has been problematic since the passage of the new law in 2021. As outlined above, MHEC is the proper authority to provide the FAFSA data to MLDS.

For these reasons, we urge a FAVORABLE report of SB0127 from this Committee.