



**PSSAM**  
Public School Superintendents' Association  
OF MARYLAND

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**BILL:** HB 1082

**TITLE:** Blueprint for Maryland's Future Implementation – Funding and Independent Evaluation – Alterations

**DATE:** February 27, 2024

**POSITION:** Support with Amendment

**COMMITTEE:** House Appropriations Committee

**CONTACT:** Mary Pat Fannon, Executive Director, PSSAM

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The Public School Superintendents' Association of Maryland (PSSAM), on behalf of all twenty-four public school superintendents, **supports** House Bill 1082 with **one amendment**.

This bill would provide a \$150,000 State grant to each Local Education Agency for fiscal years 2026 and fiscal 2027 for the salary and benefits for Blueprint Implementation Coordinators (IC) in each Local Education Agency (LEA). The bill also extends the date for an independent evaluation of the implementation of the Blueprint.

PSSAM requests one amendment to include funding for Blueprint Coordinators in the State budget for the entire duration of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future.

In the final version of the Blueprint legislation (HB 1300/2020), the Legislature required each local governing body and the LEA to jointly designate Blueprint Implementation Coordinators. The requirement was that this position would be required through fiscal 2025, which was subsequently changed to fiscal 2026 during the 2021 session (HB 1372). The IC position was also mandated without an identified funding source. Lastly, the position was to be created by July 1, 2021 and all LEA were in compliance within one or two months of that deadline.

In July of 2021, the role of the coordinators was unclear, and many districts assigned this responsibility to existing staff. Now, two and a half years later, many of the coordinators are still wearing multiple hats in their districts, and have significant responsibilities in addition to the Blueprint work. This is especially challenging in smaller districts with fewer staff and resources.

For example, among the ICs there are Chief Financial Officers, Chiefs of Staff, Chief Academic Officers, Directors of Assessment and Reporting, and Chief Innovation Officers.

PSSAM started convening the ICs in 2021 with monthly implementation and planning meetings. As the AIB was named, and the new State Superintendent was settling in, implementation began in earnest. Last year at this time, we calculated IC's required attendance at roughly 71 meetings; since last year, we have easily doubled that amount and are only calculating obligations at the state level. The local outreach and implementation efforts likely rival those figures. Implementation Coordinators have been responsible for dozens of mandated reports to the State, as well as presentations and training sessions within their districts and to the public. The commitment to the Blueprint work has been immense and led by the ICs and their superintendents.

The designation of ICs has created an equity issue between small and large systems. Even after adjusting for the enrollment of the districts -- the planning and implementation requirements are the same -- whether you are a district with 200,000 students or 2,000 students. As we have moved through the initial two years of the Blueprint, it is exceptionally clear that these ICs are integral for the proper implementation with fidelity. We recognize that many staff in our districts are overworked and overburdened, but we feel it is appropriate to request a carve-out for the salaries of the ICs, especially since the General Assembly mandated the position. We believe a line item in the budget would provide an equitable funding opportunity for all districts to hire and employ a full-time Blueprint Coordinator for successful implementation of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future.

For these reasons, PSSAM **supports** House Bill 1082 and requests a **favorable report with one amendment.**