



**Testimony in support of
House Bill 1082: Blueprint for Maryland's Future Implementation – Funding and
Independent Evaluation – Alterations**

**Budget and Taxation Committee
Position: Favorable**

March 26, 2024

Strong Schools Maryland is a network of education advocates dedicated to ensuring the full funding and faithful implementation of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. Since our inception in 2016, we have been committed to the realization of World Class Schools for every student in our state. In 2023, this means supporting the full funding and faithful implementation of the Blueprint. Strong Schools Maryland **supports House Bill 1082, with amendments** that ensure allocated funds are used appropriately if a Blueprint Implementation Coordinator's salary is maxed out due to their pay grade in the county's existing pay scale.

The Blueprint for Maryland's Future envisions a World-Class system of public schools for our state's students. This can only be achieved through implementation of the law with fidelity. Blueprint Implementation Coordinators serve on the front lines of Blueprint law, providing oversight, input and recommendations aligned with the Blueprint outcomes and ensuring compliance with all criteria established by the Accountability and Implementation Board (AIB) and in alignment with the guidance provided by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE).

As the Blueprint law is just that—a blueprint—we believe that additional legislative changes must be made at the state and local levels to create the conditions necessary to realize World Class Schools. Though the law foresaw a need for local-level coordinators of the Blueprint's implementation, it did not include dedicated funding for the role. For the last several years, we have seen varying iterations of the Blueprint Implementation Coordinator (BIC) role at school systems across the state. For a time, there were BICs working across the state who also held roles in public relations, federal program compliance, teaching and learning—even as Superintendent of the very school system they served.

Their work is demanding, their task unlike any other we've set before education administrators, and it is imperative that BICs be specifically funded by the state to ensure equitable capacity for all 24 school systems to implement the Blueprint with fidelity.

House Bill 1082:

- Provides a sizable grant to each county board of education for the salary of the county's Blueprint implementation coordinator;
- Incentivizes a competitive job hiring process;
- Affirms the state's commitment to ensuring the Blueprint is locally implemented by qualified professionals.

Blueprint implementation coordinators are required to have extensive knowledge and a vast set of skills in not only a diverse range of education topics, but also human resources management and public economics. Montgomery County Public Schools requires a master's degree from an accredited university or college, as well as demonstrated leadership experience in K-12 education, project management, and program development.¹

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reports the average salary of a project manager in the U.S. to be \$95,370.² BLS also reports the average salary of education administrators in primary and secondary education to be \$99,870.³ The salary grant that this bill provides would allow Blueprint coordinator positions to be not just competitive in our job market, but also lead in compensation of education and organizational leaders.

This is a key example of the many changes and shifts in how we administer and fund public education in Maryland that we will have to grapple with as the Blueprint continues to be implemented. In a World Class Education system, we fund our priorities.

For these reasons, we urge a favorable report on House Bill 1082 with amendments.

For more information, contact Riya Gupta at riya@strongschoolsmaryland.org

¹ [MCPS](#)

² [U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Project Management Specialist](#)

³ [U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Education Administrator](#)