



## **TESTIMONY TO THE SENATE BUDGET AND TAXATION COMMITTEE**

### **SB 161 Community Schools - Alterations**

**POSITION: Support**

**BY: Linda T. Kohn – President**

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The League of Women Voters of Maryland (LWVMD) has a long-standing history of support for an adequate and equitable public education system as well as for a comprehensive range of child-centered services to ensure that all children have the opportunity to grow toward stable, productive adulthood. Thus, we have always been a strong supporter of an effective Community Schools program in the Blueprint for Maryland's Future.

**LWVMD supports SB 161 because it strengthens the Community School related provisions** of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future to reflect nationally recognized best practices and established definitions of Community School Implementation and provides flexibility with guardrails to local school districts with fewer than 40 schools.

Some important provisions of this bill

- Give new flexibility to districts with fewer than 40 schools to use up to 10% of the Concentration of Poverty Grant (CPG) dollars for staffing, training and professional development, and other materials and resources needed for Community School implementation at a systems level;
- Require plans to be submitted for coordinating CPG funds for all school districts.
- Restore key definition elements to community schools;
- Emphasize that families and community partners must be included in Community School leadership teams; and
- Require MSDE to create and implement a common needs assessment tool in consultation with local Community School implementers and stakeholders.

**The LWVMD strongly urges a favorable report on SB 161.**