



**Senate Bill 161/House Bill 200**  
**POSITION: SUPPORT**  
**Budget & Taxation Committee – January 24, 2024**

The Maryland Out of School Time Network (MOST) is a statewide organization dedicated to closing opportunity gaps by expanding both the quantity and quality of afterschool and summer learning opportunities for school-aged young people. MOST is one of the fifty statewide networks supported by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation and serves as Maryland’s affiliate to the National Afterschool Association. MOST serves as the backbone organization for the Maryland Coalition for Community Schools. The Maryland Coalition for Community Schools, founded in 2016, advocates for student and family success by leading the charge to expand the Community School Model in Maryland.

The Blueprint for Maryland’s Future set the stage for a broad expansion of the Community Schools model, which is active in more than four hundred schools across Maryland. The Kirwan Commission included community schools based on the review of the research on the impact of implementing the full-service community school models as a strategy for reducing barriers to education created by concentrated poverty. For Community Schools to be effective and achieve the anticipated outcomes, the nationally recognized and established best practices must also be in place. Senate Bill 161/House Bill 200 makes small but important alterations to the Community School provisions in the blueprint to ensure robust implementation and alignment to research-based practices.

Key changes include: 1) providing a modicum of flexibility to school districts with fewer than forty schools eligible for the Concentration of Poverty Grants; 2) ensuring family and community representation on leadership teams; and 3) a common needs assessment tool created by MSDE in collaboration with local implementors.

In crafting legislation as complex as the Blueprint, we need to ensure that the investments meet the law's letter and intent. This fine-tuning for Community Schools will lead to fidelity to the model, additional clarity, and greater effectiveness. We applaud Senator McCray for sponsoring SB161 and encourage the committee to provide a favorable report.

Ellie Mitchell  
Executive Director, MOST Network/MD4CS  
[emitchell@mostnetwork.org](mailto:emitchell@mostnetwork.org)

**Maryland Out of School Time Network / Maryland Coalition for Community Schools**

1500 Union Ave / Suite 2300  
Baltimore MD 21211 / 410 374-7692  
[www.mostnetwork.org](http://www.mostnetwork.org)