

HB0428_Rental_Assistance_for_Community_School_Fami

Uploaded by: Cecilia Plante

Position: FAV



**TESTIMONY FOR HB0428
COMMUNITY SCHOOLS – RENTAL ASSISTANCE FOR COMMUNITY SCHOOL
FAMILIES – PROGRAM AND FUND - ESTABLISHMENT**

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Stewart

Committee: Budget and Tax

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0428 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

Supporting Marylanders who are struggling and on the verge of becoming homeless is a worthy goal for the state. Those who are marginalized and vulnerable should get our support. This bill, if enacted, would establish a fund for providing rental assistance to families in community schools.

Community schools already receive Concentration of Poverty Grants to support the education of children from poor families. However, if the family is unable to pay rent and becomes homeless, those children are even more at risk. This fund would identify families who are on the edge of becoming homeless by establishing a coordinator in each community school who would make a determination based on overdue rent notices, unemployment receipts, reports of unsafe living conditions, etc. The program would then provide rental and utility assistance, payment of back rent or utilities and any penalties or fines to the family of the student enrolled in the community school for a period of 12 months.

Our members understand that many people in our state struggle to meet basic needs and support the state's efforts to ensure that Marylanders are housed and that their children can be in an environment that supports their education.

We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.

CDN Favorable HB 428.pdf

Uploaded by: Claudia Wilson Randall

Position: FAV



**TESTIMONY
HOUSE BILL 428**

Community School Families Program and Fund - Establishment

Senate Budget & Tax Committee

March 26, 2024

Position: Favorable

Dear Chair Guzzone and Members of the Budget and Tax Committee:

The Community Development Network of Maryland (CDN) is the voice for Maryland's community development sector and serves nearly 200 member organizations. CDN—focuses on small affordable housing developers, housing counseling agencies and community-based non-profits across the state of Maryland. The mission of CDN is to promote, strengthen and advocate for the community development sector throughout Maryland's urban, suburban and rural communities. CDN envisions a state in which all communities are thriving and where people of all incomes have abundant opportunities for themselves and their families.

HB 428 - Establishes the Rental Assistance for Community School Families Program to provide rental assistance to eligible student households; requiring the State Department of Education, in consultation with the Department of Housing and Community Development, to administer the Program requiring the Governor to include in the annual budget bill an appropriation of \$10,000,000 for the Fund; etc.

According to the Maryland Housing Needs Assessment completed in 2021 by the National Center for Smart Growth and Enterprise Community Partners, Maryland is short 85,000 rental units for low-income households. The Blueprint for Maryland's Future: Report on Neighborhood Indicators of Poverty analyzes the impact of poverty and socioeconomic status on student achievement, educational attainment, and other educational outcomes. According to the report, "Concentrated poverty and neighborhoods have a demonstrated and significant impact on a student's educational career."

Housing is an urgent priority for student achievement and learning loss from the pandemic. The revolving door of students in low-income communities due to housing instability make successful schools impossible. Community schools have been an excellent intervention and rental assistance can stabilize both the family and the school. Establishing a Fund that could provide cash assistance and support services to families experiencing financial crises that hinder their ability to pay their rent and stay housed. Too often, short term shocks have long term consequences which could be avoided if timely assistance was easily accessible. Safe, affordable, quality housing provides a foundation from which children can engage fully in schooling and set themselves up for success in the future.

We ask your favorable report for HB 428..

Submitted by Claudia Wilson Randall, Executive Director

Community Development Network of Maryland • 9770 Patuxent Woods Drive, Suite 331. Columbia MD 21046

Phone 443-756-7819

HB 428 Eviction Prevention Community Schools Templ

Uploaded by: Gwen DuBois

Position: FAV



HB 428 – Community Schools - Rental Assistance for Community School Families Program and Fund - Establishment

Hearing of the Budget and Taxation Committee on March 26, 2024

Position: Favorable

Chesapeake Physicians for Social Responsibility (CPSR) urges you to support HB 428, which will create an eviction prevention funds program for families with children enrolled in Maryland’s community schools.

Chesapeake Physicians for Social Responsibility is the statewide affiliate of Physicians for Social Responsibility. With our 900 supporters, our mission is to address the greatest public health threats of all: nuclear war and climate change, but we are also committed locally to addressing environmental injustice and health disparities. Health disparities may arise from problems with lack of employment, lack of educational opportunities, unhealthy environments, but nothing is more central to causing health disparities than housing insecurity. Evictions represent the worst outcome of housing insecurity, which includes high housing costs in proportion to income, poor housing quality, unstable neighborhood, overcrowding, and homelessness.¹

At Chesapeake Physicians for Social Responsibility, we know that prevention is the best treatment and preventing children from experiencing evictions is good medicine. There was a recent review² of the best designed studies looking at the harms from eviction filings and evictions on children from birth to age 9.

- 1) A recent eviction was associated with worse mother-reported child health status at age 5 years.
- 2) Evicted children had more hospitalizations and worse access to energy, health care, and childcare.
- 3) For a cohort of at risk 9-year-old children experiencing evictions in the preceding year, that experience was associated with cognitive losses compared to non-evicted children that were equivalent to the loss of one full year of schooling.
- 4) Evictions of pregnant women are associated with bad birth outcomes including premature birth and low birth weight.
- 5) A study in Cleveland found that by age 2, when there was an eviction filing history, there was a drop in lead testing and increase in lead levels compared to other children and even worse where there was actually an eviction.

If eviction filing is prevented for school age children, siblings born into the family where evictions have

¹ <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/pdredge/pdr-edge-frm-asst-sec-111918.html>

² <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2803667>

been avoided may experience better birth outcomes which could translate into lifelong health advantages. Preventing evictions may promote lead testing and prevent lead poisoning and irreversible brain injury in younger siblings.

Housing is health. Young children exposed to overcrowding and/or multiple moves in one year, were more often reported by their caregivers to have poor health, impaired educational, social or emotional skills, and were measured to have low weight compared to other children.³

In older children and adolescents, a history of multiple moves has been associated with mental health problems substance abuse, increased behavior problems, poor school performance, and increased risk of teen pregnancy. These negative outcomes will likely handicap them in their adult lives.

The Blueprint for Maryland's Future is investing significant funds to assist families whose children are attending community schools. Located throughout Maryland, [Community Schools](#) provide support for families by coordinating wraparound services like transportation, healthcare, counseling, and healthy food. **Without an investment in eviction prevention funds, students in community schools who are evicted will lose ready access to the support of their community school.**

Recent research is clear that preventing evictions stabilizes the family, the school, and the community. Students facing eviction are 6 times more likely to be chronically absent and 4 times more likely to not complete high school,¹ and students who have experienced housing insecurity were more likely to have a lower GPA as well as poorer mental health outcomes.² The National Center on Family Homelessness estimates that the graduation rate of children experiencing homelessness is less than 25%.³ **Families cannot thrive without safe, stable housing. Schools cannot thrive with a student body forced to live in unstable and deplorable conditions.**

[According to a recent research report by Stout Risius Ross on eviction prevention funds in Maryland, a fully funded program would more than pay for itself. Every dollar spent on eviction prevention saves the State \\$2.39.](#) A full \$40 million investment in eviction prevention would yield approximately \$92 million in cost savings or avoidance for the State by reducing homelessness and state-funded safety net costs related to shelter, assisting students experiencing homelessness, health care, foster care, decreased incarceration, and the economic impacts of increased employment and income stability. **On education alone, Stout estimated that a fully funded eviction prevention funds program (about \$40 million) would provide \$23.75 million in benefits to the State through better education outcomes for students and an increase in federal funds.**

Eviction prevention through rental assistance furthers gender and racial equity. Women-led (70%) and Black-led (74%) households have avoided eviction with help from the state's current emergency rental assistance program and likely will be evicted at much higher rates unless the Governor and General Assembly take action.

Maryland cannot be a national leader in leaving no one behind, ending childhood poverty, righting the racial wrongs of the past, and ensuring shelter for all without investing in eviction prevention funds.

³ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3134514/>

[Chesapeake PSR](#) urges you to move favorable on HB 428. For more information contact: Gwen L. DuBois MD, MPH gdubois@jhsph.edu

¹ <https://gardnercenter.stanford.edu/publications/study-homeless-and-highly-mobile-students-san-mateo-county/housing-instability-and>

² Mariah Kornbluh, et al., Exploring Housing Insecurity in Relation to Student Success, J Am Coll Health, Apr. 2022.

³ Health Care for the Homeless, Homelessness in Maryland, <https://www.hchmd.org/homelessness-maryland>(last visited Dec. 1, 2023).

HB 428 - B&T 2nd -Supp - Community Schools - Renta

Uploaded by: Henry Bogdan

Position: FAV



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March 26, 2024

Testimony on House Bill 428
Community Schools - Rental Assistance for Community School Families
Program and Fund - Establishment
Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

Position: Favorable

Maryland Nonprofits is a statewide association of almost 2000 nonprofit organizations and institutions. We urge you to support House Bill 428 to stabilize the housing situation of children and families in need of rental assistance through their Community Schools. This Bill has passed the House in the same form as you have already approved Senate Bill 370.

The Community Schools Program is a part of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future's recognition that many factors outside the classroom can negatively impact school performance, particularly for children whose families are living in or near poverty. This program is already investing significant funds to assist families by coordinating wraparound services like transportation, healthcare, counseling, and healthy food.

Recent research has found that students facing eviction are 6 times more likely to be chronically absent and 4 times more likely to not complete high school. Students who have experienced housing insecurity were more likely to have a lower Grade Point Averages as well as poorer mental health outcomes. The National Center on Family Homelessness estimates that the graduation rate of children experiencing homelessness is less than 25%. Families cannot thrive without safe, stable housing. Schools cannot thrive with a student body forced to live in unstable and deplorable conditions. Failure to address housing insecurity creates a significant threat to the success of our current and future investments in public education.

The Community Schools Program offers a vehicle in place, already established to coordinate services holistically, to identify and address needs for rental assistance. Creating the program and fund proposed by House Bill 428 will both strengthen the Blueprint and advance our efforts to overcome systemic racial, economic and gender inequities.

We urge you to give House Bill 428 a favorable report.



Maryland Nonprofits' mission is to strengthen organizations and networks for greater quality of life and equity.

HB 428_Senate hearing_HPRP FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Ingrid Lofgren

Position: FAV



HOMELESS PERSONS REPRESENTATION PROJECT

HB 428 – Community Schools - Rental Assistance for Community School Families Program and Fund - Establishment

Hearing of the Budget and Taxation Committee on March 26, 2024

Position: FAVORABLE

Homeless Persons Representation Project (HPRP) urges the Committee to support HB 428, which will prevent evictions and homelessness for Maryland children and families by providing rental assistance to eligible student households at community schools.

HPRP is a non-profit civil legal aid organization that provides free legal services to Marylanders who are homeless or at risk of homelessness on issues that create barriers to housing and economic stability. HPRP provides direct services through offices serving Baltimore City, Montgomery County, and Prince George's County, and advocates for policies that will prevent and end homelessness statewide. HPRP's Homeless Youth Initiative (HYI) serves youth and young adults under age 25. Most of HPRP's client households include school-age children or older youth who have been students in community schools.

HB 428 promotes housing and educational stability for families, and will further gender and racial equity, by addressing an urgent unmet need for rental assistance. Most of the households that HPRP represents in eviction proceedings are headed by single mothers with school-age children. This is not surprising given that single-parent renter households had the highest cost-burden rate nationally in 2022 at 62% percent.¹ In addition, most households, especially those with children, do not have sufficient residual income to pay rent arrears.² During the COVID-19 pandemic, increased government investment in rental assistance provided an essential lifeline for HPRP's clients when legal assistance alone could not prevent eviction. With help from the state's emergency rental assistance program, women-led (70%) and Black-led (74%) households avoided eviction. This equitable and effective two-generation approach to supporting families stabilized the family's housing, enabling parents to pursue or sustain employment, and eliminated barriers to educational stability for children. Students facing eviction are 6 times more likely to be chronically absent and 4 times more likely to not complete high school,³ and students who have experienced housing insecurity were more likely to have a lower GPA as well as poorer mental health outcomes.⁴ The National Center on Family Homelessness estimates that the graduation rate of children experiencing homelessness is less than 25%.⁵ Unfortunately, almost all of this COVID rental assistance funding has been exhausted and the funding will no longer be available when HB 428 takes effect.

In addition, rental assistance is a sound investment that avoids the human and fiscal costs of eviction and homelessness. The Blueprint for Maryland's Future is investing significant funds to assist families whose children are attending community schools. Located throughout Maryland, community schools provide support for families by coordinating wraparound services like transportation, healthcare, counseling, and healthy food. Without an investment in rental assistance funds, students in community schools who are evicted will lose access to the support of their community school. Recent research is clear that preventing evictions stabilizes the family, the school, and the community. [According to a recent research report by Stout Risius Ross on eviction prevention funds in Maryland, a fully funded program](#)

[would more than pay for itself. Every dollar spent on eviction prevention saves the State \\$2.39.](#) A full \$40 million investment in eviction prevention would yield approximately \$92 million in cost savings or avoidance for the State by reducing homelessness and state-funded safety net costs related to shelter, assisting students experiencing homelessness, health care, foster care, decreased incarceration, and the economic impacts of increased employment and income stability. On education alone, Stout estimated that a fully funded eviction prevention funds program (about \$40 million) would provide \$23.75 million in benefits to the State through better education outcomes for students and an increase in federal funds. The Fiscal and Policy Note indicates that the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DCHD) estimates that the full \$10 million in rental assistance funding included in the bill will likely serve 3,000 to 3,500 families per year. With many families likely including multiple children, the benefits and cost savings associated with this investment are significant.

In sum, families cannot thrive without safe, stable housing. Schools cannot thrive with a student body forced to live in unstable and deplorable conditions. Maryland cannot be a national leader in leaving no one behind, ending childhood poverty, advancing gender and racial equity, and ensuring shelter for all without investing in eviction prevention funds.

HPRP urges you to move favorable on HB 428. For more information, please contact Ingrid Lofgren, Director of HPRP's Homeless Youth Initiative, at ilofgren@hprplaw.org or (410)656-9975.

¹ America's Rental Housing, https://www.jchs.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/reports/files/Harvard_JCHS_Americas_Rental_Housing_2024.pdf (last visited January 30, 2024)

² *Id.*, stating that renter households earning less than \$30,000 annually had an all-time low median residual income of just \$310 per month and among those renters it was found that those with high cost burdens fared even worse with a median residual income of just \$170.

³ <https://gardnercenter.stanford.edu/publications/study-homeless-and-highly-mobile-students-san-mateo-county/housing-instability-and>

⁴ Mariah Kornbluh, et al., Exploring Housing Insecurity in Relation to Student Success, *J Am Coll Health*, Apr. 2022.

⁵ Health Care for the Homeless, Homelessness in Maryland, <https://www.hchmd.org/homelessness-maryland> (last visited Dec. 1, 2023).

HB428 - CASA Written Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Jose Coronado Flores

Position: FAV



**Testimony in SUPPORT of HB428
Community Schools - Rental Assistance for Community School Families Program and
Fund - Establishment**

Senate - Budget and Taxation Committee
Jose Coronado-Flores , On Behalf of CASA

March 26th, 2024

Dear Honorable Chair Guzzone and Members of the Committee,

CASA is pleased to offer **favorable testimony in support of HB428**, because it is important legislation that will address the need for emergency rental assistance funds in order to prevent evictions.

In particular, CASA is invested in seeing this bill pass, because many of our working-class members are a single emergency expenditure away from not being able to pay their rent. We see community schools as excellent liaisons in connecting families in need of rental support. Right now, community schools provide support for families by coordinating wrap around services like transportation, healthcare, counseling, and healthy food. Without an investment in eviction prevention funds, students in community schools who are evicted will lose ready access to the support of their schools.

Families cannot thrive without safe, stable housing. Schools cannot thrive with a student body forced to live in unstable and deplorable conditions. According to a recent research report by Stout Risius Ross on eviction prevention funds in Maryland, a fully funded program would more than pay for itself. Every dollar spent on eviction prevention saves the State \$2.39. A full \$40 million investment in eviction prevention would yield approximately \$92 million in cost savings or avoidance for the State by reducing homelessness and state-funded safety net costs related to shelter, assisting students experiencing homelessness, health care, foster care, decreased incarceration, and the economic impacts of increased employment and income stability. On education alone, Stout estimated that a fully funded eviction prevention funds program (about \$40 million) would provide \$23.75 million in benefits to the State through better education outcomes for students and an increase in federal funds.

Maryland cannot be a national leader in leaving no one behind, ending childhood poverty, righting the racial wrongs of the past, and ensuring shelter for all without investing in eviction prevention Funds. For these reasons, CASA urges a favorable report.

Jose Coronado-Flores
Research and Policy Analyst
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HB 428_MD Center on Economic Policy_FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Kali Schumitz

Position: FAV

Marylanders Needs Eviction Prevention Funding

Position Statement Supporting House Bill 428

Given before the Senate Education, Energy & Environment and Budget & Taxation Committees

HB 428 will create an eviction prevention funds program for families with children in Maryland's community schools. The Blueprint for Maryland's Future is investing significant funds to assist families whose children are attending community schools, but without an investment in eviction prevention funds, students in community schools who are evicted will face additional challenges and lose access to the supports they receive from their community school. For these reasons, the **Maryland Center on Economic Policy supports House Bill 428**

Located throughout Maryland, [community schools](#) provide support for families by coordinating wraparound services like transportation, healthcare, counseling, and healthy food. Recent research is clear that preventing evictions stabilizes the family, the school, and the community. Elementary school students facing eviction are six times more likely to be chronically absent while middle and high school students were five times more likely to be absent and four times less likely to complete high school.ⁱ Students who have experienced housing insecurity were more likely to have a lower GPA as well as poorer mental health outcomes.ⁱⁱ The National Center on Family Homelessness estimates that the graduation rate of children experiencing homelessness is less than 25%.ⁱⁱⁱ Families cannot thrive without safe and stable housing. Schools cannot thrive with a student body forced to live in unstable and deplorable conditions.

According to a recent study by Stout Risius Ross on eviction prevention funds in Maryland, a fully funded program would more than pay for itself.^{iv} Every dollar spent on eviction prevention saves the state \$2.39. A full \$40 million investment in eviction prevention would yield approximately \$92 million in cost savings or avoidance for the state by reducing homelessness and state-funded safety net costs related to shelter, assisting students experiencing homelessness, health care, foster care, decreased incarceration, and the economic impacts of increased employment and income stability. On education alone, Stout estimated that a fully funded eviction prevention funds program (about \$40 million) would provide \$23.75 million in benefits to the state through better education outcomes for students and an increase in federal funds.

Maryland has long had an affordable housing problem. According to the Maryland Housing Needs Assessment, nearly one-third of all Maryland households are experiencing housing cost burdens.^v Of these, 67% are homeowners while 33% are renters. Among renters, 48% of those households are cost burdened, and among low-income households, 76% are severely cost-burdened.

The latest Out of Reach report from the National Low Income Housing Coalition lists Maryland as the tenth least affordable state for renters.^{vi} To afford a modest two-bedroom apartment in the state, a family must earn \$31.08 an hour or \$64,642 annually. A minimum wage worker in Maryland would have to work 79 hours per week year-round. When families struggle to pay rent, they face greater risks of instability, eviction, and even homelessness,

which research links to food insecurity, poor health, lower cognitive scores and academic achievement, and more frequent foster care placement among children.

Unaffordable and unstable housing perpetuates racial, economic and health disparities in our state. If we want to close disparities between white and Black and Brown Marylanders, we must begin with housing. Eviction prevention through rental assistance furthers gender and racial equity. Women-led (70%) and Black-led (74%) households have avoided eviction over the last two years with help from the state's emergency rental assistance program and likely will be evicted at much higher rates unless the Governor and General Assembly take action to continue funding the program.

Maryland cannot be a national leader in leaving no one behind, ending childhood poverty, righting the racial wrongs of the past, and ensuring shelter for all without investing in eviction prevention funds. For these reasons, **the Maryland Center on Economic Policy respectfully requests the Committee to make a favorable report on House Bill 428.**

Equity Impact Analysis: House Bill 428

Bill Summary

HB 428 will create an eviction prevention funds program for families with children in Maryland's community schools. The Blueprint for Maryland's Future is investing significant funds to assist families whose children are attending community schools. Located throughout Maryland, [Community Schools](#) provide support for families by coordinating wraparound services like transportation, healthcare, counseling, and healthy food.

Background

Maryland has long had an affordable housing problem. According to the Maryland Housing Needs Assessment, nearly one-third of all Maryland households are experiencing housing cost burdens.^{vii} Of these, 67% are homeowners while 33% are renters. Among renters, 48% of those households are cost burdened, and among low-income households, 76% are severely cost-burdened.

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Recent research is clear that preventing evictions stabilizes the family, the school, and the community. Elementary school students facing eviction are 6 times more likely to be chronically absent while Middle and High school student were 5 times more likely to be absent and 4 times more less likely to not complete high school. Students who have experienced housing insecurity were more likely to have a lower GPA as well as poorer mental health outcomes. The National Center on Family Homelessness estimates that the graduation rate of children experiencing homelessness is less than 25%. Families cannot thrive without safe, stable housing. Schools cannot thrive with a student body forced to live in unstable and deplorable conditions.

Equity Implications

When families struggle to pay rent, they face greater risks of instability, eviction, and even homelessness, which research links to food insecurity, poor health, lower cognitive scores and academic achievement, and more frequent foster care placement among children.

Unaffordable and unstable housing perpetuates racial, economic and health disparities in our state. If we want to close disparities between white, black and brown Marylanders, we must begin with housing. Eviction prevention through rental assistance furthers gender and racial equity. Women-led (70%) and Black-led (74%) households have avoided eviction with help from the state's current emergency rental assistance program and likely will be evicted at much higher rates unless the Governor and General Assembly take action.

Impact

HB 428 will likely **improve racial, health and economic equity** in Maryland.

ⁱ John W. Gardner Center, <https://gardnercenter.stanford.edu/publications/study-homeless-and-highly-mobile-students-san-mateo-county/housing-instability-and>

ⁱⁱ Mariah Kornbluh, et al., Exploring Housing Insecurity in Relation to Student Success, J Am Coll Health, Apr. 2022. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/35471954/>

ⁱⁱⁱ Health Care for the Homeless, Homelessness in Maryland, <https://www.hchmd.org/homelessness-maryland> (last visited Dec. 1, 2023).

^{iv} Maryland Center on Economic Policy <https://www.mdeconomy.org/eviction-prevention-funds/>

^v Maryland 10 Year Housing Assessment <https://dhcd.maryland.gov/Documents/Other%20Publications/Report.pdf>

^{vi} National Low Income Housing Coalition <https://nlihc.org/oor/state/md>

^{vii} Maryland 10 Year Housing Assessment <https://dhcd.maryland.gov/Documents/Other%20Publications/Report.pdf>

NASW Maryland - 2024 HB 428 FAV - Community School

Uploaded by: Karessa Proctor

Position: FAV

Testimony before the Senate Budget & Tax Committee

House Bill 428: Community Schools - Rental Assistance for Community School Families Program and Fund - Establishment March 26, 2024 ****Support****

On behalf of the Social Work in Schools Committee of the National Association of Social Workers, Maryland Chapter, we would like to express our support for House Bill 428: Community Schools - Rental Assistance for Community School Families Program and Fund – Establishment.

NASW is the largest national organization of the profession, representing over 120,000 social workers nationwide, with 17,000 licensed in the state of Maryland. Our committee includes school social workers serving in school systems throughout Maryland.

The Community Schools [website](#) of the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future states, “Community schools serve as hubs that bring families, communities, and partners together to remove barriers to learning.” Providing site-based resources determined by an individualized Needs Assessment, families can access services that address and support physical, dental, and mental health; food scarcity; tutoring needs; mentoring and more.

Homelessness has long been recognized as one of the most disruptive events impacting children’s long-term educational success. In a [presentation](#) to the State Board of Education in 2021, then-Superintendent Mohammed Choudhury detailed its persistence, range, and impact on Maryland’s students as compared to their continuously-housed peers. The data he presented showed gaps of 23%-25% in English Language Arts and Math proficiency, a 31% increase in chronic absenteeism, a 17% lower graduation rate, and a 20% higher drop-out rate for students who have experience disrupted housing. Homelessness is enumerated as one of the major Adverse Childhood Events (ACE).

Adding rental and utility support as a resource to the many others that Community School families can access is an important first step in supporting our students and narrowing these gaps and reaching our goal of providing a world-class education for all Maryland students.

We ask that you return a favorable report for HB 428.

Respectfully,

Gail L. Martin, LCSW-C; Legislative Committee Liaison, Social Work in Schools Committee
NASW-MD

HB0428 ACDS Support - Hrg in Senate B&T - School F

Uploaded by: Lisa Sarro

Position: FAV



HB0428 – Community Schools - Rental Assistance for Community School Families Program and Fund - Establishment

Hearing of Budget and Taxation Committee, March 26, 2024

Position: Favorable

SUPPORT: HB 428 will help meet a critical need by ensuring that Community Schools staff have an efficient way to secure funds to prevent evictions, provide rental assistance, and provide other resources to support students whose families are struggling with unsafe housing, the threat of homelessness, and homelessness.

ACDS serves as Anne Arundel County's nonprofit housing and community development agency, helping Anne Arundel County residents thrive through their ability to obtain and maintain safe, stable, and affordable housing. As part of fulfilling this role, ACDS administers an Eviction Prevention Program using federal, State and local funds. ACDS also administers grants to other nonprofits providing eviction prevention funding and works closely with the County's Continuum of Care, the Coalition to End Homelessness, and foundations and faith-based organizations that help households at risk of eviction.

We frequently work with Pupil Personnel Workers, McKinney-Vento Liaisons and others connected to our local schools to try to help school families struggling with housing instability and homelessness. We know the lengths to which these school employees go to try to pull together resources for families in crisis so they can find housing, keep housing, or replace unsafe housing with safe and stable housing. ***Our dedicated school PPWs and McKinney-Vento liaisons scramble tirelessly looking for financial assistance for families facing eviction and experiencing homelessness***, reaching out to multiple sources at once and navigating the complex eligibility and paperwork requirements of many different programs, not to mention trying to keep track of what organizations may or may not have funding at any given time. ***The Rental Assistance Program contemplated by this bill will eliminate that scramble by keeping the rental assistance piece of the families' need for assistance "in-house."***

The amendments to the bill resulting in implementation of the Program by the Department of Housing and Community Development with assistance from school staff rather than the other way around will ensure that the new program runs smoothly and effectively, with a minimum of new administrative burdens on either DHCD or MSDE. DHCD is already well-positioned to implement the Program, having been instrumental in the successful distribution of rental assistance funds during the pandemic, and as noted above, MSDE staff already identify families in need and provide connections to resources. The creativity, flexibility, and collaboration between the bill sponsors, DHCD, MSDE and advocates is to be commended.

For the reasons noted above, ACDS urges the Committee to issue a FAVORABLE report on HB 428.

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HB0428_CC_Martinez_FAV-Crossover.pdf

Uploaded by: Madelin Martinez

Position: FAV

House Bill 428**Community Schools-Rental Assistance for Community School Families Program and Fund-Establishment**

Budget and Taxation Committee

March 26, 2024

Support

Catholic Charities of Baltimore supports HB 428, which will create an eviction prevention fund program for families with children enrolled in Maryland's community schools. We also understand and support the revision of eligibility criteria to include homeless students under the McKinney-Vento Act.

For a century, Catholic Charities has provided care and services to improve the lives of Marylanders in need. We accompany Marylanders as they age with dignity, support their pursuit of employment and career advancement, heal from trauma and addiction, achieve economic independence, prepare for educational success, and welcome immigrant neighbors into Maryland communities.

As one of the largest human service providers in Maryland, we continually receive referrals for our Eviction Prevention Program. In Fiscal Year 2022, we received 793 referrals and successfully assisted 233 individuals. In Fiscal Year 2023, the number of referrals increased to 908, but the assistance provided decreased to 153 individuals. Currently, in the first half of Fiscal Year 2024, we have received an astounding 1656 referrals, yet regrettably, funding and program requirements limited our capacity to assist 75.

The significant surge in referrals, doubling from the previous fiscal year, highlights the growing demand for eviction prevention services. However, there is a concerning trend as the level of funding provided has decreased by 87 percent compared to the previous fiscal year.

It is evident that additional financial assistance is crucial to support Marylanders in maintaining stable housing, especially those with limited incomes. Many individuals we work with struggle to cover basic household bills, and the scarcity of affordable housing options further compounds the challenges for those earning low wages. The effectiveness of the financial assistance is evident in the fact that for our most recent cohort of individuals and families, 82% remained stably housed 6 months post-award.

Recent research is clear that preventing evictions stabilizes the family, the school, and the community. Students facing eviction are 6 times more likely to be chronically absent and 4 times more likely to not complete high school,ⁱ and students who have experienced housing insecurity were more likely to have a lower GPA as well as poorer mental health outcomes.ⁱⁱ The National Center on Family Homelessness estimates that the graduation rate of children experiencing homelessness is less than 25%.ⁱⁱⁱ The overarching message is clear: families cannot thrive without safe, stable housing, and schools cannot thrive with a student body forced to endure unstable housing conditions.

On behalf of the individuals and families we work with, Catholic Charities of Baltimore appreciates your consideration, and urges the committee to issue a favorable report for HB 428.

Submitted By: Madelin Martinez, Assistant Director of Advocacy

ⁱ <https://gardnercenter.stanford.edu/publications/study-homeless-and-highly-mobile-students-san-mateo-county/housing-instability-and>

ⁱⁱ Mariah Kornbluh, et al., Exploring Housing Insecurity in Relation to Student Success, J Am Coll Health, Apr. 2022.

ⁱⁱⁱ Health Care for the Homeless, Homelessness in Maryland, <https://www.hchmd.org/homelessness-maryland> (last visited Dec. 1, 2023).

HB 428_MAP_FAVOR.pdf

Uploaded by: Mark Huffman

Position: FAV



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 428

Community Schools-Rental Assistance for Community School Families Program and Fund – Establishment

Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
March 26, 1pm

Submitted by Mark Huffman, Co-Chair

Member Agencies:

211 Maryland

Anne Arundel County Food Bank

Baltimore Jewish Council

Behavioral Health System Baltimore

Bridges to Housing Stability

CASH Campaign of Maryland

Energy Advocates

Episcopal Diocese of Maryland

Family League of Baltimore

Fuel Fund of Maryland

Job Opportunities Task Force

Laurel Advocacy & Referral Services,
Inc.

League of Women Voters of Maryland

Loyola University Maryland

Maryland Center on Economic Policy

Maryland Community Action
Partnership

Maryland Family Network

Maryland Food Bank

Maryland Hunger Solutions

Paul's Place

St. Vincent de Paul of Baltimore

Welfare Advocates

Marylanders Against Poverty

Kali Schumitz, Co-Chair

P: 410-412- 9105 ext 701

E: kschumitz@mdeconomy.org

Mark Huffman, Co-Chair

P: (301) 776-0442 x1033

E: MHuffman@laureladvocacy.org

Marylanders Against Poverty (MAP) strongly supports HB 428 which will create an eviction prevention funds program for families with children enrolled in Maryland's community schools.

Service providers in our coalition with direct experience in eviction prevention programming report increased numbers of unhoused clients seeking help, three times as many requests for assistance as can be addressed, and a reduction of over 50% of available funds resulting from the exhaustion of American Rescue Plan Act funding.

Rising rental costs, escalating utility bills, and soaring prices of essentials push more and more families to the edge of eviction.

The Blueprint for Maryland's Future is investing significant funds to assist families whose children are attending community schools. Located throughout Maryland, [Community Schools](#) provide support for families by coordinating wraparound services like transportation, healthcare, counseling, and healthy food. **Without an investment in eviction prevention funds, students in community schools who are evicted will lose ready access to the support of their community school.**

Recent research is clear that preventing evictions stabilizes the family, the school, and the community. Students facing eviction are 6 times more likely to be chronically absent and 4 times more likely to not complete high school,¹ and students who have experienced housing insecurity were more likely to have a lower GPA as well as poorer mental health outcomes.² The National Center on Family Homelessness estimates that the graduation rate of children experiencing homelessness is less than 25%.³ **Families cannot thrive without safe, stable housing. Schools cannot thrive with a student body forced to live in unstable and deplorable conditions.**

[According to a recent research report by Stout Risius Ross on eviction prevention funds in Maryland, a fully funded program would more than pay for itself. Every dollar spent on eviction prevention saves the State \\$2.39.](#) A full \$40 million investment in eviction prevention would yield approximately \$92 million in cost savings or avoidance for the State by reducing homelessness and state-funded safety net costs related to shelter, assisting students experiencing homelessness, health care, foster care, decreased incarceration, and the economic impacts of increased employment and income stability. **On education alone, Stout estimated that a fully funded eviction prevention funds program (about \$40 million) would provide \$23.75 million in benefits to the State through better education outcomes for students and an increase in federal funds.**

Eviction prevention through rental assistance furthers gender and racial equity. Women-led (70%) and Black-led (74%) households have avoided eviction with help from the state's current emergency rental assistance program and likely will be evicted at much higher rates unless the Governor and General Assembly take action.

Maryland cannot be a national leader in leaving no one behind, ending childhood poverty, righting the racial wrongs of the past, and ensuring shelter for all without investing in eviction prevention funds.

MAP appreciates your consideration and urges the committee to issue a favorable report for HB 428.

Marylanders Against Poverty (MAP) is a coalition of service providers, faith communities, and advocacy organizations advancing statewide public policies and programs necessary to alleviate the burdens faced by Marylanders living in or near poverty, and to address the underlying systemic causes of poverty.

¹ <https://gardnercenter.stanford.edu/publications/study-homeless-and-highly-mobile-students-san-mateo-county/housing-instability-and>

² Mariah Kornbluh, et al., Exploring Housing Insecurity in Relation to Student Success, J Am Coll Health, Apr. 2022.

³ Health Care for the Homeless, Homelessness in Maryland, <https://www.hchmd.org/homelessness-maryland>(last visited Dec. 1, 2023).

PJC testimony HB 428 FAV in SENATE.pdf

Uploaded by: Matt Hill

Position: FAV

**HB 428 – Community Schools - Rental Assistance for Community School Families Program
and Fund – Establishment**

Hearing of the Budget and Taxation Committee, March 26, 2024

Position: Favorable

Public Justice Center urges you to support HB 428, which will create an eviction prevention funds program for families with children enrolled in Maryland’s community schools. Public Justice Center (PJC) is a nonprofit public interest law firm that assists over 800 renters and their families each year. As part of Renters United Maryland, we stand with tenants to protect and expand their rights to safe, habitable, affordable, and non-discriminatory housing. Eviction prevention funds are often life changing for our client-families with children facing eviction. Magdalena Escobar’s experience provides an example:



Magdalena Escobar, her husband, and three children have resided in their Greenbelt apartment for the past five years. Ms. Escobar had to leave her job as a cook in a local restaurant to take care of the significant, emerging medical needs of her son. At the same time, her husband lost hours at his job. They quickly fell behind on the rent and faced an eviction filing. They applied for eviction prevention funds from Prince George’s County to help pay the back-due rent, and retained an attorney from CASA to negotiate a lower rent. They received the eviction prevention funds in September 2023, and it changed their lives: “Eviction prevention funds were a huge relief. I had an eviction scheduled for the next week, and after so many calls and help from CASA, the funds came through. My kids didn’t want to go to school because they were worried they were going to come home and our things would be on the street. My son and daughter were already struggling at school, and the pending eviction made it so much worse. When we told the kids the rent had been paid, they were so happy that they started shouting and yelling. Now they smile more and worry much less. Also, my lawyer learned that I was being charged the wrong amount of rent, so the landlord lowered the rent, making it more affordable. My husband is getting more hours at work, and we intend to stay in our neighborhood for the long term. I needed these funds, they really helped me, but I see lots of neighbors who still need this money. I got this help when I needed it, and I hope that others get this help when they need it to keep their families housed.”

The Blueprint for Maryland's Future is investing significant funds to assist families whose children are attending community schools. Located throughout Maryland, [Community Schools](#) provide support for families by coordinating wraparound services like transportation, healthcare, counseling, and healthy food. **Without an investment in eviction prevention funds, students in community schools who are evicted will lose ready access to the support of their community school.**

Preventing evictions stabilizes the family, the school, and the community. Families cannot thrive *without* safe, stable housing. Schools cannot thrive *with* a student body forced to live in unstable and deplorable conditions.

[According to a recent research report by Stout Risius Ross on eviction prevention funds in Maryland, a fully funded program would more than pay for itself. Every dollar spent on eviction prevention saves the State \\$2.39.](#) A full \$40 million investment in eviction prevention would yield approximately \$92 million in cost savings or avoidance for the State by reducing homelessness and state-funded safety net costs. **On education alone, Stout estimated that a fully funded eviction prevention funds program (about \$40 million) would provide \$23.75 million in benefits to the State through better education outcomes for students and an increase in federal funds.**

Key Findings

- Maryland is investing \$3.8 billion a year to implement the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. Unfortunately, *the wrap-around services based in community schools do not include housing stability support.*
- Eviction prevention funds ensure that families do not lose access to community school services. And, according to Stout, *such a program would provide \$23.75 million in benefits to the state* through better education outcomes for students and an increase in federal funds.
- *Students facing eviction are 6 times more likely to be chronically absent and 4 times more likely to not complete high school,⁹ and students who experienced housing insecurity were more likely to have a lower GPA as well as poorer mental health outcomes.¹⁰*
- The National Center on Family Homelessness estimates that the *graduation rate of children experiencing homelessness is less than 25%.¹¹*

Eviction prevention through rental assistance furthers gender and racial equity. Women-led (70%) and Black-led (74%) households have avoided eviction with help from the state's current emergency rental assistance program and likely will be evicted at much higher rates unless the Governor and General Assembly take action.

Maryland cannot be a national leader in leaving no one behind, ending childhood poverty, righting the racial wrongs of the past, and ensuring shelter for all without investing in eviction prevention funds.

Public Justice Center is a member of Renters United Maryland and urges you to move **favorable on HB 428.** For more information contact: Matt Hill, 410-625-9409, ext. 229, hillm@publicjustice.org

MMHA - 2024 - HB428 crossover.pdf

Uploaded by: Matthew Pipkin

Position: FAV



House Bill 428

Committee: Budget and Taxation

Bill: House Bill 428 Community Schools - Rental Assistance for Community School Families Program and Fund - Establishment

Date: March 25th, 2024

Position: Favorable

The Maryland Multi-Housing Association (MMHA) is a professional trade association established in 1996, whose members house more than 538,000 residents of the State of Maryland. MMHA's membership consists of owners and managers of more than 210,000 rental housing homes in over 958 apartment communities and more than 250 associate member companies who supply goods and services to the multi-housing industry.

House Bill 428 ("HB 428") as amended seeks to establish the "Rental Assistance for Community School Families Program" to provide rental assistance to eligible student households. This bill as amended requires the Department of Housing and Community Development to administer this program through community school counselors, local schools or local school systems tasked with identifying and offering various financial assistance to eligible student households. HB 428 as amended would allow the Governor to include in the annual budget bill an appropriation for the fund.

Evictions are disruptive to residents and housing providers. Most of all, it has an impact on minor children. MMHA supports this legislation and offers its appreciation to the sponsor for bringing this legislation forward. As the COVID-19 pandemic taught us, we would ask that flexibility be given to the administration of this fund. A program such as this needs to be simple and have as few strings as possible to help incentivize housing providers to participate. MMHA also recognizes the budgetary realities of this budget season and would like to ask that this program not be funded at the expense of increasing filings fees that are being proposed this session.

Please contact Matthew Pipkin, Jr. at (443) 995-4342 with any questions.

HB 428 Amendment 473224.pdf

Uploaded by: Vaughn Stewart

Position: FAV



HB0428/473224/1

AMENDMENTS
PREPARED
BY THE
DEPT. OF LEGISLATIVE
SERVICES

21 MAR 24
14:56:13

BY: Delegate Stewart

(To be offered in the Budget and Taxation Committee and the
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee)

AMENDMENT TO HOUSE BILL 428

(Third Reading File Bill)

On page 7, strike beginning with the comma in line 12 down through “SECTION”
in line 15 and substitute “MAY, IN ACCORDANCE WITH LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES, BE THE SCHOOL-BASED LIAISON FOR THE
PROGRAM”.

HB 428 FAV Del Stewart.pdf

Uploaded by: Vaughn Stewart

Position: FAV

VAUGHN STEWART
Legislative District 19
Montgomery County

Environment and Transportation
Committee

Subcommittees

Environment

Land Use and Ethics



The Maryland House of Delegates
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Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3528 • 301-858-3528
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Vaughn.Stewart@house.state.md.us

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony in Support of HB 428
Testimony by Delegate Vaughn Stewart
March 26, 2024 • Senate Budget & Taxation Committee

What the Bill Does:

The bill (HB 428) would establish a new rental assistance program for families with students enrolled in community schools. The Fund would be administered by the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), in consultation and conjunction with the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE).

The fund would offer rental assistance and eviction prevention funds, which can be used for payments, arrears, late fees, and relocation costs. To be eligible, the family must be at risk of homelessness or eviction, and must include at least one student enrolled in a community school. The assistance would be capped at the cost of 12 months of rent.

Funding for the program has been secured in the FY25 Budget by Senator Hettleman. An additional amendment has been introduced for your consideration which will narrow the scope of responsibilities placed on community school coordinators in administering the fund.

Why the Bill is Important:

The Maryland General Assembly has chosen to dedicate significant resources to community schools within the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. Community schools work in collaboration with community partners, local governments, and other stakeholders to provide wraparound services that address barriers to learning and success. Such services can include, but are not limited to, healthcare services, counseling services, access to healthy food, safe transportation to and from school, and extended learning hours. All of these services are aimed at supporting the educational pathways of students who need it the most—those who are members of historically underfunded and under-served communities across the state. Community schools yield documented [school-wide positive effects](#) on academic performance, family and community engagement, attendance, absenteeism, and discipline and health issues.

One service, however, which community schools do not currently provide is rental assistance. Housing insecurity presents a significant problem for students' educational success, while also having

serious negative consequences for communities and classrooms. Students whose families experience repeated evictions must adapt to new friends, teachers, classrooms, and learning environments every time they switch schools. These changes are not only disruptive to their learning, but can also be harmful to their social and emotional development.¹

Student mobility does not only affect the student; instructional quality and the success of the entire class are compromised when classrooms regularly lose and gain new students during the school year.² Additional data suggests that school mobility as a result of eviction may disproportionately affect students and communities of color, especially communities of color.³

For students in Maryland community schools, the problem is then compounded. Access to a broad range of essential services is linked to their housing situation. **Evictions already mean students are separated from their friends and teachers—in community schools, evictions mean the entire family is separated from vital wraparound services.**

Linking rental assistance to the other wraparound support services offered by community schools would make a huge difference in the lives of community school students and their families. It would shield students from the negative effects of housing insecurity on their education and personal development. It would ensure that students and their families maintain consistency in receipt of essential services and benefits. It may also offer families the services and resources required to relocate from dangerous, uninhabitable housing or predatory landlords.

Why the Committee Should Vote Favorably:

HB 428 as introduced received only favorable or favorable with amendments testimony during its joint hearing with the Appropriations and Ways and Means Committees. My team and I worked closely with DHCD, MSDE, and other community stakeholders to craft amendments designed to create a program that makes use of each agency's strengths and ensure effective allocation of the funds. The version of the bill in front of you today received a bipartisan vote in the House of Delegates.

The evidence is overwhelming: **Students with unstable housing do worse in school and students with stable housing do better.** Administering rental assistance through Maryland community schools would provide the missing link in wraparound services, protecting students and their families from housing insecurity while shielding them from the compounded negative effects of losing other essential services.

A vote for HB166 is a vote to strengthen the Blueprint and empower our most vulnerable neighbors. I urge a favorable report.

¹ [The Impact of the Looming Eviction Cliff on School-age Youth](#), National League of Cities.

² Haley Jr., Victor Pearse. [THE IMPACT OF EVICTION ON STUDENT DISPLACEMENT: An Atlanta Case Study](#).

³ Cowin, Rebecca, Hal Martin, and Clare Stevens. [Measuring Evictions During the COVID-19 Crisis](#).

Health Care for the Homeless - HB 428 FAV - Rental

Uploaded by: Vicky Stewart

Position: FAV

HEALTH CARE FOR THE HOMELESS TESTIMONY
IN SUPPORT OF
**HB 428 - Community Schools - Rental Assistance for Community
School Families Program and Fund - Establishment**

Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
March 26, 2024



Health Care for the Homeless strongly supports HB 428, which would establish an eviction prevention funds program for families with children enrolled in Maryland’s community schools. Preventing evictions is a critical piece of how we prevent and end homelessness and, as such, this bill is a top priority for Health Care for the Homeless.

We know that there is a plethora of health risks associated with the disruptive displacement caused by eviction. Following an eviction, a person’s likelihood of experiencing homelessness significantly increases. Homelessness historically creates new health problems and exacerbates existing ones. Where you or I could easily manage something like diabetes or hypertension in the year 2022, even HIV, the disruptive displacement following an eviction makes caring for these things exponentially harder and sometimes impossible.

Mortality among those experiencing homelessness has escalated over the last 5-10 years. On December 21, 2023, Health Care for the Homeless gathered for our annual Homeless Persons’ Memorial Day in which we remembered the lives of hundreds of people with the experience of homelessness who died last year. There is no amount of health care that can substitute stable housing. As stable housing impacts every aspect of a person’s life, stable housing is a critical component of every child’s education.

Health Care for the Homeless Lead Therapist Case Manager Tammy Montague, LCSW-C, shared her experience working with a family who was at risk of eviction because funding was not available. Ms. Montague shared that eviction prevention funding keeps families together and kids in school. But it devastates children in more ways than education. Ms. Montague shared the story of helping a family with a little girl prevent an eviction just before Christmas. She asked the girl, Maddie,¹ what she wanted for Christmas and Maddie asked for a Barbie dream house, an easy bake oven, and a chimney. When Tammy asked why a chimney, Maddie responded because Santa need a way to bring her gifts. All she wanted for Christmas was a home. Ms. Montague described Maddie’s Christmas request as “heart wrenching” and “devastating.”

A new report from the [Maryland Center on Economic Policy](#), Maryland Eviction Prevention Funds Alliance and Stout, *Assessment of Maryland’s Need for Eviction Prevention Funds (EPF) and the Estimated Fiscal Impact of EPF*, provided specific evidence of how devastating an eviction is on a children and families. And, particularly, how eviction prevention funding can prevent this type of devastation. The study revealed that “[f]amilies experiencing homelessness who were given rental assistance were less than half as likely as families who were not given rental assistance to have a child placed in out-of-home foster care.”² Further, the report noted that “[s]chool-aged children who experience homelessness face significant mental and

¹ Name changed for privacy and confidentiality.

² Stout, *Assessment of Maryland’s Need for Eviction Prevention Funds (EPF) and the Estimated Fiscal Impact of EPF (2023)*, page 24, available at [Maryland's Need for Eviction Prevention Funds | Maryland Center on Economic Policy \(mdeconomy.org\)](#).

physical health challenges that prevent students from focusing on their education. These challenges can result in students experiencing homelessness to become chronically absent from school. Even after just one year of chronic absenteeism, students are significantly less likely to complete high school.”³

Preventing evictions is a critical part of creating a Maryland where all families can have safe, stable, affordable housing. And eviction prevention funds categorically stop families from experiencing homelessness. Even a narrowly tailored program focused on preventing homelessness or supporting families whose children are enrolled in a community school generates exponential benefits for children, particularly Black and Brown children in poverty.

We understand that the bill sponsors will work with advocates, the Maryland State Dept. of Education, and the Dept. of Housing and Community Development to refine the administrative structure of the program and minimize the burden on community school coordinators. We also understand and support revising the eligibility criteria to include homeless students under the McKinney-Vento Act but deleting the current priority in the bill. We support these efforts as the General Assembly works to pass this critical legislation.

The importance of the stability of housing in a child’s life cannot be understated. For the health and safety of the children and families we serve and for all Marylanders, Health Care for the Homeless urges a favorable report on HB 428.

Health Care for the Homeless is Maryland’s leading provider of integrated health services and supportive housing for individuals and families experiencing homelessness. We deliver medical care, mental health services, state-certified addiction treatment, dental care, social services, housing support services, and housing for over 11,000 Marylanders annually at sites in Baltimore City and Baltimore County.

Our Vision: Everyone is healthy and has a safe home in a just and respectful community.

Our Mission: We work to end homelessness through racially equitable health care, housing and advocacy in partnership with those of us who have experienced it.

For more information, visit www.hchmd.org.

³ *Id.* at page 26.

HB428 - Community Schools - Rental Assistance for

Uploaded by: Dawana Sterrette

Position: FWA

**Testimony of the
Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners
In Support with Amendment
House Bill 428 Community Schools –
Rental Assistance for Community School Families Program and Fund – Establishment**

March 26, 2024

The Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners is supportive of the legislation that would establish the Rental Assistance For Community School Families Program. However, the concern is the language amended onto the bill that would require a community schools coordinator, a local school or a local school system to identify eligible student households and facilitate direct payments. School systems, schools and community school coordinators are not equipped, nor have the resources to facilitate payments or identify all eligible students.

The school board suggests that this program is best handled fully by the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). DHCD should consult with the local school system in this program, but that the Community Schools Coordinator, a local school or a local school system shall publicize the Rental Assistance Program and direct families to apply that are interested in the program directly to DHCD. DHCD shall be required to review applications and administer the program, inclusive of accepting payment. The school system, community school coordinator, nor schools should be involved in payments to the program.

9.9-104.1

Page 7, lines 12- 15

(F) THE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS COORDINATOR, A LOCAL SCHOOL, OR A LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM SHALL PROMOTE THE APPLICATION PROCESS FOR THE RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM ~~[IDENTIFY ELIGIBLE STUDENT HOUSEHOLDS AND FACILITATE DIRECT PAYMENTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH SUBSECTION (E) OF THIS SECTION].~~

Page 7, lines 16-19

(G) (1) THERE IS A RENTAL ASSISTANCE FOR COMMUNITY SCHOOL FAMILIES FUND. (2) THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SHALL ADMINISTER THE FUND AND SHALL REVIEW ALL APPLICATIONS AND FACILITATE DIRECT PAYMENTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH SUBSECTION (E) OF THIS SECTION.

For the foregoing reasons, the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners supports with amendment, House Bill 428 and urges a favorable report.

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HB428 Letter of SWA 3.25.24.pdf

Uploaded by: Dr. Carey Wright

Position: FWA

school, coordinating with school leadership, monitoring implementation, and monitoring the expenditures of the Concentration of Poverty Grant that supports the Community school activities.

With the current management responsibilities of the Community Schools Coordinator, it would not be possible to take on the determination of eligibility and the facilitation of direct payments. The Community School Coordinator cannot facilitate payments for a program managed by a State Agency. MSDE believes the addition of this responsibility will compromise the coordinator's ability to perform their existing duties and serve their school community in a maximally effective manner.

Proposed Amendments (Third Reader)

Page 3, lines 30-31, and Page 4, lines 1-2, in place of the removed language, insert:

(IV) Providing information about the availability of the rental assistance program to families, including eligibility requirements, and how to apply.

Page 7, strike lines 12-15 and replace with:

(F) The Community Schools Coordinator, a local school, or a local school system shall provide verification of student enrollment, and inclusion in the compensatory education enrollment, or eligibility for McKinney Vento Assistance.

With these amendments, MSDE supports the creation of the Rental Assistance for Community School Families Fund.

The State Board requests that the committee consider this information on **HB 428**. Please contact Dr. Akilah Alleyne, Executive Director of Government Affairs, Education Policy, and Government Relations, at Akilah.alleyne@maryland.gov or at 410-767-0504 or Zach Hands, Executive Director of the State Board, at Zachary.hands1@maryland.gov or at 443-915-6094, if you would like any additional information.

HB 428. Community Schools Rental Assistance Program

Uploaded by: John Woolums

Position: FWA

BILL: House Bill 428
TITLE: Community Schools - Rental Assistance for Community School Families Program and Fund - Establishment
DATE: March 26, 2024
POSITION: SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS
COMMITTEE: Budget and Taxation
Education, Energy, and the Environment
CONTACT: John R. Woolums, Esq.

The Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) supports the successful development of community schools as a core component of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. The Blueprint provides significant funding to support the planning and operation of community schools in neighborhoods with high concentrations of poverty. The Blueprint law defines a community school as a public school that establishes a set of strategic partnerships between the school and other community resources that promote student achievement, positive learning conditions, and the well-being of students, families, and the community by providing wraparound services. In this context, MABE also supports the intent of House Bill 428 to establish a rental assistance program within the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) to support families of students attending community schools.

However, as introduced and currently drafted, local school systems are very concerned that the bill appears to require community school coordinators to "facilitate direct payments" for rent, utilities, and other expenses to eligible households. Our community school coordinators are already heavily burdened by an extraordinarily broad scope of responsibilities for the facilitation of wraparound services for students and families. MABE believes this bill provision is far too prescriptive because it would impose a major new responsibility on each coordinator to not only facilitate but also administer direct payments to households this new rental assistance program.

Specifically, on page 7, in lines 9-11, the bill would require each local community school coordinator to "identify eligible student households and facilitate direct payments." Again, MABE does not believe administering a rental assistance payment program should be added to the responsibilities of our community schools coordinators. MABE greatly appreciates that the bill sponsors have agreed to an amendment to clarify that the coordinator's role should be defined as "liaison" and that this role should be further defined by the local school system.

(F) THE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS COORDINATOR MAY BE THE SCHOOL-BASED LIAISON FOR THE PROGRAM, IN ACCORDANCE WITH LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES [IDENTIFY ELIGIBLE STUDENT HOUSEHOLDS AND FACILITATE DIRECT PAYMENTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH SUBSECTION (E) OF THIS SECTION].

MABE believes that this amendment better reflects the role of the coordinator, whose specific responsibilities are governed by their local school system's community school needs assessment and plan. MABE looks forward to each school system's ongoing collaboration with DHCD in support of the new rental assistance program to be created by House Bill 428.

For these reasons, MABE requests a favorable report on House Bill 428 with an amendment to ensure an appropriate role for the community school coordinator.

HB 428 xover Rental Assistance Comm Schools - PSSA

Uploaded by: Mary Pat Fannon

Position: FWA



PSSAM
Public School Superintendents' Association
OF MARYLAND

Mary Pat Fannon, Executive Director
1217 S. Potomac Street
Baltimore, MD 21224
410-935-7281
marypat.fannon@pssam.org

BILL: HB 428

TITLE: Community Schools - Rental Assistance for Community School Families Program and Fund - Establishment

DATE: March 26, 2024

POSITION: Favorable with Amendments

COMMITTEE: Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

CONTACT: Mary Pat Fannon, Executive Director, PSSAM

The Public School Superintendents' Association of Maryland (PSSAM), on behalf of all twenty-four public school superintendents, **supports House Bill 428 with amendments.**

This bill creates the Rental Assistance for Community School Families Program to provide rental assistance to eligible student households; it requires the Department of Housing and Community Development, in consultation with the State Department of Education, to administer the Program and establish the Rental Assistance for Community School Families Fund.

PSSAM strongly supports the creation of this Fund and the recognition of community schools as important conduits to serve our neediest families; however, as currently drafted the bill requires community schools coordinators identify eligible students and facilitate direct payments for rent and utilities to families.

This is way outside of the scope of work for community-based practitioners who are in schools to provide wraparound supports and establish trusting environments for families. Any housing assistance is most appropriately administered by county and state housing departments who regularly assist families with these intimate financial details and should be handled outside of any relationships with school personnel.

We strongly advocate for the removal of local school personnel, namely the community schools coordinators, from playing any implementation role in this new program except for providing information and referrals as appropriate.

We request the bill be amended as follows:

Page 3, new line 30-31:

(IV) Providing information about the availability of the rental assistance program to families, including eligibility requirements, and how to apply.

Page 7, strike lines 12-15 and replace with:

(F) Upon request, a local school system shall provide verification of student enrollment, and inclusion in the compensatory education enrollment, or eligibility for McKinney Vento Assistance.

The first amendment ensures that the dissemination of information regarding this program reaches community school families. The second amendment ensures best practices regarding financial privacy for families by verifying eligibility through established procedures regarding income verification at the district level, keeping it as far away from the relationship between families and their school communities and school personnel.

For these reasons, PSSAM requests a **favorable with amendments** committee report for House Bill 428.