



**Testimony in SUPPORT of
Senate Bill 545: Primary and Secondary Education – Public School Employees – Salaries**

Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

Position: Favorable

February 28, 2024

At Strong Schools Maryland, we work to support the faithful implementation and full funding of the promises legislated through the landmark Blueprint for Maryland's Future. The Blueprint recognizes the necessity of educators. As a state, we must strive to fairly compensate educators for the key role they play in the development of our students and incentivize a diverse array of talented individuals to work in the field. As such, Strong Schools Maryland supports SB 545 as it sets a mandate for the minimum salary for Maryland public school teachers.

Current Maryland educator salaries vary by district with minimum salaries reaching as low as \$43,900 annually, falling short of the promised standards in the Blueprint.¹ Furthermore, the National Center for Education Statistics published research indicating that 44% of public schools reported teaching vacancies, with more than half of these vacancies attributed to resignations as of the 2022 school year.²

We are facing a teacher shortage, and the lack of educators directly impacts the quality of our students' education. Students deserve educators and school leaders that reflect their diverse array of backgrounds and experiences. To attract and retain this teaching workforce, we must adequately invest fiscal resources in our teachers.

The Blueprint raises the starting salaries for teachers in Maryland to \$60,000 while incorporating certification pay raise incentives within Pillar 2: High Quality and Diverse Teachers and Leaders. Senate Bill 545, simply codifies that the minimum salary for all public school employees will be \$60,000 by July 1, 2026. The proposed legislation also dictates the pay increases for specified certifications which reiterates the mandates of the Blueprint. Finally, this bill incentivizes skilled teachers to dedicate their expertise where it is most needed by offering additional compensation for educators working in low performing schools.

Strong Schools Maryland stands in strong support of Senate Bill 545, as it takes a significant step in fulfilling the mandates of the Blueprint by establishing the minimum salary for public school teachers and equitably incentivizing educators within the profession.

For these reasons, we urge a favorable report on Senate Bill 545.

For more information, contact Kenzie Funk at kenzie@strongschoolsmaryland.org

¹ [Minimum and Maximum Salaries for Maryland Public School Teachers](#)

² [Maryland's Teacher Workforce: Supply, Demand, and Diversity](#)