

HB1300/SB1000 Blueprint for Maryland's Future – Implementation

Submitted by India Ochs (Annapolis, MD)

As a parent and former student of Anne Arundel County public schools, I am in full support of implementing the Blueprint for Maryland's Future under HB1300/SB1000.

Of note, I wanted to highlight the concept of world class education, a term used throughout these bills and by others supporting changes to education, but a term without a clear definition. Achieving a world class education should not be about having the highest test scores in the world, but about providing our students with an education that enables them to address 21st century issues. A world class education system should engage our students in authentic, not standardized, learning experiences. If we want to provide our students with a world class curriculum, that curriculum needs to be broad and flexible, so our kids can learn content and skills related to their own interests, talents, and abilities. A world class education system provides direct support for each of student. All students should be connected to at least one significant adult in the building, so that they can get the needed support in pursuit of their best education. A world class education system should also capitalize on the strengths of its students and teachers, and connect with community resources. Teachers and students should be able to tap into their own talents and interests. A world class education system seeks not to standardize, but to make the most of both its students and teachers in all learning.

A world class system should not push higher test scores, but should push for higher standards and better outcomes in areas like reading, math, and science, and those higher standards need to be put in place for all our students, so that students from low income families, students with disabilities, or non-English speaking students have the same standards, the same opportunities, as their peers. And the good news is, if the Blueprint for Maryland's Future is fully implemented, with things like the increased early education for our 3 and 4 year olds who are most in need, increase pay and supports for our teachers, focus on both college and career-ready opportunities, and additional supports in special education and mental health, we will have the opportunity to actually bring that world class education to all our students. Thank you and please fully support HB1300/SB1000.