



Mary Pat Fannon, Executive Director

BILL: Senate Bill 267 - AP Opportunities Act of 2020
DATE: February 4, 2020
POSITION: **Support with Amendments**
COMMITTEE: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs
CONTACT: Mary Pat Fannon, Executive Director

The AP Opportunities Act of 2020 requires that the State Board of Education provide Advanced Placement (AP) examination fee assistance for students with specified financial needs beginning in the 2020-2021 school year.

The Public School Superintendents' Association of Maryland (PSSAM), which represents all twenty-four local school superintendents, **supports Senate Bill 276 with two amendments.**

As indicated in the fiscal note, many local school systems are already paying some or all of the AP test fees for financially challenged students, so we strongly support the intent of this legislation. However, PSSAM asks that language be included that explicitly states that the program's requirements *only* exist if there are sufficient State funds provided. If the State does not provide sufficient funding in any given year, we do not want this to become a new mandate on local systems. An additional suggestion is to remove the reference to the eligibility of a student in Head Start as they would not be taking these exams.

Local school systems have been active partners with the State, the local community colleges and institutions of higher education, the business community and more to provide more college and career-ready opportunities. This legislation would bolster those efforts by removing any financial barriers for some of our neediest students and we strongly support this objective.

For the reasons stated above, PSSAM **supports Senate Bill 276 with two amendments**, and urges a favorable committee report.

One Voice, One Vision for Maryland's Students