



**SB275 EDUCATION - COMMUNITY AND LOCAL ACCOUNTABILITY FOR STRUGGLING SCHOOLS
(CLASS) ACT OF 2020 - INNOVATION SCHOOLS**

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EDUCATION, HEALTH, AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

OPPOSE

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Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) opposes **SB275 Education - Community and Local Accountability for Struggling Schools (CLASS) Act of 2020 - Innovation Schools**. This Administration bill requires each school with one-star under the State's accountability system for at least the previous two school years to be designated as an innovation school for the purpose of improving school performance and student achievement through increased autonomy and flexibility. An innovation plan must be developed for each school that contains specified elements and must be approved by a vote of school staff. A local board of education must approve an innovation plan as specified for a period of up to 5 years.

SB275 requires a county board of education to designate schools receiving one star for two consecutive years under the star rating system as an innovation school. The county board would be required to establish an Innovation Plan Committee for each innovation school with specific contents for an innovation plan. Also required under the bill is a process for review, adoption, modification or rejection of a proposed innovation plan. The bill includes electronic posting of the plan, a public comment period, a public hearing, specifying the funding and operation of the innovation school, inclusion of required language in collective bargaining agreements.

AACPS already requires all schools, regardless of their star rating, to develop a school improvement plan. The school improvement plan requires action steps, professional development, resources, and measurement of effectiveness with timelines. The school improvement plan consists of various stakeholders of the school community and reporting mechanisms. In addition, AACPS also conducts a comprehensive needs assessment to improve student outcomes at schools identified by Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE). This additional review and accountability process is conducted in collaboration with MSDE.

In addition, ESSA has extensive and robust processes that hold schools accountable if they do not show improvement or meet targets. The AACPS ESSA Consolidated Strategic Plan also has accountability requirements clearly outline the school system's response to low performing students. Schools are required to conduct a needs assessment, determine root cause analysis, and develop plans including evidence-based practices.

Finally, the Protect Our Schools Act specifies parameters for academic and school quality indicators, comprehensive support and improvement plans, and targeted support and improvement plans. It also prohibits specified school interventions.

Accordingly, AACPS respectfully requests an **UNFAVORABLE** committee report on SB275.