

BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Mayor, City of Baltimore

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*Chair, Baltimore City Board of
School Commissioners*

Dr. Sonja Brookins Santelises
Chief Executive Officer

**Testimony of the
Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners
In Opposition of Senate Bill 986
Public Schools – Agricultural Education and Grant Programs**

March 3, 2020

The Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners opposes Senate Bill 986 as a curriculum mandate. This legislation requires each school board, beginning in SY 2022 to implement an agricultural science curriculum in at least one public high school in the county or at least one career and technology education center in the county. In addition, each local board must implement an agricultural education program that meet certain requirements.

In creating the State Board and local boards of education, the Maryland General Assembly has delegated to them the responsibility for content standards and curriculum. The State Board establishes state standards and the local boards adopt and implement locally developed programs with local funding to ensure that these standards are met. Local boards of education can best balance educational practices, available resources, public input, and accountability. However, Baltimore City Public School System currently have three agricultural programs across the city, and appears to meet the criteria for this bill with current programming. It must be noted that the level of funding is insufficient for the teachers, materials, and additional costs required in the legislation.

For the foregoing reasons, the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners opposes Senate Bill 986 and urges an unfavorable report.

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