



PO Box 716
Baltimore, MD 21233
202.669.0031 phone

Committee: Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
House Appropriations Committee
House Ways and Means Committee

Bill Number: Senate Bill 1000 & House Bill 1300

Title: Blueprint for Maryland's Future – Implementation

Hearing Date: February 17, 2020

Position: Support with Amendment

The Maryland Assembly on School-Based Health Care (MASBHC) strongly supports *Senate Bill 1000 and House Bill 1300 – Blueprint for Maryland's Future – Implementation*. This bill further establishes in statute recommendations from the Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education, including codifying funding recommendations for school-based health centers.

There are currently 86 school-based health centers in Maryland, operating in 12 local school systems. They are staffed and supported by community health providers, primarily local health departments, and provide somatic, behavioral, and oral health services. By design, they are located in schools with high concentrations of poverty and act as a safety net provider, particularly for students who experience barriers to accessing health care services in the community. By providing health services on-site, students experience increased seat time and less absenteeism.

In summer 2018, MASBHC had the opportunity to present before the full Commission as part of a panel discussing the benefits of on-site health and behavioral health services in schools. It was during this time that we discussed the history of funding for school-based health centers dating back to the late 1990s. When funding was first awarded, the State was scheduled to phase-in \$6 million in new funding over a three-year period. Unfortunately, only one installment was ever realized and the funds have remained flat at approximately \$2.5 million annually for the past 20 years. As a result, local school systems have limited funding



PO Box 716
Baltimore, MD 21233
202.669.0031 phone

options from the State to establish or expand school-based health centers, even where there is an identified need.

We were very pleased to see the inclusion of \$6.5 million in annual funding within SB 1000 and HB 1300. This funding fully implements a recommendation from the Commission's January 2019 Interim Report to restore, with an inflationary increase, the original promise made by the State to fund school-based health centers over 20 years ago.

To reflect the Maryland State Department of Education's existing grant process for school-based health centers, we are respectfully requesting the following technical amendment. Currently, MSDE awards grants to local school systems and approved community health partners who sponsor school-based health centers.

AMENDMENT

On page 58, in line 34, strike "**TO LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEMS**".

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony and we urge a favorable vote. If you need any further information, please contact Rachael Faulkner, our public policy and governmental affairs consultant at rfaulkner@policypartners.net or (410) 693-4000.