

# BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**Brandon M. Scott**  
*Mayor, City of Baltimore*

**Linda Chinnia**  
*Chair, Baltimore City Board  
of School Commissioners*

**Dr. Sonja Brookins Santelises**  
*Chief Executive Officer*

**Testimony of the  
Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners  
Support with Amendments  
Senate Bill 664 – Education –  
Student Financial Aid – Outreach Plan and  
Advisory Committee**

**April 1, 2021**

The Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners supports any student that has the desire to attend an institution of higher learning or trade school or to begin a career. This legislation directs each county board of education to encourage and assist certain students to complete and submit financial aid forms. We appreciate that this is no longer a graduation requirement. The legislation also requires that MSDE, in coordination with the Maryland Higher Education Commission, to establish an advisory committee to provide guidance to county boards and high schools with information, resources, and best practices on universal FAFSA or MSFAA completion and planning for financial aid for postsecondary education.

The Board support the legislation as amended with two additional amendments. The first is that not all school systems participate in the Maryland College Application Campaign, therefore this language should be removed. The second is the reporting requirement. There may be challenges in accurately capturing the data as some students may also work with outside organizations for help in completing financial aid forms. We hope that the language can be added that requires the data to be captured “to the extent practicable.” The Board suggests that the advisory committee review best practices for capturing such information, prior to mandating the data collection.

For the foregoing reasons, the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners supports, with amendments, Senate Bill 664 and urges a favorable report, with the suggested amendments.

Dawana Merritt Sterrette, Esq.  
Director, Legislative and Government Affairs  
[dsterrette@bcps.k12.md.us](mailto:dsterrette@bcps.k12.md.us)  
443-250-0190