



**HB1113 PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION - EDUCATION SAVINGS ACCOUNT PROGRAM -
ESTABLISHED**

March 11, 2021

APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

OPPOSE

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Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) opposes **HB1113 Primary and Secondary Education - Education Savings Account Program - Established**. This bill establishes an Education Savings Account program in the State to provide grants to students to attend a nonpublic school or a home school program meeting specified conditions in the bill. It requires the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) for administering the program. The bill also requires MSDE to adopt regulations to implement the program.

AACPS opposes the diversion of public education funds to nonpublic schools. AACPS specifically opposes the use of tuition tax credits, tax deductions, or vouchers as a means of reimbursing parents/guardians for their children's nonpublic educational expenses in Pre-K–12.

We are facing unprecedented times as result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has significantly impacted education, school systems, students, and families. The diversion of public education funds to nonpublic schools or home school programs is likely to have serious economic, constitutional, legal, and public policy consequences. If public education funds were used for the support of nonpublic schools, fewer resources would be available for public elementary and secondary schools. The diversion of public education funds to nonpublic schools would also impede the ability of localities to ensure an appropriate, safe, and equitable education for all students. Further, students in schools with limited parental/guardian and community support would be disadvantaged. AACPS and school systems across the State are already facing decreased funding as a result of the pandemic and diverting additional public funds away from public schools would have a negative impact on public education.

It is also important to note that, unlike public schools, nonpublic schools have no direct accountability to taxpayers for their use of tax revenues.

Accordingly, AACPS respectfully requests an **UNFAVORABLE** committee report on HB1113.