



**HB998 COUNTY BOARDS OF EDUCATION - IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION AND RELATED SERVICES  
– REQUIREMENT**

February 24, 2021

WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

**OPPOSE**

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Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) opposes **HB998 County Boards of Education - In-Person Instruction and Related Services - Requirement**. This bill requires each county board of education, notwithstanding any law, regulation, or executive order to the contrary, to require school buildings to be open each school day in the 2021-2022 school year to provide in-person instruction and related services, including services such as speech-language pathology services, counseling, physical therapy, and occupational therapy, to certain students. The bill also requires each county board to provide instruction and related services to certain students in person except under certain circumstances.

AACPS supports local control of educational policy, curriculum, budgets, and administration. Local governance by boards of education is essential to a comprehensive system of public education. Retaining local board authority allows for collaboration and cooperative planning within the local community rather than through top-down decisions from the State. In fact, Maryland law states, “*educational matters that affect the counties shall be under the control of a county board of education,*” and that local boards of education, “*determine, with the advice of the county Superintendent, the educational policies of the county school system.*”

As decisions are made on the local level, local boards of education receive and rely on public input and are best able to address local needs. The relationship between neighborhoods and local public schools encourages participation by parents/guardians and other community members in the educational process so that everyone has a responsibility for and ownership of public education. Retaining decision-making authority at the local level allows local boards of education to best balance educational practices, available resources to implement those practices, public input, and accountability.

Accordingly, AACPS respectfully requests an **UNFAVORABLE** committee report on HB998.