

**Testimony SB383/HB531**  
**Budget and Taxation Committee**  
**Position: Support**  
**February 8, 2022**

Senator Guy Guzzone, Chair Senator Jim Rosapepe, Vice Chair and Members of the Budget and Taxation Committee I Strongly urge your support of SB383/HB531 the “Maryland Association of Environmental and Outdoor Education Grant - Funding and Evaluation – Extension.”

My school district Calvert County Public Schools was the first district in Maryland to achieve 100% Maryland Green Schools status. This was not only an honor, but a statement about the goals of the school district. I have been Superintendent of Calvert County Public Schools since July 1, 2014 and was so glad to discover the long term investment my district was making in environmental education.

Green Schools are schools who have chosen to maintain a healthy environment that can support a successful learning environment while saving energy, valuable resources, and money. The CCPS *Green School* drive has been pulsating through our schools since the inception of our environmental education program for the Calvert County Public School System (CHESPAX). Environmental Education is important in our district and Board of Education staff work closely with local, state and regional partner agencies to provide hands-on environmental education experiences for our students.

The Chesapeake Bay and the Patuxent River and other natural settings serve as living laboratories for students to use their science content and process skills to learn to make responsible decisions regarding the natural environment.

The Maryland Association of Environmental Outdoor Education (MAEOE) has been leading and managing the Maryland Green Schools program since 1999. We are proud to say that CCPS

was the first school district in Maryland where 100% of our K-12 schools are certified. Of those 24 schools, 11 of them have reached a sustainable status. Queen Anne's County Public Schools joined us in 2020 and we would like to see other school districts achieve 100% Green Schools.

The Green School Application process that requires the facilitation of a dedicated person or group of individuals with a passion to cultivate a green climate in their school. Our Green School coordinators must enlist a team at the staff and student level to ensure each objective is met and that the school is successful. The commitment and dedication involved requires commitment of administrators, staff, students, partners and the community.

The Green Schools Act makes a difference for school districts like ours where we are committed to having all schools maintain their Green Schools status and to those school districts where there are few or no Green Schools. There is no monetary award to become green. But these funds which go out to teachers, schools, and partners throughout the state and can motivate and strengthen programs. This will have long-term implications and support school system sustainability goals. Our greatest motivation is teaching our students the importance of being a steward of our environment.

Please support this Bill and Maryland Green Schools.

Daniel Curry, Ed.D  
Superintendent  
Calvert County Public Schools