



**Board of Education of Howard County
Testimony Submitted to the Maryland Senate,
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
April 5, 2022**

**Board of Education
of Howard County**

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HB1280: UNFAVORABLE

Public Schools - Mathematics Credit - College Preparatory Computer Science or Computer Programming Course

The Board of Education of Howard County (the Board) opposes **HB1280 Public Schools - Mathematics Credit - College Preparatory Computer Science or Computer Programming Course** as a curriculum mandate with potential unintended consequences for students.

HB1280 would allow an Advanced Placement (AP) Computer Science course or an equivalent college preparatory course approved by a local board to count towards a mathematics credit. This is currently existing practice, as the Howard County Public School System allows AP Computer Science A (CT-475-1) to serve as a mathematics course credit in high school to satisfy one of the high school graduation requirements.

Current graduation requirements state that students must earn 4 mathematics credits while also being enrolled in a mathematics course in each year of high school. This is a practice particularly important for students seeking to enter a four-year university or college, which may not also recognize a computer science course as the equivalent of a mathematics course. University System of Maryland (USM) Schools in particular accept AP Computer Science as one of four required mathematics courses for admission. However, in accordance with the USM requirements, the AP Computer Science course should not serve as the final high school mathematics course. This could put students in a situation where they satisfy the requirements of the bill, particularly in (B) requiring the student to “enroll in the course concurrently with or after completing Algebra II” but not realize this sequence could negatively affect their college entry. Therefore, students taking AP Computer Science A (CT-475-1) in grade 12 should also enroll in another mathematics course.

As a legislative platform, the Board opposes curriculum mandates. While computer science in and of itself is an important and recognized avenue for student learning - with many related courses offered including through our Career and Technical Education programs - replacement of mathematics courses should be decided by education experts. The authority to determine curriculum should remain with the state and local boards which are best suited to develop comprehensive curricula and assessments.

For these reasons, we urge an UNFAVORABLE report of HB1280 from this Committee.