



## HB985 EDUCATION - PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS - FINANCIAL LITERACY CURRICULUM

March 23, 2022

EDUCATION, HEALTH, AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

### OPPOSE

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Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) opposes **HB985 Education - Public High Schools - Financial Literacy Curriculum and Graduation Requirement**. This bill requires the State Board of Education to develop curriculum content for a half-semester-long course in financial literacy. Each local board of education must implement the curriculum in every public high school under the board's jurisdiction, and a student must complete the course in order to graduate from a public high school.

AACPS strongly supports financial literacy and has also taken steps to ensure that all students have a strong foundation in financial education to make informed decisions and accomplish their educational goals. In 2007, we approved a one-semester Financial Literacy course for high school students as an elective. Since then, AACPS has developed additional elective courses in financial literacy. Additionally, AACPS has integrated financial literacy standards into multiple content areas, including math, social studies, family and consumer science, and language arts. As such, the current efforts by the State and local boards of education is the preferred approach rather than a State legislative mandate that such a course be a graduation requirement, which may not ensure that students are financially literate.

While this legislation is well-intentioned, AACPS opposes efforts by the General Assembly to legislate public school curriculum. The district appreciates the amendment to remove the graduation requirement from the bill but still has concerns with the curriculum mandate. The authority to establish curriculum and assessments is the domain of the Maryland State Board of Education and the local boards of education, the same entities charged with the responsibility to research, investigate, and evaluate both curriculum and assessments. This allows local boards of education to collaborate with the State and stakeholders to ensure that all students, schools, and school systems are held accountable.

Maryland has already taken proactive steps to ensure that all of our students are financially literate by implementing Personal Financial Literacy Education Standards in grades 3–12 in every public school. The State has established a Financial Literacy Education Council to support local school system implementation activities and has partnered with financial institutions and other organizations to provide ongoing professional development for teachers. In addition, public and private partnerships help fund financial literacy initiatives in local schools.

Finally, as required by the Blueprint for Maryland's Future (Blueprint), the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) will be conducting a comprehensive review of its educational content standards. AACPS believes that MSDE should be afforded the opportunity to conduct this review in accordance with Blueprint before the General Assembly imposes such a requirement.

Accordingly, AACPS respectfully requests an **UNFAVORABLE** committee report on HB985.