



**SB116 PUBLIC SCHOOLS - INCLUSIVE AND DIVERSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS -  
DEVELOPMENT OF CONTENT STANDARDS AND IMPLEMENTATION**

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EDUCATION, HEALTH, AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

**LETTER OF INFORMATION**

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Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) is submitting a letter of information on **SB116 Public Schools - Inclusive and Diverse English Language Arts - Development of Content Standards and Implementation**.

This bill requires the State Board of Education, by December 1, 2022, to develop content standards for inclusive and diverse English language arts to be included in the State Standards and Frameworks for English Language Arts. Each county board of education is required to develop and implement age-appropriate curriculum guides for inclusive and diverse English language arts. Each public school is required to include inclusive and diverse English language arts in the English language arts curriculum beginning in the 2023–2024 school year.

AACPS acknowledges the historical, generational, and compounding reality of the systems, structures, and practices that have intentionally and unintentionally created and continued to afford advantages to some student groups while perpetuating inequities for others. AACPS must take responsibility and action for dismantling, and actively repairing these inequities to ensure positive educational outcomes for all AACPS students. The goal of the AACPS strategic plan is to ensure that every student meets or exceeds standards as achievement gaps are eliminated. Accordingly, AACPS aims to elevate all students while eliminating all gaps. To that end, AACPS students, schools, and families are supported in a manner that is positive, purposeful, and proactive. Achievement for all AACPS students is promoted using a three-tiered approach:

- Schools are supported in developing and maintaining a responsive, equitable school culture;
- Engaging, relevant, research-based, differentiated instruction is implemented; and
- Enrichment opportunities are provided for all students.

Implementation of the inclusive and diverse English language arts standards outlined in SB116 will support the AACPS commitment to fostering a standards-based learning environment where inclusion and diversity are encouraged. We are, however, concerned about the funding implications and timeline impacts of the legislation. AACPS has an educational equity policy and regulation which align with Maryland State Department of Education regulations. As part of its commitment to educational equity, all AACPS district level offices individually and collectively work to require that an equity lens be used in reviews of staff, curriculum, pedagogy, professional development, instructional materials, and assessment design. The district has been working to implement the State regulations over the last few years and such an adjustment in the curricular requirements will take time and funding to accomplish. The development and implementation of curriculum standards takes more than a year as school districts must obtain materials, train teachers and properly prepare for implementation. Additionally, school systems require funding for teacher and staff stipends for the revisions of curricula and assessments, teacher and staff stipends for participation in professional development, the purchase of new resources and materials of instruction as well as the review of new resources and materials of instruction.

While AACPS supports the goal and the spirit of the bill, we ask that the Committee identify potential funding sources for implementation. AACPS anticipates a cost of nearly \$3.2 million to implement the requirements of this bill. AACPS also respectfully request that the Committee consider delaying the implementation date to ensure proper and meaningful implementation.

Thank you for consideration of this information regarding SB116.