



## HB1338 FACE MASK REQUIREMENTS - PROHIBITION

March 8, 2022

HEALTH AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

### OPPOSE

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Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) opposes **HB1338 Face Mask Requirements - Prohibition**. This bill prohibits a State or local elected official, governmental entity, or other person from requiring an individual to wear a certain face mask as a condition of entry into certain places or receiving certain goods, services, or education, except under certain circumstances.

Local governance by boards of education is essential to a comprehensive system of public education. That said, educators are not health professionals. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, AACPS has relied on guidance from the County and State health departments as well as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. That guidance has served us well as we have navigated the uncertain waters of these uncertain times.

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, Section 4-101 of the Education Law Articles 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.” Local boards of education receive and rely on public input and are best able to address local needs. The relationship between the community and local public schools encourages participation by parents/guardians and other community members in the educational process so that everyone has 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 HB1338.