



**Letter of Information: Senate Bill 814
Promise Schools - Establishment
February 24, 2023**

The Maryland Out of School Time Network (MOST) is a statewide organization dedicated to closing opportunity gaps by expanding both the quantity and quality of afterschool and summer learning opportunities for school-aged young people. MOST is one of the fifty statewide networks supported by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation and serves as Maryland's affiliate to the National Afterschool Association. MOST serves as the backbone organization for the Maryland Coalition for Community Schools. The Maryland Coalition for Community Schools was founded in 2016 to advocate for student and family success by leading the charge to expand the Community School Model in Maryland.

The Maryland Coalition for Community Schools applauds the focus on Community Schools in Senate Bill 814 and the inclusion through amendments of some of the original language designed to implement Community Schools aligned to the national best practices framework that did not get included in the final version of the Blueprint. When implemented with fidelity, Community Schools will contribute to transforming schools' cultures and providing positive and productive learning environments.

The coalition supports investing more at the state and local levels to build quality systems of support for Community Schools. Currently, there is only one FTE with no additional resources at the state level to support more than 300 schools currently (which will be over 700 schools after the full phase-in). In addition, local school districts with fewer than forty schools have no administrative support for their community school implementation.

If Senate Bill 814 is enacted, we encourage the initiative to:

- Take a positive program improvement approach that engages school staff, students, and families in a restorative and asset-based process;
- Align with existing school improvement efforts and new initiatives within the Blueprint for Maryland's Future
- Align to the Essentials for Community School Transformation Framework recently released by the Community School Forward partnership: (Available online at https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/media/3935/download?inline&file=CSF_Visual_Framework_Essentials_Community_School.pdf)

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