

does not pull the rug out from under the school by sunseting the investments that are making the school successful.

Clear guardrails in the bill ensure that the law must be applied rigorously and require the Department to build, implement, and enforce a consistent process for administering the program – a task the Department takes seriously and one which MSDE stands ready to lead. This bill is anchored in and lays out all the necessary elements for a successful, research-based school transformation plan and framework to ensure Maryland is equipped to empower schools that need the most attention. See, for example, the Accelerating Campus Excellence framework, which:

*“...ensures that not only are a district’s more effective teachers working with the students with larger needs, but that the school is seen as a safe, warm, welcoming place, where children’s social-emotional needs are met”.*⁴⁵

In addition, the bill’s alignment with the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future and the strengthening of community school implementation plans are critical components of the bill and will stand only to bolster program success.

Equally important in this bill is the consequence of not seeing results. This bill, if enacted, will not force a school’s students to remain in a school that continues to underperform. Instead, in a school that does not meet improvement goals after three years, families are able to select a non-low-performing public school of their choice in their current local education agency (LEA) or another LEA in the State and be able to enroll (including transportation) in that school.

This program will ensure Maryland can close opportunity and achievement gaps for all Maryland’s children using effective, research-based strategies for school improvement. MSDE is eager for the opportunity to implement the provisions of this bill, if enacted, in partnership with local education agencies while not compromising on the expectation of student and educator success for those in persistently underperforming schools. The Maryland State Department of Education respectfully requests that you consider this information as you deliberate **Senate Bill 814** and MSDE urges a favorable report. Please contact Justin Dayhoff, at 410-767-0439, or justin.dayhoff@maryland.gov, for any additional information.

⁴ <https://commitpartnership.org/blog/equity-works-ace-results>

⁵ <https://www.dallasisd.org/cms/lib/TX01001475/Centricity/domain/98/evaluation/21-22/acadpe/EA22-601-2%20FULL%20Accelerating%20Campus%20Excellence%20ACE%20Program.pdf>

