

# **HB1267 Promise Schools FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Cecilia Plante

Position: FAV



## TESTIMONY FOR HB1267

### Promise Schools - Establishment

**Bill Sponsor:** Delegate Wilkins

**Committee:** Ways and Means

**Organization Submitting:** Maryland Legislative Coalition

**Person Submitting:** Cecilia Plante, co-chair

**Position:** FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB1267 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of individuals and grassroots groups with members in every district in the state with well over 30,000 members.

Maryland is an extremely diverse state. With its big metropolitan areas and its rural Eastern Shore and mountainous Western Maryland counties, it is hard to find a lot of commonality in experience. The goal, though, is to ensure that children across this great state have a similar educational experience and opportunity. But that is something that is hard to achieve. Not every county or jurisdiction has equivalent resources, whether they are financial resources or faculty/teacher resources.

This bill seeks to help the schools that are struggling the most. It requires that the Department of Education identify at least 10 low-performing schools each year and make them Promise Schools. Once identified, the County Board for each county that has a Promise School will perform a comprehensive analysis of the key factors that contribute to the school's low performance. Once that analysis is complete, a three-year plan will be put in place to solve the issues that are keeping students from performing. The plan could include salary increases for recruitment/retention; programs and initiatives that accelerate student learning; tutoring; staff development; and other wraparound services. Funding would be provided to accomplish the plan.

Performance will be monitored for the three-year period. If, at the end of the three years, the school's performance has not improved, students will be allowed to transfer to other non-Promise Schools in the area and will have their transportation costs reimbursed.

While we are strongly supportive of the Promise School program, and believe that it is innovative as well as badly needed, we think that having students transfer to other schools is not a practical solution, particularly in rural areas where there is no alternative school nearby. We believe that after two years, if the Promise School's performance has not improved, a new comprehensive analysis should be made and the a new plan put in place. Additionally, the Promise School at that point, should partner with a high-performing school to help meet the plan goals and improve performance.

We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** report in committee.

# **HB 1267 Promise Schools Written Testimony.pdf**

Uploaded by: Jheanelle Wilkins

Position: FAV

JHEANELLE WILKINS  
Legislative District 20  
Montgomery County

Vice Chair, Ways and Means  
Committee

Rules and Executive Nominations  
Committee

Chair

Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland



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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

March 10, 2023

**House Bill 1267 - Promise Schools- Establishment**

Dear Colleagues,

I am pleased to present **House Bill 1267 - Promise Schools- Establishment**, which addresses disheartening trends in our public educational system. Certain community schools in Maryland are producing low test scores at an alarming rate, and we must address these disparities in policy.

The State Department of Education will select 10 schools based on a performance scale. After selection, an analysis will be performed to organize key factors that are potential reasons for low testing scores. Once key issues are designated, \$2,000,000 from the annual budget will be allocated to help provide resources to overcome the issues that caused schools to perform at an unsatisfactory level.

This legislation seeks to promote test scores by delivering resources that have the potential to increase attentiveness and allowing faculty to devote more time to each student. The resources will help provide a catered learning initiative to overcome the school's obstacles and decrease low test scores. If enacted, this legislation aims to decrease low test scores by offering a \$7,000 bonus to educators for recruitment and retention, extending the duration of school hours and/or days, planning with precision to accelerate student learning, distributing free breakfast and lunch, incorporating highly skilled tutors and wraparound services.

House Bill 1267 addresses the socio-economic barriers that students in Maryland's marginalized communities experience. I urge the committee to give a **favorable report** for **House Bill 1267 - Promise Schools - Establishment**.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jheanelle Wilkins'.

Delegate Jheanelle Wilkins

**2023\_HB1267\_MSDETestimony\_Support\_WRITTEN\_FINAL.pd**

Uploaded by: Justin Dayhoff

Position: FAV



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”.*<sup>45</sup>

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 **House Bill 1267** and MSDE urges a favorable report. Please contact Justin Dayhoff, at 410-767-0439, or [justin.dayhoff@maryland.gov](mailto:justin.dayhoff@maryland.gov), for any additional information.

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

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

**LBCMD Support Letter - HB 1267 - Priority Bill .do**

Uploaded by: Ufuoma Agarin

Position: FAV





March 10, 2023

Chairwoman Vanessa E. Atterbeary,  
Ways and Means Committee  
House Office Building, Rm. 131  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Chairwoman Atterbeary and Members of the Committee:

The Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland offers strong **favorable** support for House Bill 1267 – Promise Schools – Establishment. **This bill is on the 2023 legislative priority agenda of the Black Caucus.**

This legislation requires the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to annually designate at least 10 community schools – that are identified as low-performing or in need of comprehensive support and improvement – as promise schools. This bill also requires a local county board of education to evaluate and complete a comprehensive analysis of the key factors and causes of a promise school’s low performance or need for support, followed by a specified three-year plan to improve outcomes. Under House Bill 1267, the Governor must include an appropriation in the annual budget bill for the promise budget plan, as well as \$2 million for MSDE to support local boards.

Educational outcomes in Maryland have historically been lower for Black students. According to the 2022 Maryland Comprehensive Assessment, Black students scored 20 to 40 percentage points lower than their counterparts in math, English language proficiency, reading and writing comprehension, and English language arts. It is critical that impactful measures are taken to close these gaps in achievement and reduce the present disparity. By providing support to the schools that need it the most, this Legislature will help Maryland’s students reach their full potential – restoring the promise of education by fostering environments where all students can thrive. For these reasons, the Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland supports House Bill 1267 and would appreciate your favorable support of this legislation.

Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland

**HB1267\_MSEA\_Lamb\_FWA.pdf**

Uploaded by: Lauren Lamb

Position: FWA

## **Testimony in Support with Amendments to House Bill 1267 Promise Schools - Establishment**

**House Ways and Means Committee  
March 14, 2023**

**Lauren Lamb  
Government Relations**

The Maryland State Education Association supports, with amendments, House Bill 1267. This legislation would require the State Department of Education to designate 10 community schools that are identified as low-performing or in need of comprehensive support and improvement as promise schools each year, require a county board of education to perform a comprehensive analysis of key factors and causes that led to a school being low-performing or in need of comprehensive support and improvement, and require the Governor to include \$2,000,000 in the annual budget bill to support technical assistance and support for promise schools.

MSEA represents 75,000 educators and school employees who work in Maryland's public schools, teaching and preparing our almost 900,000 students so they can pursue their dreams. MSEA also represents 39 local affiliates in every county across the state of Maryland, and our parent affiliate is the 3-million-member National Education Association (NEA).

We wholeheartedly support the goal of providing targeted resources to community schools in need of additional support. Universal school meals and wraparound services, for example, undoubtedly benefit students' learning and overall wellbeing. The Promise School Plans in this legislation would be locally developed, comprehensive, and adapted to the needs of the individual school and its students.

We thank the sponsor for meeting with us regarding amendments to ensure that salary increases and professional requirements in the Promise School Plan are distributed fairly and are subject to collective bargaining. We also look forward to continuing to discuss alternatives to the existing proposal that when a Promise



School has made insufficient progress after 3 years, students may transfer to another school in the county or state at the county board's expense. Such an arrangement could rapidly destabilize enrollment, wreaking havoc on funding, wraparound supports, and school culture by creating de facto school closures – an approach which research shows is “not a promising strategy for remedying low student performance” and carries risks to students' well-being.<sup>1</sup> We urge an amendment that removes this extreme measure and adopts a more constructive strategy to promoting student success.

MSEA continues to enthusiastically support investment in community schools. **We therefore urge the committee to issue a Favorable Report on House Bill 1267 with the critical amendments described here.**

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<sup>1</sup> School Closure as a Strategy to Remedy Low Performance. National Education Policy Center (2017). <https://nepc.colorado.edu/sites/default/files/publications/PB%20Sunderman-Coghlan-Mintrop%20Closures.pdf>

# **HB1267 Support w Amendments.pdf**

Uploaded by: Shamoyia Gardiner

Position: FWA



**Testimony in amended support of  
House Bill 1267: Promise Schools-Establishment**

**House Ways & Means Committee  
Position: Favorable with Amendments**

March 14, 2023

Strong Schools Maryland is a network of education advocates dedicated to ensuring the full funding and faithful implementation of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. **Strong Schools Maryland urges a favorable vote on House Bill 1267: Promise Schools-Establishment as amended by the bill sponsor.**

The Blueprint for Maryland's Future envisions a world-class system of public schools for our state's students. Central to this achievement is the success of the statewide Community Schools strategy as established by the Blueprint Concentration of Poverty Grant Program. If Maryland attempts to implement Community Schools in name only, without adherence to national best practices and the long-term investment necessary to realize positive outcomes, we will not see the successes envisioned by the Blueprint.

In addition to the focused investments made in the original bill text, HB1267 includes a sponsor amendment that restores a significant portion of a national, empirically evidenced framework for implementing Community Schools including the below provisions:

- Community Schools are implemented through a student-centered framework that is supported by policies and practices that create collaborative leadership, shared accountability, capacity development, and authentic family and community engagement;

- Supports the unique needs uncovered in the course of administering the Community Schools strategy by dedicating staffing capacity at MSDE to support more than 360 individual schools across the state and creating the flexibility for high-population schools to hire additional coordinators; and
- Increases structural opportunities for student, educator, family, and community engagement through the leadership of Community Schools, completion of needs assessment, and publication for the general public of each school's completed implementation plan.

At the start of the 2022-2023 school year, Maryland had about 360 Community Schools in various stages of implementation, across 24 counties with varying levels of familiarity and investment in the strategy. There is a vital conversation about Maryland's Community Schools strategy that must be had by this General Assembly and we urge the committee to support the best practices and supports offered by House Bill 1267 and its amendment.

For more information, contact:

Shamoyia Gardiner

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# **3-14 HB1267 \_Promise Schools - Establishment.pdf**

Uploaded by: Gail Sunderman

Position: UNF





## TESTIMONY TO THE HOUSE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

### HB1267 Promise Schools – Establishment

**POSITION: Oppose**

**BY: Nancy Soreng – President**

**Date: March 14, 2023**

The League of Women Voters of Maryland (LWVMD) is a nonpartisan organization that works to influence public policy through education and advocacy. LWVMD supports programs and reforms that promote equal access to quality education and is committed to [diversity, equity, and inclusion](#) in principle and in practice.

This bill, HB1267 *Promise Schools - Establishment*, would designate a certain number of Community Schools that have been identified as low-performing or in need of improvement as promise schools. The bill specifies that the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) must identify at least 10 eligible schools as promise schools, which would then be required to meet certain requirements. It mandates an annual appropriation of \$2,000,000 to support County boards with technical assistance.

**LWVMD opposes HB1267.** It's not clear whether this bill reinforces or competes with the Blueprint for Maryland's Future, which is designed as a comprehensive approach to school improvement and is in the early stages of implementation. HB1267 competes by allocating funding to a new program rather than allocate additional resources to fully fund the Blueprint. It's also unclear how it will impact the Community Schools model more broadly, which offers an integrated focus on academics, health and social services, youth and community development, and community engagement. Community Schools is an [evidence-based](#) strategy that is appropriate for students of all backgrounds and has a positive impact on educational outcomes. There is no comparable research on the efficacy of promise schools.

Limiting the number of promise schools to 10 runs the risk of introducing subjective criteria into the selection of "low performing" schools since it relies on the judgment of MSDE officials to designate 10 schools as promise schools. The current five star rating system used to identify low performing schools is highly flawed, as it over identifies high poverty schools as low-performing. An [analysis of the Maryland five-star rating system](#) from the [Baltimore Education Research Consortium](#) documented the relationship between report card rating and the percentage of a school's economically disadvantaged students. No high-poverty school earned a five-star rating under the Maryland system thus reinforcing the influence of poverty rather than capturing the value added by educators. In contrast to promise schools, Community Schools are an option for all schools.

The bill does reinforce the Blueprint's focus on improving low-performing, high poverty schools, but because the number of potential promise schools is small, it's unclear whether its impact will be significant.

The League of Women Voters of Maryland urges the committee to give an unfavorable report to HB1267.

# **HB1267- Promise Schools - Establishment.pdf**

Uploaded by: Dawana Sterrette

Position: INFO

# BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**Brandon M. Scott**  
Mayor, City of Baltimore

**Johnette A. Richardson**  
Chair, Baltimore City Board  
of School Commissioners

**Dr. Sonja Brookins Santelises**  
Chief Executive Officer

## **Testimony of the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners House Bill 1267 Promise Schools – Establishment**

**March 14, 2023**

The Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners has several concerns and anticipates significant fiscal impact should the proposed legislation become law.

The legislation would dilute existing Concentrations of Poverty Grant (CPG) funds for the purpose of creating a new category of schools called “Promise Schools” that are low performing. In addition, it would re-create student transfer provisions (similar to No Child Left Behind) for students in Promise Schools to attend schools elsewhere in the state and for per pupil funds to follow those students. The bill also seems to be in competition with the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future legislation requirements.

Allowing students to transfer to other schools and providing transportation to those students would pose a substantial cost to the district. In addition, if students are allowed to attend county schools, the district must also reimburse the county for that cost. This could take a significant amount of funding from City Schools’ budget if students are transferring to county schools.

The legislation also dictates that districts have a Director of Community Schools – which City Schools does not have presently and would pose yet another cost.

Finally, the bill seems to conflate community schools with academics. Community Schools is a whole child strategy, which ensures barriers are removed so students can fully participate in their academic program.

For the foregoing reasons, the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners provides this information for consideration while this legislation is being debated.

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**MD4CS\_HB1267\_LOI.pdf**

Uploaded by: Ellie Mitchell

Position: INFO



**Letter of Information: House Bill 1267  
Promise Schools – Establishment  
Ways & Means  
March 14, 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 House Bill 1267 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 350 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 House Bill 1267 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; and,
- 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](https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/media/3935/download?inline&file=CSF_Visual_Framework_Essentials_Community_School.pdf)).

Ellie Mitchell

Executive Director, Maryland Out of School Time Network

**Maryland Out of School Time Network / Maryland Coalition for Community Schools**

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Leaders in Youth Development

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