



## HB1107 ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY – SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT SYSTEM PILOT PROGRAM

March 8, 2023  
WAYS AND MEANS

### SUPPORT

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Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) supports **HB1107**. This bill establishes the School-Aged Children Mental Health Support System Pilot Program in Anne Arundel County to help implement the goals and recommendations of the Anne Arundel Mental Health Task Force with a focus on providing mental and behavioral health support to school-age children in Anne Arundel County. The pilot program is to be conducted during the 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 school years. The bill requires that the Mental Health Task Force hire two full-time behavioral health coordinators to care for school aged children. The bill further requires the Mental Health Task Force to coordinate services and communication among the school system, county government, and local health providers. Additionally, the bill requires the Anne Arundel County Mental Health Agency to submit a report on the effectiveness of the program to the Anne Arundel County Delegation and the House Ways and Means Committee of the General Assembly. Finally, the bill requires the Governor to include sufficient funding for the two full-time behavioral health care coordinator positions necessary to implement the program. If sufficient funding is not appropriated for a fiscal year, the Anne Arundel Mental Health Agency is not required to implement the program for that fiscal year.

In 2019, AACPS, in collaboration with the Anne Arundel County Government, created the Anne Arundel Mental Health Task Force to examine, through a countywide lens, ways to address the increased mental health needs of children and adolescents in Anne Arundel County. In 2020, the Task Force issued a report with recommendations addressing several key areas, including discrimination, bias and cultural barriers; lack of access to resources and mental health providers; mental health stigma; poverty; social media; and trauma.

AACPS recognizes the importance of promoting the positive mental health of all students through the development of impactful relationships and by teaching resilience. Student mental health is of particular importance during this time when AACPS students are faced with the impacts of an ongoing global health pandemic. AACPS is committed to continued collaboration with the County and stakeholders to continue to help address the mental health needs of our County's youth. As such, AACPS supports the efforts of this pilot program to implement the goals and recommendations of the Anne Arundel Mental Health Task Force and to provide additional behavioral and mental health support to students.

Accordingly, AACPS respectfully requests a **FAVORABLE** committee report on HB1107.