



HB200 – COMMUNITY SCHOOLS - ALTERATIONS

March 26, 2024

BUDGET AND TAXATION

SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS

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Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) supports with amendments **HB200 – Community Schools – Alterations**. As amended, this bill: (1) expands upon the definitions of community school and wrap around services; (2) alters the requirements for community schools to permit more than one community school coordinator to serve a community school; (3) requires, rather than authorizes, each community school coordinator to utilize the common needs assessment tool developed by the Director of Community Schools at the State level; (4) requires an annual evaluation to be performed of community schools using an evaluation tool developed by the Director of Community Schools; and (5) removes the authority granted in the bill as introduced to the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to modify a community school’s needs assessment to instead require MSDE to provide feedback.

AACPS has a growing community school program and is starting to see the impact of the community school strategy on student engagement and achievement. Research is clear that when families and students have access to crucial wraparound services, students excel personally and academically. In fact, this year we had 12 AACPS schools that improved by at least one star on the Maryland State Report Card. Of these 12 schools, nine were Blueprint for Maryland’s Future community schools.

AACPS supports the opportunity to add additional community school coordinators to best meet the needs of schools. Under current law, a school with 200 students and a school with 2,000 students are both allowed only on community school coordinator.

However, AACPS requests that the bill be amended to reinstate the provision of the bill as introduced that would permit local school systems to use a portion of the personnel and per pupil allocation (PPA) Concentration of Poverty grant funding to support the administration of community schools at the district level. AACPS strongly supports the amendments made to the Senate bill, SB161, that would permit 15% of personnel and PPA grant funding to be used to provide district administrative support to community schools. Community School coordinators are overwhelmed with managing grants for the community school program, including working on budget, payroll, and contracts. Allowing local school systems to use a limited amount of personnel and PPA grant funding to support schools in grant management will allow school coordinators to focus on engaging families, supporting students, and working with community partners to grow the community school strategy to best meet the needs of their school community.

Accordingly, AACPS respectfully requests a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** committee report on HB200.