

HB 200 Sen Community Schools Alterations.pdf

Uploaded by: Denise Riley

Position: FAV



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Kenya Campbell
PRESIDENT

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SECRETARY-TREASURER

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
HB 200 - Community Schools – Alterations
March 26, 2024**

SUPPORT

Chair Guzzone and members of the committee, AFT-MD asks for a favorable report on HB 200, which seeks to amend requirements for community schools. These proposed alterations hold potential to enhance the effectiveness and impact of community schools in Maryland.

This legislation introduces several key provisions aimed at enhancing the operation and effectiveness of community schools including:

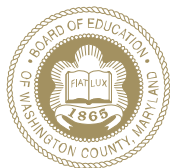
- It mandates the Director of Community Schools to develop a standardized needs assessment tool to facilitate the evaluation of student, family, and community needs, ensuring that resources and services are targeted effectively.
- Community school coordinators will be required to complete an annual evaluation to assess the impacts of community school programs and services on students, families, and the community, providing valuable insights for ongoing improvement.
- They are also tasked with periodically reviewing and modifying the school's implementation plan based on changing needs and evaluation results. This iterative process ensures that community schools remain responsive to evolving challenges and priorities.
- The State Department of Education will provide feedback on needs assessments and implementation plans, offering valuable guidance and support to community schools statewide.

These provisions align with the core principles and objectives of community schools, emphasizing collaboration, accountability, and responsive decision making. By standardizing assessment tools, evaluation processes, and oversight mechanisms, HB 200 ensures consistency and quality across community schools while allowing for flexibility to meet diverse local needs.

HB200 support_WCBOE Senate hearing 3-26-24.pdf

Uploaded by: Jamie Brown

Position: FAV



BILL: House Bill 200
TITLE: Community Schools - Alterations
HEARING DATE: March 26, 2024
POSITION: SUPPORT
COMMITTEE: Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
CONTACT: Mr. Steve Edwards, Deputy Communications Officer (301-766-8914)

The Washington County Board of Education supports House Bill 200, which would authorize each county board of education that has fewer than forty (40) community schools and receives funding from the Concentration of Poverty School Grant Program for the personnel grant and the per pupil grant to expend no more than 15% of the funds distributed by the state under certain circumstances.

Washington County Public Schools (WCPS) has experienced a 21% increase over the last three (3) years in students eligible for free and reduced priced meals. Because of the increase in poverty in Washington County over the past three years, the number of Concentration of Poverty (COP) schools supported by the WCPS' Community Schools Specialist Coordinator has grown from five (5) in Fiscal Year 2021 to twelve (12) in Fiscal Year 2024. Given the increasing rate of poverty, WCPS anticipates supporting seventeen (17) COP schools in Fiscal Year 2025.

With the anticipated addition of five (5) new COP schools in Washington County in Fiscal Year 2025, the flexibility proposed by House Bill 200 would enable WCPS to consider adding additional support staff for COP schools, to help ensure that each COP school is meeting the needs of the students and communities that those schools serve.

By allowing up to 15% of the grant funding to be used at the district level would provide WCPS with approximately \$1,350,000 in Fiscal Year 2025 that may be used to add a second Community Schools Specialist Coordinator to support COP schools. But perhaps the most impactful way the additional funds would help relates to behavioral support/health services for students. The additional funding can have a double impact by not just helping students in COP schools, but also students in non-COP schools. The additional funding would be applied to COP schools for behavioral support/health services thereby freeing up WCPS funding currently being used for these services in COP schools to be used in non-COP schools for behavioral support/health services. Given the increasing need for behavior support/health service needs of our students, the additional funding would allow WCPS to contract with several local health agencies to provide access to care outside of the normal school day.

Without this additional funding, WCPS may not be in a position in Fiscal Year 2025 to add these extremely important positions to support its neediest students.

Washington County Board of Education respectfully requests a favorable report on House Bill 200.

Thank you.

cc: Washington County Board of Education Members
Washington County Delegation to the Maryland General Assembly
Dr. David T. Sovine, Superintendent
Dr. Jennifer Webster, Associate Superintendent for Administration and Leadership
Dr. Gary Willow, Associate Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction
Mr. Jeffrey Proulx, Chief Operating Officer
Ms. Ilissa Ramm, Chief Legal Counsel
Mr. Jeremy Jakoby, Director of Student Services, School Counseling, and School Health
Mr. John Woolums, Director of Governmental Relations, Maryland Association of Boards of Education
Ms. Mary Pat Fannon, Executive Director, Public School Superintendents' Association of Maryland

HB200 Community Schools Testimony (2).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

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Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland



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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

March 26, 2024

House Bill 200 - Community Schools - Alterations

Dear Colleagues,

I am pleased to present **House Bill 200 - Community Schools - Alterations**, which would ensure that school districts with less than 40 community schools that receive funding from the Concentration of Poverty School Grant expend 10-15% of the per public grant on behalf of eligible schools.

Currently, if a local system has at least 40 eligible schools or more in the district, they may expend 50% or less of the funds. For school districts with less than 40 eligible schools, they don't have this option. House Bill 200 provides the opportunity for districts with fewer eligible schools to spend funds to coordinate successful community school services.

House Bill 200 clarifies that schools utilizing the per-pupil grant must base their grant spending on the *most recent* needs assessment plan and prioritize funding for the areas of greatest need according to the needs assessment plan. The bill requires the Director of Community Schools to create a common needs assessment tool (in consultation with local schools and communities) that community school coordinators can use to complete the needs assessment. These needs assessments must be published online after being approved by MSDE.

This legislation requires community school coordinators to review their implementation plans at least once every 3 years to determine if students' needs are being met.

House Bill 200 has no fiscal effect on the State and local levels. The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and AIB can handle the bill's provisions using existing resources.

House Bill 200 addresses the socio-economic barriers that students in Maryland's marginalized communities experience. Everyone deserves a quality education. I urge the committee to give a **favorable report** for **House Bill 200 - Community Schools - Alterations**.

Sincerely, 
Delegate Jheanelle Wilkins

XHB200_MSEA_Lamb_FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Lauren Lamb

Position: FAV

FAVORABLE
House Bill 200
Community Schools – Alterations

Senate Budget & Taxation Committee
March 26, 2024

Lauren Lamb
Government Relations

The Maryland State Education Association supports House Bill 200, which would establish requirements to promote best practices in community schools, including developing a common needs assessment as a resource to Community School Coordinators (CSCs), adding to the objectives of a community school, and ensuring student, family, and educator voice is included throughout the support planning process.

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).

MSEA wholeheartedly supports efforts to align community school policy with proven best practices. When community schools provide targeted supports to students and community members, we see improved academic outcomes, family and community engagement, and attendance, and corresponding reductions in rates of health challenges, student discipline, and chronic absenteeism.

Providing a common needs assessment tool promotes best practices and standardizes data collection while still allowing CSCs to tailor the tool to the community they serve. We also appreciate that information about community schools' priorities and services will be shared transparently while ensuring the privacy of students, families, and community members. As educators, we recognize the timeliness and necessity of developing strong community schools across our state, and this bill's inclusion of student, family, and educator voice is essential to that end.

We urge the committee to issue a favorable report on House Bill 200.

X HB 200 - Favorable.docx.pdf

Uploaded by: Shamoyia Gardiner

Position: FAV



**Testimony in SUPPORT of
House Bill 200: Community Schools – Alterations**

Budget & Taxation Committee

Position: Favorable

March 26, 2024

Strong Schools Maryland exists to advocate, build power, and share resources with invested Marylanders to co-create strong public schools whose graduates are equipped to thrive. This year, our 2024 legislative priorities include *Fortify the Blueprint*, which is necessary to ensure that the realities of implementation are accounted for in statutes related to the law. To that end, **we are happy to support House Bill 200: Community Schools–Alterations.**

This bill does several things:

- Reinstates language codifying national best practices in Community Schools implementation, which was stripped from the 2019 bill (now Chapter 529) before passage;
- Provides some flexibility in the use of Concentration of Poverty grant dollars to local education agencies with fewer than 40 qualifying schools, to support local coordination of the strategy and provide support to Community School Coordinators;
- Directs schools to equitably allocate funding to address identified school community needs as a part of the needs and assets assessment developed at the individual school level; and
- Requires greater transparency and appropriate collaboration between MSDE and local school systems in the development, approval, and evaluation of Community Schools implementation

We are also supportive of several forthcoming sponsor amendments to the bill, which will: further clarify the scope of AIB and MSDE's authority in the conduction of needs and assets assessments, approval of implementation plans, and public reporting on the use of reserved Concentration of Poverty grant program funds; and establish reporting timelines for schools in the various stages of Community School implementation and evaluation, on a sustainable 3-4 year cycle.

In the course of our work this past year, engaging, educating, and –most importantly– learning from those directly impacted by Blueprint implementation, a clear need for the various provisions of this bill has been made evident.

At this moment, when state and local leaders are wavering in their commitment to the Blueprint, the legislature must do all it can to support the success of students and school communities as the law is implemented. This bill represents how much we prioritize a continuous improvement model for one of the largest aspects of Blueprint investment, with no additional fiscal impact posed.

For these reasons, we urge a favorable report on House Bill 200.

For more information, contact Shamoyia Gardiner:
shamoyia@strongschoolsmaryland.org

LBCMD Priority Support Letter - HB 200.pdf

Uploaded by: Ufuoma Agarin

Position: FAV



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March 25, 2024

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Chairman Guy Guzzone,
Budget & Taxation Committee
3 West Miller Senate Office Bldg.
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Chairwoman Guzzone and Members of the Committee:

The Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland offers strong favorable support for **House Bill 200 - Community Schools - Alterations**, which would ensure that school districts with less than 40 community schools that receive funding from the Concentration of Poverty School Grant expend 10% or less of the per public grant on behalf of eligible schools. **This bill is on the 2024 legislative priority agenda of the Black Caucus.**

Currently, if a local system has at least 40 eligible schools or more in the district, they may expend 50% or less of the funds. For school districts with less than 40 eligible schools, they don't have this option. House Bill 200 provides the opportunity for districts with fewer eligible schools to spend funds to coordinate successful community school services.

House Bill 200 clarifies that schools utilizing the per-pupil grant must base their grant spending on the *most recent* needs assessment plan and prioritize funding for the areas of greatest need according to the needs assessment plan. The bill requires the Director of Community Schools in MSDE to create a common needs assessment tool (in consultation with local schools and communities) that community school coordinators can use to complete the needs assessment. These needs assessments must be published online after being approved by MSDE.

This legislation requires community school coordinators to review their implementation plans at least once every 3 years to determine if students' needs are being met.

House Bill 200 has no fiscal effect on the State and local levels. The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and AIB can handle the bill's provisions using existing resources.

House Bill 200 addresses the socio-economic barriers that students in Maryland's marginalized communities experience. Everyone deserves a quality education. For these reasons, the Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland supports House Bill 200.

Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland

FINAL HB200 SWA AACPS.pdf

Uploaded by: Grace Wilson

Position: FWA



HB200 – COMMUNITY SCHOOLS - ALTERATIONS

March 26, 2024

BUDGET AND TAXATION

SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS

Grace Wilson, Legislative & Policy Specialist (410.440.1758)

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.

HB 200.Community Schools Reforms SENATE.pdf

Uploaded by: John Woolums

Position: FWA

BILL: House Bill 200
TITLE: Community Schools - Alterations
DATE: March 26, 2024
POSITION: SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS
COMMITTEE: Budget and Taxation
CONTACT: John R. Woolums, Esq.

The Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) supports House Bill 200 in order to advance the successful development of community schools as a core component of the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future. MABE, on behalf of all local boards, strongly supports the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future and its vision for a world-class public education system for all students, and MABE supports the improvements House Bill 200 would make to the community schools program.

The Blueprint provides significant funding to support the planning and operation of community schools in neighborhoods with high concentrations of poverty. The Blueprint law defines a community school as a public school that establishes a set of strategic partnerships between the school and other community resources that promote student achievement, positive learning conditions, and the well-being of students, families, and the community by providing wraparound services. In light of the complexity and inherently local nature of the community schools model and program, MABE has requested amendments, included in both House and Senate versions, to preserve local decision-making regarding community schools plans.

MABE requests an amendment to House Bill 200 to conform it to Senate Bill 161 to ensure that at the local level the law would provide much needed flexibility to utilize up to 15% of community schools funding for systemwide coordination of programs and services. Also, MABE requests amendments to reduce the scope of additional reporting requirements to be imposed on community school coordinators. MABE does appreciate that the bill has already been amended to more appropriately define the roles of the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and the State Director of Community Schools regarding the common needs assessment tool, and locally developed needs assessments and plans. However, the bill would enhance the role of standards and performance measures at the state level within MSDE. Although MABE and local school systems have concerns with the scope of these reforms, MABE believes the bill is poised to establish a better balance of state and local roles and responsibilities toward the success of community schools.

To illustrate the complexity and nuance of community schools, which are responsible for coordinating wraparound services for students and their families, the Blueprint law defines wraparound services, as follows:

- “Wraparound services” means:
- (1) Extended learning time, including before and after school, weekends, summer school, and an extended school year;
 - (2) Safe transportation to and from school and off–site apprenticeship programs;
 - (3) Vision and dental care services;
 - (4) Establishing or expanding school–based health center services;
 - (5) Additional social workers, mentors, counselors, psychologists, and restorative practice coaches;

- (6) Enhancing physical wellness, including providing healthy food for in-school and out-of-school time and linkages to community providers;
- (7) Enhancing behavioral health services, including access to mental health practitioners and providing professional development to school staff to provide trauma-informed interventions;
- (8) Providing family and community engagement and supports, including informing parents of academic course offerings, language classes, workforce development training, opportunities for children, and available social services as well as educating families on how to monitor a child's learning;
- (9) Establishing and enhancing linkages to Judy Centers and other early education programs that feed into the school;
- (10) Enhancing student enrichment experiences, including educational field trips, partnerships, and programs with museums, arts organizations, and cultural institutions;
- (11) Improving student attendance;
- (12) Improving the learning environment at the school; and
- (13) Any professional development for teachers and school staff to quickly identify students who are in need of these resources.

The breadth and scope of building a community school needs assessment and plan involve these wraparound services and much more. And the Blueprint clearly intends for this to be community-based process of engagement, buy-in, and partnership. Again, local school systems are very supportive of the community schools model and programs and committed to the success of community-based strategies to dramatically enhance the availability of wraparound services for students and families. Creating a community school is an inherently local process, and MABE urges the adoption of amendments to ensure that this continues to be reflected in the law.

For these reasons, MABE requests a favorable report on House Bill 200 with amendments substantially similar to those already adopted on Senate Bill 161 to maintain the balance of state guidance and standards, and local school system coordination and operation of community schools through community engagement.

HB 200 xover Comm Schools - PSSAM - SWA - B&T.pdf

Uploaded by: Mary Pat Fannon

Position: FWA



PSSAM
Public School Superintendents' Association
OF MARYLAND

Mary Pat Fannon, Executive Director
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BILL: HB 200
TITLE: Community Schools - Alterations
DATE: March 26, 2024
POSITION: Favorable with Amendments
COMMITTEE: Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
CONTACT: Mary Pat Fannon, Executive Director, PSSAM

The Public School Superintendents' Association of Maryland (PSSAM), on behalf of all twenty-four public school superintendents, **supports House Bill 200 with amendments.**

The establishment and expansion of community schools has been one of the most impactful and successful initiatives in the implementation of Blueprint for Maryland's Future. PSSAM is pleased to see the exponential growth in community schools and the corresponding academic improvements, and positive community impact.

While we appreciate the hard work put into both versions of this legislation, we do not support the House bill's provisions that strike allowing districts with less than 40 schools to use some of their Concentration of Poverty Grant (CPG) to manage district wide community schools initiatives. ***We strongly support the Senate bill's (SB 161) authorization for use of the Concentration of Poverty Grant (CPG) to expend up to 15% of personnel grant and per pupil grant funds*** on behalf of eligible schools, provided that a plan to meet specified current law requirements is submitted to the Accountability and Implementation Board (AIB). This set aside will ensure the totality of the CPG funds are used with fidelity, and that the appropriate staff are managing this essential funding and procurement functions, not putting management and fiscal burdens on the local community schools coordinators.

We request that the development of spending plans for the 15% funding and the evaluation criteria be developed in consultation with the LEAs, AIB and the MSDE, and not prescribed in the bill and statute. The development of metrics and objectives should be created through regulations in collaboration with practitioners to most accurately reflect the goals and objectives of the community schools' pedagogy. Lastly, since these plans and evaluations will ultimately be

public documents, they need to be carefully crafted to remove student and family identifiers and should be vetted and established in regulations, not statute.

Allowing districts with less than 40 schools to use some of their grant funding to manage the program will yield tremendous economies of scale and enhance best practices and cooperation among these smaller cohorts. Federal Title programs have long acknowledged the need to set aside funding for administrative tasks, such as budgeting, contracts and grant writing, to support the hands-on work. Centralizing and supporting these tasks at the district office will allow school coordinators to concentrate on engaging families, supporting students, and collaborating with community partners.

The following example from Harford County Public Schools illustrates the importance of allowing funding to be used for centralized support. Currently, their ten community schools have a combined budget of \$3,957,841 with no dedicated coordination or support. In the near future, their community schools budget is expected to exceed their Title 1 budget, which currently has 6 district-support professionals. Making this much needed adjustment is extremely important to ensure funding is used efficiently and effectively.

We also support appropriate oversight and evaluation of the community schools with a standard *needs assessment* developed by the State Director of Community Schools, in consultation with local school systems and members of the community schools' leadership team. *However, we do not support expanding any authority given to the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to modify or approve the needs assessment.*

We support the current law's requirement of the creation and approval of an implementation plan for a community school, but believe the expanded *annual evaluation* is overly onerous. If the committee feels an evaluation is needed, ***we request and support a triennial evaluation instead.*** However, it is important to note that these schools also undergo periodic audits to ensure that funds are being spent appropriately and in accordance with their implementation plans. Further, community schools participate in the annual local budget processes so there is continual oversight from the districts as well.

For these reasons, PSSAM requests a **favorable with amendments** committee report for House Bill 200.

HB 200 - State Board & AIB - SUPPORT .docx.pdf

Uploaded by: Zachary Hands

Position: FWA

TO: Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

BILL: House Bill 200 – Community Schools – Alterations

DATE: March 26, 2024

POSITION: Support with Amendments

Chair Guzzone and Members of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee,

The Maryland State Board of Education (State Board), Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), and Accountability and Implementation Board (AIB) would like to express our support for **HB 200**, with amendments. Overall, we support the bill's intent to provide a more robust framework and accountability around the Community Schools Model that is embedded in the Concentration of Poverty Grant Program as part of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. We continue to have discussions with stakeholders and the bill sponsors on amendments to HB 200 focused on two key provisions of the Third Reader version of the bill.

As introduced, the bill proposed that Local Education Agencies (LEAs) with 1 to 39 Community Schools may expend, on behalf of community schools, up to 10% of the funds received through the Concentration of Poverty grant program. The proposed change enables LEAs with fewer than 40 schools eligible for the Concentration of Poverty grant, to centrally manage a portion of the funds. LEAs with fewer than 40 community schools have explained the need for some funding at the central office level to better support community schools.

We support utilizing a portion of the concentration of poverty grant at the central office level to help ensure that funds are being managed effectively and efficiently, especially as the number of schools and amount of grant funds will continue to grow, and to reduce the administrative burden on individual schools. However, we believe it is important to clarify that only a portion - up to 10 to 15% - of total grant funds in *any* LEA should be expended on central office administrative costs. LEAs with 40 or more community schools already have the option to manage up to 50% of the Concentration of Poverty grant funds centrally on behalf of eligible schools. We are proposing to clarify this provision to limit the use of funds on *administrative costs* to 10-15% of the total grant funds for all LEAs while retaining the authority for LEAs with 40 or more community schools to manage up to 50% of total grant funds centrally.

HB 200 requires the creation and mandatory use of a common needs assessment tool for community schools. A standardized, mandatory format for these assessments will yield uniform and comprehensive data for MSDE, streamlining the review process. The original version of HB 200 required MSDE approval on both the needs assessment and the implementation plans.

MSDE agrees with the change in SB 161 to remove approval of the needs assessment, but requests that the committee not remove MSDE approval of the implementation plans to ensure cohesive implementation strategies across community schools.

HB 200 as introduced requires community schools to revisit their needs assessments and update their implementation plans every three years. This cycle of continuous evaluation and improvement is essential for the responsive growth of the Community School Model and impact on student outcomes. The bill also requires every community school to submit an evaluation form annually to MSDE and AIB. MSDE and AIB support requiring community schools to complete an evaluation of the impact of the implementation plan and services provided to students and their families *once every three years*, instead of annually. This would complement the continuous improvement cycle already included in the bill while making the number of schools submitting their evaluations manageable for MSDE and AIB collaboratively to review and provide feedback to the schools. The data requested in the evaluation is critical to evaluate the impact of the use of funds; however, they have already been identified by either AIB or MSDE for ongoing monitoring and are either currently reported to MSDE or will be a new data collection.

In FY 2024, there are 454 community schools in 22 LEAs receiving Concentration of Poverty grants. There are three LEAs with 40 or more community schools. MSDE projects that there will be approximately 600 community schools in FY 2025.

MSDE and the AIB request that the committee consider this information as it deliberates on **HB 200**. Please contact Rachel Hise, Executive Director of the AIB, at rachel.hise@maryland.gov or at 410-991-7525, or Zach Hands, Executive Director of the State Board, at Zachary.hands1@maryland.gov or at 443-915-6094, if you would like any additional information.