

HB1082 (2)- Blueprint for Maryland's Future Imleme

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Position: FAV

**Testimony of the
Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners
In Support of
House Bill 1082
Blueprint for Maryland’s Future Implementation – Funding and Independent
Evaluation – Alterations**

March 26, 2024

The Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners supports House Bill 1082 and appreciates the sponsors understanding the need for the continuation of an Implementation Coordinator (IC) and assures this continuation with a salary paid for by the State and the County in the same proportion as the foundation program.

The Implementation Coordinator’s role is pivotal in ensuring that school districts adhere to the Blueprint’s requirements. Because of this pivotal role, the Board also envisions that the Implementation Coordinator will be necessary throughout the life of the implementation of the Blueprint requirements. The Implementation Coordinator oversees all aspects of implementation of the Blueprint. The IC provides oversight, input and recommendations aligned with the Blueprint outcomes and ensures compliance with all criteria established by the Accountability and Implementation Board (AIB). The IC leads and coordinates the development and submission of implementation plans.

For the foregoing reasons, the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners supports House Bill 1082 and urges a favorable report.

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Uploaded by: John Woolums

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BILL: House Bill 1082
TITLE: Blueprint for Maryland's Future Implementation – Funding and Independent Evaluation – Alterations
POSITION: SUPPORT
DATE: March 26, 2024
COMMITTEE: Budget and Taxation
CONTACT: John R. Woolums, Esq.

The Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) supports House Bill 1082 in order to secure both state and local funding to support the offices of the local Blueprint Implementation Coordinators. MABE also supports the other amendments contained in the bill to adjust implementation and reporting timelines.

MABE strongly supports House Bill 1082 to require state and local government cost-sharing for the salaries and related costs of local Blueprint Implementation Coordinators. These professionals are responsible for coordinating with the AIB and MSDE, and developing local implementation plans and therefore critical to the success of the Blueprint.

As this committee knows, the Blueprint law is an enormous and multi-faceted set of education funding and policy reforms. At its core, the Blueprint mandates increases in State and local funding for public education that represent the full commitment Maryland must make to fully and equitably fund a world class public education for all of Maryland's nearly 900,000 students. MABE knows that the role of sufficiently funded and supported offices of local Blueprint Implementation Coordinators is essential to achieving their school system's transformative, comprehensive, and therefore quite costly Blueprint reforms.

For these reasons, MABE requests a favorable report on House Bill 1082.

HB 1082 - xover - Blueprint for Maryland's Future

Uploaded by: Mary Pat Fannon

Position: FAV



PSSAM
Public School Superintendents' Association
OF MARYLAND

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BILL: HB 1082

TITLE: Blueprint for Maryland's Future Implementation – Funding and Independent Evaluation – Alterations

DATE: March 26, 2024

POSITION: Favorable

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 1082.

This bill would provide a \$150,000 State grant to each Local Education Agency for each fiscal year for the salary and benefits for Blueprint Implementation Coordinators (IC) in each Local Education Agency (LEA). The bill also extends the date for an independent evaluation of the implementation of the Blueprint.

In the final version of the Blueprint legislation (HB 1300/2020), the Legislature required each local governing body and the LEA to jointly designate a Blueprint Implementation Coordinator for each district. This position was required through fiscal 2025, which was subsequently changed to fiscal 2026 during the 2021 session (HB 1372). The IC position was also mandated without an identified funding source. Lastly, the position was to be created by July 1, 2021 and all LEA were in compliance within one or two months of that deadline.

In July of 2021, the role of the coordinators was unclear, and many districts assigned this responsibility to existing staff. Now, two and a half years later, many of the coordinators are still wearing multiple hats in their districts, and have significant responsibilities in addition to the Blueprint work. This is especially challenging in smaller districts with fewer staff and resources. For example, among the ICs there are Chief Financial Officers, Chiefs of Staff, Chief Academic Officers, Directors of Assessment and Reporting, and Chief Innovation Officers.

PSSAM started convening the ICs in 2021 with monthly implementation and planning meetings. As the AIB was named, and the new State Superintendent was settling in, implementation began in earnest. Last year at this time, we calculated ICs required attendance at roughly 71 meetings; since last year, we have easily doubled that amount and are only calculating obligations at the state level; local outreach and implementation efforts likely rival those figures. Implementation Coordinators have been responsible for dozens of mandated reports to the State, as well as presentations and training sessions within their districts and to the public. The commitment to the Blueprint work has been immense and led by the ICs and their superintendents.

The designation of ICs has created an equity issue between small and large systems. Even after adjusting for the enrollment of the districts -- the planning and implementation requirements are the same -- whether you are a district with 200,000 or 2,000 students. As we have moved through the initial two years of the Blueprint, it is exceptionally clear that these ICs are integral for implementation with fidelity. We recognize that many staff in our districts are overworked and overburdened, but we feel it is appropriate to request a carve-out for the salaries of the ICs, especially since the General Assembly mandated the position. We believe a line item in the budget would provide an equitable funding opportunity for all districts to hire and employ a full-time IC for successful implementation of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future.

For these reasons, PSSAM **supports** House Bill 1082 and requests a favorable committee report.

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Uploaded by: Riya Gupta

Position: FWA



**Testimony in support of
House Bill 1082: Blueprint for Maryland's Future Implementation – Funding and
Independent Evaluation – Alterations**

**Budget and Taxation Committee
Position: Favorable**

March 26, 2024

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. Since our inception in 2016, we have been committed to the realization of World Class Schools for every student in our state. In 2023, this means supporting the full funding and faithful implementation of the Blueprint. Strong Schools Maryland **supports House Bill 1082, with amendments** that ensure allocated funds are used appropriately if a Blueprint Implementation Coordinator's salary is maxed out due to their pay grade in the county's existing pay scale.

The Blueprint for Maryland's Future envisions a World-Class system of public schools for our state's students. This can only be achieved through implementation of the law with fidelity. Blueprint Implementation Coordinators serve on the front lines of Blueprint law, providing oversight, input and recommendations aligned with the Blueprint outcomes and ensuring compliance with all criteria established by the Accountability and Implementation Board (AIB) and in alignment with the guidance provided by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE).

As the Blueprint law is just that—a blueprint—we believe that additional legislative changes must be made at the state and local levels to create the conditions necessary to realize World Class Schools. Though the law foresaw a need for local-level coordinators of the Blueprint's implementation, it did not include dedicated funding for the role. For the last several years, we have seen varying iterations of the Blueprint Implementation Coordinator (BIC) role at school systems across the state. For a time, there were BICs working across the state who also held roles in public relations, federal program compliance, teaching and learning—even as Superintendent of the very school system they served.

Their work is demanding, their task unlike any other we've set before education administrators, and it is imperative that BICs be specifically funded by the state to ensure equitable capacity for all 24 school systems to implement the Blueprint with fidelity.

House Bill 1082:

- Provides a sizable grant to each county board of education for the salary of the county's Blueprint implementation coordinator;
- Incentivizes a competitive job hiring process;
- Affirms the state's commitment to ensuring the Blueprint is locally implemented by qualified professionals.

Blueprint implementation coordinators are required to have extensive knowledge and a vast set of skills in not only a diverse range of education topics, but also human resources management and public economics. Montgomery County Public Schools requires a master's degree from an accredited university or college, as well as demonstrated leadership experience in K-12 education, project management, and program development.¹

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reports the average salary of a project manager in the U.S. to be \$95,370.² BLS also reports the average salary of education administrators in primary and secondary education to be \$99,870.³ The salary grant that this bill provides would allow Blueprint coordinator positions to be not just competitive in our job market, but also lead in compensation of education and organizational leaders.

This is a key example of the many changes and shifts in how we administer and fund public education in Maryland that we will have to grapple with as the Blueprint continues to be implemented. In a World Class Education system, we fund our priorities.

For these reasons, we urge a favorable report on House Bill 1082 with amendments.

For more information, contact Riya Gupta at riya@strongschoolsmaryland.org

¹ [MCPS](#)

² [U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Project Management Specialist](#)

³ [U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Education Administrator](#)