

**KAREN LEWIS YOUNG**  
*Legislative District 3*  
Frederick County

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Committee on Education, Energy,  
and the Environment



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**THE SENATE OF MARYLAND**  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

The Honorable Senator Feldman, Chair  
The Honorable Senator Kagan, Vice Chair  
Education, Energy, and Environment Committee  
Maryland Senate  
Annapolis, MD

March 6th, 2024

**SB0984 Blueprint for Maryland's Future - Alterations**

Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and esteemed members of this committee,

Implementing the Blueprint has come with its fair share of wrinkles. I have spent a great deal of time working with my public school system to address some of the issues we are facing. Issues, I am certain, are not confined to Frederick County. SB984 will amend the Blueprint in five key ways:

- There are not enough participants in our apprenticeship programs to meet Blueprint goals. SB984 directs the Secretary of Labor to prioritize activities, programs, and services that contribute to achieving the statewide goal of having 45% of high school students complete an apprenticeship course by graduation by School Year 2030-31.
- SB984 requires the State Board of Education, rather than the Accountability and Implementation Board (A.I.B.), to approve when the career ladder phase-in becomes effective. Further, it empowers county boards of education to approve specifications for teachers spending time outside the classroom. Local control will help county boards of education implement the requirements in a way that makes sense for that jurisdiction.
- It permits county boards to limit the time-frame to school semesters as well as the number of courses a student can dually enroll in. This will help jurisdictions protect funding and make sure the opportunity is available for the greatest number of students.

Finally, A.I.B. in consultation with the State Department of Education to conduct two feasibility studies:

- Create a study on the logistics of providing additional publicly funded pre-kindergarten, including considerations such as construction and private pre-kindergarten providers receiving public funds.
- Create a study of the teacher career ladder, considering aspects such as working time outside of the school year, school resources for educators to progress their career, and other regulations to understand what may be impeding the professional advancement of educators.

This bill will empower local jurisdictions, engage the Secretary of Labor in meeting our statewide goals, and help meet the needs of our teachers. I urge a favorable report.

Sincerely,



Senator Karen Lewis Young