



**Testimony in OPPOSITION of
Senate Bill 791: Public Schools – Career Ladder – Teacher Classroom Teaching Time**

Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

Position: Unfavorable

February 21, 2025

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 so every student in our state is equipped to thrive upon graduation. Strong Schools Maryland urges an **unfavorable vote on Senate Bill 791**, which if enacted, would change the original mandate of the Blueprint that teachers teach in the classroom an average of 60% of the teacher's working time to 80% of the teacher's working time.

The Blueprint specifically mandates that teachers teach in the classroom for 60% of the time because the other 40% of the time is critical for not only lesson planning but for coordination between teachers and teachers of different subjects, education professionals, administration, and families. This time is especially critical for coordinating supports for the very students the Blueprint aims to support, including students with disabilities and multilanguage learners. We know that time spent outside of the classroom is necessary for adequate planning time for teachers in order to meet diverse educational, emotional, and behavioral needs. Further, feedback from teachers, specifically Black teachers, Indigenous teachers, and other teachers of color, cite out of classroom planning time as critical for retaining a racially diverse teacher workforce.¹

The Blueprint codifies this by requiring that teachers teach for an average of 60% of the teacher's working time. However, with proposals to pause collaborative time programming, critical to creating a positive school environment for a diverse teacher workforce, this proposed piece of legislation works in tandem to mandate further reductions and cuts to the original promises of the Blueprint.

While we recognize the challenges with the teacher shortage, the answer is certainly not to cut the protections given to teachers to plan and coordinate the necessary supports for their students. We must instead invest equitably in programs, such as Grow Your Own, to diversify, grow, and retain a high quality teacher workforce in Maryland. The Blueprint for Maryland's Future envisions a school system that protects the working environment and expectations for teachers so that they can properly coordinate with other staff to provide support and meet the needs of their students. This bill does not align with this mission and, in doing so, proposes harmful alterations to the Blueprint that negatively impact both students and teachers.

For these reasons, we strongly urge an unfavorable report on Senate Bill 791.

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¹ [National Council on Teacher Quality](#)