



## **SB852 – BLUEPRINT FOR MARYLAND’S FUTURE – ALTERATIONS**

March 5, 2025

EDUCATION, ENERGY, AND THE ENVIRONMENT

### **SUPPORT**

Grace Wilson, Senior Legislative & Policy Specialist (410.440.1758)

Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) supports **SB852 – Blueprint for Maryland’s Future – Alterations**. This bill makes numerous alterations to the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future (Blueprint) law. AACPS believes in the vision of the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future to transform public education in the State by fully and equitably funding world class public education. AACPS is committed to implementing the Blueprint with fidelity, while also advocating for Blueprint reform as necessary to account for lessons learned during the first three years of implementation. AACPS supports SB852 which proposes numerous needed changes to the Blueprint to ensure continued successful implementation of this transformative law.

Specifically, AACPS appreciated clarification provided by this bill that terms or conditions relating to the employment of school personnel that are subject to collective bargaining will continue to be covered by the collective bargaining process and are not under the authority of the Accountability and Implementation Board (AIB). AACPS was delayed in submitting a career ladder to the AIB for approval due to an impasse in bargaining on a separate negotiated issue. This resulted in conflict between State collective bargaining law and the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future, and confusion on how to resolve this conflict. Ultimately, the collective bargaining process played out and AACPS was able to submit and receive approval for our career ladder. This change in law will eliminate any conflicts between collective bargaining law and the Blueprint and ensure that collective bargaining is maintained at the local level.

AACPS also supports the removal of assistant principals and principals from the career ladder provisions of the Blueprint. Administrators in AACPS are currently represented by separate units. Removing administrators from the career ladder better aligns with school systems’ organizational structures. Furthermore, National Board Certification is not an appropriate benchmark for administrators. If NBC is determined to be a necessary certification for administrators, administrators without NBC should be permitted the opportunity to be grandfathered into this requirement.

Moreover, AACPS supports a study by MSDE of the adequacy of special education funding in the State. AACPS will spend more than \$202.9 million in fiscal year 2025 to provide direct services to approximately 10,800 students with disabilities. However, AACPS will receive only \$32 million in federal special education funding. Foundation funding is utilized to close the difference between federal funding for special education and actual expenditures providing specialized education. As such, increased funding is necessary to provide our special education students with access to high quality programs and instruction to meet their unique needs.

AACPS believes the changes proposed SB852 will ensure the continued successful implementation of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. Accordingly, AACPS respectfully requests a **FAVORABLE** committee report on SB852.