



# MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

*Expanding Opportunity and Unleashing Potential*

15 West Gude Drive ♦ Suite 100 ♦ Rockville, Maryland 20850

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**BILL:** House Bill 1262

**TITLE:** County Boards of Education – Post College and Career Readiness Pathways – Payment of Costs

**DATE:** March 5, 2025

**POSITION:** Support

**COMMITTEE:** Ways and Means

**CONTACT:** Patricia Ursprung, Coordinator, Legislative Affairs

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The Montgomery County Board of Education supports House Bill 1262.

This bill authorizes county boards of education to develop and implement income eligibility guidelines for the payment of costs associated with college preparatory programs, such as the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program and Advanced Placement courses.

On September 26, 2024, the Montgomery County Board of Education adopted a legislative platform that contains priority issues and ongoing concerns. One of the Board of Education's priority issues was to explore ways to curtail costs associated with Blueprint-required funding of college preparatory programs.

Currently, the Blueprint for Maryland's Future requires school systems to cover the costs of Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) exams for all students who meet the College and Career Readiness standard. In FY24, MCPS spent more than \$4.4 million on AP and IB exams. That year, the per-exam fees were as follows: \$89 for the AP exam, \$137 for the AP Capstone exam, and \$119 for the IB exam. Of the funds dedicated to cover exam costs, \$236,480 was spent on exams that were never taken because the student either canceled or simply failed to show up for the exam.

Montgomery County is economically diverse. As a result, our schools provide services to families that experience substantial financial need, those who are fully economically stable, and many that fall somewhere in the middle. The Montgomery County Board of Education is committed to making sure all students have access to the educational opportunities contained within the Blueprint and understands that not all families need the same level of support to make access possible. In order to maximize the funds that are allocated to us from our funding partners, the



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Board of Education supports House Bill 1262, which would allow us to utilize income eligibility guidelines to determine the level of financial support a family could receive in connection with participation in college preparatory programs. Any flexibility would better allow the Board to utilize the limited funds available to support all students attending Montgomery County Public Schools. Equitable access to academic programs and opportunities for all students is not achieved through equal financial support to all families.