



**Testimony in OPPOSITION of  
House Bill 1421: Accountability and Implementation Board – Scope of Authority**

**Appropriations and Ways & Means Committees**

**Position: Unfavorable**

March 6, 2025

Strong Schools Maryland is an organization dedicated to ensuring the full funding and faithful implementation of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. Our organization played a critical role in its passage and the veto override in 2019 and 2020. **Strong Schools Maryland opposes House Bill 1421** – placing the Accountability and Implementation Board (AIB) under the Maryland State Board of Education (MSDE) is not an effective solution and would cause more harm than good.

The AIB was created because Maryland's education system lacked a mechanism for sustained, independent accountability. For years, MSDE struggled to implement systemic education reforms, and lawmakers recognized the need for a separate entity to ensure that Blueprint policies were fully and equitably carried out. The AIB was designed to function independently to ensure that reforms were implemented consistently across local school districts and that the state remained committed to the Blueprint's long-term vision.

While MSDE has made improvements in leadership and capacity, the need for an independent oversight body has not disappeared. The Blueprint is a decade-long reform plan, and its success depends on accountability structures that remain in place regardless of changes in administration or political shifts. Moving the AIB under MSDE would blur the lines of responsibility and weaken the oversight mechanisms that were put in place to ensure the Blueprint's success.

Rather than dismantling the AIB's autonomy, adjustments should focus on clarifying its responsibilities to ensure effective oversight and accountability. This bill does not accomplish that. Instead, it disrupts an accountability structure that was intentionally designed to function independently of the agencies it monitors. The solution is not to weaken oversight but to refine it in a way that strengthens the Blueprint's implementation.

**For these reasons, we strongly urge an unfavorable report on House Bill 1421.**

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