



**Testimony in OPPOSITION of
House Bill 732: Public Schools – Career Ladder – Teacher Classroom Teaching Time**

Ways and Means Committee

Position: Unfavorable

February 25, 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 House Bill 732**, 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 aims to expand non-teaching time to 40% because that time is critical for not only lesson planning but also for coordination between teachers of different subjects, education professionals, administration, and families. It 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. As a result, schools with more collaborative teacher time generally have higher student achievement outcomes.¹

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.² The Blueprint recognizes this by codifying this goal of a 60%/40% classroom split in order to support a cohort of diverse and high quality teachers under Pillar 2. 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 House Bill 732.

For more information, contact Kenzie Funk kenzie@strongschoolsmaryland.org

¹ [Teacher Collaboration in Perspective, A Guide to Research](#)

² [National Council on Teacher Quality](#)