



**Board of Education
of Howard County**

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**Board of Education of Howard County
Testimony Submitted to the Maryland House of Delegates,
Ways & Means Committee
March 6, 2025**

HB1421: FAVORABLE

Accountability and Implementation Board - Scope of Authority

The Board of Education of Howard County (the Board) supports **Accountability and Implementation Board - Scope of Authority**.

HB1421 shifts the Accountability and Implementation Board (AIB) from an independent unit of State government to a unit subject to the bylaws, rules, and regulations of the Maryland State Board of Education (MSBE). The bill subsequently alters all provisions of the current Blueprint for Maryland's Future statute to clarify that the AIB has authority only over the monitoring and evaluation of the intended outcomes of the Blueprint through approval of implementation plans.

Both the MSBE and AIB are dedicated to excellence and fulfilling the promise of the Blueprint and in recent months, the AIB and MSBE have also made concerted efforts to work collaboratively on key areas of Blueprint. Since the implementation of the Blueprint, however, the duality of having two entities develop guidelines and provide oversight of educational delivery in Maryland has been challenging. Restructuring and clarifying the relationship between MSBE and AIB, with AIB focusing on oversight and accountability of the Blueprint and reestablishing the MSBE as the state's education policy-making entity, would streamline procedures and processes while cutting down on overlapping oversight. Delays in approvals and guidance production could potentially be improved when combining AIB and MSBE resources, including by increasing available staff for both.

With the movement of AIB under MSBE as proposed by HB1421, the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Committee would also report directly to MSBE. This could potentially address issues of duplication in guidance from that entity as well. Recent issues in guidance have centered around youth apprenticeships, with conflicting definitions between AIB, the Maryland Department of Labor, and MSBE. Ultimately, with requirements, terminology, standards, and guidance varying from policies to documents to guidance being received by districts, there is much confusion around all things apprenticeship and disagreement and/or misunderstanding regarding new requirements.

HB1421 further requires that by September 1, 2025, and annually thereafter, MSBE shall review the requested or required reports for Blueprint as a whole to identify duplication and opportunities to clarify and consolidate reporting requests or requirements. MSBE must report to the General Assembly on recommendations based on this review.

While reporting is an important part of the Blueprint to ensure accountability of the local school systems, an informal review identified 179 reports required under the Blueprint and in compliance with existing requirements in the Education Article, the Maryland Code of Regulations, and joint AIB/MSBE established policies. Any efforts to reduce duplication in reporting would greatly benefit local school systems by saving staff resources needed to complete.

For these reasons, we urge a FAVORABLE report on HB1421 from this Committee.