

TO: House Committee on Ways and Means

BILL: House Bill 1262- Country Boards of Education- Post College and Career Readiness Pathways- Payment of Costs

DATE: March 5, 2025

POSITION: Information

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The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) is providing information regarding **House Bill 1262**, which outlines financial responsibilities for Post-College and Career Readiness (Post-CCR) Pathways between the state and local county boards under the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. While MSDE acknowledges the bill's intent to provide fiscal clarity, we urge careful consideration of its potential to widen disparities and weaken the Blueprint's commitment to universal access.

Under this legislation, the state provides a defined level of education funding and any costs exceeding that amount would become the responsibility of local county boards. HB1262 establishes a financial baseline and permits county boards to develop income eligibility guidelines and procedures for covering costs associated with competitive college preparatory programs—including the International Baccalaureate (IB), Cambridge, or Advanced Placement (AP)—for families earning below 400% of the federal poverty level. Each local education agency (LEA) would be responsible for determining and implementing these guidelines.

While the bill introduces a structured approach to fiscal management, its implementation raises concerns about equity and access. The current Blueprint model ensures that all students who meet the College and Career Readiness (CCR) standard can access Post-CCR Pathways at no cost to them or their families. This universal access is critical for achieving the Blueprint's goals of educational equity and workforce readiness. However, HB1262 introduces a county-by-county framework for financial eligibility, which risks creating disparities in opportunity and access. In jurisdictions with limited fiscal capacity or differing eligibility criteria, students who would have otherwise participated may face financial barriers, forcing families to make alternative educational decisions based on cost rather than academic readiness.

This shift in funding responsibility may undermine the Blueprint's promise by deprioritizing equitable access to advanced learning opportunities. Instead of ensuring all students meeting the CCR standard can transition into high-quality postsecondary preparation, HB1262 could create an uneven landscape where access depends on local funding rather than student readiness.

We respectfully request that you consider this information as you deliberate **HB1262**. For further information, please contact Dr. Akilah Alleyne (Executive Director of Government Affairs) at 410-767-0504, or [Akilah.alleyne@maryland.gov](mailto:Akilah.alleyne@maryland.gov).