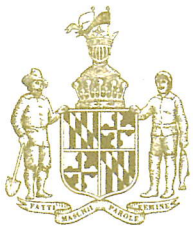
NANCY J. KING
Legislative District 39
Montgomery County

MAJORITY LEADER

Budget and Taxation Committee

Chair
Education, Business, and
Administration Subcommittee



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Senate Bill 343 – County Boards of Education –
Post College and Career Readiness Pathways – Payment of Costs

February 18, 2026

Mister Chairman and Members of the Education, Energy and the Environment Committee:

The Blueprint for Maryland's Future required the State Board of Education to adopt College and Career Readiness (CCR) standards. The Blueprint further required local Boards of Education to provide all students who meet the CCR standard access to specific post-CCR pathways at no cost (including fees) to them or their parents.

This requirement under the Blueprint made programs like Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) exams free for all students regardless of income level. While this aligns with the Blueprint's vision of equity and universality, this mandated expense is creating a financial burden on our local school systems. For example, in FY2025 Montgomery County Public Schools spent in excess of $4.2 million on AP and IB exams.

Senate Bill 343 will require school systems to continue to offer these exams for free for students with family income below 400% of the federal poverty level but would allow local school systems to develop and establish income eligibility guidelines and procedures for payment for those students with family income levels above 400% of the federal poverty level.

Passage of this legislation will allow school systems to continue covering exam costs for families with the greatest needs while allowing the school systems to reallocate funding to other essential programs, and so I respectfully request a favorable report on Senate Bill 343.