



OPPOSE: House Bill 803

Public Schools - Career Ladder - Teacher Classroom Teaching Time

House Ways and Means Committee

February 25th, 2026

The Blueprint Coalition, a 30+ member organization representing hundreds of thousands of Marylanders and co-led by representatives of Strong Schools Maryland and the Maryland Education Coalition, is committed to ensuring the full implementation and funding of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. The Blueprint Coalition urges an unfavorable vote on House Bill 803, 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 multilingual 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

It is also important to recognize the broader implementation context. Last year, during deliberations on House Bill 504, collaborative time implementation was programmatically and financially paused through fiscal year 2029. That delay already represents a significant adjustment to the original Blueprint timeline. School systems have been given substantial ramp time to prepare for full implementation. Further increasing required classroom teaching time from 60% to 80% would move Maryland even farther from the Blueprint's core design and undermine the long-term strategy embedded in Pillar 2.

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.

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

² [National Council on Teacher Quality](#)

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 803.

Please contact Riya Gupta at riya@strongschoolsmaryland.org for additional questions.