



BLUEPRINT FOR
Maryland's Future

Accountability &
Implementation Board

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BILL: House Bill 803

TITLE: Public Schools - Career Ladder - Teacher Classroom Teaching Time

SPONSOR: Delegate Miller, et al

HEARING DATE: February 25, 2026

COMMITTEE: Ways and Means


POSITION: **OPPOSE**

The Accountability and Implementation Board (AIB) for the Blueprint for Maryland's Future **OPPOSES House Bill 803 - Public Schools - Career Ladder - Teacher Classroom Teaching Time**, which eliminates Teacher Collaborative Time established in the Blueprint for Maryland's Future.

Overall, in Maryland, teachers spend 80% of their time in direct classroom instruction and up to 20% of their time is planning time, typically working alone. The Blueprint calls for all teachers to have additional time (increased from 20% to 40% of time) when they are not solely teaching in front of the classroom to work with colleagues on strategies to improve student outcomes. During this time, they analyze student data to identify students who may be falling behind, determine needed interventions, work with students one-on-one and in small groups to get them back on track, and work on ways to strengthen the curriculum and pedagogical practices.

This time – differentiated from traditional “planning time” – is called “collaborative time” in the Blueprint, and to support collaborative time, the Blueprint called for phased-in additional funding over an 8-year period beginning in FY 2026 (SY 25-26). In accordance with the Blueprint's requirements for career ladders, current law states that teachers on career ladder levels one, two and three shall teach in the classroom on average 60% of their working time and spend the remaining time on other related activities, including improving instruction, identifying and working with students who need additional help, and leading or participating in professional learning.

In December 2024, the AIB received data from the Maryland State Department of Education indicating a substantial shortage of teachers. This information prompted the AIB, on January 10, 2025, to take the position that, at this time, collaborative time could not be carried out on the original eight-year phase-in timeline called for in the Blueprint. Further, the AIB acknowledged that there was an urgent



need to support the implementation of additional strategies to increase the teacher pipeline so that the State can meet the goal of providing 40% collaborative time for teachers, albeit on a revised timeline.

This position is aligned to the AIB's approach to adjust the Blueprint when and if those adjustments are rooted in research and data. Further, this position affirms the AIB's commitment to collaborative time as a proven component of high-performing school systems and key to the successful implementation of the Blueprint.

In the 2025 General Assembly legislative session, the enactment of HB 504 (CH 237 of 225) delayed the phase-in of the "collaborative per-pupil amount," and thereby the implementation, by three years, until FY2029. However, while there was a pause in the implementation of collaborative time, the work to implement collaborative time continues. The AIB and MSDE have been focused on improving the teacher pipeline to reduce the number of conditionally licensed teachers and providing alternative pathways to recruit and retain fully licensed teachers. The teacher vacancy rate decreased 45% in the 2025-2026 school year from the prior school year. Special education vacancies decreased by 21% and elementary education vacancies decreased by 64%. The AIB's bill, HB 490/SB 311 Education - Blueprint for Maryland's Future - Revisions, expands pathways to teacher certification, providing additional tools to further increase the pool of candidates.

The AIB is committed to working with MSDE and the LEAs to identify innovative yet practical ways to implement collaborative time and, of equal importance, to use that time to support instruction and interventions to improve student outcomes.

If enacted, HB 803 would effectively eliminate collaborative time, disposing of a valuable and proven tool that improves instruction and student outcomes, upending progress that has already been made by LEAs, and disrupting efforts to investigate innovative models that will assist in identifying the optimal balance between direct instruction and collaboration.

For these reasons, the AIB **OPPOSES HB 803** and strongly urges an **UNFAVORABLE** report. If you would like more information, please contact Joy Schaefer, Government Relations Director at joy.schaefer@maryland.gov or (410) 991-7623.