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**TO:** House Ways and Means Committee

**BILL:** House Bill (HB) 1555 - Education - Blueprint for Maryland's Future - Oversight Requirements

**DATE:** March 12, 2026

**POSITION:** Oppose

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The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) respectfully opposes **HB 1555 - Education - Blueprint for Maryland's Future - Oversight Requirements** which would create two new oversight bodies that oversee the implementation of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future, the Accountability and Implementation Board (AIB), MSDE, and other agencies responsible for implementing the Blueprint. The bill would also expand the scope of the Office of the Inspector General for Education (OIGE) to include the AIB, require the Office of Legislative Audits (OLA) to audit the AIB, allow a local education agency (LEA) to appeal an AIB release of funds decision to the Office of Administrative Hearings, and change the term of an AIB member from 6 years to 4 years. The newly established Joint Oversight Committee on the Blueprint for Maryland's Future within the Maryland General Assembly would meet regularly throughout the year, would have subpoena power, and would review decisions made by the AIB and the State Board of Education.

The State Board and MSDE share the goals of ensuring all students have access to an equitable and world-class education that is supported by effective and efficient governing bodies. However, we believe that this bill would establish redundant and burdensome oversight structures over the Blueprint, creating additional administrative work for MSDE, AIB, and LEAs, and distracting from meaningful work focused on academics.

The two new oversight bodies established by this bill would hold regular meetings and hearings throughout the year to discuss Blueprint implementation. Meaningful participation by MSDE would require staff capacity from multiple offices, drawing time and attention away from core responsibilities, including direct support to schools and LEAs focused on academics and improving student outcomes. LEA staff would likely face similar demands to prepare for and participate in these oversight activities, requiring significant time and effort from existing staff capacity.

MSDE, LEAs, and the AIB already regularly present their progress and plans for future implementation at public local school board meetings, State Board of Education meetings, and AIB board meetings. As part of these public board meetings, investigative questions and inquiries are made into progress being made and the alignment to the goals of the Blueprint and established outcome measures. When progress is not satisfactory, adjustments and corrective actions are required.

The AIB and the State Board of Education have established a regular cadence of joint meetings to support a

shared and aligned vision for education in Maryland. These discussions are grounded in the statutory requirements and goals of the Blueprint. Establishing additional oversight bodies that may also seek to define the State's education vision could create confusion for practitioners and slow implementation progress.

The State Board and MSDE believe the governance structures necessary for effective and efficient Blueprint implementation are already in place and look forward to continuing to work with members of the General Assembly to ensure the best outcomes for Maryland students.

We respectfully request that you consider this information as you deliberate **HB 1555**. For further information, please contact Laurel Cratsley, Interim Executive Director of Government Affairs, at 443-571-5461 or [Laurel.Cratsley@maryland.gov](mailto:Laurel.Cratsley@maryland.gov).