

What is the Return on Investment of the Kirwan Blueprint for Maryland's Future?

The Kirwan Blueprint **makes educational sense.**

The Kirwan Blueprint is supported by most Marylanders because it recommends increased investments in expanding all-day prekindergarten, hiring more teachers and raising teacher pay, making sure students are graduating college and career ready, and increasing state and local spending on special education, English learners, and low-income students and community schools.

The Kirwan Blueprint **makes economic sense.**

The Kirwan Blueprint is intended to help Maryland public school students meet the challenges of a continuously shifting global economy (globally competitive), respond to the needs of Maryland's evolving labor force requirements (ready for on-demand high paying jobs), and be better prepared for post-secondary education if that is a preferred option for the individual (prepared for college without the need for remedial courses).

What will Kirwan cost, and what is the expected return on that investment?

The Kirwan Blueprint calls for gradual increases in state and local funding over the next ten years to reach the goal of annually providing \$2.8 billion more in state funding and \$1.2 billion more in local funding by 2030.

The highly respected Sage Policy Group was commissioned by a leading grassroots education advocacy group, Strong Schools Maryland, to conduct a [return on investment \(ROI\) study](#) to translate the projected educational outcomes of adopting the Kirwan Commission's recommendations into economic and fiscal impacts with monetary values.

- The costs will be matched and then exceeded by economic benefits:
 - By 2034, only four years after the Kirwan Blueprint is to be fully funded; the increased fiscal benefits start to exceed the cost.
- Marylanders' earnings will increase:
 - Under Kirwan, per capita personal income will rise, parents of students in full-day PreK will fully join the workforce, and career and technical education will lead to high paying jobs.
 - With the improved educational outcomes under Kirwan, and as earnings increase, state and local income tax and other revenues will also increase.!
- Reduced social spending: Not being proficient in reading or math means a higher likelihood of becoming incarcerated and becoming dependent on public assistance in the form of Medicaid, food stamps, and welfare payments.
 - With the improved educational outcomes and attainment under Kirwan, the amount of tax revenues in excess of social assistance costs would grow from \$5.7 billion to \$10.2 billion. Revenues will go up, and we will spend less on public assistance.

What are business leaders saying in support of the Kirwan Blueprint?

On December 11, 2019, more than 30 Maryland business leaders signed a [joint letter to Governor Hogan and legislative leaders](#) in strong support of passing legislation in 2020 to enact the recommendations of the Kirwan Commission.

Business Executives – We Must Implement the Kirwan Commission Recommendations

“We are business leaders whose lives have been committed to building the economy and providing jobs for Marylanders. Maryland employers and employees must compete with companies across the United States and the world. To succeed in an ever increasingly competitive global economy, our state must have a world-class education system. Sadly, we don’t have that now. Significant and immediate changes in our present system are needed or Maryland will slip and all Marylanders will pay a steep and avoidable price.”

“We have reviewed the recent recommendations for systemic educational reform put forward by the Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education (the Kirwan Commission). We strongly support the Commission’s recommendations.”

“As Maryland taxpayers and business executives, we recognize no one wants to pay more and then get more of the same.”

“The Commission, by contrast, has recommended strong and unprecedented accountability measures.”

“The Commission’s recommendations also require that a substantial portion of new funds be spent on specific educational practices for which there is actual proof of effectiveness.”

“Is Kirwan affordable? Yes. The Sage Policy Group’s recently released return on investment analysis confirms that investing in education is money well spent. Better educated workers are higher paid, higher tax-paying citizens, and they are citizens who place fewer and lower demands on state funding for the costs, fiscal and social, for things like prisons and Medicaid. Before all of the very first of those who start pre-k on day one finish their education, the entire program will have paid for itself and will have cost the taxpayers nothing.”

“This is not truly a question of “can we afford Kirwan?” The real question – and the true challenge for our state, its citizens, and the state’s political leadership – is where are we going to be as a state if we fail to enact the Commission’s recommendations?”

If someone says, “We can’t afford it.” Tell them that business leaders and economists agree – “We can’t afford NOT to!”