

February 1, 2021

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**MABE's Legislative Committee Updates**

MABE’s **Legislative Committee** met virtually On Monday, February 1, to take positions on pending legislation and receive highlights on pending priority bills on COVID relief funding, special education, school facilities, and other topics. The Committee is chaired by Karen Yoho (Frederick County), and the vice-chair is Brenda Wolff (Montgomery County).

Also, the Committee received an overview of the Governor’s proposed State budget and investments in education. The budget would restore full funding for the Education Trust Fund by shifting money from the Blueprint Fund to make up for revenues lost when Casinos closed temporarily in 2020 during the pandemic. The following table shows State Aid for major education programs from FY 2020 to the pending budget bill.

**Legislative Committee**

**2021 Calendar**

- January 4, 2021  
\* (January 12, 2021 - Session convened)
- February 1, 2021
- February 22, 2021
- March 15, 2021
- April 5, 2021  
\* (April 12, 2021 - Session adjourns "Sine Die")
- April 28, 2021

MABE's Legislative Committee meetings are held virtually by Zoom on Monday mornings, 10:00 to 12:00, unless otherwise indicated. Meeting agendas and materials are posted on the [MABE website](http://MABE website).

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>Difference</u>	<u>Percent Difference</u>
<b>Public Schools</b>					
Foundation Programs	\$3,429.6	\$3,502.7	\$3,413.4	-\$89.3	-2.5%
Compensatory Aid	1,330.4	1,364.7	1,285.8	-78.9	-5.8%
Limited English Proficiency	311.1	348.2	334.3	-14.0	-4.0%
Special Education - Formula Aid	303.2	314.9	306.6	-8.2	-2.6%
Special Education - Nonpublic	123.5	123.9	123.9	0.0	0.0%
Student Transportation	303.0	310.2	288.1	-22.1	-7.1%
Guaranteed Tax Base	43.7	41.2	49.9	8.6	20.9%
Head Start/Pre-Kindergarten	50.7	29.6	29.6	0.0	0.0%
<b>Blueprint Programs</b>	<b>245.7</b>	<b>340.3</b>	<b>497.4</b>	<b>157.1</b>	<b>46.2%</b>
<b>Blueprint Hold Harmless</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>213.7</b>	<b>213.7</b>	
Other Education Programs	93.2	90.7	92.0	1.3	1.5%
<b>Subtotal Direct Aid</b>	<b>\$6,234.1</b>	<b>\$6,466.4</b>	<b>\$6,634.6</b>	<b>\$168.2</b>	<b>2.6%</b>
Retirement Payments	767.9	750.3	779.0	28.7	3.8%
<b>Total Public School Aid</b>	<b>\$7,002.0</b>	<b>\$7,216.7</b>	<b>\$7,413.6</b>	<b>\$196.9</b>	<b>2.7%</b>

The Budget would alter the allowable uses of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future Fund to include early childhood, primary, and secondary education costs associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, including one-time grants to address enrollment declines related to the pandemic. The enrollment "hold harmless grants" would ensure that all local school systems receive an increase in total funding over FY 2021.

\$151.6 million of Blueprint funds are allocated to supplemental instruction and tutoring.

\$174.9 million of Blueprint funds are allocated to offset a shortfall in Education Trust Fund revenues in fiscal 2020 and 2021.

Source: [Dept. of Legislative Services \(DLS\) Fiscal Briefing \(January 25, 2021\)](#)

	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>Difference</b>
<i>Hold Harmless Grants*</i>	\$0.0	\$213.7	\$213.7
Concentration of Poverty Grants	65.2	71.9	6.7
Teacher Salary Incentives	75.0	75.0	0.0
Transitional Supplemental Instruction	23.0	174.6	151.6
Mental Health Services Coordinators	2.0	2.0	0.0
Special Education Grants	65.5	65.5	0.0
Prekindergarten Supplemental Grants	64.0	53.7	-10.4
Early Education	45.6	54.7	9.2
Prekindergarten Expansion Grants	26.6	26.6	0.0
MSDE Innovative Programs**	9.4	9.4	0.0
Teacher Collaborative Grants	2.5	2.5	0.0
MHEC Teaching Fellows Scholarship	2.0	2.0	0.0
Declining Enrollment Grants	7.6	0.0	-7.6
Blueprint Outreach	0.3	0.0	-0.3
Medicaid Direct Certification Initiative	0.2	0.0	-0.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$388.8</b>	<b>\$751.6</b>	

### Education Aid Added to Governor's COVID Bill

The Senate Budget and Taxation Committee adopted amendments to Governor Hogan's "Recovery for the Economy, Livelihoods, Industries, Entrepreneurs, and Families (RELIEF) Act," including a \$100 million in targeted education aid.

As introduced, this emergency Hogan Administration bill (1) provides up to \$750 in economic impact payments to a taxpayer who claims the State earned income tax credit in specific tax years; (2) exempts from the State income tax the unemployment insurance (UI) benefits received by an individual; (3) authorizes certain businesses to retain an increased sales and use tax vendor credit; (4) excludes fiscal 2020 and 2021 from the multi-year lookback periods generally used to establish employer UI taxes each year; (5) exempts from the State income tax certain coronavirus relief payments; and (6) authorizes the Department of Commerce to convert certain business loans into grants.

The Senate Budget & Taxation Committee heard the bill on January 26 and, on January 27, considered and approved amendments to add \$520 million in additional targeted funding. Although the initial bill did not include education-related provisions, the Senate amendments include \$100 million in education aid - \$50 million for summer school and \$50 million for costs related to school reopening/return to in-person instruction:

- \$50,000,000 to the county boards of education to provide eight weeks of summer school or tutoring services during the summer, provided that the amounts shall be distributed proportionally to the number of public school students who qualify for free or reduced-price meals in the county as compared to the number of total public school students who are eligible for free or reduced-price meals in the State; and

- \$50,000,000 to county boards of education to safely move towards delivering in-person education with priority given to special education students, students without reliable broadband service, and those who have shown a need for in-person education to succeed. The amounts shall be distributed proportionally to the number of public school students enrolled in the county compared to the number of total public school students enrolled in the State.

## Passing the Kirwan Blueprint in 2021

As the week of February 8, 2021 approaches, when the House of delegates is slated to return to Annapolis for voting, MABE joins the broad coalition of education organizations in urging the General Assembly's House and Senate chambers to override the veto of House Bill 1300, the Blueprint for Maryland's Future Act.

The Kirwan Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education was a multi-year initiative to research and develop major funding and policy reforms to improve Maryland's public education system's quality to benefit each of our nearly 1 million public school students. In turn, it benefits the State's economy and quality of life for all Marylanders.

More information on the Kirwan Commission's work, including the [Interim Report](#), the [National Center on Education and the Economy \(NCEE\) Framework](#), the Blueprint legislation (Senate Bill 1030), and MABE's testimony, is available on MABE's [priority issue page](#) on the Kirwan Commission and Blueprint for Maryland's Future.

## Federal Updates

### Senator Chris Van Hollen Introduces Bill to Fully Fund Special Education and Title I

The Keep Our Promise to America's Children and Teachers (PACT) Act has been introduced in the Senate by Maryland's Sen. Chris Van Hollen and in the House by Rep. Susie Lee (D-NV). The Keep, Our PACT Act, would create a 10-year mandatory glide path to fully fund both Title I, which assists America's highest-need schools, and the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act, ensuring special education a priority in the federal budget.

*"Regardless of their zip code, every child deserves a first-rate education. Today, I'm reintroducing the Keep Our PACT Act to support our nation's students by fully funding Title I and IDEA. Right now, the federal government is falling billions of dollars short every year on its commitment to fully fund these programs. Last school year, the Title I program was shortchanged by more than \$29 billion and IDEA was underfunded by over \$23 billion—that's over \$764.4 million in Maryland alone." – US Sen. Chris Van Hollen*

MABE supports this bold initiative to build a much stronger federal commitment to supporting the work of local school systems in Maryland and throughout the nation.

## Package of Education Legislation Introduced in the House

Several lawmakers led by Chairman Bobby Scott (D-VA) on the House Education and Labor Committee have introduced three education-related proposals. The bills, known respectively as the “[Reopen and Rebuild America’s Schools Act](#),” the “[Save Education Jobs Act](#),” and the “[Learning Recovery Act of 2021](#),” would provide an additional \$466 billion for the K-12 community. These funds would be targeted specifically to help support state and local efforts to improve school infrastructure, address learning loss, and avert additional layoffs in the education sector. More information, including factsheets and section-by-section summaries of these bills, can be found [here](#).

In addition to these new developments, the committee also reconsidered and passed the [National Apprenticeship Act of 2021](#)—a legislative proposal similar to one passed by the entire House last Congress.

Weekly updates on federal legislation and agency actions are available on [MABE’s Federal Advocacy Center](#).

### Bill Report

A [Bill Report](#) containing MABE’s positions and the status of all the bills we are tracking is available on the MABE website and updated weekly during Session.

### Advocacy Resources

- [MABE’s Annapolis Advocacy Center](#)
- [MABE’s State Board Advocacy Center](#)
- [MABE’s Federal Advocacy Center](#)

For more information, contact John R. Woolums, Esq., MABE’s Director of Governmental Relations, at [jwoolums@mabe.org](mailto:jwoolums@mabe.org) or 410-841-5414.

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