

STATE EDUCATION FUNDING FOR EQUITY & EXCELLENCE

MABE POSITIONS

The Maryland Association of Boards of Education, representing all local boards of education in Maryland:

- ✓ **Supports** full funding at the state and local levels for the Blueprint for Maryland's Future Act law enacted in 2021 to reform and enhance Maryland's school finance system.
- ✓ **Supports** full funding for the Blueprint law and other mandated programs in a manner that is consistent with preserving local board governance authority.
- ✓ **Supports** increased State funding to support the array of mandated programs under state law and regulations, including any newly adopted mandates.
- ✗ **Opposes** efforts to reduce state funding or shift funding obligations from the State to local governments.

BACKGROUND

MABE was fully engaged in advocating for the education funding and policy reforms developed by the Kirwan Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education from 2016 to 2020, and the resulting Blueprint for Maryland's Future Act enacted in 2021. The Blueprint law launches a long-term phase-in of mandated increases in State and local funding for public education that represent the commitment Maryland must make to fully and equitably fund a world class public education for all of Maryland's nearly 900,000 students. The Commission's recommendations and key components of the Blueprint law, include:

- Ensuring high-quality early childhood education and care, including expanded full-day prekindergarten for low-income three and four year-olds;
- Elevating teachers and leaders through increased salaries and numbers of teachers, counselors and other staff, including a more diverse workforce;
- Creating a world-class instructional system of college and career readiness pathways, including career and technical education (CTE);
- Increasing per pupil funding for all students and targeting additional funding for students who need it most, including economically disadvantaged students, students receiving special education services, and English language learners;
- Providing comprehensive supports by targeting funding to schools serving high concentrations of students living in poverty to provide community schools which feature before-and after-school, summer academic programs, and student access to needed health and social services; and
- Ensuring excellence for all through enhanced oversight and accountability to ensure that the Commission's recommendations are successfully implemented and produce the desired results.

Maryland's Constitution places the highest priority on public education by requiring the General Assembly to "establish a thorough and efficient system of free public schools" and to "provide by taxation or otherwise for their maintenance." Courts have interpreted this to mean funding must be sufficient to provide all students with "an adequate education measured by contemporary educational standards"; and if sufficient funding is not provided, the State is failing to meet its constitutional duty.

Throughout the pandemic, Maryland and each of the 24 school systems benefited from the substantial amount of federal funding provided to respond to the public health, school facilities, school meals, and teaching and learning needs of students and communities. This federal funding has enabled Maryland to set aside hundreds of millions of dollars in state education funding. MABE is confident that Maryland can fulfill its constitutional mandate to fully fund and support an adequate, equitable, and excellent education for each student if the Blueprint law and other mandated educational programs and related services are fully funded.

For additional information, see [MABE's Resolution on Adequate and Equitable Education Funding](#).