

BILL: House Bill 1211
TITLE: Education - Compensatory Education - Maryland Neighborhood Tier System Calculation
POSITION: SUPPORT
DATE: March 14, 2023
COMMITTEES: Appropriations
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The Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) supports House Bill 1211, because it would fulfill the charge of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future law that the state adopt reforms to the compensatory education funding formula based on neighborhood indicators of poverty.

The Kirwan Commission in Innovation and Excellence in Education recommended, and the Blueprint law requires, that significantly more resources be directed to the students who need it the most, including through the expansion of community schools. The Blueprint added a concentrated poverty weight to the funding formula to support intensive services, for students and their families to enable them to succeed in school, that are coordinated and able to meet the additional needs of students in schools located in distressed communities. The Blueprint also added categorical funding amounts for each school with concentrated poverty to be used to establish or enhance community schools and establish or enhance school health and behavioral services.

In addition, the Blueprint required the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to analyze the use of neighborhood indicators of poverty to determine state funding decisions and issue a report the fall of 2022 (Section 5-223 of the Education Article). MSDE submitted this report to the legislature and Accountability and Implementation Board (AIB) in October, 2022. In this report, MSDE presents its recommended methodology to develop and apply a system of neighborhood indicators of poverty, known as Maryland Neighborhood Tiers (MNT). The report also includes options of how to utilize the recommended tier system in the Compensatory Education and Concentration of Poverty grant funding formulas. House Bill 1211 contains the legislative policy and funding components necessary to implement the department's findings and recommendations.

Specifically, this legislation would require MSDE to assign each neighborhood in the State to a neighborhood tier based on the following criteria: median household income, average educational attainment of the neighborhood population, percentage of single-parent households, rate of homeownership, and any other economic criteria determined by MSDE that may determine a student's preparedness and ability to learn. Again, MABE believes that House Bill 1211 represents the culmination of the Blueprint's charge to develop and implement a neighborhood indicator of poverty methodology to benefit the teaching and learning of students based on these measures of community, school, and student needs.

For these reasons, MABE requests a favorable report on House Bill 1211.