

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF BLUEPRINT FOR MARYLAND'S FUTURE

This is a summary to provide background for the upcoming Board of Education meeting report of *Blueprint for Maryland's Future* to include the five policy sections. Dr. William Kirwan was appointed the chair of a commission to study education in Maryland and to specifically to review and recommend any needed changes to update the current education funding formulas and make recommendations to enable Maryland's Prekindergarten-12 system to perform at the level of the best performing systems in the world. It is included in House Bill 1300 and 1372. A District and County Implementation Coordinator, jointly appointed by the superintendent and county government is required to be assigned for each Local Education Agency (LEA). Regular reporting requirements to the legislature, as well as MSDE and the new Accountability Board, are required.

The *Blueprint for Maryland's Future*, also known as the *Blueprint*, establishes in law the policies and accountability recommendations of the Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education. The Bill took effect on July 1, 2020, and has five major policy areas: Early Childhood Education, High-Quality and Diverse Teachers and Leaders, College and Career Readiness (CCR) Pathways – including Career and Technical Education, More Resources to Ensure All Students are Successful, and Governance and Accountability. Staff in BCPS have developed an internal workgroup that meets monthly to discuss the pending implementation of the items in the *Blueprint*. The *Blueprint* coordinator also meets monthly with our county government partners. Several members of BCPS have volunteered to sit on sub-committee workgroups being offered to members of LEAs through MSDE. This collaboration puts BCPS in a strategic position to ensure that our students can take advantage of the most current information regarding the implementation of the *Blueprint*.

### **Early Childhood Education**

Investing in high quality early childhood education and care will mean a significant expansion on full-day Preschool and Prekindergarten programs. LEAs will be required to offer free Preschool and Prekindergarten programs for families that are considered economically disadvantaged. There is a consideration of the assistant staff member in the Preschool and Prekindergarten classroom holding a higher criterion, such as an associate of arts degree. These full-day options that are required by the *Blueprint* could be within the school system or within the community. This effort is being made to ensure that all students enter Kindergarten ready to learn. All Preschool and Prekindergarten programs will be required to have a state accreditation and rating. This currently impacts BCPS, as the majority of the Preschool and Prekindergarten programs offered are half-day sessions and are not in all of our buildings. An expansion of full day Prekindergarten will be explored by a Prekindergarten expansion internal workgroup in BCPS. BCPS representatives are also participating in a multiagency group – Baltimore County's Early Childhood Advisory Council – to develop a shared vision and collaborative multiyear strategic plan to ensure that necessary resources are leveraged to meet the needs of Baltimore County's youngest learners and their families. In addition to full-day Prekindergarten, there are opportunities to expand Judy Centers and Family Support Centers through *Blueprint*.

### **High Quality and Diverse Teachers and Leaders**

Elevating teacher and school leaders includes raising standards and the status of the teaching profession. It includes creating a performance-based career ladder and offering salaries comparable to other fields. The intent is to make career teaching a desirable profession and keep teachers in a classroom. Pending negotiations, the state will increase National Board Certification Teacher salaries for those who teach at least 60% of their time teaching in a classroom. BCPS will collaborate with the unions on any future requirements.

### **College and Career Readiness Pathways**

An internationally benchmarked curriculum that enables most students to achieve “college- and career-ready” status by the end of tenth grade must be implemented in each LEA. Students will be required to pursue pathways that include early college, advanced placement courses, and/or a rigorous technical education leading to industry-recognized credentials and high-paying jobs. All students who meet CCR standards must have access to no cost post-CCR pathways including competitive entry college prep program, early college/dual enrollment, robust Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, and credit or non-credit certificate or licenses programs courses or apprenticeship leading to occupational credential or postsecondary certificate. There is a heavy emphasis on CTE preparation, specifically youth apprenticeship. BCPS is well established with our community college partners, the College Board, and CTE programming to meet this requirement.

### **Providing More Supports to Students Who Need it Most**

Broad and sustained new supports for schools serving high concentrations of students living in poverty could include before- and after-school and summer academic programs, academic enrichment opportunities, student access to needed health and social services, and increased support for English learners and special education students. This includes a grant program for high-poverty schools to provide wraparound services for families, called the Concentration of Poverty grant, which builds Community Schools for those who qualify by meeting a certain threshold of poverty. Community School grants will expand to schools who are above a 50% poverty ranking over the next four years. A presentation on Community Schools was presented in October to our Board of Education Curriculum Committee. The Bill includes a required focus on trauma, behavioral, and social-emotional learning supports and training at the school level, revises the funding formula weight for special education, English learners, and Free and Reduced Meal Program (FARMS) students. BCPS is actively working to support students in this area of the *Blueprint*.

### **Governance and Accountability**

Ensuring excellence for all includes creating an accountability-oversight board that has the authority to ensure that the Commission’s recommendations are successfully implemented and produce the desired results, which has been titled the Accountability and Implementation Board (AIB). This expert review team of educators and administrators to visit schools and provide feedback on curriculum, instruction, and structures so that all students are receiving an excellent education, as envisioned by the *Blueprint*. Our county government partner has a member of their staff on the AIB.