



BLUEPRINT FOR
Maryland's Future

Accountability &
Implementation Board

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R12A01 Accountability and Implementation Board

FY 2027 Operating Budget Hearing
Response to Department of Legislative Services Analysis

Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
Education, Business and Administration Subcommittee
Senator Nancy King, Chair
Friday, March 6, 2026


House Appropriations Committee
Education and Economic Development Subcommittee
Delegate Stephanie Smith, Chair
Monday, March 9, 2026

Chair Isiah Leggett
Executive Director Rachel Hise

The Accountability and Implementation Board (AIB) appreciates the opportunity to appear before the budget subcommittee to discuss the Department of Legislative Services' (DLS) analysis of the fiscal 2027 budget and to respond to the requested comments. We thank our new analyst, Katharine Barbour, for her hard work in providing a thorough analysis. The AIB supports the Governor's FY 2027 allowance.

As the Blueprint for Maryland's Future completes its fourth year of implementation at the end of this school year, we have come so far. The AIB recently released an updated statewide "one pager" on the Blueprint's progress since the 2022-23 school year (FY 2023). For example, we have achieved:

- 70% increase in 3- and 4-year-olds enrolled in full-day PreK;
- 401% increase in teachers earning and/or maintaining National Board Certification;
- 53% increase, that represents 10% of high school students, in dually enrolled students;
- 150% increase in community schools across the state, which means more resources for the students who need it most; and
- Last fall the AIB conducted in-person, face-to-face progress monitoring conferences with all 24 Local Education Agencies (or LEAs), which created a solid and authentic foundation for us to



collaborate more closely and effectively with our local districts to ensure implementation progresses successfully.

The AIB also released one-pagers for each LEA that were shared with you and are posted on the AIB's website, where you will see impressive growth in your districts.

The AIB understands that in Maryland, one size does not fit all. The Board provides flexibility whenever possible when it is within its statutory authority and without sacrificing progress in achieving the Blueprint's goals. As an example of this commitment to partnership and flexibility, the AIB recently adopted changes to the Minimum School Funding Joint Policy, in partnership with the State Board of Education and at the request of the 24 superintendents, to give LEAs an additional year, until FY 2028, to fully meet the requirement.

We have come so far, and we must stay the course. The AIB is committed to implementing the Blueprint with fidelity and achieving its intended outcomes.

Responses to DLS Comments and Recommendations

DLS Comment (pg. 5): AIB should provide updates on Phase I and Phase II expenditures and any changes to the expected timeline for expending or reverting funds.

AIB Response: The AIB did not receive an appropriation for Technical Assistance Grants in the current fiscal year or the FY 2027 allowance. All Phase I grants - for Strategic Facilitators in FY 2024 and 2025 - have been closed and any remaining funds will be reverted to the Blueprint special fund by the end of FY 2026. The majority of Phase II awards - for Strategic Facilitators (continuation) and Targeted Assistance for Resource Allocation, PreK, Career Ladder, and College and Career Readiness in FY 2025 and 2026 - have been expended. Please see Exhibit 1 for the updated chart of expenditures. Any unspent Phase II grants funds will be reverted to the Blueprint fund at the end of the fiscal year. Grant extensions and/or modifications were provided to these remaining recipients:

- 1) **Resource Allocation Strategy Lead (APA):** This grant award was extended through 6/30/2026 to continue to assist the AIB and LEAs with technical assistance relating to the Minimum School Funding Requirements including but not limited to:
 - a) Waiver Request Submissions
 - b) MSF Requirement Calculations and Analysis
 - c) PowerSchool coding issues and suggestive actions

- 2) **CTE Committee Strategic Facilitation (City Works):** This grant was extended through 6/30/2026 to continue to assist stakeholders such as LEAs, Community Colleges, and Local Workforce Development Boards in the areas that support:
 - a) Career Coaching;
 - b) Expansion of Registered Apprenticeships starting in high school;

- c) Additional time for the implementation of the CTE Expert Review Team Deployment Plan.

In addition to the extension of the grant, the Government Workforce Development Board provided additional funding to add hours to the existing scope of work. Their contribution of \$175,000 towards the grant has increased the AIB’s reimbursable funds appropriation to \$175,000 for FY 2026 (budget amendment in process).

- 3) **Strategic Facilitator for Baltimore County (Edlab Strategies):** This grant was approved for an extension through 5/30/26 in order to complete the approved scope of work. The initial work slowed through the summer due to vacations, transitions and some strategic shifts, leaving the LEA with additional funding on the grant. The LEA requested to extend the grant so they could continue working on several key initiatives aligned with the district’s Blueprint commitments. Specifically Baltimore County will work with their Strategic Facilitator to complete the following deliverables:
 - a) Develop a comprehensive dual enrollment strategy and outreach plan;
 - b) Create a secondary school College & Career Readiness (CCR) toolkit for school leaders;
 - c) Plan, launch and help to facilitate a new PLC for secondary principals focused on CCR pathways.

Exhibit 1
Technical Assistance Grants
February 2026

	Phase I			Phase II		
	Award	Expenditures	% Expended	Award	Expenditures	% Expended
Allegany	\$100,000	\$100,000	100%	\$151,988	\$150,588	99%
Anne Arundel	\$100,000	\$51,000	51%	\$159,875	\$42,617	27%
Baltimore City	\$100,000	\$100,000	100%	\$100,000	\$55,838	56%
Baltimore	\$100,000	\$99,750	100%	\$193,999	\$176,202	91%
Calvert	\$100,000	\$100,000	100%	\$204,125	\$204,120	100%
Caroline	\$100,000	\$100,000	100%	\$184,857	\$176,867	96%
Carroll	\$100,000	\$100,000	100%	\$191,500	\$158,550	83%
Cecil	\$100,000	\$97,000	97%	\$151,775	\$56,034	37%
Charles	\$100,000	\$50,375	50%	\$213,850	\$174,975	82%

Dorchester	\$100,000	\$100,000	100%	\$242,588	\$242,585	100%
Frederick	\$0	\$0	n/a	\$50,000	\$43,200	86%
Garrett	\$100,000	\$99,999	100%	\$167,040	\$117,072	70%
Harford	\$100,000	\$99,908	100%	\$273,240	\$253,223	93%
Howard	\$100,000	\$99,960	100%	\$140,257	\$100,053	71%
Kent	\$100,000	\$100,000	100%	\$230,092	\$175,488	76%
Montgomery	\$100,000	\$71,750	72%	\$95,000	\$42,100	44%
Prince George's	\$100,000	\$32,508	33%	\$279,737	\$258,935	93%
Queen Anne's	\$100,000	\$99,999	100%	\$45,818	\$35,074	77%
St Mary's	\$100,000	\$100,000	100%	\$100,000	\$63,500	64%
Somerset	\$100,000	\$98,818	99%	\$177,300	\$163,750	92%
Talbot	\$100,000	\$99,750	100%	\$156,375	\$147,788	95%
Washington	\$100,000	\$99,999	100%	\$215,040	\$200,140	93%
Wicomico	\$100,000	\$97,826	98%	\$99,139	\$99,130	100%
Worcester	\$0	\$0	n/a	\$99,225	\$99,215	100%
CTE Committee	\$100,000	\$100,000	100%	\$275,000	\$206,600	75%
Strategy Lead	n/a	n/a	n/a	\$312,265	\$251,435	81%
Total	\$2,300,000	\$2,098,642	91%	\$4,510,085	\$3,695,078	82%

Note: CTE's total award has been increased to \$275,000; however \$175,000 is being funded by the Department of Labor's Government Workforce Development Board, therefore the amount of Blueprint special funds awarded to the CTE Committee remains at \$100,000.

DLS Comment (pg. 11): AIB should comment on the actions it will take if LEAs do not meet the July 1, 2026 deadline for increasing minimum salaries to \$60,000.

AIB Response: The Blueprint requires LEAs to provide a minimum \$60,000 salary for all teachers beginning July 1, 2026. The AIB has clearly and consistently made LEAs aware of this requirement and the rationale for it in the Blueprint, which is to attract high quality and diverse teachers to the profession. In the first LEA Blueprint Implementation Plans in 2023, LEAs were required to provide the AIB with a plan for how they intended to meet this requirement. Since 2022, LEAs have made significant progress in meeting the minimum salary requirement, with the average teacher salary increasing by 20% from \$49,422 to \$59,185 in 2025-26. Currently 12 LEAs meet the requirement as of July 1, 2025, and 9 other LEAs have minimum salaries at or above \$56,000. The AIB will require LEA Superintendents to submit an attestation by July 1, 2026, that they have a minimum teacher salary of \$60,000 and the documentation to support the attestation. The law does not provide a waiver or exception to this requirement. The Board is currently developing the Release of Funds considerations as well as any other action items or contingency plans for LEAs not meeting Blueprint requirements, and/or not making progress on



Implementation Plans and/or Student Performance. The Board will finalize these considerations and identify actions to address deficiencies in a transparent and public process and communicate these to LEAs.