



## **Report of the Superintendent's Blueprint Fiscal Compliance Workgroup**

**Updated February 12, 2025**



Overview.....	3
Maximizing Expenditure Reporting by Blueprint Programs.....	6
Realigning Resources Among Schools.....	7
Implementation Strategies.....	9
System Communication Plan.....	12
Addendum -February 12, 2025.....	14
Appendices.....	22



The Blueprint for Maryland’s Future, among many policy decisions, reformed the State education funding formula to require local school systems to ensure that funding received in certain student program areas is expended at the school level within the program area through which the funding was received. Specific student-based Blueprint funding programs addressed by the workgroup include:

- Foundation program – The base per pupil funding amount in the law.
- Compensatory education – Per pupil funding for students who are identified as eligible for Free and Reduced Meals.
- Multilingual learners – Per pupil funding for students who are formally identified as needing services to develop English language proficiency.
- Special education – Per pupil funding for students identified for special needs services through an Individualized Education Program (IEP) process.

Through the funding formula, the Board of Education receives specific revenue through each program. There is an amount of required funding, based on the number of students in each program, at both State and County levels. These required funding amounts are referred to as shares. For each Blueprint program there is a required State share and local share, which together is the required combined share for the program.

The Blueprint then applies fiscal compliance in a manner that requires that the funding follow the students to the school level. For each program level, 100% of funding received must be spent on students in that program with at least 75% being spent at the school level where the students are located. Carroll County Public Schools (CCPS) is then accountable for compliance through monthly reporting to the State of expenditures by funding program at the school level.

Our FY25 estimates for compliance within Blueprint funding areas indicate compliance gaps in the following programs: Compensatory education - \$39 million and Multilingual learners - \$5 million. This means that, presently in CCPS, our resources are not distributed across schools in a manner that we can demonstrate compliance through expenditure reporting in these Blueprint program areas. Resources will need to be realigned across all schools to achieve compliance.

In special education, our FY25 estimate is that we are expending \$10 million more than the required combined share under Blueprint. However, the reality of special education law and needs is that more resources, not fewer, are required for our students. Therefore, we cannot legally reduce special education funding, nor would we. Thus, even though we are spending beyond the required share in special education, that creates a challenge overall in aligning all program funds that also must be considered as part of a compliance plan.

In May 2024, the Accountability and Implementation Board (AIB) and the Maryland State Board of Education (MSBE) enacted Joint Implementation Policy #2 – Blueprint for Maryland’s Future (see Appendix A). This policy provides a three-year period, fiscal years (FY) 25-27, for local school systems to achieve fiscal compliance under the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future. Joint Implementation Policy #2 provides the following:

- a. “Fiscal Year 2025 (2024-2025 School Year): LEAs are expected to make a good faith effort to meet the requirement in the baseline year.
- b. Fiscal Year 2026 (2025-2026 School Year): Each LEA that is not in compliance with the requirement shall reduce by at least half the percentage of students within a district who attend a school that has not met the minimum school funding level (at least 75%/100% as



- applicable) of per pupil formula funding.
- c. Fiscal Year 2027 (2026-2027 School Year): Each LEA shall demonstrate that the minimum school funding level (at least 75%/100% as applicable) of per pupil formula funding is following all students to their school.”

Superintendent McCabe formed a Blueprint Fiscal Compliance Workgroup with the onset of fiscal year FY25 to develop comprehensive strategies for CCPS to meet fiscal compliance under the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future. Assistant Superintendents O’Neal and Shockney were directed to form a workgroup comprised of internal and external stakeholders best suited to analyze information and data and develop a system plan for compliance. Dr. McCabe also appointed external facilitators to guide the workgroup’s process.

The workgroup roster was comprised as follows:

### **External Co-Facilitators**

Dr. Donald W. Harmon  
Mr. Joseph P. Licata

### **Staff Leads**

Dr. Frank Grossman, AIB Strategic Facilitator for CCPS  
Ms. Angie McCauslin, CCPS Blueprint Coordinator  
Mr. Jonathan D. O’Neal, Assistant Superintendent of Operations  
Mr. Nicholas Shockney, Assistant Superintendent of Instruction

### **Superintendent’s Cabinet**

Mr. Robert Burk, Chief Financial Officer  
Mr. Gary Davis, Chief Information Officer  
Mr. Ernesto Diaz, Director of Human Resources  
Dr. Christy Farver, Director of Elementary Schools  
Ms. Carey Gaddis, Communications Officer  
Ms. Amy Gromada, Director of Middle Schools  
Mr. Michael Hardesty, Director of Transportation  
Mr. Eric King, Director of High Schools  
Dr. Arlene Moore, Equity and Inclusion Officer  
Mr. Curtis Pierce, Chief of School Security  
Mr. Raymond Prokop, Director of Facilities Management  
Mr. Karl Streaker, Director of Student Services  
Mr. Steve Wernick, Director of Curriculum  
Ms. Christine Wittle, Director of Special Education

### **System Staff**

Mr. Jeff Alisauckas, Supervisor for Professional Learning  
Ms. Christine Bechtel, Supervisor of Secondary Special Education  
Ms. Brenda Bowers, Communications Coordinator  
Mr. Bill Caine, Facilities Planner  
Mr. Bill Eckles, Supervisor of Career and Technical Education  
Ms. Beth Fagan, Special Education Coordinator of Early Intervention  
Ms. Kim Mahle, Supervisor of Human Resources  
Ms. Pam Mesta, Supervisor of ESOL



Ms. Pam Meyers, Supervisor of Early Childhood and Family Education  
Ms. Shannon Mobley, Principal of Century High School  
Ms. Jenn Seashole, Supervisor of Information Technology  
Mr. Drew Sexton, Supervisor of Budget  
Mr. Keith Shorter, Supervisor of Transportation

### **Carroll County Government Staff**

Ms. Deb Effingham, Deputy County Administrator  
Ms. Roberta Windham, County Administrator  
Mr. Ted Zaleski, Director of Management and Budget

### **Employee Bargaining Groups**

Mr. Dan Bessick, MSEA/APSASCCO UniServ Director  
Mr. Erin Brillhart, Principal of Sykesville Middle School/APSASCCO President  
Mr. Nathan Curtis, MSEA/CCEA UniServ Director  
Ms. Celeste Jordan, CCEA President  
Ms. Kelley McDonough, West Middle School Career Coach/CCEA Executive Board  
Mr. Martin Tierney, Principal of Runnymede Elementary School/APSASCCO Vice President

In addition, various State officials received open invitations to attend any sessions of the workgroup. We thank Dr. Joshua Michael, President of the Maryland State Board of Education, and Ms. Rachel Amstutz, AIB Director of Policy, for attending and observing workgroup sessions.

Dr. McCabe charged the workgroup with a timeline to develop a final report to align with the FY26 operating budget process. The workgroup met and determined a purpose statement to fulfill the Superintendent's charge:

*The CCPS Blueprint Fiscal Compliance Workgroup will develop a comprehensive plan for compliance by FY27 by:*

- *Understanding the requirements;*
- *Considering the impact on all students;*
- *Developing innovative strategies and solutions;*
- *Identifying and addressing all contingencies; and*
- *Clearly communicating the plan to all stakeholders.*

This report meets the charge and timeline from the Superintendent. It is organized into four main sections: Maximizing Expenditure Reporting by Blueprint Programs, Realigning Resources Among Schools, Implementation Strategies, and System Communication Plan.



One component of fiscal compliance under the Blueprint is to ensure that all appropriate expenditures are being properly reported by Blueprint program. In FY25, we are examining all expenditures through the workgroup process to determine any qualifying expenditures which are presently reported centrally but qualify to be reported at the school level by Blueprint programs.

These reporting changes will occur by FY26 as part of our progression to full compliance. In essence, through the workgroup we are re-examining all system expenditures and linking them to appropriate program categories in the Blueprint for Maryland's Future – Fiscal Reporting Guidelines. From there, we will adjust expenditures to the appropriate program(s) in FY26.

One example of a large expenditure already identified thus far is in the area of multilingual learners (ML). Our data indicates that we have approximately \$1 million in expenditures reported centrally. The conversion to report those expenditures to the school and ML program level in FY26 should bring CCPS closer to compliance with AIB/MSBE Joint Policy #2.

Another area where we need to address reporting compliance is in the area of special education. We estimate that we are expending approximately \$10 million more on special education services than required in the combined shares of the Blueprint formula. This represents significant challenges because, not only does it reflect a gap between Blueprint theory and our reality, it stresses our flexibility to comply in other Blueprint programs. We will need to exercise the Blueprint provision allowing for charging compensatory education funding to cover the additional expenditures in special education. The most significant process toward full fiscal compliance by Blueprint program involves realigning resources across the system and all schools. As the vast majority of our operating budget is tied to staff, this means rebasing staffing across schools. Looking forward to school administration in the future under Blueprint compliance, it will be important that school staffing costs be managed so that the school does not exceed funding levels within any one program.



## **Program Funding at the School Level**

In order to support schools in this management of staying within program funding levels, CCPS has determined that we will ensure that 80% of funding in each program will be budgeted at the school level. However, we will reserve a 5% variance to protect a school from having staffing costs that exceed the funding amount of a program. In essence, 80% of funding by program will go to the school level while 75% may be charged to staffing. The remaining 5% variance will be dedicated to other supports for the students in the school.

## **New Classroom Teacher Staffing Standard**

The workgroup developed a new baseline for staffing to be implemented in FY26 and FY27 to achieve system fiscal compliance. We captured the current staffing allocations across CCPS and used those data in our workgroup to develop a new standard based upon ranges of compensatory education student enrollment. The standard, in some way, will be applied beginning in FY26 to phase CCPS into fiscal compliance by Blueprint program.

The chart below represents the new classroom teacher staffing allocation standard to be implemented in our schools beginning in FY26.

	Base School Standard			Tier 1 Standard			Tier 2 Standard			Tier 3 Standard			Tier 4 Standard		
	Comp Ed Range			Comp Ed Range			Comp Ed Range			Comp Ed Range			Comp Ed Range		
	Low %	High %	Ratio	Low %	High %	Ratio	Low %	High %	Ratio	Low %	High %	Ratio	Low %	High %	Ratio
Elementary	0%	5%	28.0	6%	19%	25.0	20%	23%	22.0	24%	36%	18.0	37%	100%	16.0
Middle	0%	5%	29.0	6%	18%	26.0	19%	27%	23.0	28%	32%	19.0	33%	100%	17.0
High	0%	5%	30.0	6%	19%	27.0	20%	24%	25.0	25%	31%	20.0	32%	100%	18.0

This classroom teacher staffing allocation standard applies only to classroom teacher staffing. This includes homeroom teachers, academic subject teachers, and related arts teachers, such as art, music, health, FACS, technology education, and physical education. It does not include other teacher or educator positions such as special educators, media specialists, counselors, speech language pathologists, physical therapists, occupational therapists, mental health therapists, career coaches, specialists, etc.

The Blueprint staffing standard chart divides schools at all three levels – elementary, middle, and high schools – into staffing allocation groups based upon percentage ranges of compensatory education enrollment at each school. Depending upon which group a school is in, a specific classroom student: teacher ratio is then applied to the school.

Initial classroom teacher ratios are established to bring schools into compliance in Blueprint program areas, notably compensatory education and multilingual learners (ML). The classroom teacher staffing allocation standard groups schools into tiers based on the school’s percentage of compensatory education students as below. The compensatory education ranges are slightly different at each level to adjust for the number of schools and the distribution of compensatory education students at each level.

- Base school standard – The baseline for a school that had almost no compensatory education students enrolled.
- Tier 1 – Schools at each level which have a smaller percentage of compensatory education students.
- Tier 2 – Schools at each level which have a slightly higher percentage of compensatory education students.
- Tier 3 - Schools at each level which have a more significant percentage of compensatory education students.
- Tier 4 - Schools at each level with a high percentage of compensatory education students.



Appendix B of this report illustrates the current FY25 classroom teacher budgeted positions and ratios for each school, each school's compensatory education percentage, and the tier into which the school will be placed in the new classroom teacher staffing standard. Appendix B may be referenced for comparative purposes and to gauge the level of change required to implement Blueprint fiscal compliance.

### ***Fiscal Compliance Objectives***

These initial ratios are intended to shift resources across schools to help achieve the following Blueprint compliance objectives:

1. Realign system staffing resources to achieve compliance with compensatory education funding (\$39 million);
2. Free up staffing resources to achieve compliance with ML funding (\$5 million); and
3. Free up staffing resources to establish the variance described above (\$13 million).

Obviously, these compliance gap figures will result in significant changes in staffing across our schools, both in terms of changes from school to school and within a school by program area. The classroom staffing allocation standard described above only addresses classroom teaching positions, but not all school-based staffing or other positions in the system. In order to achieve full fiscal compliance through the above three objectives, the new classroom teacher staffing allocation standard, by itself, will not free up sufficient staffing resources.

Beyond the application of the new standard, key system leaders will need to examine all staffing and make further systemic staffing decisions. Additional details of how the new staffing standard will be applied and how other staffing decisions may be made will follow in the next section of this report, Implementation Strategies.





Developing comprehensive strategies and action steps to effectively implement systemic decisions is as important as the decisions themselves. Achieving Blueprint fiscal compliance will bring tremendous change to CCPS, particularly in terms of how our schools operate. The workgroup was careful to devote equal effort to consider the implications of each decision, as it did to the decision itself. Careful consideration was given to determining the impact on students. While we must comply with Blueprint, we also want to do so in a manner that best supports our students' learning and achievement. This work included re-examining prior system decisions on resource allocation as well as considering new opportunities as we move through fiscal compliance.

The following section outlines our implementation strategies or action steps:

### ***Maximizing Expenditure Reporting by Program***

During FY25, budget staff are analyzing all expenditures and mapping them to the Blueprint for Maryland's Future – Fiscal Reporting Guidelines, as described in that section of this report. The analysis will be concluded by end of January 2025. The results of the analysis will then potentially adjust the Blueprint program areas fiscal compliance gaps. These adjustments will be incorporated into other strategies in this plan, such as the application of the new classroom teacher staffing standard and other systemic staffing decisions.

### ***Application of the Classroom Teacher Staffing Standard***

Initial ratios are included in this report for planning purposes. The school directors will apply these initial ratios at each level and develop a virtual staffing allocation for every school based on the standard by mid-January 2025.

Budget staff will analyze the virtual staffing allocations to estimate if the ratios as applied appear sufficient to achieve the compliance objectives. Adjustments will then be made as needed and this process will be iterative until a final classroom teacher staffing standard is reached. This process will conclude by end of January 2025.

Once the final classroom teacher staffing standard is established, the final standard will be applied to each school to develop a final staffing allocation. Based on this final staffing allocation, a theoretical class size analysis will be completed for each school. This process will conclude by the end of the first week of February 2025.

To comply with the fiscal compliance phase-in requirement of Joint Implementation Policy #2 – Blueprint for Maryland's Future, CCPS will separate the schools by elementary and secondary levels. In each of the two years of the phase-in period, CCPS will achieve 100% compliance at each level in succession.

For FY26, CCPS will begin by achieving compliance with all secondary schools. Given the volume of change involved in this process, other potential Blueprint-related implementation plans in secondary schools will be paused until at least FY27 to allow schools and communities to adjust.

For instance, concurrent with our fiscal compliance workgroup, we also have three school scheduling committees meeting to determine the most efficient school schedule models at each level (elementary, middle, and high) to meet Blueprint requirements, including program funding and teacher time requirements under the career ladder. These committees will issue their reports and recommendations in February 2025. While recommendations of the middle and high school committees will be available for vetting, no action will be taken on recommendations at these levels until at least FY27.

Final fiscal compliance will be achieved in FY27 when all CCPS elementary schools will be brought into compliance. As with secondary schools the prior year, other potential Blueprint-related implementation plans will be paused in FY27 to allow schools and communities to adjust.



## ***Other Systemic Staffing Decisions***

As noted in the Realigning Resources Across Schools section of the report, application of the classroom teacher staffing standard alone will not be sufficient to achieve all three fiscal compliance objectives. Additional staffing changes will be required beyond classroom teachers. The scope of other changes to systemic, non-classroom teacher staffing required will be dictated by the combined processes above associated with maximizing expenditure reporting and applying the classroom teacher staffing standard. When those analyses are completed and adjusted program area compliance gaps are refined, the level of additional staffing decisions required will be clearer.

Those analyses should be completed by the first week of February 2025. System leaders will be prepared to announce other staffing changes by mid-February 2025.

## ***School Funding Variance in Program Areas***

As indicated previously, CCPS will reserve a 5% variance in Blueprint program areas to protect schools from having staffing costs that exceed the funding amount of a program. In the foundation program, CCPS has an established history of providing a per pupil allocation to the school level. This will continue through compliance and will be the variance in the foundation program.

CCPS will also reserve a 5% variance in school-level funding in the compensatory education and ML programs. These program variances will be implemented as schools are phased into compliance with secondary schools in FY26 and elementary schools in FY27.

Building upon the work of the fiscal compliance workgroup, system leaders will develop a menu of non-staffing strategies to support student learning and achievement from which schools can select options annually. As noted above, the approach of the workgroup was that, rather than complying for the sake of compliance, we will do so in a manner that best supports our students' learning and achievement. To this end the workgroup invested tremendous effort to re-examining existing instructional practices for efficacy and considering novel instructional approaches.

System leaders will draw from this work and provide schools with an array of strategies to which the school may apply its program variances. These will be provided to schools in advance of the year in which the school is brought into fiscal compliance. Secondary schools will be provided with strategies by the end of school year 2024-25. Elementary schools will be provided with strategies by the end of school year 2025-26.

## ***Labor-Management and Negotiations-Related Implications***

The implications of fiscal compliance for labor relations are many. The amount of change in the assignment of staff and how differently schools will operate is significant. The aggressive timeline the Superintendent established for the workgroup not only recognized coordinating this report with the FY26 operating budget timeline but also with the need to allow sufficient time for labor-management discussions and potential collective bargaining to occur prior to implementation.

General communication strategies will be described in the following report section, System Communication Plan. However, relative to the impact on employees, there is a need for intensive collaboration between CCPS central staff and the impacted employee bargaining units. For this reason, representatives from the CCEA and APSASCO were included on the workgroup, as those units are most likely to see the greatest impact. The hope, by including them, was that association leadership would begin the labor-management process with a deeper understanding of the implications and a preparedness to move into discussions at the timing of the release of the report.

The master agreements contain negotiated processes for the assignment of employees. These include the



voluntary transfer process, involuntary transfer (surplus) process, and the reduction in force process. Generally, these processes include timelines for notification and selection.

Those negotiated processes are intended to govern normal staffing conditions in typical years. They do not necessarily anticipate a situation with the level of change involved with Blueprint fiscal compliance implementation.

CCPS central staff will be engaging employee bargaining unit leadership at the time the report is released to determine if there is a need or interest in negotiating any changes specific to implementation of this report. As more specific details emerge during implementation, that communication will continue so that adjustments may be considered as quickly as possible from a labor-management perspective.

Finally, there will be implications on the mutual work of the Blueprint career ladder committee between CCPS and CCEA and APSASCCO as implementation of this report unfolds. CCPS staff will continue to communicate and provide updates to CCEA and APSASCCO on implementation and how it may impact career ladder decisions.



It was important to the Superintendent and the workgroup that a comprehensive communication strategy be developed to guide the release and implementation of the report. Given the amount of system change required to achieve fiscal compliance and the wide-ranging implication of the implementation strategies, providing accurate and timely information to all stakeholders is essential. Additionally, transparent communication of the change process and implications of implementation are vital to setting and managing expectations during the implementation process.

The report will be presented publicly to the Board of Education at its January 8, 2025, business meeting. This will be the first opportunity for the Board to receive the information, discuss the concepts, and ask questions. At the same time, other stakeholders will be hearing the information for the first time as well and attempting to digest the complexities. Therefore, an established communication strategy will be shared as part of the report presentation, so stakeholders will be aware of opportunities for further information sessions.

The communication strategy includes the following elements:

### ***Website as the Central Source of Information***

A section will be created on the CCPS Blueprint website to house the report and all related information. Notice of the website section will be shared during the January 8, 2025 Board business meeting. It also will be disseminated via our CCPS communication system. The website will be used as a repository of documents related to Blueprint fiscal compliance and to share key dates that arise from this communication strategy. It will also include an evolving Frequently Asked Questions section and an email contact for stakeholders to submit comments and questions.

### ***Public Board Meetings***

Beginning with the January 8, 2025, business meeting, monthly Board meetings will include a report on progress toward implementation. In addition, joint meetings with the Board of Education, the Board of County Commissioners, and the Carroll Delegation will include information on the implementation of this plan. All of these meetings are televised and streamed for the public to consume live or on demand.

### ***Employee Groups***

The implications for labor management and negotiations are significant. Much of the system change required for fiscal compliance will involve staffing decisions. For these reasons, we invited the leadership of the two employee units most likely impacted to be part of the process from the beginning.

Moving forward with the implementation process, there will be multiple opportunities to engage employee groups and employees:

- Central staff will notify the leadership of employee bargaining groups of planned changes.
- When appropriate and invited, central staff will attend meetings of employee bargaining groups to provide details regarding the implementation process.
- As soon as implementation details are clarified, the Superintendent's designee will discuss potentially negotiable aspects with employee bargaining groups and develop a priority timeline to address issues.
- The Superintendent will disseminate messages to staff regarding implementation at critical points.
- The Superintendent will host one town hall meeting, specifically for employees, to provide a forum for employees to receive updates and interact with staff.
- Central staff will provide updates at regular principal meetings to share information and guide the work of implementation. School leaders will be provided pertinent discussion points to assist with messaging.

### ***Other Key Stakeholders***



Beyond employee groups, all key stakeholders have an interest in our implementation plans for Blueprint fiscal compliance. Accordingly, our communication strategy includes opportunities to engage other specific stakeholders.

### ***Elected Officials***

In addition to the public meetings referenced above, when the report is made public, copies will be provided to all Carroll County local and State elected officials for their review. Elected officials are able to contact us individually or collectively to have more detailed discussions or request information.

### ***Students***

Central staff will share and discuss the report and plan with leadership of the Carroll County Student Government Association (CCSGA). If CCSGA then would like staff to provide presentations at larger CCSGA meetings, we will be pleased to do so.

### ***Parents and Other Community Members***

The report will be presented to appropriate Board-appointed advisory councils, such as the Community Advisory Council and the Teacher Advisory Council at their scheduled meetings.

The Superintendent will hold two town hall meetings for all community members in the spring of 2025 to share the implementation plan details regarding specific strategies and implications. These town hall meetings will be announced in advance through the CCPS communications system and social media. The meetings also will be available for streaming.



The Superintendent’s Blueprint Fiscal Compliance Workgroup released its initial report on January 8, 2025, and presented the plan to the Board of Education. At that time, the initial plan was described as a framework to fiscal compliance, and it was noted that analysis would continue, strategies would be refined, and processes would be developed. As substantive updates are brought to the Board of Education and submitted for public information, this plan will be updated by incorporating addenda for those key updates. This addendum details the updates provided at the February 12, 2025, Board meeting.

### **Maximizing Expenditure Reporting by Program**

Work has continued toward maximizing expenditure reporting. At the February 12, 2025, Board meeting, updated fiscal compliance gaps were provided based on projected expenditure reporting:

Compensatory education:

- Revised compliance gap of \$27 million, based on the following reductions to the original \$39 million gap:
  - \$10.3 million in special education charges above required Blueprint shares
  - \$1.6 million in identified qualifying expenditures

Multilingual education:

- Revised compliance gap of \$4 million, based on charging expenditures of existing central ML staff to the school level.

### **Realigning Resources Among Schools**

Following the release of the report, work continued to update underlying data in the report. Enrollment figures were updated from the official fall 2023 enrollment counts to the official fall 2024 enrollment numbers. Additionally, fiscal compliance data in Blueprint program areas was updated based on preliminary FY26 State aid calculations. After examining these updates, the new classroom teacher staffing allocation standard was slightly adjusted as below:

	Base School Standard			Tier 1 Standard			Tier 2 Standard			Tier 3 Standard			Tier 4 Standard		
	Comp Ed Range			Comp Ed Range			Comp Ed Range			Comp Ed Range			Comp Ed Range		
	Low %	High %	Ratio	Low %	High %	Ratio	Low %	High %	Ratio	Low %	High %	Ratio	Low %	High %	Ratio
Elementary	0%	5%	30.0	6%	19%	25.0	20%	23%	22.0	24%	36%	18.0	37%	100%	16.0
Middle	0%	5%	31.0	6%	18%	26.0	19%	27%	23.0	28%	32%	19.0	33%	100%	17.0
High	0%	5%	32.0	6%	19%	27.0	20%	24%	25.0	25%	31%	20.0	32%	100%	18.0

### **Impact of Implementing the Classroom Teacher Staffing Standard**

In addition to arriving at an updated classroom teacher staffing standard, we have had time to analyze the implementation of the standard and arrive at some early projections on the impact to staffing FTE at each school, overall FTE reductions, and class size ranges.

The following tables were provided in the update to the Board of Education on February 12, 2025.



**Schools by Tier Based on Fall 2024 Enrollments and Updated Classroom Teacher Staffing Standard**

Elementary			Middle			High		
School	Comp Ed %	Tier	School	Comp Ed %	Tier	School	Comp Ed %	Tier
Carrolltowne	13%	1	Oklahoma Road	15%	1	Century	19%	1
Eldersburg	14%	1	Sykesville	18%	1	Liberty	14%	1
Freedom	12%	1	Mt. Airy	20%	2	South Carroll	20%	2
Linton Springs	15%	1	North Carroll	30%	3	Westminster	23%	2
Mechanicsville	14%	1	Shiloh	28%	3	Manchester Valley	27%	3
Mt. Airy	20%	2	East	38%	4	Francis Scott Key	37%	4
Piney Ridge	20%	2	Northwest	45%	4	Winters Mill	36%	4
Winfield	21%	2	West	33%	4			
Ebb Valley	27%	3						
Friendship Valley	30%	3						
Hampstead	26%	3						
Manchester	30%	3						
Parr's Ridge	24%	3						
Runnymede	33%	3						
Sandymount	26%	3						
Spring Garden	32%	3						
Cranberry Station	42%	4						
Elmer Wolfe	41%	4						
Robert Moton	58%	4						
Taneytown	59%	4						
Westminster	40%	4						
William Winchester	39%	4						

**FTE Changes for Classroom Teachers by Level**

Level	Students	Current FTE	Projected FTE	Change
<b>Elementary</b>	11,642	522.0	483.9	-38.1
<b>Middle</b>	5,903	313.6	294.4	-19.2
<b>High</b>	7,914	390.4	355.7	-34.7
	<b>25,459</b>	<b>1,226</b>	<b>1,134</b>	<b>-92</b>

**FTE Changes by High School**

School	Tier	Current FTE	Projected FTE	Change
Century	1	53.5	40.7	-12.8
Liberty	1	52.4	37.3	-15.1
South Carroll	2	49.0	37.3	-11.7
Westminster	2	72.0	59.0	-13.0
Manchester Valley	3	64.5	66.9	2.4
Francis Scott Key	4	46.0	50.3	4.3
Winters Mill	4	53.0	64.2	11.2
		<b>390.4</b>	<b>355.7</b>	<b>-34.7</b>



FTE Changes by Middle School

School	Tier	Current FTE	Projected FTE	Change
Oklahoma Road	1	41.0	29.2	-11.8
Sykesville	1	39.0	29.2	-9.8
Mt. Airy	2	39.0	32.8	-6.2
North Carroll	3	33.0	31.6	-1.4
Shiloh	3	33.0	33.1	0.1
East	4	44.5	47.1	2.6
Northwest	4	37.0	37.9	0.9
West	4	47.1	53.6	6.5
		<b>313.6</b>	<b>294.4</b>	<b>-19.2</b>

FTE Changes by Elementary School

School	Tier	Current FTE	Projected FTE	Change
Carrolltowne	1	25.8	18.4	-7.4
Eldersburg	1	21.0	14.8	-8.0
Freedom	1	27.0	19.7	-7.3
Linton Springs	1	32.0	23.2	-8.8
Mechanicsville	1	22.0	16.1	-6.9
Mt. Airy	2	17.0	15.6	-1.4
Piney Ridge	2	25.2	19.6	-5.6
Winfield	2	32.2	24.6	-7.6
Ebb Valley	3	25.0	24.4	-0.6
Friendship Valley	3	22.0	21.9	-0.1
Hampstead	3	18.0	16.2	-1.8
Manchester	3	29.0	29.4	0.4
Parr's Ridge	3	17.0	16.4	-0.6
Runnymede	3	27.0	26.0	-1.0
Sandymount	3	27.2	28.2	1.0
Spring Garden	3	20.0	18.3	-1.7
Cranberry Station	4	24.0	29.8	5.8
Elmer Wolfe	4	23.2	23.3	0.1
Robert Moton	4	18.2	19.3	1.1
Taneytown	4	20.0	21.8	1.8
Westminster	4	24.0	27.6	3.6
William Winchester	4	25.2	29.3	4.1
		<b>522.0</b>	<b>483.9</b>	<b>-38.1</b>





Average Class Sizes

Level	Students	Current Class Size Avg	Projected Class Size Avg	Change
Elementary	11,642	23.3	24.6	1.3
Middle	5,903	18.8	26.0	7.2
High	7,914	22.9	27.4	4.5

Average Class Sizes by Elementary Schools

School	Tier	Current Class Size Average	Projected Class Size Average	Change
Carrolltowne	1	25.0	31.4	6.4
Eldersburg	1	22.3	30.3	8.0
Freedom	1	24.0	31.4	7.4
Linton Springs	1	24.5	32.3	7.8
Mechanicsville	1	25.0	30.8	5.8
Mt. Airy	2	27.2	28.9	1.7
Piney Ridge	2	23.3	27.9	4.6
Winfield	2	23.5	28.1	4.6
Ebb Valley	3	22.8	22.8	NC
Friendship Valley	3	23.8	22.6	-1.2
Hampstead	3	22.1	23.4	1.3
Manchester	3	23.3	22.4	-0.9
Parr's Ridge	3	23.2	23.2	NC
Runnymede	3	23.4	22.6	-0.8
Sandymount	3	23.8	22.1	-1.7
Spring Garden	3	22.1	23.3	1.2
Cranberry Station	4	24.9	19.1	-5.8
Elmer Wolfe	4	21.1	20.2	-0.9
Robert Moton	4	22.9	20.5	-2.4
Taneytown	4	22.6	19.5	-3.1
Westminster	4	23.6	19.4	-4.2
William Winchester	4	22.7	19.6	-3.1
		<b>23.3</b>	<b>24.6</b>	<b>1.3</b>



Average Class Sizes by Middle Schools

School	Tier	Current Class Size Average	Projected Class Size Average	Change
Oklahoma Road	1	20.4	34.7	14.3
Sykesville	1	17.9	34.6	16.7
Mt. Airy	2	20.0	30.4	10.4
North Carroll	3	19.0	26.1	7.1
Shiloh	3	19.1	23.8	4.7
East	4	17.9	17.3	-0.4
Northwest	4	17.7	17.7	NC
West	4	19.6	23.7	4.1
		<b>18.8</b>	<b>26.0</b>	<b>7.2</b>

Average Class Sizes by High Schools

School	Tier	Current Class Size Average	Projected Class Size Average	Change
Century	1	21.8	30.9	9.1
Liberty	1	23.0	35.5	12.5
South Carroll	2	23.2	31.4	8.2
Westminster	2	22.6	29.9	7.3
Manchester Valley	3	24.3	22.7	-1.6
Francis Scott Key	4	20.8	21.2	0.4
Winters Mill	4	24.7	20.1	-4.6
		<b>22.9</b>	<b>27.4</b>	<b>4.5</b>



**Class Size Ranges by Level and Tier**

Level	Tier	School Count	Projected Low	Projected High	Projected Average
Elementary	1	5	20.7	44.0	31.2
	2	3	20.3	35.7	28.3
	3	8	15.2	35.5	22.8
	4	6	14.3	26.0	19.7
Middle	1	2	33.0	39.7	34.7
	2	1	29.4	31.6	30.4
	3	2	21.2	27.5	25.0
	4	3	21.8	27.4	19.6
High	1	2	27.4	42.0	33.2
	2	2	30.8	38.9	30.7
	3	1	22.3	24.0	22.7
	4	2	19.3	21.5	20.7

**Class Size Ranges by Elementary School**

School	Tier	Projected Low	Projected High	Projected Average
Carrolltowne	1	25.0	39.3	31.4
Eldersburg	1	20.7	44.0	30.3
Freedom	1	24.0	39.3	31.4
Linton Springs	1	24.5	36.7	32.3
Mechanicsville	1	25.0	42.0	30.8
Mt. Airy	2	26.7	32.2	28.9
Piney Ridge	2	20.3	35.7	27.9
Winfield	2	26.5	29.3	28.1
Ebb Valley	3	20.5	25.0	22.8
Friendship Valley	3	18.5	28.7	22.6
Hampstead	3	20.0	35.5	23.4
Manchester	3	18.2	29.5	22.4
Parr's Ridge	3	20.5	25.8	23.2
Runnymede	3	15.2	29.8	22.6
Sandymount	3	17.2	27.0	22.1
Spring Garden	3	19.0	28.3	23.3
Cranberry Station	4	14.3	25.3	19.1
Elmer Wolfe	4	17.5	23.0	20.2
Robert Moton	4	16.7	26.0	20.5
Taneytown	4	15.8	23.0	19.5
Westminster	4	15.0	22.3	19.6
William Winchester	4	15.8	22.3	19.6



**Class Size Ranges by Middle School**

School	Tier	Projected Low	Projected High	Projected Average
Oklahoma Road	1	33.6	39.7	34.7
Sykesville	1	33.0	39.5	34.6
Mt. Airy	2	29.4	31.6	30.4
North Carroll	3	26.0	26.3	26.1
Shiloh	3	21.2	27.5	23.8
East	4	21.8	27.3	17.3
Northwest	4	21.8	27.4	17.7
West	4	23.0	24.3	23.7

**Class Size Ranges by High School**

School	Tier	Projected Low	Projected High	Projected Average
Century	1	27.4	36.7	30.9
Liberty	1	31.7	42.0	35.5
South Carroll	2	31.1	38.9	31.4
Westminster	2	30.8	30.8	29.9
Manchester Valley	3	22.3	24.0	22.7
Francis Scott Key	4	21.5	21.5	21.2
Winters Mill	4	19.3	21.4	20.1

***Additional Position Changes Required for Fiscal Compliance***

Despite the significant staffing changes and reductions associated with implementing the classroom teacher staffing standard, those changes are not sufficient to achieve the three major compliance objectives:

1. Reallocate existing expenditures to fund \$27m in required compensatory education student services
2. Reduce existing expenditures to fund \$4m in the required Multilingual learner (ML) student services
3. Reduce \$13m in existing expenditures to establish a 5% variance for schools in compensatory education and ML program areas

Beyond the staffing changes through the classroom teacher staffing standard, there are changes to over 100 FTE at the central and school levels. These changes include positions eliminated, positions reduced, and positions repurposed as detailed on the following charts:



**Central Office and Administrative Positions**

Action	Position	Implementation
Eliminate	Mentor Teacher-School Counseling (1)	2025-2026
Eliminate	Special Education Instructional Consultant-Inclusion (2)	2025-2026
Eliminate	Coordinator-Instructional Technology (1)	2025-2026
Eliminate	Teacher-Instructional Technology (2)	2025-2026
Eliminate	Coordinator-Career & Technical Education (1)	2025-2026
Re-Purpose	Coordinator-Secondary ELA (1)	2025-2026
Re-Purpose	Coordinator-Secondary Mathematics (1)	2025-2026
Re-Purpose	Coordinator-Secondary Science (1)	2025-2026
Re-Purpose	Coordinator-Secondary Social Studies (1)	2025-2026
Re-Purpose	Coordinator-STEM (1)	2025-2026
Reduce	Athletic Director (7)	2025-2026
Eliminate	Elementary Assistant Principal (1)	2026-2027

**Secondary School Positions**

Action	Position	Implementation
Eliminate	Middle School Reading Specialist (4)	2025-2026
Eliminate	Middle School Math Resource Teacher (4)	2025-2026
Eliminate	Middle & High School Media Specialist (14)	2025-2026
Eliminate	Academic Facilitator (7)	2025-2026

**Elementary School Positions**

Action	Position	Implementation
Eliminate	Elementary School Reading Specialist (11)	2026-2027
Eliminate	Elementary School Math Resource Teacher (11)	2026-2027
Eliminate	Primary Interventionist (7)	2026-2027
Eliminate	Media Clerks (22)	2026-2027



**Maryland State Board of Education and the Accountability and Implementation Board  
Joint Implementation Policy #2 – Blueprint for Maryland’s Future  
Minimum School Funding Requirement**

**Background**

When the Maryland General Assembly created the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future (Blueprint), it recognized the importance of ensuring per pupil funding reaches the students it is intended to help and, as a result, require minimum school funding levels to ensure allocated funds follow children to their school programs. In Md. Code Ann., Ed. §5-234, the Blueprint law establishes minimum school funding at 75% of the per pupil amount applicable to the foundation program and seven targeted funding programs, as well as 100% of the concentration of poverty per pupil grant and 100% of per pupil funding for private providers participating in the full-day prekindergarten program.

Local education agencies (LEAs) must report to the Accountability and Implementation Board (AIB) and Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) beginning on or before July 1, 2024, and each July 1 thereafter, on the LEA’s compliance with minimum school funding requirements at the school system and individual school level. The new Blueprint Financial Reporting System, which was required by §5-234(c) to be developed by MSDE in consultation with AIB, is designed to collect LEA and school-level budget and spending information by Blueprint funding formula monthly beginning in fiscal year 2025 (July 1, 2024). LEAs will upload data each month by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the following month. (It is currently in beta testing in fiscal year 2024; all LEAs have had access to the system since April 2024.) The first full year of LEA data will be available by October 15, 2025, after the closeout of fiscal year 2025.

Pursuant to Ed. §5-405(c), Blueprint funds are automatically withheld by law until the AIB determines that a local school system or public school has met adequate implementation and performance standards. From fiscal year 2023 through 2025, the AIB is authorized to release funds after a local school system or public school has developed an initial implementation plan and has received approval for its initial implementation plan and for any subsequent modification (§5-405(c)). Beginning in fiscal year 2026, the AIB is authorized to release or withhold funds based on whether a local school system or public school has made sufficient progress on an implementation plan or taken appropriate steps to improve student performance.





### Discussion

As with the implementation of other Blueprint programs and requirements, the first year of data is baseline data. LEAs are expected to make a good faith effort to meet the minimum school funding requirement. The 2024 LEA Blueprint Implementation Plans submitted by May 1, 2024, include a multi-year plan for how each LEA will meet the minimum school funding requirement.

Minimum school funding is an integral part of making progress on implementation plans, improving student performance, and achieving the Blueprint outcomes. Thus, beginning in fiscal year 2026, the AIB will be authorized to evaluate LEA and school-level compliance with the minimum school funding requirements and make Blueprint funding determinations based on the level of compliance.

While the mechanism for equitable funding is to ensure at least the minimum funding at each school, the intent of the law is to ensure each student's school is appropriately resourced. Therefore, key performance measures will focus on the proportion of students who attend schools funded at the minimum school funding level.

Ed. §5-406(f) requires the AIB to adopt an appeals process for LEAs to request a waiver from minimum school funding requirements based on certain enrollment shifts and other criteria. The AIB will develop an appeals process, which will include an opportunity for public review and comment before the appeals process is adopted.

Finally, while the Blueprint calls for a minimum school funding level of 75% or 100% of funds from the per pupil formulas, this is the *minimum* expectation for *each* school, not an average across schools. The 75% minimum allows for school variation on costs, particularly those related to school personnel; however, the intent is not to require that 25% of funds are spent centrally.

### Policy Statements

1. To provide further detail on the expectations for minimum school funding requirement compliance, the AIB and State Board of Education jointly resolve that LEAs are urged to meet the minimum school funding requirement for all students in all schools as soon as practicable and must meet the requirement *no later than* the 2026-2027 school year.
2. Adherence to the minimum school funding requirement will be measured by the percentage of students within an LEA who attend a school that has met the required minimum school funding levels in accordance with Ed. §5-234. The percentages of



schools within a district in compliance with the required minimum school funding levels will also be monitored and reported.

3. Each LEA will submit baseline data for each LEA in aggregate and each school in the LEA by Blueprint funding formula required to comply with Ed. § 5-234. LEAs should make a good faith effort to meet the minimum school funding requirement in the 2024-25 school year. The following timeline is available for LEAs that do not meet the requirement in the 2024-2025 school year:
  - a. Fiscal Year 2025 (2024-2025 School Year): LEAs are expected to make a good faith effort to meet the requirement in the baseline year.
  - b. Fiscal Year 2026 (2025-2026 School Year): Each LEA that is not in compliance with the requirement shall reduce by at least half the percentage of students within a district who attend a school that has not met the minimum school funding level (at least 75%/100% as applicable) of per pupil formula funding.
  - c. Fiscal Year 2027 (2026-2027 School Year): Each LEA shall demonstrate that the minimum school funding level (at least 75%/100% as applicable) of per pupil formula funding is following all students to their school.
4. The AIB and MSDE will use data collected from the LEAs in the Blueprint Financial Reporting System to evaluate compliance with the requirement. The monthly data reporting will satisfy the reporting requirement to MSDE and the AIB that begins July 1, 2024, with data from each month required to be uploaded by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the following month.

*Adopted this 16<sup>th</sup> day of May 2024*

Isiah Leggett, Chair  
Accountability and Implementation Board

*Adopted this 21<sup>st</sup> day of May 2024*

Clarence C. Crawford, President  
State Board of Education





**Current School Budgeted Classroom Teacher FTE, Student-Teacher Ratio, Comp Ed %, and Tier Placement**

School	FTE	Current Ratio	Comp Ed %	Tier
Carrolltowne Elementary	31.2	19.0	12%	1
Cranberry Station Elementary	29.4	19.8	41%	4
Ebb Valley Elementary	30.4	18.1	26%	3
Eldersburg Elementary	25.6	18.0	18%	1
Elmer A. Wolfe Elementary	28.4	16.4	42%	4
Freedom District Elementary	32.6	19.7	11%	1
Friendship Valley Elementary	27.2	17.6	29%	3
Hampstead Elementary	22.2	17.8	25%	3
Linton Springs Elementary	39.0	18.6	13%	1
Manchester Elementary	35.2	18.3	26%	3
Mechanicsville Elementary	26.8	17.9	16%	1
Mount Airy Elementary	21.4	21.4	20%	2
Parr's Ridge Elementary	21.2	19.4	23%	2
Piney Ridge Elementary	30.4	18.5	20%	2
Robert Moton Elementary	22.6	17.0	57%	4
Runnymede Elementary	33.0	17.3	35%	3
Sandymount Elementary	32.8	17.1	25%	3
Spring Garden Elementary	24.4	17.9	33%	3
Taneytown Elementary	24.6	18.5	63%	4
Westminster Elementary	29.6	18.1	39%	4
William Winchester Elementary	30.8	19.0	36%	3
Winfield Elementary	39.0	17.2	20%	2
Mount Airy Middle	38.0	19.8	19%	2
North Carroll Middle	32.0	18.8	27%	2
Northwest Middle	36.0	17.9	47%	4
Oklahoma Road Middle	40.0	19.0	14%	1
Shiloh Middle	32.0	19.7	27%	2
Sykesville Middle	38.0	19.9	16%	1
Westminster East Middle	43.5	18.4	38%	4
Westminster West Middle	46.1	19.8	31%	3
Century High	52.5	20.6	17%	1
Francis Scott Key High	45.0	20.7	41%	4
Liberty High	51.4	19.5	14%	1
Manchester Valley High	63.7	21.5	26%	3
South Carroll High	48.0	19.5	20%	2
Westminster High	70.0	21.1	24%	2
Winters Mill High	51.3	22.2	35%	4

