

# BOARD OF EDUCATION OF ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY

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**BILL:** SB949 CAREER EDUCATION POLICY ACT

**HEARING DATE:** FEBRUARY 28, 2018

**COMMITTEE:** EDUCATION, HEALTH, AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

**POSITION:** OPPOSE

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The Board of Education of Anne Arundel County opposes **SB949 CAREER EDUCATION POLICY ACT**. This bill would:

- Prohibit a school system from requiring a student to take a technology education course as a graduation requirement if the student has taken a CTE course.
- Prohibit a local school system from directing a charter school or contract school on how technology education credits may be counted toward graduation.
- Mandate that if a school system pays for a student to take an Advanced Placement (AP) exam, a Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT), or a Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), the local board shall pay for a student to take an industrial certification exam or apprenticeship entrance exams.
- Mandate on the administration of software used by school systems to administer postsecondary information processing and counseling by mandating the equivalency of the pursuit of a vocational certificate, industry certification, or apprenticeship program with the pursuit of postsecondary education.

The Board of Education of Anne Arundel County wholeheartedly supports and understands the benefits of a career and technology education (CTE) education. The Anne Arundel County Public Schools Career and Technology Education Office provides leadership, support, and resources for all courses and programs in the areas of Applied Technology, Business Education, Computer Science, Family and Consumer Sciences, and Technology Education. CTE programs offer students an opportunity to get a head start on their career, as well as, post-secondary education. Students can earn industry certifications and transcribed college credit while completing high school graduation requirements and use this acquired knowledge for entry-level employment and further education at a college, technical or business school, or an apprenticeship program. With 40 different complete programs, AACPS has something for everyone. Our State-approved programs of study are designed to prepare students for the 21st century global economy and its rapidly changing workforce needs. Just recently, 10 AACPS CTE students won their respective categories, 10 more finished second, and six others placed third at the recent SkillsUSA Region 3 championships, earning the right to compete in the upcoming State competition.

We are supporting other CTE bills this Legislative Session, including SB517 and the proposal to establish a grant program in the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation to provide grants to apprenticeship sponsors to create degree apprenticeships in workforce shortage employment

categories. This bill would also establish a matching grant program for local governments to create apprenticeships for hard-to-fill local government jobs.

However, the Board opposes provisions in the bill relating to a county board of education's authority over charter and contract schools. Specifically, sections 4-135 and 9-113 would limit a county board's authority in approving courses. We oppose any efforts to restrict the Board's authority and governance over charter and contract schools. In addition, we have concerns that by allowing charter and contract schools to determine what would qualify as a technology education high school graduation requirement because it takes the Board out of the decision-making process. As such, a charter school and contract school under the Board's authority would be allowed to have different courses than those identified by a local school system.

The Board also opposes the requirement in SB949 that county boards of education pay for all CTE and apprenticeship exams if we already pay for AP, PSAT or SAT exams for students. While well-intended, this particular requirement creates an unfunded mandate that would have significant fiscal implications for school systems. This requirement would be extremely costly, particularly with the new 45% by 2025 CTE requirement. The Board is not opposed to the merits of these exams, however, we believe that local school systems should retain the right to select exams for school system payment.

The Board of Education of Anne Arundel County also has concerns with the bill's mandate on the administration of software used by school systems to administer postsecondary information processing and counseling by mandating the equivalency of the pursuit of a vocational certificate, industry certification, or apprenticeship program with the pursuit of postsecondary education. We support a county board's decision-making authority in determining how to structure and administer career counseling programs for high school students.

Accordingly, the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County respectfully requests an **UNFAVORABLE** committee report on SB949, as drafted.