



SB267 AP OPPORTUNITIES ACT OF 2020

February 4, 2020

EDUCATION, HEALTH, AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS

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Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) supports **SB267 AP OPPORTUNITIES ACT OF 2020** with a couple of amendments. This Administration bill requires, to the extent funding is provided in the State budget, the State Board of Education to provide Advanced Placement (AP) examination fee assistance for specified students with financial need beginning in the 2020-2021 school year.

AACPS greatly appreciates this bill's proposal to establish a State funding source for the reimbursement of local school system costs of providing financial assistance to students taking critically important assessments. The availability of these funds will help AACPS' single most important strategic goal – to accelerate the academic learning and engagement of all students while eliminating all achievement, experience, and opportunity gaps. This funding will be particularly beneficial in increasing underrepresented student groups and minority student participation in challenging academic programs. We support State and local sharing or State assumption of the significant examination fees for students, particularly for those who are financially disadvantaged as such fees present a disincentive to enrollment and participation in advanced studies programs. Currently, AACPS covers the cost for students in the 11th Grade to take the SAT because we firmly believe that such increased access to these opportunities will help to elevate all students, decrease the achievement gap, and open more opportunities for postsecondary and career education for more of our students. The proposed legislation will allow AACPS to provide even more opportunities for all our students.

AACPS requests that the bill be amended to define the term “assistance” to clarify that the Advanced Placement exam fees will be fully paid for eligible students under the bill.

In addition, AACPS requests that the bill amended to remove the term “Head Start” in line 21 on page 1. Including this term is confusing because a student in Head Start would not be eligible to take an Advanced Placement test.

Accordingly, AACPS respectfully requests a **FAVORABLE with amendments** committee report on SB267.