



**HB1557 PUBLIC SCHOOLS - HEALTH SERVICES - COUNTY BOARDS OF EDUCATION AND
HEALTH DEPARTMENTS**

March 4, 2020

WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

OPPOSE

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Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) opposes **HB1557 Public Schools - Health Services - County Boards of Education and Health Departments**. This bill gives local health departments primary responsibility for providing adequate health services in public schools, authorizes local health departments or the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) to designate responsibility for providing health services to local school boards under specified circumstances, and makes conforming changes. The bill also creates a health specialist position in both the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and MDH to ensure that public schools provide quality and effective school health services.

This legislation infringes on local school system decision-making. Current law requires a local school system, with the assistance of a local health department, provide adequate health services, instruction in health education, and a healthful school environment. MSDE and MDH must develop public standards and guidelines for school health programs and offer assistance to local school boards and local health departments in their implementation. Each local school system must designate a school health services program coordinator but may authorize the local health department to designate a coordinator.

AACPS does not believe that local health departments are the appropriate venue to manage the delivery of school health services without school system oversight and management. AACPS has a very collaborative relationship with the Anne Arundel County Department of Health to provide health services in all of our schools. The distinction is that AACPS provides the oversight and management of this collaboration through our Division of Student Support Services. Maintaining the current relationship structure as the local school system is best equipped to ensure that all State and federal education laws are being followed in the provision of services, including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act which governs student health room records.

Accordingly, AACPS respectfully requests an **UNFAVORABLE** committee report on HB1557.