

## **The Future is Here:**

### **Key Actions and Reporting Requirements in the Blueprint for Maryland's Future**

Joel D. Miller, University of Maryland  
Pamela Catherine Callahan, University of Maryland  
Dr. Lawrence Clark, University of Maryland

#### **Introduction**

Maryland's State Legislature took steps towards major educational policy change in public schooling between 2019 and 2021 by passing [Senate Bill 1030](#) (S.B. 1030), [HouseBill 1300](#) (H.B. 1300), and by overriding a gubernatorial veto that would have ended their legislative ascent. Collectively, the bills outline the "Blueprint for Maryland's Future" (Blueprint), and were inspired and informed by the Commission on Excellence & Innovation in Education, led by former Chancellor of the University System of Maryland, Dr. William E. Kirwan. Colloquially known as the "Kirwan Commission," the group was assembled by the state legislature in 2016 and engaged in research, conversation, and [reporting](#) in order to lay a path towards more equitable funding of public education, increased rigor in teacher preparation, increased attentiveness towards diverse student needs, and for fostering a more diverse teaching workforce. To the Kirwan Commission, realizing these collective aims would "enable Maryland's preK-12 system to perform at the level of the best-performing systems in the world" (Interim Report, 2019, p. *iii*).

This brief is designed as an accessible overview of the reporting requirements spread across various state and local agencies in implementing the Blueprint's goals, particularly in the near term. We<sup>1</sup> summarize expected activity across a range of stakeholders, with a particular focus on what the Blueprint requires of local school districts in the state. The requirements are sweeping, addressing, among other topics, a new accountability reporting agency, teacher career ladders, new standards for teacher preparation, and general concerns of teacher knowledge and practice addressed in the law. The following charts outline key reporting requirements for the state's school districts, as well as important deadlines that the districts must follow over the next five years. We understand this brief to reflect the interests of a broad base of concerned stakeholders in Maryland's public school districts. This brief recognizes that districts are ultimately accountable for the priorities articulated in the legislation. We therefore hope to elevate the Blueprint's key deadlines and reporting structures. We also recognize that this brief cannot capture the full scope of the district-level work required to make the legislative priorities a reality.

---

<sup>1</sup>This analysis is a product of [The Maryland PDS 2025 Project](#), a collaborative effort precipitated by S.B. 1030 between Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS), Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS), Montgomery County Education Association (MCEA), and Prince George's County Education Association (PGCEA).

### Key to Acronyms and Agency Abbreviations

Acronym	Definition	Acronym	Definition	Acronym	Definition
<b>A&amp;I</b>	Accountability & Implementation Board	<b>LEA</b>	Local Education Agency	<b>MSDE</b>	Maryland State Department of Education
<b>CCR</b>	College and Career Readiness	<b>MACC</b>	Maryland Association of Community Colleges	<b>NBC</b>	National Board Certification
<b>CTE</b>	Career and Technology Education Committee	<b>MHEC</b>	Maryland Higher Education Commission	<b>OLA</b>	Office of Legislative Audits
<b>GovWkf</b>	Governor's Workforce Committee	<b>MdGov</b>	The Governor of the State of Maryland	<b>OPGA</b>	Office of Program Evaluation & Government Accountability
<b>IHEs</b>	Institutions of Higher Education	<b>MGA</b>	Maryland General Assembly	<b>SBoE</b>	State Board of Education

### Reporting Responsibilities by Agency

Agency	Policies/Reporting Topic	Report to...	Citation	Brief Description	Due date listed in legislation**
State Board of Education (SBoE)	Produce annual reports on progress towards the Blueprint	MdGov MGA	HB1300, p. 94	The State Board must report annually on the following vis-a-vis the Blueprint for Maryland's Future: "(I) Progress made on the implementation of the Blueprint (ii) recommended legislative changes, including any changes necessary to ensure that the implementations have adequate resources and measurements; (iii) the degree to which state and local agencies, as applicable, are carrying out their assigned roles in implementing the Blueprint for Maryland's Future; and (iv) whether the funds provided by the state and local governments are consistent with the board's estimate of what is necessary to fully implement" (p. 94-95).	Annually beginning November 1, 2021, and concluding November 1, 2030.
	Adopt teacher preparation regulations	A&I	HB1300, p. 111	In coordination with the Professional Standards and Teacher Education Board, the State Board will adopt regulations to implement the provisions of teacher preparation enumerated in the Blueprint for Maryland's Future.	Not specified
	Evaluate progress towards more rigorous teacher preparation	MLDS MdGov MGA	HB1300, p. 106	Perform evaluation to measure diversity in teacher preparation programs across the state, specifically measuring: "(1) enrollment in teacher preparation programs; (2) teacher candidates who successfully graduate	Begin evaluation by July 1, and submit results by

	programs and diversity of teacher candidates			from teacher preparation programs and subsequently enter the teaching profession; and (3) teachers and school leaders in primary and secondary schools in the state” (p. 106).	December 30, 2026.
	Implement new standards for school administrators	n/a	HB1300, p. 135	Becoming a licensed principal will require National Board Certification.	July 1, 2029
	Create and deliver CCR standards	A&I MHEC GovWkf MACC	HB1300, p. 167	The SBoE will coordinate with multiple agencies to construct and deliver College and Career Readiness high school standards to the school districts. By July 2021,* the Board shall contract a private entity to evaluate the standards “empirically” to determine if the standards adequately prepare students to be college and/or career ready by 10th grade.	January 1, 2021*
	Revise COMAR re: Coordinated Community Supports Consortium	n/a	HB1300, p. 233	The SBoE shall review and revise COMAR 13A.08.01.11 as necessary after considering the recommendations created in coordination with the Maryland Consortium on Coordinated Community Supports.	July 1, 2022
<b>MSDE</b>	Produce annual reports on statewide 9th grade progress to graduation	A&I MLDS	HB1300, p. 167	MSDE shall submit annual reports on 9th graders’ progression towards graduation, as informed by district-level reports.	Begin 2021-2022 school year and annually thereafter
	Submit study on the Per Pupil Grant Program	A&I	HB1300, p. 45.	MSDE “shall submit a report to” the A&I “on incorporating neighborhood indicators of poverty to determine a school’s eligibility for the compensatory education program and the concentration of poverty grant” (p. 45), using “the American Community Survey” and “Poverty Estimates Program” as well as “the Area Deprivation Index developed by the University of Wisconsin – Madison to rank neighborhoods by socioeconomic status disadvantage” (p. 45-6).	October 1, 2021
	Deploy first round of Expert Review Teams	A&I	HB1300, p. 100	“Beginning on July 1, 2023, the department shall send expert review teams to at least 10% of public schools in at least three different local school systems each year” (p. 100).	July 1, 2023
	Submit annual report on teacher preparation and new teachers	StateBd MdGov MGA	HB1300, p. 103	MSDE, collaborating with the MLDS Center and Maryland Higher Education Commission, will submit annual reports on the progress towards the Blueprint goals, particularly with regards to the “preparation and diversity of teacher candidates and new teachers” (p. 103).	Beginning July 1, 2021 and annually thereafter.
	Raise teacher salary floor	n/a	HB1300, p. 144	The floor for teacher salaries (minimum salary) must be \$60,000.	July 1, 2026

	Design Professional Development (PD) for Career Ladder	n/a	HB1300, p. 147	MSDE will design and share Career Ladder PD with school districts that includes “training on how to lead and mentor teams of professionals to promote professional learning among colleagues; (ii) training on how to collaborate with colleagues to improve student performance; (iii) training on how to design and support collaborative professional learning for teachers pursuing an NBC (iv) a train–the–trainer model; and (v) advanced training on the science of learning specific to individual disciplines” (p. 147).	July 1, 2023
	Implement financial management and data tracking system	A&I	HB1300, p. 61	Implement a financial management system and student data system capable of tracking and analyzing miscellaneous funding requirements listed under Part VI of HB1300.	July 1, 2022
<b>IHEs</b>	State agencies monitor the measures taken by IHEs to address diversity of teacher candidates and rigor of teacher preparation programs	MLDS MSDE MHEC	HB1300, p. 103-6	State agencies report data trends in: candidates accepted into teacher preparation programs at IHEs in the state, “disaggregated by gender, racial, and ethnic background” (p. 104), teacher quality, undergraduate majors in field of study, in-state versus out-of-state training in new public school hiring, satisfaction of district leaders with new hires, and success on required assessments on first attempts.  State agencies will also report on measures taken by IHEs to: “increase the proportion of highly qualified individuals from groups historically underrepresented in the teaching profession” (p. 104), increase the rigor of teacher preparation coursework, alignment between IHE coursework and state curricular requirements, improve teacher skill in research and research techniques, more rigorous “licensing standards” (p. 105), and to incentivize high quality high school graduates to enter the profession.	Annually beginning July 1, 2021, with final report completed by December 30, 2026.
	Implement new teacher preparation standards	MSDE	HB1300, p. 108	Undergraduate and graduate teacher preparation programs must feature an internship experience for prospective teachers that is “equivalent to one full school year.” IHEs “shall” “prioritize selecting partner schools in the same community as the” IHE (p. 109). Additionally, graduation shall require passing a “nationally recognized, portfolio–based assessment of teaching ability” (p. 112).	July 1, 2025
<b>Local Education Agency (LEA)/ School District</b>	Employ relevant positions in schools eligible for Concentration of Poverty Grants	n/a	SB1030, p. 11-12	State will provide funds to Districts and individual Schools that are eligible for Concentration of Poverty Grants to ensure that each Community School employs a Community Schools Coordinator and a Health Care Practitioner.	2020 and 2021
	Performance Evaluation	OPGA or OLA	SB1030, p. 21-2.	Evaluation of compliance with laws and regulations, specifically “an analysis of grading standards, graduation requirements, assessments,	n/a

			procurement, and equitable use of resources among the schools within the system evaluated.”	
Submit annual compliance reports	A&I	HB1300, p. 60-1	LEAs will submit annual compliance reports about distribution of funds to individual schools to support “Miscellaneous” programs described under Section VI of the bill.	July 1, 2023 (and each July 1 thereafter)
Create implementation plans for the Blueprint	A&I	HB1300, p. 83	LEAs will bear responsibility for implementing elements of the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future as outlined by the A&I Board and must submit an implementation plan to that body.  Furthermore, in each year from 2021 through 2025, “the governing body of a county <i>and</i> the local school system <i>jointly</i> shall appoint a single implementation coordinator responsible for the implementation of the blueprint for Maryland’s future” (p. 87). These plans must be consistent with the comprehensive implementation plan developed by the A&I Board.	June 15, 2021*
Implement a Teacher Career Ladder	A&I MSDE	HB1300, p. 123	Districts must implement the specifics enumerated in Subsection 10 of HB1300. Much of these will be carried out by a Local Career Ladder Development Board, which should be composed of “advanced teachers and stakeholders” (p. 134).	July 1, 2023 for ladder, with more specific requirements in subsequent years (p. 126).
Create local National Board Coordinator role	MSDE	HB1300, p. 141	Selected by the district superintendent, this coordinator works with the state National Board Coordinator to encourage teachers to pursue NBC and to facilitate support networks for developing NBC teachers.	n/a
Report increases in teacher pay	A&I	HB1300, p. 144	Districts must report base salary increases as well as pay increases associated with the Teacher Career Ladder to the A&I Board.	July 1, 2024
Implement MSDE-designed Career Ladder PD	MSDE	HB1300, p. 148	All teachers must receive PD from school districts on the Career Ladder as designed by MSDE. Subsequently, new teachers must receive that PD within one year of being hired.	June 30, 2025
Submit MOU to A&I re: early childhood education	A&I	HB1300, p. 161	“Each county board shall enter into a memorandum of understanding with the department, each eligible private provider participating in publicly funded prekindergarten in the county, and other applicable government agencies” (p. 161).	n/a
Implement 9th grade tracker system	MSDE A&I MLDS	HB1300, p. 166	Each district will “implement a 9th grade tracker system to measure each student’s progress toward graduating on time, including credit accumulation and the number of semester core course failures during the	Begin 2021-2022 school year

				first year of high school for students completing the 9th grade year” and report data annually to the A&I Board and the MLDS (p. 166).	
	Provide access to CCR pathways, free of charge	n/a	HB1300, p. 172	For students who’ve accomplished the adopted CCR standards, school boards must provide the following “post-CCR pathways” to students and families, free of charge: a) a competitive entry college preparatory program, chosen by the county board (e.g. AP, IB, etc.); b) a program that allows a student, through an early college program or dual enrollment at a student’s high school and an institution of higher education; or c) a robust set of career and technology education programs that are recommended by the cte skills standards advisory committee and approved by the cte committee.	By the 2023-2024 school year
	Appoint Behavioral Health Services Coordinator	A&I	HB1300, p. 177, 231	Develop a plan to enhance district-level behavioral health services and submit to the A&I Board.	November 1, 2021
	Align career and technology education programs with CTE standards	CTE	HB1300, p. 214.	“The adoption of programs relating to, and the provision of, career and technical education by county boards, the state board, and community colleges shall be consistent with the system implemented by the CTE committee” (p. 214).	Begin FY 2024
<b>CTE</b>	Create a CTE Expert Review Team	A&I	HB1300, p. 103	The CTE Committee shall assemble an expert review team as well as processes and procedures for the teams to visit schools and make recommendations.	n/a
	Create CTE Goals	n/a	HB1300, p. 215	On or before december 1, 2021, the cte committee shall establish, for each year for 2022 through 2030, inclusive, statewide goals that reach 45% by the 2029–2030 school year, for the percentage of high school students who, prior to graduation, complete the high school level of a registered apprenticeship or an industry–recognized occupational credential	Achieved by 2029-2030 school year
	Submit annual reports	A&I MGA	HB1300, p. 221	Submit annual reports to the Maryland General Assembly and the A&I board as to progress in school and district achievement of CTE goals.	Annually beginning July 1, 2021.*
<b>A&amp;I Board</b>	Create a Comprehensive Implementation Plan	n/a	HB1300, p. 83	The Board shall submit a comprehensive implementation plan and timeline of implementing facets of the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future, featuring specific milestones to be achieved by specified agencies, including LEAs.	February 15, 2021*
	Independent Evaluation Report	MdGov	HB1300, p. 96	Report progress towards implementing elements of the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future to the Governor. A&I should contract an external group	October 1, 2024 And

				to conduct and complete the report. A&I must then determine what is/isn't working and what steps must be taken to change.	October 1, 2030
	Deploy Expert Review Teams to all schools	n/a	HB1300, p. 99	Create and deploy ERTs to individual schools, first based on low test scores, then by school and district request, and finally to visit all schools in the state by 2030.	By the end of 2030-2031 school year.

\* Indicates that the date has passed.

\*\* We identified dates in the current draft of legislative documents, found by following links embedded in the Introduction.

**Partial [Timeline](#) of Reporting Requirements (2021-2025)**

Year	2021		2022		2023		2024		2025	
	Agency	Requirement	Agency	Requirement	Agency	Requirement	Agency	Requirement	Agency	Requirement
<b>Annual Requirements</b>	MSDE	Submit statewide report on 9th grade progress to graduation	MSDE	Submit statewide report on 9th grade progress to graduation	MSDE	Submit statewide report on 9th grade progress to graduation	MSDE	Submit statewide report on 9th grade progress to graduation	MSDE	Submit statewide report on 9th grade progress to graduation
		Submit Annual Report on teacher preparation and new teachers		Submit Annual Report on teacher preparation and new teachers		Submit Annual Report on teacher preparation and new teachers		Submit Annual Report on teacher preparation and new teachers		Submit Annual Report on teacher preparation and new teachers
	CTE	Submit Annual Report	CTE	Submit Annual Report	CTE	Submit Annual Report	CTE	Submit Annual Report	CTE	Submit Annual Report
	A&I	Submit Annual Report	A&I	Submit Annual Report	A&I	Submit Annual Report	A&I	Submit Annual Report	A&I	Submit Annual Report
	State Board	Submit Annual Report	State Board	Submit Annual Report	State Board	Submit Annual Report	State Board	Submit Annual Report	State Board	Submit Annual Report
					LEA	Submit Compliance Report	LEA	Submit Compliance Report	LEA	Submit Compliance Report





## Considerations

In light of the Blueprint's legislative aims and of our purposes in reviewing and presenting them in the preceding charts, we offer several considerations for the communities of stakeholders impacted by this legislation. We focus specifically on reporting requirements as well as on the timeframe in which the reporting is, at the time of our analysis, required to take place in order to provide an accessible guide for the many stakeholders who will have some responsibility for realizing the Blueprint's goals in schools and systems across the state.

### Reporting

Much of the responsibility for implementing Blueprint policy falls to local school districts. According to the bills, the state's local education agencies (LEAs) must follow the state's regulatory guidance for the Blueprint, but they are also tasked with developing and implementing change on the ground level. The requirements for implementing a teacher career ladder are illustrative of this condition. For example, in the most recent draft of H.B. 1300, school districts are to have created implementation plans for a career ladder as of Summer 2021. Additionally, school districts are meant to implement those plans by July 1, 2023. Furthermore, between 2021 and 2023, LEAs must, among other tasks, create a career ladder "development board" (p. 134), "set standards" for teacher and administrator career tracks on the ladder (p. 134), ensure that interested teachers and administrators have access to relevant induction programs to prepare them for higher rungs on the ladder, and perhaps hire more employees in order to align with time in classroom requirements set by the state for the higher career ladder positions. This list is not exhaustive of the work required to implement the career ladder, but it is indicative of the work required of LEAs to implement a key element of the Blueprint.

Much of the reporting is to be delivered to the newly developed [Accountability and Implementation Board](#) (A&I Board). According to the legislation, the A&I Board will create a comprehensive implementation plan for elements of the Blueprint and has oversight authority regarding LEA implementation plans for elements of the Blueprint. One mechanism for keeping schools and school districts accountable is in the creation of "Expert Review Teams," which can and will be deployed by the A&I Board to schools in order to address issues such as student progress towards graduation and to make recommendations for improvement. Essentially, the A&I Board is the entity responsible for holding districts, and MSDE, accountable to the new public school laws. It is therefore reasonable for school district administrators to follow the work of this new unit.

As is frequently challenging when translating legislation into policy, our analysis illuminated some issues of clarity in the legislation. Specifically, we identified a number of instances in the legislation where the use of the terms *board* and *department* did not offer a clear reporting structure. As the House and Senate bills move through the reconciliation process, we expect that the final version will offer additional clarity, but suggest interested stakeholders identify any unclear areas pertinent to their reporting responsibilities and closely follow the development of the final language and supplementary regulation.

Opaque legislative language *could* lead to consternation, but it could also signal unique opportunities for collaboration. For example, we find additional lack of clarity in the legislative definitions of “Teacher Leaders” (H.B. 1300, p. 128). It is clear that National Board Certification (NBC) is critical for those interested in higher rungs of the career ladder. However, the legislation also calls for Teacher Leaders to have “sufficient research expertise” and notes that they will utilize that expertise to lead teams of teachers in research in curriculum and/or practice (H.B. 1300, p. 129). Is this expertise developed during NBC training? Might it be taught in professional development experiences, led in partnership with IHEs? These sorts of questions might prompt unique opportunities for school districts and IHEs to collaborate on defining and developing a path toward the expertise called for in the legislation, as well as developing ways for teacher expertise to address any problems identified by accountability bodies like the A&I Board. Given the interconnected nature of this legislation, if there are gaps in clarity, we worry that progress will be stymied if clarity is not ensured in the final version.

### **Timeline**

Not only are local school districts responsible for implementing and, in many cases, developing the specifics of state policy, but they are also on the clock to develop these policies soon, as many of the implementation deadlines are either fast approaching or have already passed. Returning to the career ladder example, the legislation calls for LEAs to understand, design, and implement a career ladder by summer 2023. At the time of this analysis, the house and senate bills have yet to be reconciled, the state-level regulations have not been finalized, so the dates on this timeline are subject to change. This note should not, however, be taken to mean that the dates *will* change. As a result, school district administrators might consider the implications of these policy changes for their system. Furthermore, there are some dates that carry the reach of the legislation over the next decade. Implementation plans must therefore take into account near and long term deadlines.

### **Other Critical Components and Considerations for District Teams**

Changes to funding and complexities between idea and implementation also characterize the Blueprint legislation. The changes to the state school financing are significant and wide reaching, but beyond the scope of review for this brief. However, there are other significant elements of the legislation. Included among the other major components are making pre-kindergarten more accessible and equitable, expanding community school services, and making education spending more equitable state-wide. These and other components reflect additional, significant shifts in public schooling in Maryland, only some of which is reflected in the chart and timeline in this brief.

We also suggest that district leaders spend time thinking about the reporting requirements. As currently written, the legislation offers a district a number of dates and deliverables, but such reporting requirements do not offer a roadmap to the work required from individuals and teams at the district level. In some districts, it may be the case that the reporting requirements may require districts to hire new team members or rearrange workflows in order to meet the deadlines listed in the legislation. The comprehensive implementation plans created by the A&I Board should provide

clearer guidance. Given the current context, however, we recognize that district teams are navigating a number of challenges as they chart the best path forward for students and teachers during the Covid-19 pandemic. Thus, it is our hope that this brief will help interested stakeholders and district leaders to identify how, when, and through which processes the reporting requirements will be completed.

## **Conclusions**

The Blueprint for Maryland's Future signals an important legislative step towards ensuring that all students in Maryland have access to a high quality public education. A key component of the Blueprint is the accountability structure presented in the House and Senate bills. In the chart above, we have attempted to showcase the ways various stakeholders will work collaboratively to collect data, author reports, share information, draft initiatives, and evaluate programs in service of state-wide initiatives to increase the quality of teaching and learning in the public school systems of Maryland. For school districts, the time is now to begin planning their next steps in fulfilling the lofty aims of the legislation. It is our hope that this policy brief will support district-level stakeholders as they unpack the legislation to determine their reporting responsibilities as well as expectations set forth in the legislation for collaboration.