

TO: Members of the State Board of Education

FROM: Carey M. Wright, Ed.D., State Superintendent of Schools 

DATE: December 3, 2024

SUBJECT: Summary of Community School Policies, Implementation, and Highlights

Purpose

The purpose of this memo is to provide a comprehensive overview of community school policies, implementation of the community school strategy, and recent highlights.

Background

Community schools in Maryland address the needs of students and families by integrating academics, health and social services, and community engagement. These schools are provided with additional resources through the Concentration of Poverty Grant, which consists of a personnel grant and a per-pupil allocation. Twenty-three of Maryland's 24 local education agencies (LEAs) are implementing the community school strategy. The strategy includes employing coordinators, conducting assets and needs assessments, developing implementation plans, and aligning services to support student success. Baltimore City Public Schools will share highlights of their progress and initiatives to illustrate the impact of community schools within their district.

Executive Summary

1. An Overview of Community Schools in Maryland
2. Key Characteristics of Community Schools
3. Concentration of Poverty Grants
4. Highlights from Baltimore City Public Schools

Action

No action is required; this information is for discussion only.

Attachments

Empowering Communities: Inside Maryland's Community School Initiative

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Office of Community Schools

Division of Student Support and Federal
Programs

December 2024

PRESENTED BY

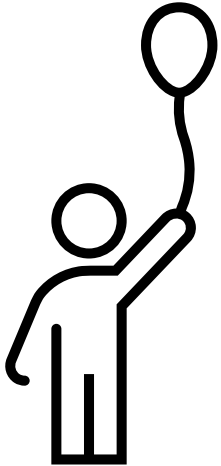
Mary Gable, Assistant State Superintendent

Derek Anderson, Executive Director, Community Schools

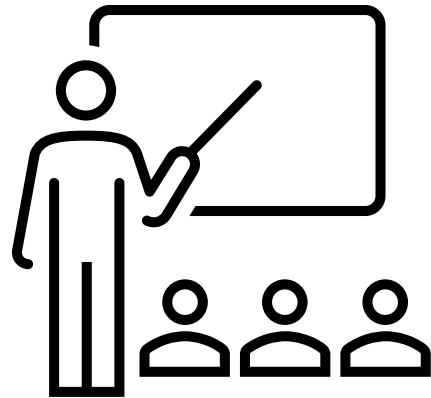
Donna Gunning, Assistant State Superintendent

Dr. Sonja Brookins Santelises, CEO of Baltimore City Public Schools

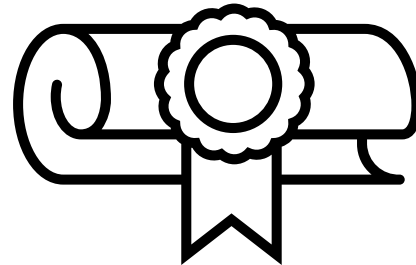
Pillars of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future



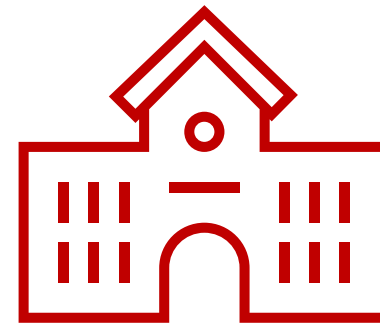
Early Childhood Education



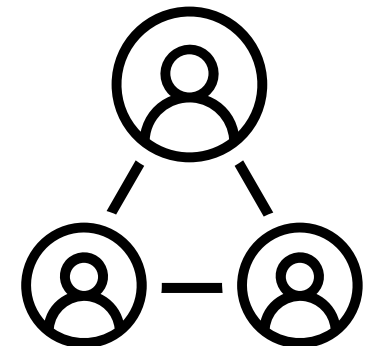
High-Quality & Diverse Teachers & Leaders



College & Career Readiness



More Resources for Student Success

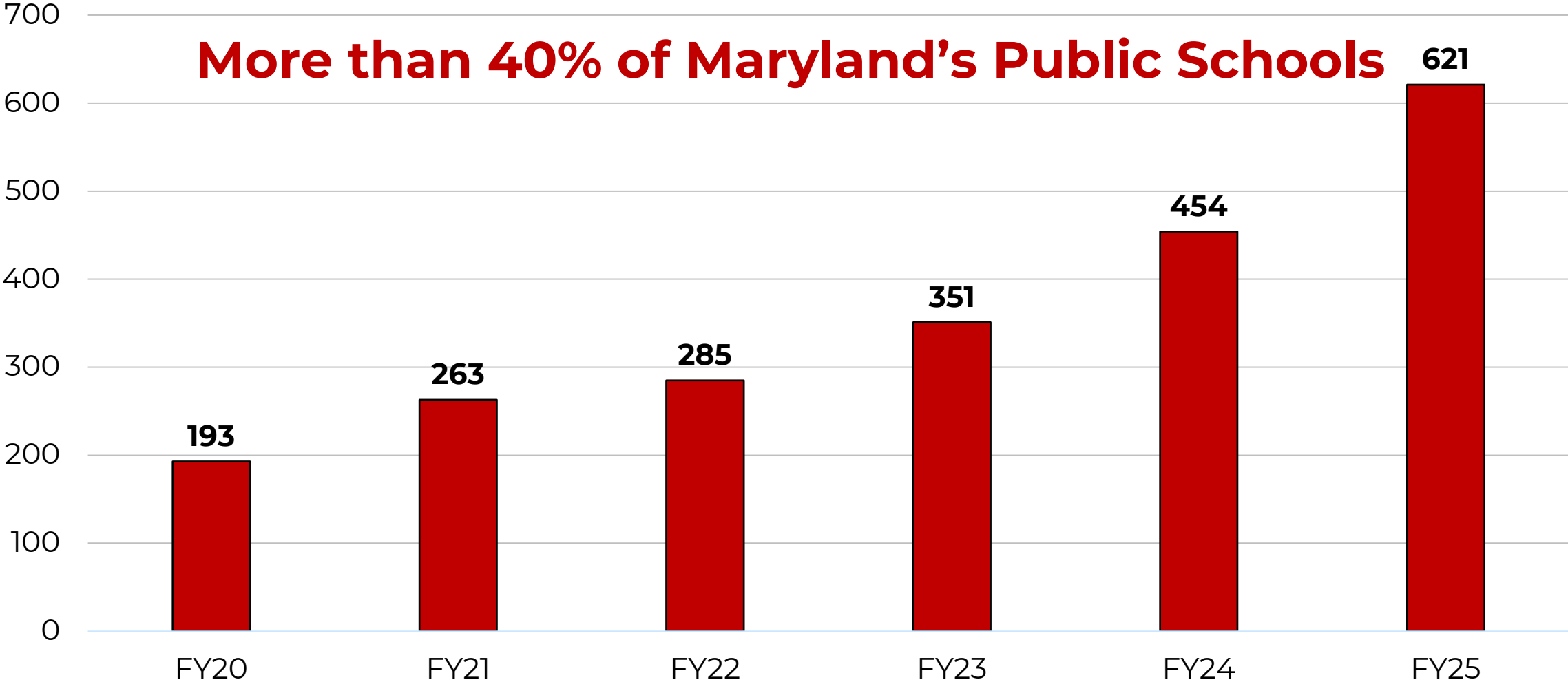


Governance & Accountability

New Community Schools Added each Academic Year

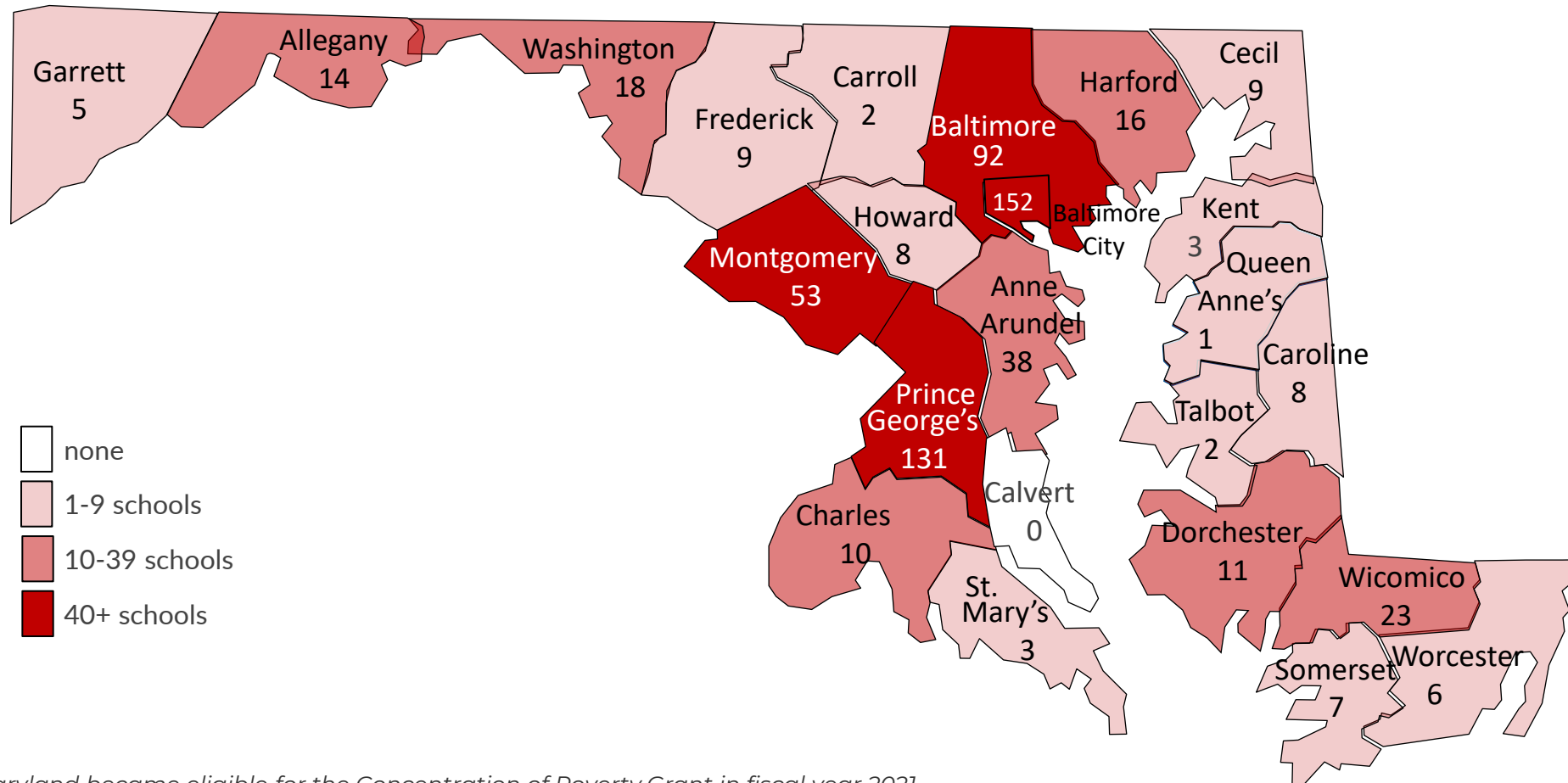
Academic Year	New Community Schools
2019 - 2020	193
2020 - 2021	70
2021 - 2022	22
2022 - 2023	66
2023 - 2024	103
2024 - 2025	167

Community Schools in Maryland



Number of Community Schools by Local Education Agency

In FY 2025, **621** community schools across **23** Local Education Agencies (LEAs) received Concentration of Poverty Grants. Maryland has 24 LEAs and the SEED School.



*The SEED School of Maryland became eligible for the Concentration of Poverty Grant in fiscal year 2021.

Key Characteristics of Community Schools in Maryland

- **Strategic partnerships** with community resources for shared accountability and collaborative leadership.
- **Authentic engagement** with families and the community to build capacity.
- **Student-centered approach** promoting inclusive achievement and positive learning environments.
- **Focus on well-being** of students, families, educators, and the community.
- **Provision of wraparound services** and engaging practices to support holistic development.



Office of Community Schools Partnerships

The following partners have made significant contributions to implementation efforts over the past 12 months:

- The National Center for Community Schools
- The Institute for Educational Leadership
- Education First
- The Maryland Center for Community Schools at Towson University
- Maryland State Education Association and National Education Association

Professional Learning and Technical Assistance

Since the start of the 2024 – 2025 school year, the Office of Community Schools has facilitated numerous engagements for more than 1300 participants aimed at supporting community school leaders, which include:

- In-person level-setting engagements for new community school coordinators
- Developing and introducing an updated assets and needs assessment tool for community schools
- Implementation plan webinars for community schools developing goals during year two of eligibility
- Spending guidance virtual webinars for community school leaders
- Monthly virtual convenings for community school coordinators to network and share best practices

Community School Requirements

- **Year One** - Completion and Submission of an Assets and Needs Assessment and Publicly Available Summary of Findings
- **Year Two** - Completion and Submission of an Implementation Plan
- **Year Three** - Enaction of Three-Year Implementation Plan
- **Annually** - Community School Evaluation Reports – required annually
- Revisit the Assets and Needs Assessment and Implementation Plan at least **every three years**.
- Local education agencies with at least **40 Community Schools** may utilize up to 50% of allocated funds to support the eligible schools within the district.

Two Types of Grants

Local education agencies and schools do not need to apply for these grants as they are awarded each fiscal year based on FARMs eligibility.

Personnel Grant

Provided during year 1 of eligibility, Personnel Grants are utilized to hire a **community school coordinator** and a **full-time healthcare provider** (includes school hours and extended learning time). Once these positions are filled, the remaining funds may be used for wraparound services, completing the needs assessment, or to fulfill requirements under COMAR 13A.04.16.01.

Per-Pupil Grant

After the first year of eligibility, the Per-Pupil Grants are calculated using a weighted student formula. These funds are specifically earmarked to provide **wraparound services** supporting students' holistic development. Grant funds may also be used to fulfill requirements under COMAR 13A.04.16.01.

Eligibility Thresholds by Fiscal Year

Fiscal Year	Personnel Grant Eligibility	Per-Pupil Eligibility
2020	80%	-
2021	75%	-
2022	70%	80%
2023	65%	75%
2024	60%	70%
2025	55%	65%
2026	55%	60%
2027	55%	55%

*The concentration of poverty level is defined as the average percentage of eligible students over **three years** included in the school's enrollment (excluding Pre-K).*

Phased-In Per-Pupil Allocations

Concentration of Poverty Level * Eligible Students Enrolled

The Per-Pupil allocation increases with each year of eligibility.

Year of Eligibility	Per-Pupil Percentage
Year 1	16%
Year 2	32%
Year 3	37%
Year 4	55%
Year 5	66%
Year 6	75%
Year 7	100%

Phased-In Per-Pupil Allocations

A Sample School with a **70%** Concentration of Poverty Level and **350** Eligible Students Enrolled

Year of Eligibility	Per-Pupil Percentage	Total Per-Pupil Grant Funding
Year 1	16%	\$113,359.68
Year 2	32%	\$226,719.36
Year 3	37%	\$262,144.26
Year 4	55%	\$389,673.90
Year 5	66%	\$467,608.68
Year 6	75%	\$531,373.50
Year 7	100%	\$708,498.00

*Calculations are based on fiscal year 2022 statutes.

A Sample of Wraparound Services

The Blueprint for Maryland's Future Defines **13** Wraparound Services Including:

- **Extended Learning** - Programs that offer additional academic and enrichment opportunities outside of the regular school day or year, including after-school tutoring, summer learning, and STEM activities, to support student achievement and growth.
- **Providing Family and Community Engagement** - Initiatives that foster strong connections between families, schools, and the community through events, workshops, and resources aimed at empowering families to actively participate in their children's education.
- **Expanding Behavioral Health Services** - Increasing access to mental health resources and counseling within schools, ensuring students receive the support needed to address social, emotional, and behavioral challenges.

Community Schools in Action

Indian Head Elementary School, Charles County

Year 1

- During the course of the 2022 – 2023 school, the Community School Coordinator spearheaded the implementation of a comprehensive assets and needs assessment, engaging the entire school community to identify strengths, challenges, and opportunities for growth.
- **Specific Needs Identified:**
 - Address Food Insecurity within the Community
 - *Indian Head Elementary School exists within a USDA-certified Food Desert*
 - Provide Greater Access to Basic Healthcare
 - Enhance Family and Caregiver Engagement

Community Schools in Action

Indian Head Elementary School, Charles County

Year 2

- Building on the findings from the comprehensive assets and needs assessment, the Community School Coordinator led the collaborative effort to develop a strategic three-year implementation plan, prioritizing targeted actions to address identified needs and leverage community strengths.
- **Implementation Plan Goals:**
 - Establish an extended learning program, focusing on literacy and mathematics, that serves up to 100 students.
 - Facilitate diverse family engagement opportunities covering a wide range of topics, including literacy, mathematics, family fitness, and STEM, to foster meaningful connections and support holistic learning.
 - Enhance the school-based food pantry to accommodate up to 40 families each week.

Community Schools in Action

Indian Head Elementary School, Charles County

Year 3

- Indian Head Elementary School has a **thriving community school steering committee** that includes a Judy Center, family members, and the local Mayor.
- In partnership with the Title I team, Indian Head Elementary School has established a **"Dadvisory" Council** to create opportunities for mentorship, volunteering and supporting the school.
- The Indian Head Elementary School campus will be the site of Charles County's first **School-Based Health Center**.
- In partnership with the local Boys and Girls Club, **extended learning programming is provided for more than 200 of the students** at Indian Head Elementary School.
- Hired a part-time **Behavior Specialist** that provides direct additional support to students 2.5 days each week.

Community School Highlights from Baltimore City Public Schools

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Chief Executive Officer

Baltimore City Public Schools

Tina Hike-Hubbard

Chief of Communications, Engagement, and Enrollment

Baltimore City Public Schools