



**SB888 EDUCATION - AMERICAN STUDIES AND SOCIAL EQUITY STANDARDS ADVISORY BOARD -
ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND MODEL POLICY**

March 8, 2022

EDUCATION, HEALTH, AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

OPPOSE

Jeanette Ortiz, Esq., Legislative & Policy Counsel (410.703.5352)

Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) opposes **SB888 Education - American Studies and Social Equity Standards Advisory Board - Academic Standards and Model Policy**. This bill establishes the American Studies and Social Equity Standards Advisory Board. It requires that at least 80% of the Board's members reflect the geographic diversity of the State and have a background in advocacy for certain ethnic and social groups. The legislation also requires the Advisory Board to review academic standards for American studies and develop a model policy on ethnic and social equity in public schools. Finally, the bill requires each county board of education to implement a curriculum for American studies before the 2025-2026 school year.

AACPS supports local decision-making authority in developing curriculum and opposes efforts by the General Assembly to legislate curriculum, courses of instruction, assessments, or graduation requirements, firmly believing that this role belongs to local boards of education in conjunction with the State Board of Education. Accordingly, AACPS incorporates civics education throughout our curriculum – from elementary school to high school. Over the course of the last 5 years, each of these frameworks has been rewritten by committees of teachers, administrators, and other stakeholders in a process overseen by MSDE and approved by the Maryland State Board of Education. AACPS agrees that public school curriculum must be more inclusive, and staff continues to review and rewrite curriculum utilizing an educational equity lens to help ensure more inclusivity.

This legislation is overly prescriptive and gets ahead of the requirements set for in the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. Specifically, the Blueprint for Maryland's Future requires the Maryland State Department of Education to develop curriculum standards and resources for each subject at each grade level, that build on one another in logical sequence, in core subjects that may be used by local school systems and public school teachers. Accordingly, AACPS does support with amendments HB47 Public Schools – Expanded American History – Development of Content Standards and Implementation. AACPS appreciates that the legislation is aligned with the Blueprint and places the responsibility for the development of content standards for a more inclusive and comprehensive American history where it belongs – with the Maryland State Board of Education.

Accordingly, AACPS respectfully requests an **UNFAVORABLE** committee report on SB888.