



Maryland
Hospital Association

Senate Bill 661: Primary and Secondary Education – Community Schools – Established

*Letter of Information to the Senate Education, Health & Environmental Affairs Committee
March 6, 2019*

Bill Summary

SB 661 requires community schools to be established in Maryland; requires a community school to have a community school coordinator and a community school leadership team; requires the community school leadership team to conduct a certain assessment of needs and assets and to develop a certain implementation plan; requires the community school leadership team, in cooperation with the community school coordinator, to oversee the implementation of the plan; and authorizes local school systems to form a school-community partnership; etc.

MHA Position

Under Maryland's new Total Cost of Care agreement with the federal government, Maryland's hospitals are working to lower costs and improve population health. In addition to treating illness and injury, hospitals are reaching out beyond their four walls to keep people well and improve the health of the communities they serve. The result: hospitals are taking care of the whole person, empowering patients and families, coordinating care among different providers, and addressing social factors that influence people's health.

To achieve these goals, Maryland's hospitals are committed to addressing social determinants of health, including access to equitable and proper education.

That is why the state's hospitals recognize that the Kirwan Commission's work is critically important to Maryland and the health of all Marylanders.

For children to succeed in schools, they need to be healthy — both mentally and physically.

Legislators considering the commission's findings recognize the need for adequate education resources and have an opportunity to prioritize funding for initiatives that both foster better health and academic outcomes for students.

The Maryland Hospital Association believes in the importance of strong, effective community collaboration. These efforts are essential components of the Total Cost of Care Model, which emphasizes improving the lives of Marylanders by focusing on whole-person care and improving the lives of all Marylanders.

Establishing community schools is one way Maryland can ensure students have access to critically important health and social services.