

THE OFFICE OF GOVERNOR
WES MOORE

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE FOR CHILDREN

Neighborhood Indicators of Childhood Poverty

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Introduction

Enacted into law by the *Blueprint for Maryland's Future* in 2021, poverty-based funding is provided through two separate formulas: The Compensatory Education formula, which allocates a flat per-pupil amount to LEAs and schools based on student poverty counts, and the Concentration of Poverty Grant, which provides differentiated funding to schools based on their poverty rate. Together, these funding streams allow for additional investments in evidence-based services and supports to help offset the well-documented impact of poverty on student learning.

To determine the level of poverty-based funding LEAs and schools receive, Maryland relies on the count of students in each school that are eligible for Free & Reduced-Price Meals (FARMS) through the National School Lunch Program. FARMS eligibility is determined through one of two ways:

- *Free & Reduced-Price Lunch Applications*: Families provide information on household size and family income on the applications they submit for their children to participate in the National School Lunch Program.
- *Direct Certification*: Students are identified as eligible based on their families' participation in a range of public assistance programs. These programs include Temporary Cash Assistance in MD (TANF), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Foster Care/Homeless Program, and, since SY22-23, Medicaid.

Limitations of Existing FARMS Data

While the FARMS count remains one of the most common methodologies for measuring student poverty, there are several limitations that could impact Maryland's ability to accurately identify students who experience the circumstances of poverty.

The Accuracy of Free & Reduced-Price Lunch Applications

Across the state of Maryland, roughly one in five students counted through FARMS are eligible by way of household applications. Unlike Direct Certification, these lunch applications rely on self-reported information that may be inaccurate or out of date. Additionally, some families that would otherwise be eligible may not submit applications for a variety of reasons, including linguistic barriers or social stigma.

Community Eligibility Provision & Lunch Applications

In 2010, the Federal government rolled out the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP): a federal program that allows districts to provide free school meals to all students in schools with at least 40% Direct Certification with a cost-sharing provision. Therefore, CEP schools no longer require lunch applications. In addition, because CEP is used by only some districts, the FARMS count no longer results in a comparable count of students in poverty across districts. As a workaround

to this challenge, Maryland uses the FARMS rate from the year prior to CEP implementation to allocate poverty funding to CEP districts and schools. In some cases, this data is over a decade old and does not reflect major shifts in demographics or school closures that have occurred during that time. **Based on Education Article 5-222, CEP schools and districts currently relying on old FARMS rates will have to switch to Direct Certification rates beginning in FY27.** Direct Certification automatically captures students whose families participate in government assistance programs including Temporary Cash Assistance (TANF), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Foster Care / Homeless Program, and Medicaid. Both historic and present FARMS data as well as the alternative methodologies studied in this report indicate that Direct Certification alone does not capture the full picture of poverty in Maryland, as some low income families do not participate in these public benefit programs.

Context for this Study

In response to the challenges summarized above, the Maryland General Assembly called for the newly formed Governor's Office of Children (GOC) to submit a report on neighborhood indicators of poverty that "includes an analysis of different methods used to calculate indicators of poverty" for the purposes of determining Compensatory Education and Concentration of Poverty Grant allocations to LEAs and schools. The request explicitly directed the GOC to evaluate if and how the *American Community Survey*, collected annually by the U.S. Census Bureau, could be incorporated into the Blueprint funding formula as a supplement or alternative to the current FARMS rate.

In late 2024, The GOC partnered with Education Resource Strategies (ERS) to conduct the requested study.

Exploring and Assessing Alternative Poverty Count Methodologies

To address the known limitations of FARMS, ERS and GOC explored four methodologies for supplementing Direct Certification counts. Common to all of these methodologies was reliance on objective and consistently measured data sources that did not require collection of Free & Reduced-Price Lunch applications, or any other self-reported family information.

Below, is a summary of the four methodologies included in this study, as well as basic details about methodology.

The American Community Survey: Administered annually by the U.S. Census Bureau, the American Community Survey (ACS) collects data on 25 indicators from a stratified, random sample of 2.5% of households across the country. Data is available as 1-year and 5-year estimates, with the latter being available at the county, census tract, and census block group level.

For the purposes of this study, two methodologies were constructed using the ACS Composite Index:

1. *Composite Index*: Creates a composite score for each census block group in the state of Maryland based on 4 ACS indicators: Educational Attainment, Household Status, Income & Earnings, and Home Ownership. Based on this score, each census block group was assigned a percentile rank. A funding eligibility threshold was then set at the 20th percentile, meaning students living in the 20% lowest scoring census block groups would be eligible for poverty-based funding.
2. *Median Household Income*. Assigns a percentile rank to each census block based on ACS Median Household Income data. Funding eligibility was assigned to census block groups with Median Household Incomes at or below 140% of the poverty line.

The Area Deprivation Index: Developed by researchers at the University of Wisconsin, the Area Deprivation Index combines 17 indicators of socioeconomic status from the American Community Survey dataset into a single composite index. The index is intended to measure the level of socioeconomic disadvantage of neighborhoods across the county. The ADI is primarily used by researchers and healthcare providers.

For the purposes of this study, census block groups were assigned a percentile based on their ADI score and the funding eligibility threshold was set at the 10th percentile.

Direct Certification Multiplier: The Direct Certification Multiplier simply multiplies Direct Certification counts at schools by a fixed number to account for students living in poverty whose families do not participate in public assistance programs.

For the purposes of this study, the Direct Certification multiplier was set at 1.2, which means the Direct Certification count at every school in Maryland was increased by 20%, up to a maximum poverty rate of 100%

Choice Options A & B: In addition to the single-methodology scenarios described above, GOC & ERS modeled two scenarios that would allow LEAs to choose from multiple methodologies.

1. *Choice Option A*: Allows all districts to choose one poverty count methodology for all CEP schools and one methodology for all non-CEP schools that benefit them the most financially, with the options being the existing FARMS count (for non-CEP schools only), Direct Certification Multiplier, or ACS Composite Index.
2. *Choice Option B*: Allows districts to choose one poverty count methodology for CEP schools in their district, with the options being the Direct Certification Multiplier and ACS Composite Index. In this scenario, all other schools would use the existing FARMS rate.

Summary of Key Findings

To understand the benefits and trade-offs of each methodology, GOC and ERS assessed each methodology across four key considerations:

1. *Poverty Count*: How the count of students eligible for poverty-based funding compares to the current count statewide
2. *Data & Methodology*: Any limitations to data collection and methodology that might impact the effectiveness of each approach
3. *Disruption*: The extent to which adoption of each methodology would result in changed poverty counts and funding levels for individual LEAs and schools
4. *Total Cost*: The impact of each methodology on the total cost of poverty-based funding in the state of Maryland

It's critical to note that the methodologies and findings outlined in this report are based on **SY 24-25 enrollment counts and FY25 Blueprint formulas**. The analysis provides a clear **directional sense of the impact of each methodology** on school and district funding, but the exact figures within the report are not indicative of the impact of a given methodology on a school or district in SY26-27 / FY 2027.

Poverty Count

All methodologies tested resulted in lower student poverty counts statewide, ranging from a 2% to 21% reduction. The *ACS Median Household Income* methodology resulted in the lowest poverty count, only supplementing Direct Certification by nearly 11,000 students, and Choice Scenario A resulted in the highest poverty count, supplementing Direct Certification by nearly 92,000 students.

Data Limitations

While all methodologies tested came with certain data limitations or assumptions that would need to be explored further before implementation (e.g. the accuracy of a fixed multiplier for Direct Certification), the most notable pertained to the use of American Community Survey Data. First, some Census Block Groups were missing specific indicators included in the composite index, with the most common indicator missing being Median Household Income. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, "missing estimates can be caused by data suppression through various methods or restrictions that are applied to ACS data to limit the disclosure of information about individual respondents and the number of published estimates with unacceptable statistical reliability."

Second, data at the Census Block Group level is only available as a 5-year average. On the one hand, this allows for greater stability in student counts from one year to the next. On the other hand, the data may not fully reflect recent demographic trends in rapidly changing neighborhoods.

Disruption

All methodologies resulted in 59-81% of schools across the state experiencing a decrease in student poverty count. The *Area Deprivation Index* and *ACS Median Household Income* resulted in the most significant reductions for the most schools. Choice Options A and B resulted in the least significant changes in school poverty counts, with 61-67% of schools seeing less than a 10-percentage point change in funding eligible students.

Cost

All methodologies would decrease the total cost of poverty-based funding. The ACS Median Household Income would be the lowest cost option with an estimated cost reduction of ~\$853m, and Choice Option A would be the highest cost with an estimated cost reduction of ~\$118m.

To minimize significant fluctuations in funding or individual LEAs, Maryland could institute a “hold harmless” policy that caps per-pupil funding loss at specified levels. This policy would significantly reduce or eliminate any savings in the short-term, depending on how the policy was designed.

ERS



ERS Poverty Indicators Study

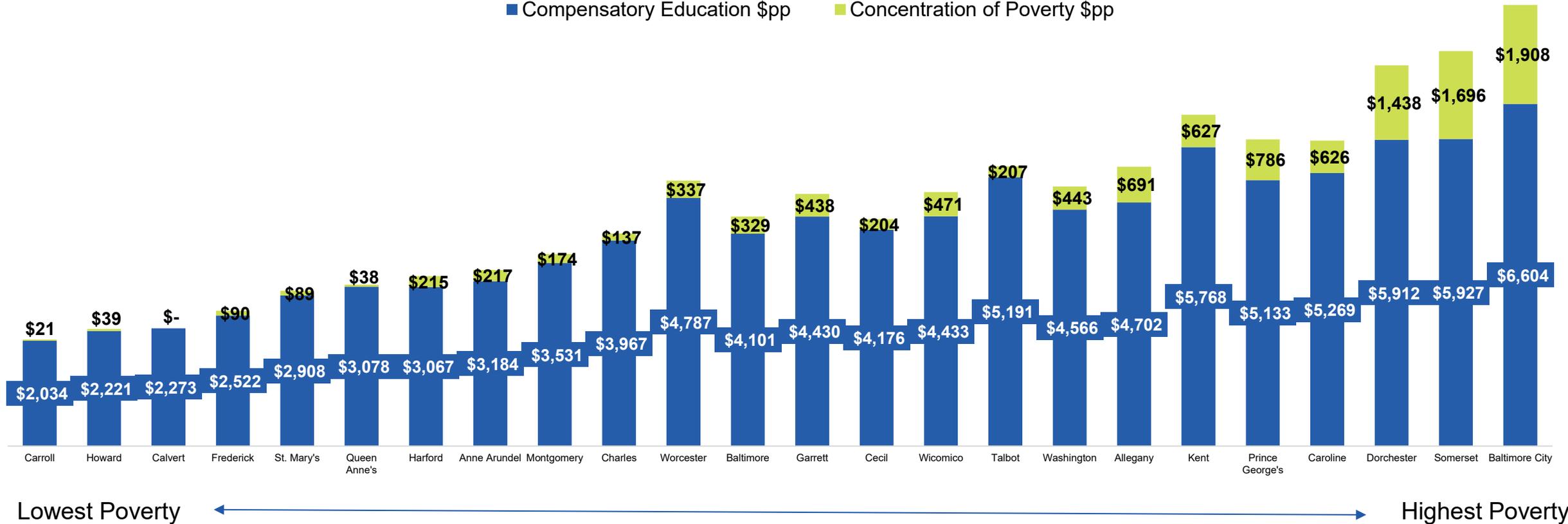
Summary of Findings

Context on Poverty- Based Funding

Each year, Maryland invests billions of dollars in poverty-based funding for LEAs across the state

Distribution of Funding, by District

■ Compensatory Education \$pp ■ Concentration of Poverty \$pp



Lowest Poverty

Highest Poverty

Poverty-based funding is allocated to LEAs and schools through two formulas

Compensatory Education
\$3.4B in FY25

Total Funding = # Students in Poverty x Comp Ed Per-Pupil Amount

Concentrations of Poverty Grant
\$378M in FY25

Personnel Grant = Fixed Amount per Eligible School

Per Pupil Grant = # Students in Poverty x Weighted CPG Per-Pupil Amount
(weight is based on the level of concentrated poverty at each school)

To allocate poverty-based funding, Maryland relies on data from the National School Lunch Program (FARMS) to count eligible students

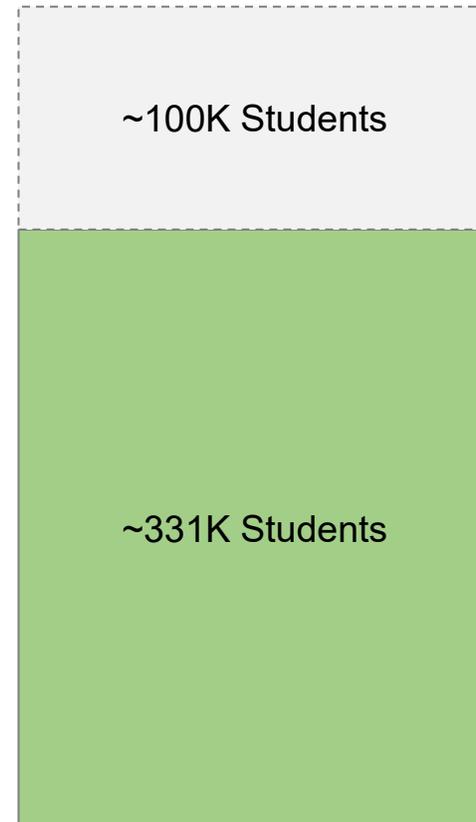
About the FARMS Rate

The FARMS rate measures students whose family income is below 130% of the poverty line for free lunch and those whose income is below 185% for reduced lunch.

Funding is based on prior year (as of October 31st) FARMS data (e.g., FY25 revenue is determined by FARMS enrollment as of October 31st, 2023)

For schools and districts that take advantage of the Community Eligibility Provision, the student poverty count is determined by multiplying the FARMS percentage from the year before CEP implementation by the enrollment from current year

How FARMS Eligibility is Determined



Household Applications: Families submit applications to allow their children to receive “Free” or “Reduced Price” lunch through the National School Lunch Program.

Direct Certification: Students automatically counted if they or their family participate in government assistance programs:

- Temporary Cash Assistance in MD (TANF)
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Foster Care/Homeless Program
- Medicaid (since SY22-23)

Education Article 5-222

- Based on Education Article 5-222, CEP schools and districts currently relying on old FARMS rates will have to switch to Direct Certification rates beginning in FY27.
- Both historic and present FARMS data as well as the alternative methodologies studied in this report indicate that Direct Certification alone does not capture the full picture of poverty in Maryland, as some low-income families do not participate in the public benefit programs included in Direct Certification counts.
- If no action is taken to amend 5-222, total poverty-based funding would **decrease ~\$130 million** due to lower student counts in CEP schools and districts.

As prior studies have pointed out, there are limitations to FARMS that could impact Maryland's ability to accurately identify students experiencing the circumstances of poverty

- **Accounting for Depth of Poverty:** FARMS does not account for wide variations in household income levels that exist among students who are eligible for poverty funding
- **Accuracy of Free & Reduced-Price Lunch Applications:** Lunch applications rely on self-reported information that could be inaccurate and some families that would otherwise be eligible may be less likely to submit applications for a variety of reasons, including linguistic barriers or level of engagement.
- **Community Eligibility Provision.** Because CEP districts and schools no longer collect lunch applications, there are two unintended consequences:
 - Students of families who live in poverty but do not participate in public assistance programs are no longer counted
 - FARMS no longer results in a comparable count of students in poverty across districts, which requires Maryland to rely on outdated poverty data

Overview of the Work

- Education Resource Strategies partnered with the Maryland Governor's Office for Children (GOC) to explore the alternative poverty count methodologies.
- During the first phase of work, ERS conducted a landscape assessment of poverty indicators and methodologies in use nationally, both in public education and other sectors. Four commonly used poverty count methodologies were identified.
- During the second phase of work, ERS worked with GOC to develop a model that could measure the impact of different poverty count methodologies on the number of students that would be eligible for poverty-based funding in each school district and school in the state.
- The model ERS developed is based on **SY24-25 enrollment data and the Blueprint funding formula for FY25 and therefore provides a directional sense of the impact of each methodology** on the number of students identified as eligible for compensatory education funding and concentrations of poverty funding. The estimates in the report do not reflect the impact in School Year 26-27 / Fiscal Year 2027 as funding formulas change over time.

Developing and Assessing Alternative Poverty Count Methodologies

To address the known limitations of FARMS, ERS and GOC explored two approaches for supplementing Direct Certification counts that would not require the collection of Free & Reduced-Price Lunch applications

American Community Survey Data

American Community Survey data allows Maryland to identify students who live in “high poverty” neighborhoods, but who are not included in Direct Certification counts because their families do not directly participate in public assistance programs.

Direct Certification Multiplier

A Direct Certification multiplier applies a common assumption to all schools about the percent of students in poverty who are not included in official Direct Certification counts because their families do not participate in public assistance programs.

The work included an exploration of three American Community Survey indices, each of which includes a different breadth of poverty indicators

Area Deprivation Index	ACS Composite Index	ACS Median Household Income
<p>Ranks the socioeconomic status of Census Block Groups using a composite of 17 different indicators from the American Community Survey.</p>	<p>Assigns a percentile rank to each Census Block Groups based on 4 indicators in the underlying ACS dataset: Educational Attainment, Household Status, Income & Earnings, and Home Ownership.</p>	<p>Assigns a percentile rank to each Census Block Group based on ACS Median Household Income data.</p>

Examples of Districts, States & Public Agencies Using the Same or Similar Method

<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Primarily used by researchers and healthcare providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Texas Education Agency Statewide Socioeconomic Tier Model▪ Colorado Department of Ed At-Risk Measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ New Mexico Ed Department Family Income Index**
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*See Appendix for more information on the American Community Survey

** New Mexico uses a combination of household income data from the Census *and* other state agencies

ERS constructed four detailed methodologies that optimized the statistical relationship between school poverty counts and proficiency rates

Methodology Thresholds with Maximum Correlation Between School Poverty Rates and Proficiency Rates

ACS Composite Index	Area Deprivation Index	ACS Median Household Income	Direct Certification Multiplier
Poverty funding eligibility was assigned to Census Block Groups at the 20 th percentile or below	Poverty funding eligibility as assigned to Census Block Groups at the 10 th percentile or below	Poverty funding eligibility was assigned to Census Block Groups with median household incomes below 140% of the poverty line	A multiplier of 1.2 was applied to the Direct Certification rate at each school

The result of the regression analysis establishing the threshold used for each methodology is illustrated below

Percent of Variation in School ELA & Math Proficiency Accounted for by Poverty

Area Deprivation Index

10 th	20 th	30 th
56.9%	55.6%	56.2%

American Community Survey: Composite Index

15 th	20 th	25 th	30 th
65.9%	66.9%	66.3%	66.0%

American Community Survey: Median Household Income

250%	200%	185%	170%	155%	140%	125%
59.9%	60.2%	60.4%	60.8%	60.8%	61.5%	61.4%

Direct Certification Multiplier

1.6	1.5	1.4	1.3	1.2	1.1
62.1%	62.3%	62.5%	62.6%	62.6%	62.5%

In addition to single-methodology scenarios, ERS modeled two scenarios that would allow LEAs to choose from multiple methodologies

Choice Option A: Allow a Choice of Poverty Count Methodologies for All Schools

- Allows all districts to choose one poverty count methodology for all CEP schools and one methodology for all non-CEP schools that captures the highest number of students, with the options being:
 - FARMS (for non-CEP schools only)
 - Direct Certification Multiplier
 - ACS Composite Index
- Is the most effective option for mitigating funding decreases for schools
- May weaken the relationship between poverty-based funding allocations and educational need

Choice Option B: Allow a Choice of Poverty Count Methodologies for CEP Schools Only

- Focuses on addressing the use of outdated poverty data by allowing districts to choose one poverty count methodology for CEP schools in their district, with the options being
 - Direct Certification Multiplier
 - ACS Composite Index
- Would result in multiple methodologies being used in the same district
- Could create a disincentives for some schools to implement CEP
- Would result in a lower student count for some LEAs compared to Choice Option A

Each poverty count methodology was assessed across four key considerations

- 1. Poverty Count:** How the count of student eligible for poverty-based funding compares to the current count statewide
- 2. Data & Methodology:** Any limitations to data collection and methodology that might impact the effectiveness of each approach
- 3. Disruption:** The extent to which adoption of each methodology would result in changed poverty counts and funding levels for individual LEAs and schools
- 4. Total Cost:** The impact of each methodology on the total cost of poverty-based funding in the state of Maryland

Findings from Methodology Assessment – Part 1

Consideration	Summary
Poverty Count	All methodologies decreased the student poverty count statewide, ranging from a 2% to 21% reduction. The <i>ACS Median Household Income</i> methodology resulting in the lowest poverty count of all methodologies tested.
Data & Methodology	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All methodologies tested came with certain data limitations or assumptions that would need to be explored further before implementation (e.g. the accuracy of a fixed multiplier for Direct Certification)• There were two notable limitations to the ACS data used for modeling:<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Some Census Block Groups were missing specific ACS indicators, with the most common indicator missing being Median Household Income.*2. Data at the Census Block Group level is only available as a 5-year average, which means that data may not fully reflect recent demographic shifts.

*According to the Census, “missing estimates can be caused by data suppression through various methods or restrictions that are applied to ACS data to limit the disclosure of information about individual respondents and the number of published estimates with unacceptable statistical reliability.”

Findings from Methodology Assessment – Part 2

Consideration	Summary
Disruption	<p>All methodologies resulted in 59-81% of schools across the state experiencing a decrease in student poverty count:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The <i>Area Deprivation Index</i> and <i>ACS Median Household Income</i> resulted in the most significant reductions for the most schools○ The two Choice options resulted in the least significant changes in school poverty counts, with 61-67% of schools seeing less than a 10-percentage point change in funding eligible students
Cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All methodologies would result in decreases in the total cost of poverty-based funding.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The ACS Median Household Income would be the lowest cost option with an estimated cost reduction of ~\$853m.○ Choice Option A would be the highest cost with an estimated cost reduction of ~\$118m.

1. Poverty Count

Each methodology resulted in fewer students eligible for poverty-based funding than the current FARMS count

Count of Funding Eligible Students by Methodology



2. Data

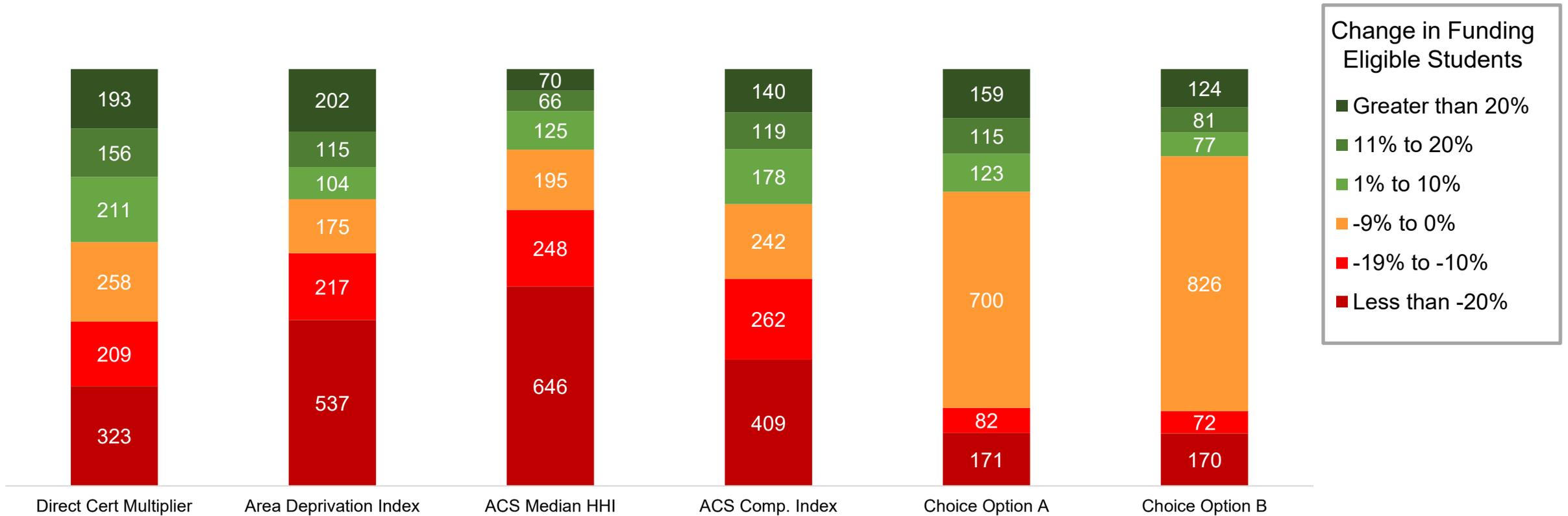
Each methodology came with certain data limitations that would need to be examined more closely before adoption

Methodology	Data Limitations to Consider
Current FARMS Rate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Not available for CEP schools and districts that no longer collect lunch applications• Self reporting may lead to instances where family income information is out-of-date or inaccurate
Direct Certification Multiplier	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Eligibility determined based on participation in public assistance programs, which may undercount students• Assumes the rate at which students in poverty participate in public assistance programs is consistent across schools, which may result in under or over counting at some schools.
Area Deprivation Index	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rankings only available at the state level as deciles, which limits Maryland's ability to differentiate funding.• The breadth of indicators included may result in students living in higher income Census Block Groups being treated as eligible for poverty-based funding
ACS Composite Index & Median Household Income	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Data available on a time lag and may not capture recent shifts in neighborhood demographics• Requires state-level capacity to oversee methodology and annual refreshes• Gaps exist in data collection, including missing indicators from some Census Block Groups

3. Disruption

While every methodology resulted in significant swings in school poverty rates, the magnitude of these swings varies by methodology

Distribution of Schools by Percent Change in Funding Eligible Student Count by Methodology



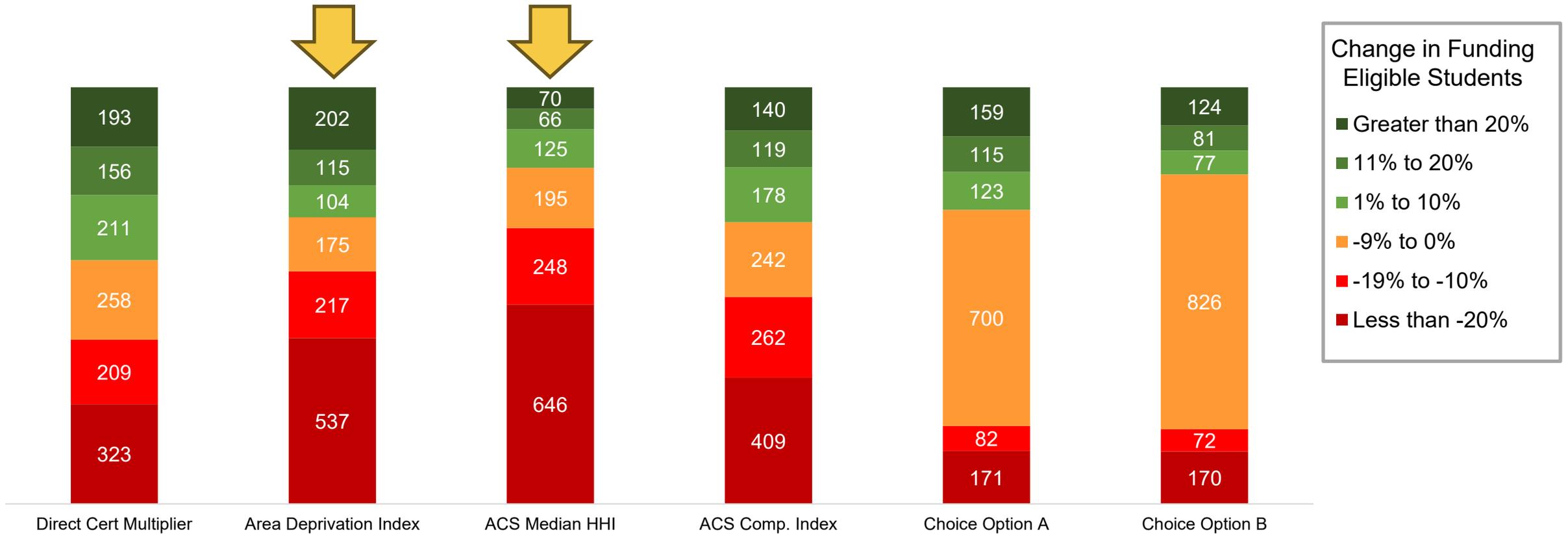
Source: ERS Modeling.

Note: Funding eligible student count for the 'current state' is equal to school-level FARMS enrollment from SY22/23 per FY25 StateAid file.

3. Disruption

The Area Deprivation Index and ACS Median Household Income would result in more significant reductions for more schools

Distribution of Schools by Percent Change in Funding Eligible Student Count by Methodology



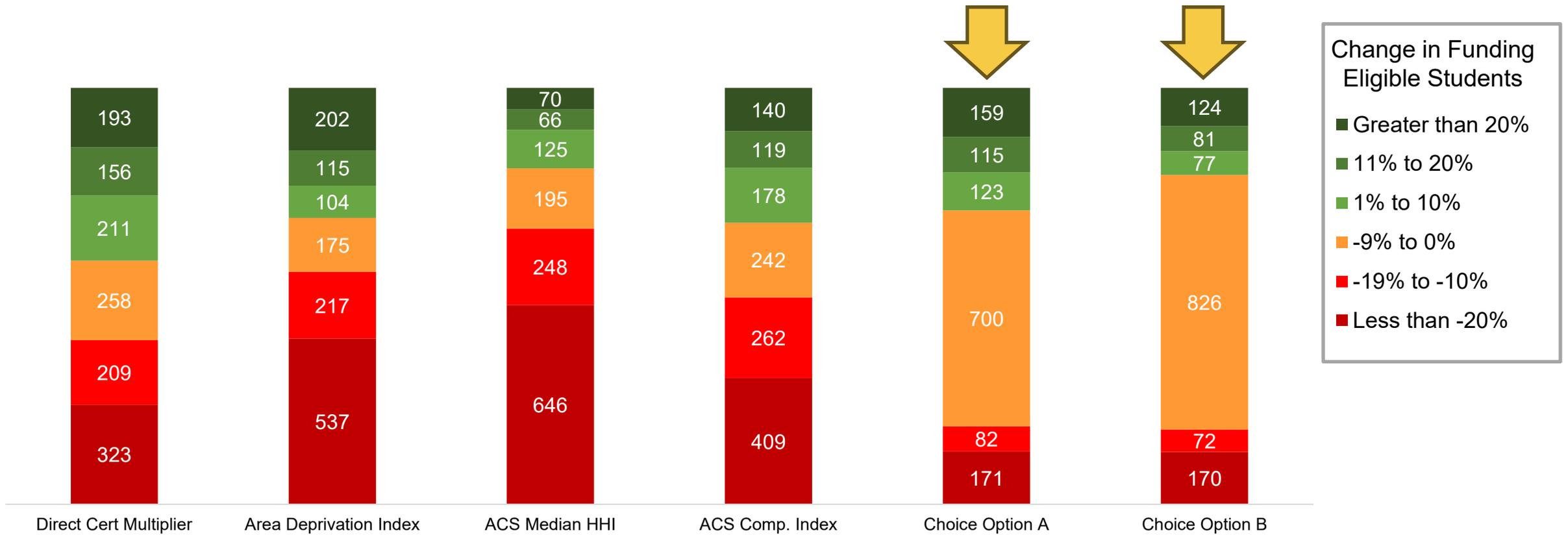
Source: ERS Modeling.

Note: Funding eligible student count for the 'current state' is equal to school-level FARMs enrollment from SY22/23 per FY25 StateAid file.

3. Disruption

Choice Options A & B would produce the most stability in school poverty counts

Distribution of Schools by Percent Change in Funding Eligible Student Count by Methodology

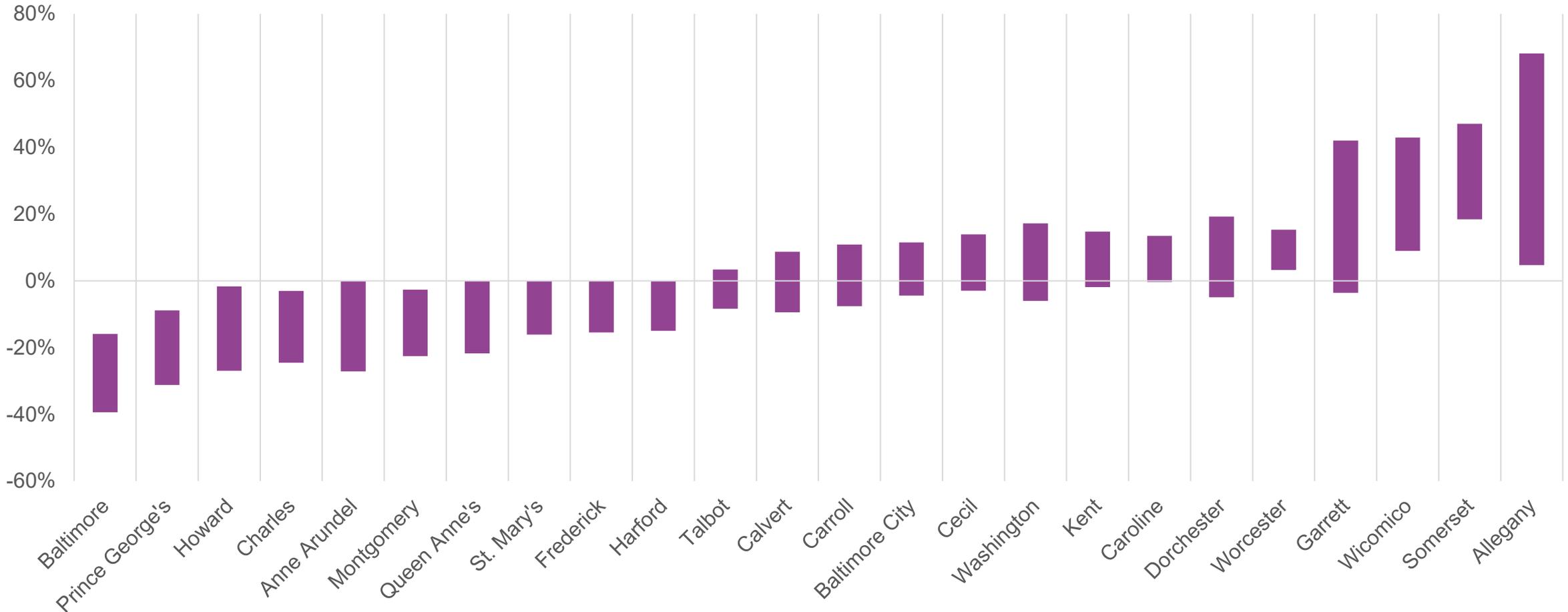


Change in Funding Eligible Students

- Greater than 20%
- 11% to 20%
- 1% to 10%
- -9% to 0%
- -19% to -10%
- Less than -20%

The impact on LEA enrollment varied significantly by methodology

Highest and Lowest % Change in Total Poverty-Eligible Enrollment for each LEA



See Appendix for detailed summary of funding impact by methodology

Source: ERS Modeling

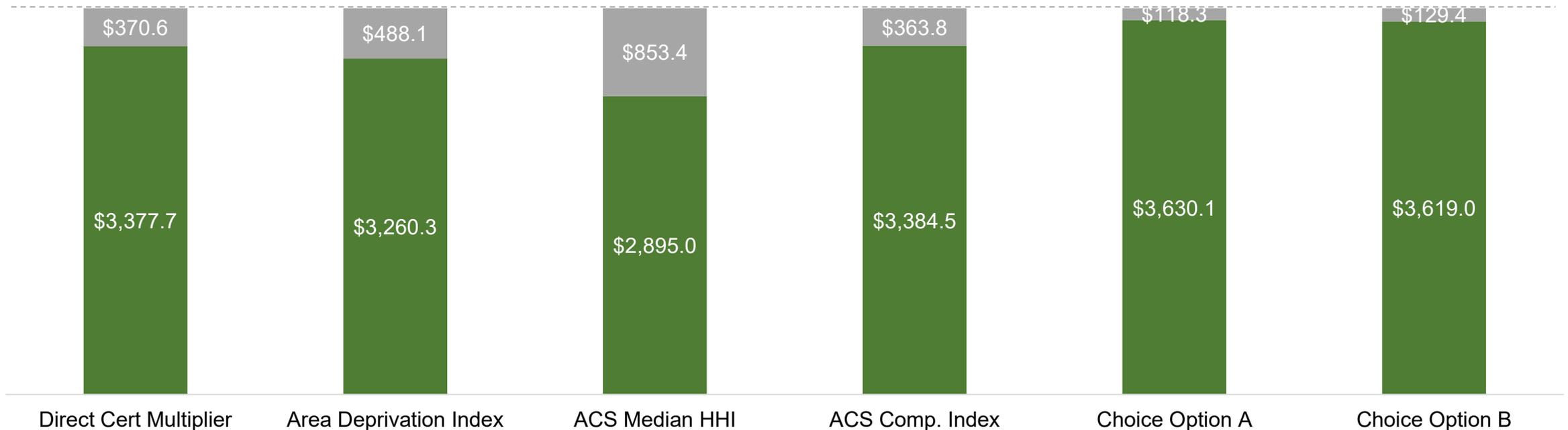
4. Cost

All methodologies would result in a net reduction in the cost of poverty-based funding statewide

Total Cost of Poverty-Based Funding by Scenario (in Millions)

■ Cost Reduction
■ Total Cost of Scenario

SY24-25 Cost = \$3,748.4M



Appendix

Appendix A: About the American Community Survey

Social Characteristics	Economic Characteristics	Housing Characteristics	Demographic & Housing Estimates
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disability status Educational attainment Language spoken at home Veteran status Household status (married, unmarried, single parent, etc.) Residence one year ago Place of birth Computers/internet access* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commuting Health Insurance Coverage Income & Earnings Poverty status Employment status Occupation/Industry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total housing units Units in structure Year structure built Rooms Bedrooms Housing tenure Year householder moved into unit House heating fuel Occupants per room Value Home ownership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sex & Age Race Citizen, Voting age

Data Collection Notes

- Administered annually to a stratified random sample of 2.5% of households
- Collectable at block group, tract, and county level
- 1 year and 5-year estimates; Census Block Group data is only available as 5-year estimates
- The 5-yr estimates included in this analysis was from 2018-22

Appendix B: About CPG Funding

- A school becomes eligible for the CPG personnel grant when they exceed a threshold of 55% FARMs students. The FY25 Personnel Grant is \$273,805 and increases by the inflation amount annually
- A school becomes eligible for the CPG per-pupil grant when a school exceeds a threshold of % FARMs students—this threshold “phases-in” from 65% (FY25) to 55% (FY27)
- The CPG per-pupil amount is determined by a sliding scale (i.e., weighted), which means that schools with a higher % of FARMs students receives a higher per-pupil funding amount than schools with a lower % of FARMs students

Appendix C: Details on Methodology Options

Methodology		Details
Direct Certification +	Direct Certification Multiplier	Current Direct Certification rates for each school were multiplied by 1.2. The USDA uses a 1.6 multiplier to determine the relative shares of providing free meals to all students in a school (irrespective of their poverty level). Therefore it is used for a different purpose. The 1.2 multiplier was chosen as it results in a stronger correlation between poverty counts and school proficiency rates.
	Area Deprivation Index	In its raw form, the Area Deprivation Index assigns each Census Block Group to a decile based on a composite index of 17 indicators. ERS assigned funding eligibility to Census Block Groups at the 10 th percentile or below, based on analyses of the correlation between resulting poverty counts and school proficiency rates.
	ACS Composite Index	A Z-score, which measures the number of standard deviations an individual value is from the mean value, was assigned to each Census Block Group for four separate ACS indicators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational Attainment • Household Status (Married, Unmarried, Single Parent, etc.) • Income & Earnings • Home Ownership The four Z-scores were then averaged and used to assign each Census Block Group a percentile rank. ERS assigned funding eligibility to Census Block Groups at the 20 th percentile or below, based on analyses of correlation between resulting poverty counts and school proficiency rates.
	ACS Median Household Income	The poverty line for a family of 4 people in Maryland was multiplied by 140% to establish a threshold for Median Household Income (~\$43,700). Every Census Block Group with a Median Household Income below that threshold was assigned identified as eligible for poverty-based funding.

Note: For methodologies relying on ACS data, ERS excluded students who were already captured through Direct Certification

Appendix D: About the Area Deprivation Index

ADI uses a subset of ACS data points, listed below

- % Population aged 25 years or older with less than 9 years of education
- % Population aged 25 years or older with at least a high school diploma
- % Employed population aged 16 years or older in white-collar occupations
- Median family income in US dollars
- Income disparity
- % Families below federal poverty level
- % Population below 150% of federal poverty level
- % Civilian labor force population aged 16 years and older who are unemployed
- Median home value in US dollars
- Median gross rent in US dollars
- Median monthly mortgage in US dollars
- % Owner-occupied housing units
- % Occupied housing units without complete plumbing
- % Single-parent households with children younger than 18
- Households without a motor vehicle
- Households without a telephone
- Households with more than 1 person per room

Appendix E: Change in Percent of Total Enrollment Eligible for Poverty-Based Funding

District	Area Deprivation Index	ACS Median HHI	ACS Comp Index	Choice Option A	Choice Option B	Direct Cert Mult.
Allegany	68%	9%	8%	16%	5%	16%
Anne Arundel	-24%	-27%	-19%	0%	0%	-14%
Baltimore City	12%	-4%	4%	6%	6%	6%
Baltimore	-16%	-39%	-18%	-18%	-18%	-32%
Calvert	-9%	-9%	-9%	9%	0%	9%
Caroline	10%	0%	8%	13%	13%	13%
Carroll	-5%	-8%	-3%	11%	0%	11%
Cecil	6%	-3%	3%	14%	7%	14%
Charles	-24%	-24%	-19%	-3%	-3%	-10%
Dorchester	19%	-5%	1%	3%	3%	3%
Frederick	-12%	-15%	-8%	0%	0%	0%
Garrett	42%	-4%	2%	9%	0%	9%
Harford	-7%	-15%	-9%	0%	0%	-3%
Howard	-26%	-27%	-21%	-2%	-2%	-14%
Kent	-2%	-1%	1%	15%	15%	15%
Montgomery	-23%	-22%	-11%	-3%	-3%	-8%
Prince George's	-28%	-31%	-13%	-9%	-9%	-18%
Queen Anne's	-22%	-22%	-8%	0%	0%	-6%
St. Mary's	-13%	-16%	-9%	0%	0%	-1%
Somerset	47%	18%	19%	32%	32%	32%
Talbot	-8%	-8%	0%	3%	0%	3%
Washington	17%	-6%	5%	9%	6%	9%
Wicomico	43%	9%	27%	27%	27%	24%
Worcester	13%	3%	7%	15%	10%	15%

Source: ERS Modeling.; Note: Funding eligible student count for the 'current state' is equal to school-level FARMs enrollment from SY22/23 per FY25 StateAid file.