



*VISION - BRIDGE Maryland sees the state challenged by a history of inequity but engaged in community organizing for a more just tomorrow.*

*MISSION - BRIDGE Maryland uses intentional relationship building, organizing and intensive leadership development in order to strengthen congregations and faith leaders to demonstrate and advance justice in the world.*

## Education Task Force

Our task force is committed to quality public education for ALL Maryland students. Such an education requires adequate funding for educational programs and for particular attention to health and welfare of students in their communities.

Ideally, strong schools build strong communities. We are committed to a strong Community Schools approach. Unlike charter and voucher programs, a community schools approach applies resources where most needed, as identified by the school community itself. In this way, resources are not diverted to private programs which promise much more than they deliver. Also, true community schools have a designated coordinator who ensures that community members are engaged in planning and implementation of programs and services.

An equitable and excellent education system requires adequate funding. Funding cannot be based solely on enrollment figures but must take into account the true needs of each school or district. The Commission on Excellence in Education (Kirwan Commission) has studied models of public education around the nation and the world and is on the way to defining a funding formula which will achieve desired results. We strongly support their efforts.

Currently, we strongly support the Constitutional Amendment, sponsored by Sen. Conway in the Senate and Delegate McIntosh in the House, to assure that the revenues from the casinos in the state go to Education programs, and cannot be diverted by executive action into other funds. This was the will of the electorate when casinos were authorized and should be respected.

We are participants in the Strong Schools Maryland organization and support their goals and efforts.

We collaborate with other Gamaliel affiliates (notably PRISCM in Prince George's County) to further these efforts.

