

MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
Rockville, Maryland

The Montgomery County Board of Education held a business meeting on March 19, 2024. At that time, the Board took the following positions on the proposed legislation contained herein.

BILLS COVERED UNDER THE BOARD’S ADOPTED PLATFORM

[HB 472/SB 540](#) - Education - School Mapping Data Program – Established – ***Support***

Applicable Board Priority: *Creating a safe and secure learning and working environment for all and funding to support the physical, social, and psychological well-being of all students*

[HB 1167/SB 1090](#) - Maryland Center for School Safety - Statewide Secure Schools Emergency Response Program – Established – ***Support***

Applicable Board Priority: *Creating a safe and secure learning and working environment for all and funding to support the physical, social, and psychological well-being of all students*

[HB 1418](#) - Public Middle and High Schools – Start Time for Instruction – Requirement – ***Oppose***

Applicable Board Priority: *Preserving local autonomy over education – including school calendars, curriculum, testing, procurement issues, and operational decision-making*

BILLS ON WHICH THE BOARD TOOK A POSITION

[HB 500/SB 749](#) - Institutions of Higher Education - Dually Enrolled Students – Alterations

Board Position: **Oppose**

Rationale: This bill would result in a financial burden on the school system. Currently, Local Education Agencies (LEAs) must pay the dual enrollment tuition costs for public school students in the county. State and local funds, as well as Blueprint monies, are allocated to the LEA for students enrolled in public schools. That is not the case for private and home school students. The financial burden, especially for a county the size of Montgomery, could be substantial.

[HB 1271/SB 818](#) - Information Technology - Artificial Intelligence - Policies and Procedures (Artificial Intelligence Governance Act of 2024)

Board Position: **Support with Amendment**

Rationale: While the school system supports the creation of guidelines applicable to use of AI, the definition of AI is too broad. Under the current definition, many of the programs used by the school system would be covered under the legislation, creating an administrative burden due to the requirement that AI programs be inventoried and reported annually. The definition of AI should be changed to focus on generative AI.

[HB 1297/SB 979](#) - Education - Artificial Intelligence - Guidelines and Pilot Program

Board Position: **Support with Amendments**

Rationale: MCPS supports the ongoing education, exploration, and work to determine the best uses for AI within education. However, the definition of AI in this bill is vague and would include all software application purchases, including word processing solutions such as Microsoft Word, adaptive testing applications, and curriculum that adjusts to meet student responses. We recommend the definition be amended to focus on generative AI and the use of data for training models.

Additionally, staff will have to engage in professional development to implement the regulations that are developed to deal with this topic. The current allocation of money for this requirement may not meet the need for effective professional learning on a topic that is ever changing and expanding. MCPS requests that more funds be allocated so that LEAs are able to design effective plans and collect meaningful data on this impactful, innovative, technology.

[HB 1381](#) - Education - Publicly Funded Prekindergarten - Payments to Private Providers and Building Use

Board Position: **Support with Amendment**

Rationale: This bill has the goal of expanding pre-kindergarten options in the county, which will help MCPS comply with the public provider/private provider requirement of the Blueprint. MCPS would benefit from an amendment that limits the expansion of Tier II students for an additional year, to allow MSDE/AIB to finalize the sliding scale parameters and to ensure that the school system doesn't have to locally fund Tier II students before state funding is available.

[HB 1441](#) - Early Childhood Education - Publicly Funded Prekindergarten Programs – Alterations

Board Position: **Support**

Rationale: This bill alters the required qualifications for staff in eligible pre-kindergarten programs. This will enable more pre-kindergarten providers to comply with the requirements of the Blueprint and expand pre-kindergarten options and availability in the county. Having more private pre-kindergarten options supports the mixed-delivery system envisioned by the Blueprint. Some private providers currently struggle to meet the requirement that teachers hold a bachelor's degree plus early childhood educator certification.

[HB1455](#) - Public Prekindergarten and Child Care Providers - Waiver Action Plan and Assistance Hubs

Board Position: **Support**

Rationale: This bill provides the option of a waiver for school systems who are unable to meet the private pre-kindergarten participation requirement in the Blueprint, while holding the LEA accountable to develop a plan for compliance by the time the granted waiver ends. This gives some flexibility to LEAs to comply with the 50/50 split, that many school systems are struggling to accomplish. Additionally, the creation of a child care hub will help to support the capacity and development of child care providers. MCPS needs to be able to partner with more private providers in order to support the mixed delivery system for Pre-K envisioned in the Blueprint. The child care hub created through this legislation will help providers work toward meeting Blueprint requirements and support them in the grant application process, provide business plan support, and assist in obtaining the curriculum and programming needed to operate a program. The more capacity we build in child care in Montgomery County, the more providers MCPS will be able to partner with us. This will help MCPS reach Blueprint targets for providing full-day programs.

[HB 903/SB 797](#) - Education - Access to Attorneys, Advocates, and Consultants for Special Education Program and Fund – Established

Board Position: **Support, as amended**

Rationale: This bill would provide funding for families to have more meaningful engagement in the special education process, especially when there is a disagreement between the family and the school system. The bill as amended requires training for attorneys, consultants and advocates prior to participating in the program, which will ensure that families who opt for outside assistance will be supported by individuals who understand the special education process. It also alleviates some of the data collection

requirements that were on the district and more clearly defines terms and the data that needs to be collected. MCPS supports this bill, as amended.

[HB 1115/SB 1026](#) - County Boards of Education – Budgets – Notice (Transparency in Education Spending Act)

Board Position: **Support, as amended**

Rationale: Since it was introduced, this bill has been amended to require approval for transfers between categories if the amount being transferred is more than 10% of the total funds in the category. Additionally, the current language in the statute, which says that transfers must occur “with” approval of county council has been reinstated. Keeping the “with” language retains the flexibility that is necessary for counties to determine an approval system that works for each locality. The Board of Education supports budget transparency and community engagement and so, with the current amendments, supports HB1115.