

MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION  
Rockville, Maryland

The Montgomery County Board of Education held a business meeting on February 6, 2024. At the time, the Board took the following positions on the proposed legislation contained herein.

***BILLS COVERED UNDER THE BOARD'S ADOPTED PLATFORM***

[HB 69](#) – Live Near Where You Teach – **Support** (also supported in 2023)

Applicable Board Priority: *Support for programs that made housing more affordable for teachers to live in the communities where they teach*

[HB 71](#) – Holocaust Education Assistance Grant – **Support**

Applicable Board Priority: *Funding to provide equitable access to programs of academic rigor and to support social and emotional well-being of students*

[HB116/SB 84](#) – Teacher Degree Apprenticeship – **Support** (also supported in 2023)

Applicable Board Priority: *Support for recruitment of a high-quality and diverse workforce, including alternative pathways to teacher certification and increased salaries*

[HB 157](#) - Appropriations for School Safety – **Support**

Applicable Board Priority: *Creating a safe and secure learning and working environment for all*

[HB 160](#) – Workplace Readiness Week – **Oppose**

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

[HB 386/SB 425](#) – Meals for Achievement – **Support**

Applicable Board Priority: *Funding for National School Breakfast and Lunch Program, universal school meals, and other nutritional programs*

***BILLS ON WHICH THE BOARD TOOK A POSITION***

**HB 25** – Public Schools – Sexually Explicit Materials – Prohibited in Libraries and Media Centers

Position: **Oppose**

Rationale: The Board supports having a robust school library collection and relies on the expertise of certified school library media specialists in curating that collection utilizing their education, training, and the guidance provided by the School Library Medical Programs office in MCPS. In addition, the term “sexually explicit materials” is vague and subjective, and applying the standard as stated in the bill risks reducing entire literary works to specific, discrete passages, rather than considering the work as a whole and the passage in context.

**HB 65** – Public Schools – Medical and Psychological Treatment in School-Based Health Centers and Public Schools – Parental Notice

Position: **Oppose**

Rationale: This bill has the potential to create a large administrative burden on health room staff and, in its current form, conflicts with state and federal laws concerning confidentiality related to the provision of health care to students.

**HB 86** – Public and Nonpublic Schools – Auto-injectable Epinephrine and Bronchodilators – Use, Availability, Training, and Policies

Position: **Support with Amendment**

Rationale: The Board supports making non-designated bronchodilators available in schools. However, MCPS cannot support the portion of the bill that permits non-medical professionals to perform clinical assessment and make decisions about emergency treatment. Administration of bronchodilators by school staff without medical licenses should be specifically limited to care of students with an established diagnosis of asthma or reactive airway disease within a pre-established asthma action plan. MCPS also requests that a funding mechanism for the non-designated bronchodilator medications in schools be included in HB 86. Without designated funding, the cost to public school systems to administer the program would be prohibitive.

**HB196** – Motor Vehicles – School Buses – Seat Belts

Position: **Oppose**

Rationale: While the Board supports the goal of increasing student safety on school buses, and has been procuring school buses with seat belts since 2020, the

cost associated with retrofitting buses already in the fleet is prohibitive. Additionally, the language prohibiting a school bus driver from operating a school bus unless every individual is seated and restrained by a seatbelt is overly broad and could result in increased liability for the school system. It would be difficult, if not impossible, for bus operators to provide that level of oversight and control over student bus riders, while also focusing on safely operating the bus.

#### [HB 356](#) – School Bus Stops – Monitoring cameras and Safety Measures

Position: **Oppose**

Rationale: Due to safety concerns, MCPS strongly opposes any repeal or amendment of the fine associated with school bus camera violations. While the Board is sympathetic to the fact that certain portions of our community are disproportionately impacted by this law due to many of the bus stops at issue being located in a small subset of the county, the sole purpose of the BusPatrol Stop Arm Camera system on MCPS buses is to deter motorists from passing a stopped school bus while loading or unloading students. Data shows that the system currently in place, which includes a \$250.00 fine for any violation of the law, is effective in curtailing future violations. Student safety is the Board's top priority. MCPS is concerned that any amendments or lessening of fines will increase the number and frequency of violations, eliminate any deterrence factor, and increase the risk to our students, DOT staff, and the residents of Montgomery County.

#### [HB 456](#) - County Boards of Education - Student Members - Voting Rights and Participation in Executive Sessions

Position: **Support with Amendments**

Rationale: The Montgomery County Board of Education strongly supports student member voting rights and is proud to have some of the most extensive student member voting rights in the state. It is clear, through their thoughtful contributions and questions posed during meetings and other discussions, that student members devote extensive time and effort into preparing for meetings and the Board values the student member's perspective on matters that come before it. The Board supports this bill with amendment only to request that Montgomery County Board of Education, and all other Boards of Education that currently have voting rights more expansive than what the new law would require, be removed for the bill so that those county boards' already codified voting rights can remain as is.

[HB416/SB 432](#) – Active Shooter Safety Drills of Trainings

Position: **Support with Amendments**

Rationale: The Board supported this bill, with a suggested amendment, last year. The Board's position has not changed.

Proposed Amendment: Remove “annual” from the notice section, and provide flexibility to adjust/reschedule drills if school operations requires a change.

(2) Provide parents with the ~~annual~~ schedule of active shooter safety drills or trainings at the beginning of the school year, which includes:

(i) the month in which the drills or trainings will occur, which may be modified if school operation necessitate adjustment;

(ii) the type of drill or training that will occur; and

(iii) how student will be notified of the drill or training.