



## MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

850 Hungerford Drive ♦ Room 123 ♦ Rockville, Maryland 20850



**BILL:** House Bill 0001  
**TITLE:** Built to Learn Act  
**DATE:** 1/23/2020  
**POSITION:** SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS  
**COMMITTEE:** Appropriations  
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The Montgomery County Board of Education supports House Bill 0001 with amendments.

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) greatly appreciates the effort of this bill to provide significant and much needed additional funding for public school construction. At the same time, the structure of this bill, without additional flexibility, is concerning. The proposed legislation has the potential to remove authority over design and construction from the local jurisdiction and invest more control with the state over every project element, including specific design.

MCPS is willing to partner with or work with the state or any other entity, such as the Stadium Authority; however, the ultimate responsibility for school facility planning, particularly educational specifications and program elements, design, and construction, must remain with the local jurisdiction.

MCPS suggests that the role of the Stadium Authority be envisioned in the legislation to relate to fiscal and other oversight responsibilities, and specific oversight for elements and functions of project budget, program, design, and construction remain with the local educational authority. MCPS respectfully requests that the possibility of state/stadium authority control over project design elements be removed.

Our concern with the approach in the proposed legislation is that it appears to create a state managed design and construction program which could lead to the loss of our local, community-based focus. Each local school district must maintain full control over the program of requirements for their individual schools and build schools that are not just schools, but schools equipped to meet the demands of the community it serves.

Additionally, MCPS requests that LEAs with proven track record of a successful construction program with multiple projects over a period of time be granted the ability to manage their construction program for each project. This would allow systems like MCPS to continue the productive and successful construction program already under way, while also allowing other jurisdictions the ability to develop processes and procedures to implement the additional funding, maintaining the possibility of different procedures relevant to different jurisdictions.



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Finally, we want to thank the Legislature again for this strong support and investment in public school construction. We look forward to working with our county officials in effectively and efficiently spending these funds. To this end, MCPS respectfully requests that funds provided in this program be granted to LEAs with the requirement for a 50/50 county match that is not capped by the current sufficiency standards but does continue to follow the established IAC review process for capital projects. For these reasons, the Board **supports** this legislation **with amendments** and urges a favorable report.