



# MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

*Expanding Opportunity and Unleashing Potential*

850 Hungerford Drive ♦ Room 123 ♦ Rockville, Maryland 20850

**BILL:** HB1450  
**TITLE:** Education - Food Waste Grant Program - Established  
**DATE:** 3/6/2020  
**POSITION:** SUPPORT  
**COMMITTEE:** Ways and Means  
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The Montgomery County Board of Education (Board) **supports** HB1450.

Montgomery County Public Schools' (MCPS) Division of Food and Nutrition Services (DFNS) minimizes food waste in the school meals program throughout the school district in the following ways:

- 1) Share tables are set up during breakfast and lunch service at all levels.
- 2) Production records are utilized by school cafeteria managers for forecasting student selections based on historical data. This practice helps minimize waste by offering menu items based on student preferences. Quantities and serving sizes prepared also are part of this forecasting.
- 3) At the elementary school level, students pre-select their center of the plate entrée choice daily which also minimizes food waste.
- 4) The majority of the fresh produce sources from our vendor is value added, meaning it is cut and processed prior to delivery. This eliminates any food scraps for disposal.

Through these efforts, there is minimal food waste/scrap resulting from food preparation.

While donating 'left over food' is a wonderful cause, DFNS is directly responsible for ensuring the safety of school food. Our practices are based on guidance from the Montgomery County Health Department regarding donating food. Licensure and Regulatory Services indicates that time and temperature control for safety, also known as potentially hazardous, foods that have been placed on the share table in schools or are left at the end of serving time may not be donated to food-recovery groups. The reason is that once food has been removed from the approved holding temperature, a 4-hour destruction clock begins. Thus, we are not able to reuse or refreeze these products. However, foods that are commercially prepackaged, nonpotentially hazardous foods, may continue to be donated. Prior to spring, summer, and winter school breaks, items such as milk, yogurt, and juice are donated to Manna Food Center based on the package date.

There is a significant interest among MCPS schools, students, staff, and community members to begin/implement post-consumer food composting program in schools. At present, there are several MCPS schools that actively are participating in the post-consumer food waste composting program being funded with local school funds or by the school's PTA. The grant funds from HB1450 will have a positive impact on individual schools to sustain their existing composting programs and could encourage other schools to begin similar composting programs.

For these reasons, the Board **supports** this legislation and urges a **favorable** report.