



BILL: Senate Bill 425 / House Bill 386
TITLE: Maryland Meals for Achievement In-Classroom Breakfast Program-Alterations (Maryland Meals for Achievement Flexibility Act of 2024)
HEARING DATE: March 20, 2024
POSITION: SUPPORT
COMMITTEE: House Ways and Means Committee
CONTACT: Mr. Steve Edwards, Deputy Communications Officer (301-766-8914)

The Washington County Board of Education supports Senate Bill 425, which would clarify that secondary schools participating in the Maryland Meals for Achievement In-Classroom Breakfast Program may serve breakfast in any broadly accessible part of the school; authorize elementary schools participating in the Program, subject to certain approval and allowances, to serve breakfast in any broadly accessible part of the school, including from “Grab and Go” carts; and generally relating to the Maryland Meals for Achievement In-Classroom Breakfast Program.

Research shows children who participate in school breakfast programs are less likely to experience food insecurity, are better able to learn, exhibit better behavior at school, demonstrate improved academic performance, and are less likely to be late or absent from school. Washington County Public Schools (WCPS) is a proud participant in the Maryland Meals for Achievement Program (MMFA) and, like other school districts in Maryland, would benefit from the flexibility proposed in the bill with regards to the manner in which schools could make breakfast available to students at schools participating in the MMFA.

Currently, 21 schools in Washington County participate in the MMFA in-classroom program with 12 additional schools participating in the MMFA modified program. Enabling schools to serve breakfast in any broadly accessible part of a school at both the elementary and secondary levels will enable school-level administrators to determine the best way to get breakfast into the hands of students while also reducing the staff time needed to distribute meals to individual classrooms thus saving valuable school resources.

While students will continue to be able to consume their meal in the classroom after the start of the school day with their peers, the flexibility proposed in the bill will allow teachers to remain focused on instruction instead of meal distribution and any distractions that may occur as meals are distributed in their classroom.

The Washington County Board of Education respectfully requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 425.

Thank you.

Cc: Washington County Board of Education Members
Washington County Delegation to the Maryland General Assembly
Dr. David T. Sovine, Superintendent
Dr. Jennifer Webster, Associate Superintendent for Administration and Leadership
Dr. Garry Willow, Associate Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction
Mr. Jeffrey Proulx, Chief Operating Officer
Ms. Ilissa Ramm, Chief Legal Counsel
Mr. Michael Embley, Director of Food and Nutrition Services
Mr. John Woolums, Director of Governmental Relations, Maryland Association of Boards of Education
Ms. Mary Pat Fannon, Executive Director, Public School Superintendents' Association of Maryland