



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Marc Elrich
County Executive

February 19, 2026

TO: The Honorable Jheanelle K. Wilkins
Chair, Ways and Means Committee

FROM: Marc Elrich
County Executive

RE: House Bill 1084, *Montgomery County – County Board of Education – School
Operation Requirements MC 14-26*
Support with Amendments

I am writing to express my support for House Bill 1084, *Montgomery County – County Board of Education – School Operation Requirements MC 14-26*, as amended by the Montgomery County House Delegation.

Under current law, public schools in Maryland must be open for student attendance for at least 180 days and 1,080 hours. There is a waiver process for meeting the 180 days requirement in the event of natural disaster, civil emergencies, or severe weather. There is no waiver process for meeting the 1,080 hours requirement. House Bill 1084 (MC 14-26), which was requested by the Montgomery County Board of Education, authorizes the Board to choose to keep the schools open for student attendance for at least 180 days or at least 1,080 hours. In its Legislative Platform document, the Board explained that winter weather closures in the 2024-2025 school year resulted in the school system being able to meet the 1,080-hours requirement but not the 180-days requirement. The school system sought a waiver, which was denied. As a result, the Board had to extend the school year by two half-days at a cost of \$1.75 million for personnel and additional costs associated with keeping the facilities operating for two extra days. The Board noted that absenteeism among students and staff was unusually high on those days, resulting in little instructional value.

The Montgomery County House Delegation voted favorably on this bill with amendments that clarify the circumstances under which the bill applies, including a requirement that the Board of Education may not reduce the number of paid workdays for school employees who receive pay at an hourly rate.

I respectfully request that the House Ways and Means Committee vote favorably on House Bill 1084 as amended by Montgomery County House Delegation.

cc: Members of the Ways and Means Committee