



# MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

*Expanding Opportunity and Unleashing Potential*

15 West Gude Drive ♦ Suite 100 ♦ Rockville, Maryland 20850

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**BILL:** House Bill 1084

**TITLE:** Montgomery County - County Board of Education - School Operation Requirements MC 14-26

**DATE:** February 19, 2026

**POSITION:** Support

**COMMITTEE:** Ways and Means

**CONTACT:** Patricia Ursprung, Coordinator, Legislative Affairs

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The Montgomery County Board of Education supports House Bill 1084.

This bill would permit Montgomery County Public Schools to comply with the minimum instructional time requirements currently in the law by meeting one of the metrics, rather than both.

Maryland law requires that public schools in Maryland meet two minimums for instructional time: 1) a minimum of 180 days of instruction; and 2) a minimum of 1080 hours for elementary and middle school students, and a minimum of 1,170 for high school students. The instructional school year calendars that the Board of Education adopts for Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) each year exceed both of the minimum requirements for instructional time.

The following table illustrates the 2025-2026 MCPS school year calendar in relation to the minimum number of hours required in State law.

	<b>Minimum Required Number of School Hours</b>	<b>Length of School Day in Hours</b>	<b>MCPS Total Yearly School Hours for SY 2025-2026</b>	<b>Total Hours Scheduled Beyond the Minimum Required Hours</b>	<b>Approximate Number of Emergency Closure Days Allowed if Minimum Hours Were Met</b>
<b>Elementary</b>	1080	6.5	1165.25	85.25	13
<b>Middle</b>	1080	6.75	1209.25	129.25	19
<b>High</b>	1170	6.75	1209.25	39.25	5



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During the 2024-2025 school year, MCPS experienced extreme winter weather that resulted in school closures during the school year. These closures meant that, without extending the school year, the school system would not have had enough instructional days to comply with the 180-day requirement. MCPS submitted a waiver request to the state, which was denied, and so the system had no choice but to extend the school year by two additional half-days in mid-June. This was done solely to comply with the 180 days requirement.

Before those forced additions, the last day of school would have been a Friday. Instead, the school year ended with two half-days on a Monday and Tuesday when many students were absent and minimal learning actually occurred. Without the added days, MCPS still would have far exceeded the state's minimum hours at every level. Further, extending the school year in this manner cost the system approximately \$1.75 million in personnel expenses alone. This did not include other operational costs such as fuel consumption and facilities expenses.

This year, MCPS faces the same possible outcome, where a severe winter storm resulted in the closure of offices on Monday, January 26, 2026; schools and offices on Tuesday, January 27, 2026, Wednesday, January 28, 2026, Thursday, January 29, 2026, and Friday, January 30, 2026; and the closure of schools on Monday, February 2, 2026. The closure on five instructional days results in the need to make up four instructional days to meet the 180-day minimum requirement. To meet the State required minimum without adding instructional days within the year that would conflict with religious observances, established holidays, contractual requirements, or spring break, MCPS will have to extend the school year through June 25, 2026.

House Bill 1084 presents a common-sense, fiscally responsible, student-focused solution. It prevents unnecessary spending, avoids placing families into disruptive last-minute schedule changes, and ensures that instructional time is meaningful and not symbolic. We respectfully ask for your support to give MCPS the flexibility it needs and the community the stability it deserves by issuing a **favorable** report on House Bill 1084.