A BILL ENTITLED

AN ACT concerning

Baltimore County Board of Education – Legal Counsel and Chief Budget Analyst

FOR the purpose of authorizing the Baltimore County Board of Education to retain counsel in certain legal matters; requiring the County Board to employ legal counsel and a Chief Budget Analyst; providing for the terms of employment of the legal counsel and Chief Budget Analyst; requiring the legal counsel to serve as the legal advisor to the County Board; requiring the Chief Budget Analyst to review the County Board’s budget and approve or return the budget with suggested changes; requiring the Chief Budget Analyst to ensure that education spending is in accordance with the County Board’s budget; providing for the salary of the Chief Budget Analyst; prohibiting the County Board from submitting its budget to the Baltimore County Council until it has been approved by the Chief Budget Analyst; and generally relating to staff for the Baltimore County Board of Education.

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

Article – Education

Section 4–104

Annotated Code of Maryland

(2018 Replacement Volume and 2020 Supplement)

BY adding to

Article – Education

Section 4–104.1

Annotated Code of Maryland

(2018 Replacement Volume and 2020 Supplement)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,

That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article – Education

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.
[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.
(a)  (1)  [Except in Baltimore County, each] EACH county board may:
   (i)  Retain counsel to represent it in legal matters that affect the board; and
   (ii)  Contract for the payment of a reasonable fee to the counsel.
   (2)  Funds for these fees shall be included in the annual budget.

(b)  (1)  [The] IN ADDITION TO THE AUTHORITY GRANTED UNDER SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION, THE Baltimore County Board may retain counsel to represent it in legal matters that involve disputes with the Baltimore County government.

(2)  (I)  THE BALTIMORE COUNTY BOARD SHALL EMPLOY LEGAL COUNSEL TO SERVE AS LEGAL ADVISOR TO THE BOARD.

   (II)  LEGAL COUNSEL EMPLOYED BY THE BOARD SERVES AT THE PLEASURE OF THE BOARD.

(c)  Each county board may pay all or part of the counsel fees for the defense of a county board member who is involved in litigation because of his service and in his official capacity on that board. These payments are a valid educational expense.

(d)  (1)  In any suit or claim brought against a principal, teacher, school security guard, or other agent or employee of a county board by a parent or other claimant with respect to an action taken by the agent or employee, the board shall provide for counsel for that individual if:
   (i)  The action was taken in the performance of his duties, within the scope of his employment, and without malice; and
   (ii)  The board determines that he was acting within his authorized official capacity in the incident.

   (2)  The counsel required by this section may be provided through the office of the county attorney or city solicitor.

   (3)  This subsection does not require a county board to provide or reimburse the cost of counsel to a plaintiff or claimant in a suit or claim against a county board or its members, agents, or employees.
(A) (1) The Baltimore County Board shall employ a Chief Budget Analyst.

(2) The Chief Budget Analyst shall serve at the pleasure of the Board.

(B) The Chief Budget Analyst shall:

(1) Review the Board’s proposed budget and:

   (I) Approve the budget; or

   (II) Return the budget to the Board with suggested changes; and

(2) Ensure that education spending is in accordance with the Board’s budget.

(C) The Chief Budget Analyst shall receive the salary provided in the annual budget.

(D) The Baltimore County Board may not submit its budget to the Baltimore County Council under § 5–102 of this article until it has been approved by the Chief Budget Analyst.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July 1, 2021.