

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2025 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 391
Ways and Means

(Delegates J. Long and Crosby)

County Boards of Education - Elections for Members Representing Specific
Districts - Alterations

This bill modifies, for various county boards of education, provisions governing the election of board members from districts. The bill requires those members to be elected only by the voters of each respective district (as opposed to voters of the entire county) in counties that elect members from districts and for which it is not already established (or not explicitly established) in statute that the members are elected only by the voters of each respective district. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2025.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill is not expected to materially affect State finances.

Local Effect: The bill is not expected to materially affect local government finances.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary/Current Law: Twenty counties have elected school boards and 4 jurisdictions have combined appointed and elected school boards. The **Appendix – Local Boards of Education Membership** shows the selection methods, terms of office, and membership of the 24 local boards of education. Of these local boards, 9 counties may be affected by the bill, as discussed below.

Calvert County

Under current law, the Calvert County Board of Education consists of five voting members

and one nonvoting student member. Of the five voting members, three are elected from each of the three county commissioner districts and two members are elected from the county at large.

Under the bill, voting members elected from each of the three commissioner districts must be elected only by the voters of each respective district.

Cecil County

Under current law, the Cecil County Board of Education consists of five voting members elected from each of the five commissioner districts and one nonvoting student member.

Under the bill, the voting members elected from each of the five commissioner districts must be elected only by the voters of each respective district.

Garrett County

Under current law, the Garrett County Board of Education consists of three elected members from each of the three county commissioner districts, two elected members from the county at large, and one nonvoting student member.

Under the bill, the three voting members from commissioner districts must be elected only by the voters of each respective district.

Montgomery County

Under current law, the Montgomery County Board of Education consists of five members who each reside in different county board of education districts that are elected by the voters of the entire county, two members who may reside anywhere in the county that are elected by the voters of the entire county, and one student member.

Under the bill, the five members from each of the county board of education districts must be elected only by the voters of each respective district.

Queen Anne's County

Under current law, the Queen Anne's County Board of Education consists of four members elected from each of the four county commissioner districts who are elected by the voters of the entire county, one member who may reside anywhere in the county that is elected by the voters of the entire county, and one nonvoting student representative from each public high school in the county.

Under the bill, the four members elected from each of the four county commissioner districts must be elected only by the voters of each respective district.

St. Mary's County

Under current law, the St. Mary's County Board of Education consists of four voting members elected from each of the four commissioner districts, one voting member elected from the county at large, and one student member. The voting members are elected on a general countywide ticket.

Under the bill, the four voting members elected from each of the four commissioner districts must be elected only by the voters of each respective district.

Somerset County

Under current law, the Somerset County Board of Education consists of five members elected from each of the five commissioner districts.

Under the bill, the members elected from each of the five commissioner districts must be elected only by the voters of each respective district.

Talbot County

Under current law, the Talbot County Board of Education consists of seven voting members elected from each of the seven election districts for the county board and two nonvoting student members.

Under the bill, the voting members elected from each of the seven election districts must be elected only by the voters of each respective district.

Worcester County

Under current law, the Worcester County Board of Education consists of seven voting members elected from each of the seven commissioner districts and one nonvoting student member from each public high school in the county.

Under the bill, the seven voting members elected from each of the seven commissioner districts must be elected only by the voters of each respective district.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Cecil, Garrett, and St. Mary's counties; Maryland State Board of Elections; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 10, 2025
km/sdk

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Appendix – Local Boards of Education Membership

The composition of the local boards of education varies with members serving three- to four-year terms. Twenty counties have elected school boards and four counties have combined appointed and elected school boards. Twenty-two boards have student members; however, only 8 boards allow student members to vote, which generally excludes authority to vote on matters relating to collective bargaining and personnel. Three counties with voting student members also preclude student members from voting on matters relating to operating and capital budgets. **Exhibit 1** shows the selection methods, terms of office, and membership of the 24 local school boards.

Exhibit 1 Local Boards of Education As of January 2025

<u>School System</u>	<u>Number of Members</u>	<u>Term</u>		<u>Means of Selection¹</u>
Allegany	6	4 years	E	5 from county at large 1 student (nonvoting, one-year term)
Anne Arundel	8	4 years	E	7 from councilmanic districts 1 student (one-year term)
Baltimore City	12	3 or 4 years	A/E	2 elected from city at large 9 appointed by mayor 1 student (one-year term)
Baltimore	12	4 years	A/E	4 appointed by Governor from county at large 7 elected from councilmanic districts 1 student (one-year term)
Calvert	6	4 years	E	2 from county at large 3 from commissioner districts 1 student (nonvoting, one-year term)
Caroline	7	4 years	A/E	3 elected from school board districts 2 appointed by Governor from county at large 2 students (nonvoting, one-year term)
Carroll	11	4 years	E	5 from county at large 5 commissioners <i>ex officio</i> (nonvoting) 1 student (nonvoting, one-year term)
Cecil	6	4 years	E	5 from commissioner districts 1 student (nonvoting, one-year term)

<u>School System</u>	<u>Number of Members</u>	<u>Term</u>		<u>Means of Selection¹</u>
Charles	10	4 years	E	1 from county at large 8 from commissioner districts 1 student (one-year term)
Dorchester	8	4 years	E	5 from councilmanic districts 3 students (nonvoting, one-year term)
Frederick	8	4 years	E	7 from county at large 1 student (nonvoting, one-year term)
Garrett	6	4 years	E	2 from county at large 3 from commissioner districts 1 student (nonvoting, one-year term)
Harford	11	4 years	A/E	6 elected from councilmanic districts 3 appointed by County Executive from county at large 1 superintendent <i>ex officio</i> (nonvoting) 1 student (one-year term)
Howard	8	4 years	E	2 from county at large 5 from councilmanic districts 1 student (one-year term)
Kent	6	4 years	E	5 from county at large 1 student (nonvoting, one-year term)
Montgomery	8	4 years	E	2 from county at large 5 from school districts 1 student (one-year term)
Prince George's	10	4 years	E	9 from school board districts 1 student (one-year term)
Queen Anne's	7	4 years	E	1 from county at large 4 from commissioner districts 2 students (nonvoting, one-year term)
St. Mary's	6	4 years	E	1 from county at large 4 from commissioner districts 1 student (nonvoting, one-year term)
Somerset	5	4 years	E	5 from commissioner districts
Talbot	9	4 years	E	7 from school board districts 2 students (nonvoting, one-year term)
Washington ²	8	4 years	E	7 from county at large 1 student (nonvoting, one-year term)
Wicomico	7	4 years	E	5 from councilmanic districts 2 from county at large
Worcester	10	4 years	E	7 from commissioner districts 3 students (nonvoting, one-year term)

¹ E = Elected and A/E = Combined appointed and elected board: (1) in Baltimore County, members are appointed by the Governor from a list of names provided by the Baltimore County School Board Nominating Commission; (2) in Caroline County, members are appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate; (3) in Baltimore City, members are appointed by the mayor from a list of names provided by the Baltimore City Public School Board Community Panel; and (4) in Harford County, members are appointed by the county executive with the advice and consent of the county council.

² Although not in statute, the Washington County Board of Education reports that there is a student member on the board and that the student member can only concur on votes and must abstain from certain matters.

Source: Sections 3-101 through 3-1405 of the Education Article; Local Boards of Education
