



MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Expanding Opportunity and Unleashing Potential

850 Hungerford Drive ♦ Room 123 ♦ Rockville, Maryland 20850

BILL: HB1074
TITLE: Education - Collective Bargaining - Certificated Employees - Class Size
DATE: 2/28/2020
POSITION: OPPOSE
COMMITTEE: Ways and Means
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The Montgomery County Board of Education (Board) **opposes** HB1074.

Not allowing for collective bargaining rights over class size does not stop a district's commitment to thoughtful policies around class size and teacher ratios.

The Board of Education commissioned a 2019 review of the state of Montgomery County Public Schools' class sizes, a review of community input on class sizes, and literature related to class size and student achievement. The review, which included input from teachers, support staff, parents, students, and administrators, found that while Montgomery County has slightly higher class sizes than the national average, it also had higher performance outcomes. The original prescription on class size was designed to protect a school district's ability to run efficiently and within budget.

Maryland schools have proven to guard this responsibility well, changing it now to meet the narrow interests of the teachers' union—a group with which we collaborate with on this type of decision-making daily—would not be wise.

Negotiating a maximum class size goes far beyond any impact on working conditions of teachers. There would be severe limitations on making appropriate groupings and assignments of students to individual classes. Any time a class ended up with one student beyond the maximum it would be necessary to hire another teacher or pull a student from the class to put that student in another, possibly quite inappropriate, class. The financial impact on any school system could be tremendous, and the impact on making appropriate educational decisions for students would be strongly negative. There are very good reasons this prohibition was included in the law in the first place, and the prohibition should remain. Class size is only one of many factors that needs to be considered when staffing schools and assigning students to classes.

For these reasons, the Board **opposes** this legislation and urges an unfavorable report.