



**Board of Education of Howard County
Testimony Submitted to the Maryland Senate,
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
April 5, 2022**

**Board of Education
of Howard County**

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**HB0752: FAVORABLE W/AMENDMENTS
Public Schools - School Psychologist Recruitment Program**

The Board of Education of Howard County (the Board) supports **HB0752 Public Schools - School Psychologist Recruitment Program** with amendments to ensure sufficient funding is provided to support the goals of the bill.

HB0752 establishes a School Psychologist Recruitment Program with the purpose of providing professional support to school psychologists in the state as well as individuals seeking to become one. Professional development opportunities may include virtual courses or webinars, mentoring or peer collaboration programs, and support materials.

HCPSS School Psychology staff indicate this bill has the potential to attract candidates from out-of-state who wish to work and live in Maryland. As social-emotional well-being of students continues to be a growing area of concern for school systems, the demand for licensed professionals will also increase.

One area of concern with the bill, however, is the provision indicating financial support would come in the form of reimbursement for professional development services and National Association of School Psychologists credentialing subject an indeterminate amount in the State budget. In order to be a true draw for school psychologists, the fees should be covered without need to provide payment upfront and a guarantee of reimbursement.

Specific amendments to address guaranteed coverage of payment include striking “subject to funding availability” in line 9 on page 3 of the amended bill, as well as “consistent with the amount provided in the State budget for the Program” in lines 19 through 20 on page 3. Additionally, a new section inserted after line 13 on page 4 of the amended bill would read:

(G) FOR EACH FISCAL YEAR, THE GOVERNOR SHALL INCLUDE IN THE ANNUAL BUDGET BILL AN APPROPRIATION SUFFICIENT TO FUND THE REIMBURSEMENTS AND PROVISIONS OF THIS SECTION.

For these reasons, we urge a FAVORABLE report of HB0752 from this Committee.