



*Serving Learners, Families, and the Community*

# CECIL COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

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Jeffrey A. Lawson, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

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President, Board of Education

February 27, 2023

Delegate Vanessa Atterbeary, Chair  
House Ways and Means Committee  
Room 131  
House Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Delegate Atterbeary:

Re: *HB961 PUBLIC SCHOOLS – SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST RECRUITMENT PROGRAM*

As Superintendent of Cecil County Public Schools, I am submitting this letter with full support of our five Board of Education members. We strongly support House Bill 961 Public Schools – School Psychologist Recruitment Program, which is scheduled for a bill hearing on March 1, 2023.

The premise of this legislation is to provide support to school psychologists, with the goal of increasing the number of school psychologists available to serve in all Maryland public schools. We have experienced a critical shortage of school psychologist candidates in recent years. Like shortages in other related professions, the school psychologist shortage has the potential to significantly undermine the availability of high quality services to students, families, and schools.

School psychologists are uniquely qualified members of school teams who support students' ability to learn and teachers' ability to teach. School psychologists apply expertise in mental health, learning, and behavior to help students succeed academically, socially, behaviorally, and emotionally. Additionally, they help teachers reach struggling students, improve classroom management skills, and utilize instructional strategies that will engage all types of learners.

House Bill 961 is critical in addressing the school psychologist shortage experienced in all counties across Maryland. Professional development support, along with financial support, toward school psychologists' certification results in supporting every student in Maryland.

Cecil County Public Schools whole-heartedly endorses House Bill 961 and requests your support and assistance in passing this bill.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey A. Lawson, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools