



Board of Education of Howard County
Testimony Submitted to the Maryland House of Delegates,
Appropriations Committee
March 5, 2025

HB1369: UNFAVORABLE
Education - Minimum Wage for Education Support Professionals

**Board of Education
of Howard County**

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The Board of Education of Howard County (the Board) opposes the **Education - Minimum Wage for Education Support Professionals** given the significant fiscal burdens placed on local school systems.

HB1369 requires local boards of education to pay education support professionals a minimum wage of \$25.00 per hour beginning July 1, 2025. An “education support professional” is defined under the bills as a noncertificated public school employee designated as part of nonsupervisory bargaining unit. Subsequent minimum wage would grow based on the Consumer Price Index or a successor index published by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. The Maryland State Board of Education would adopt regulations to carry out the provisions of the bill.

The Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) currently has over 2,100 full-time employee positions (FTE) that fall under the Education Support Professional (HCEA-ESP) bargaining unit in Howard County. Of those, approximately 923 FTE earn less than \$25.00 per hour.

The chart below highlights the steps and grades on the HCEA-ESP Secretaries and Assistants pay scale that are below \$25.00 per hour. This is the largest cohort impacted by this legislation. HB1369 would not only fundamentally alter the relationship of step/grade/classification for this salary schedule, but also for the classification and compensation relationship to all other salary schedules.

Depending on how the legislation would be implemented, without commensurate dedicated funding it likely would be cost-prohibitive. For illustrative purposes, one way to reach the \$25.00 per hour minimum would be to give a percentage increase to bring the lowest grade/steps up to \$25.00 per hour. That would take about a 40 percent COLA. Maintaining the same step/grade/pay relationship for everyone on this schedule would require everyone on the schedule to get the 40 percent increase. That would increase total cost by \$36.4 million for workers on this salary schedule alone.

Secretaries and Assistants												
Effective July 1, 2024												
GRADE STEP	I	II	III SAs	IV	V	VI Paras	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII
1	\$17.88	\$18.10	\$18.31	\$18.54	\$18.75	\$19.40	\$19.62	\$19.84	\$20.48	\$21.14	\$22.00	\$23.09
2	\$18.43	\$18.66	\$18.93	\$19.19	\$19.46	\$20.16	\$20.43	\$20.66	\$21.35	\$22.09	\$22.97	\$24.08
3	\$18.99	\$19.24	\$19.54	\$19.85	\$20.16	\$20.92	\$21.22	\$21.50	\$22.22	\$23.05	\$23.91	\$25.06
4	\$19.53	\$19.81	\$20.16	\$20.49	\$20.88	\$21.68	\$22.01	\$22.36	\$23.09	\$23.99	\$24.88	\$26.05
5	\$20.07	\$20.38	\$20.77	\$21.16	\$21.57	\$22.43	\$22.81	\$23.19	\$23.95	\$24.94	\$25.83	\$27.06
6	\$20.63	\$20.95	\$21.37	\$21.82	\$22.27	\$23.19	\$23.61	\$24.04	\$24.82	\$25.87	\$26.78	\$28.04
7	\$21.18	\$21.52	\$21.99	\$22.46	\$22.99	\$23.97	\$24.40	\$24.88	\$25.67	\$26.83	\$27.74	\$29.04
8	\$21.73	\$22.09	\$22.60	\$23.12	\$23.69	\$24.73	\$25.18	\$25.72	\$26.54	\$27.77	\$28.70	\$30.03
9	\$22.28	\$22.66	\$23.22	\$23.78	\$24.40	\$25.48	\$25.99	\$26.56	\$27.40	\$28.72	\$29.66	\$31.02
10	\$22.83	\$23.23	\$23.82	\$24.44	\$25.10	\$26.24	\$26.79	\$27.40	\$28.28	\$29.66	\$30.60	\$32.01
11	\$23.37	\$23.81	\$24.43	\$25.09	\$25.82	\$26.99	\$27.59	\$28.24	\$29.13	\$30.62	\$31.57	\$33.02
12	\$23.95	\$24.39	\$25.05	\$25.75	\$26.52	\$27.77	\$28.38	\$29.09	\$30.00	\$31.56	\$32.53	\$34.00
13	\$24.49	\$24.95	\$25.66	\$26.40	\$27.23	\$28.54	\$29.18	\$29.93	\$30.87	\$32.51	\$33.48	\$34.99
14	\$25.04	\$25.52	\$26.27	\$27.07	\$27.94	\$29.29	\$29.97	\$30.76	\$31.74	\$33.45	\$34.44	\$35.98
15	\$25.59	\$26.08	\$26.88	\$27.72	\$28.65	\$30.05	\$30.76	\$31.62	\$32.59	\$34.40	\$35.40	\$36.97
16	\$26.15	\$26.67	\$27.50	\$28.37	\$29.34	\$30.82	\$31.56	\$32.45	\$33.47	\$35.36	\$36.36	\$37.97
17	\$26.69	\$27.24	\$28.11	\$29.03	\$30.04	\$31.57	\$32.36	\$33.29	\$34.33	\$36.30	\$37.31	\$38.97
18	\$27.23	\$27.81	\$28.72	\$29.68	\$30.76	\$32.33	\$33.16	\$34.13	\$35.19	\$37.25	\$38.27	\$39.95
19	\$27.79	\$28.37	\$29.32	\$30.35	\$31.46	\$33.10	\$33.95	\$34.98	\$36.06	\$38.19	\$39.22	\$40.95
Over 19	\$28.34	\$28.95	\$29.94	\$31.00	\$32.17	\$33.85	\$34.74	\$35.82	\$36.92	\$39.14	\$40.18	\$41.94

Without dedicated funding, that increase as of July 1, 2025, and any others necessitated should HB1369 pass, would be impossible to do without extensive cuts to the HCPSS budget. For example, the initial proposed reductions to existing services considered by HCPSS for the FY25 Operating Budget to make up a \$46.6 million gap in funding included a class size increase by two at all levels, and cuts to programs like gifted and talented, strings, and summer school.

Additionally, the legislation automatically indexes cost of living increases to the rate of inflation for future years. This removes decision-making from the local level and effectively undercuts the purposes of collective bargaining.

For these reasons, we urge an UNFAVORABLE report on HB1369 from this Committee.