

KAREN LEWIS YOUNG
Legislative District 3
Frederick County

Committee on Education, Energy,
and the Environment



THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

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The Honorable Chair Ben Barnes
The Honorable Vice Mark Chang
Appropriations Committee
Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

March 25th, 2025

SB0062 – Task Force on Education Funding and Student Population Growth

Chair Barnes, Vice Chair Chang, and esteemed members of this committee,

Senate Bill 62 – Task Force on Education Funding and Student Population Growth will establish a task force to study potential strategies to address the gaps in funding that occur in school systems across the state due to the significant growth in their enrollment rates. Every year, the attendance snapshot is taken on September 30th but the funding due each school system, based on that snapshot, is not disbursed until July 1st the following year. The problem is that some school systems are growing at rates that leave counties fully responsible to absorb the difference.

In Frederick County, 804 children went without state funding during FY23. This year, one middle school ran out of desks at the start of the school year and had to scramble in order to find a seat for every student. In many schools it is a regular occurrence for textbook supplies to be so limited that students must share books. Not only does this make it more difficult for the students to study and check their facts, as they cannot take their textbooks home, but printing the assignments further increased the school's operational cost in printing paper and ink.

This is far from just a Frederick County issue. Many counties, including Anne Arundel, Carroll, Charles, Prince George's and Wicomico are also experiencing this funding shortfall. In FY23, more than 2,000 students throughout Maryland went without education funding for the entire school year. Moreover, recent data shows that this problem could begin to impact the majority of Maryland schools. Between 2023 and 2024, 22 out of 24 counties in Maryland experienced population growth, including our four largest counties and Baltimore City. As a whole, the state grew by 46,158 people. Please see the attached article for more details on Maryland's population growth.

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The task force will study this pressing issue and share a report before next session with recommendations on a variety of strategies to best address the growth some counties are facing in relation to the school funding formula. We will consult best practices around the country. We understand that, in some cases, funding will not be available for implementation. However, given the historic review of the funding formula every five years, we believe it is best to explore all options. I urge a favorable report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Karen Lewis Young". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "K" and "Y".

Senator Karen Lewis Young