



**Board of Education
of Howard County**

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**Board of Education of Howard County
Testimony Submitted to the Maryland House of Delegates,
Appropriations Committee
January 28, 2025**

HB0157: FAVORABLE

Education - Safe Schools Fund - Grant Allocations

The Board of Education of Howard County (the Board) supports **Education - Safe Schools Fund - Grant Allocations** to ensure the state money allotted can be fully taken advantage of by local school systems.

The Safe Schools Fund includes \$10 million available annually for grants to local school systems and law enforcement agencies to assist in providing adequate law enforcement coverage for public schools. Grant awards are made to counties proportional to the number of schools in that system. Under current statute, any unspent funds go back into the Safe Schools Funds. HB0157 would alter that process and instead allow unspent funds to be given to other local school system that have used their allocation and show a need for additional funds within the same fiscal year.

Currently the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) does not use the full amount allotted under the Safe Schools Fund. With a little over \$7000 for each school, HCPSS was allotted \$547,000 for the current year. Flexibility in the use of the grant funds for school security employees provided by the passage of SB1077 Public Schools - Appropriations for School Safety Expenditures - School Security Employees in 2024, allows HCPSS to now use this for overtime of police and security.

As the security of our schools continues to be a high priority, and physical security measures increasingly demand additional budget allocations, HB0157 affords Howard County the opportunity to benefit from unused funds from other school systems, and vice versa.

For these reasons, we urge a FAVORABLE report on HB0157 from this Committee.