



OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

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DATE: February 21, 2025

BILL: SB 821

TITLE: Primary and Secondary Education – Student Immunization – Temporary Admission Period

COMMITTEE: Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

POSITION: **SUPPORT**

Prince George’s County Public Schools **supports** Senate Bill 821, which requires each county board to temporarily admit a student to school if the student’s parent or guardian can provide proof that the date of the student’s immunization appointment is within 60 calendar days from the time the student is temporarily admitted into school.

Currently, the regulations allow students to be temporarily admitted to school if the parent or guardian submits proof of the immunization appointment only 20 days from the time the student is temporarily admitted to school.

From July 1 to September 30th Prince George’s County Public Schools averaged greater than 4,000 newcomer students in grades PreK -12. Newcomers are students born outside of the United States that have recently arrived in the country and are new to Prince George’s County Public Schools. Due to a variety of challenges that newcomer families face, many of these students are not able to meet the immunizations requirements in time to be counted as part of the Foundation Program resulting in millions of dollars of lost State funding each school year. For the 2025 school year, more than 900 students were identified as not being funded by the per pupil Foundation funding as they did not provide proof of immunization prior to the September 30th student enrollment submission to the Maryland State Department of Education. In addition to the lost Foundation funding, eligibility for Foundation funds is also required for receiving other services including Free and Reduced Meals, Special Education services, and Mult-lingual instruction services.

If Senate Bill 821 had been in place for the start of the 2025 school year, all but 58 students would have been included in the pupil enrollment count and Prince George’s County would have received the funding needed to educate the students who were eventually enrolled.

In addition to lost funding, the current regulations result in these students being excluded from receiving instructional services until the immunization requirements are met. Because attending school is crucial for equipping students with essential knowledge and skills that form the foundation for academic and career success, the lack of attendance has the potential to negatively impact these students’ future success and achievement in school. PGCPS understands the importance of the immunization program when considering public health and will work to ensure that all students comply; however, the current timeline is too short when considering the specific needs of these students and families. The enactment of Senate Bill 821 would be crucial in ensuring that students are able to attend school at the start of the

school year.

For these reasons, Prince George's County Public Schools requests a **favorable** report on Senate Bill 821.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Millard L. House II".

Millard House II
Superintendent
Prince George's County Public Schools

CC: Quincy Boyd, Chief of Staff