



PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

14201 School Lane | Upper Marlboro, MD 20772 | 301-952-6115 | www.pgcps.org/offices/board-of-education

February 12, 2025

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Ways and Means Committee

Re: HB608 Primary and Secondary Education - Student Immunization - Temporary Admission Period

Position: Support

Contact: Dr. Phelton Moss, Chair, Policy and Governance Committee
Phelton.Moss@pgcps.org | Johntel Greene, Government Relations Johntel@laperez.org

Dear Chair Atterbeary, Vice Chair Wilkins and esteemed members of the Ways and Means Committee,

Thank you for the work you all do on behalf of our students, educators, and staff across the state and in the Prince George's County Public Schools community. On behalf of the Prince George's County Board of Education, representing over 130,000 students, we are writing to express our strong support for HB608.

This bill would require each county board to temporarily admit students under specific circumstances related to proof of immunization appointment. It would also expand the window from 20 calendar days to 60 calendar days. We regularly encounter unique student situations that under the current 20 day immunization requirement effectively bars students from schools at a critical time in their learning and our funding formula. As one of Maryland's largest school districts, this small changes in policy can make a significant impact on numbers and funding.

1. Student Impact: Each year, we see students missing valuable instructional time while families work to obtain or verify immunization records. This disruption disproportionately affects our most vulnerable students, including those from mobile families and those experiencing housing transitions. From July 1 to September 30th Prince George's County Public Schools averaged greater than 4,000 newcomer students in grades PreK -12.

2. Financial Impact: The Foundation Program relies on headcount reporting that happens during the start of the enrollment period. When students are barred from the classroom due to immunization records, it can result in millions of dollars of lost funding to our county's education system. For SY25-26, 918 students were identified as not being funded by the per pupil Foundation funding because the students did not provide proof of immunization prior to the September 30th student enrollment submission to the Maryland State Department of Education. This resulted in a loss of \$8,469,468 Foundation funding.



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3. Healthcare Access: In Prince George's County, we have observed significant challenges for families scheduling immunization appointments during the compressed time frame between summer break and school start. Medical providers are often overwhelmed with requests during this period, creating unnecessary barriers to school attendance. This legislation aligns with our commitment to supporting families rather than creating barriers.

4. Mobile Student Needs: With our diverse and dynamic student population, we frequently encounter families who move between schools, districts, states, and even countries. These families often don't receive immunization requirement notifications until they begin the enrollment process, creating additional challenges for timely school entry.

For these reasons, the Prince George's County Board of Education urges a favorable report on HB608.

We thank you for your continued support and welcome further discussion. We are prepared to provide any additional information necessary to assist in advancing this bill. We look forward to continuing to partner with you to educate, advocate, and act, together.

Sincerely,

Prince George's County Board of Education