



LOYOLA UNIVERSITY MARYLAND

— 1852 —

February 20, 2025

Good Afternoon Chair Atterbeary, Vice Chair Wilkins, and Members of the Ways and Means Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for **House Bill 1015: Public Middle, High, and Charter Schools – Start Time for Instruction**. Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony on this critical issue.

My name is **Heather Moore**, and I serve as the **Assistant Dean of the Loyola University Maryland School of Education**. I am also the parent of two children who attend **Baltimore City Public Schools** and have been a proud Maryland resident since 1997.

In just the four years my oldest son has attended high school, the school start times have changed many times. Once permanently from 7:45 to 7:30 and other times in response to an emergency, a 2-hour delay because of snow or an early closing due to high temperatures, in fact just this morning my sons were sent home from school at 9:30 am because the heat in the building is not working, their schedule was altered and they will continue classes online at 11:15. These frequent disruptions highlight a critical question: **If emergencies can prompt schedule changes, why aren't we treating early school start times as the public health emergency they truly are?**

The research is clear. Major health, medical, and education organizations—including the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the American Medical Association—recommend that middle and high schools start no earlier than **8:30 AM** to support student health, well-being, and academic success. This is not a new conversation.

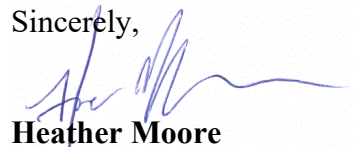
- In **2014**, the Maryland State Department of Education and the Department of Health released a **joint report** on the impact of early school start times.
- In **2016**, the Maryland Legislature passed **HB 83 – the Orange Ribbon Bill for Healthy School Hours**.
- Just this year, the **Abell Foundation** published a nearly [50-page report](#) detailing the benefits and feasibility of later start times in **Baltimore City Public Schools**.
- Also this year numerous publications—including [The Baltimore Sun](#), [The Baltimore Banner](#), [Maryland Matters](#), and [TIME Magazine](#)—have highlighted the urgency of this issue.

Maryland has long been a leader in education innovation and student-centered policies. **House Bill 1015 provides the necessary structure and support for MSDE and local school systems to implement healthy school start times statewide.**

I urge the committee to issue a **favorable report** on **House Bill 1015** and take this vital step toward prioritizing student health and academic success.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Heather Moore

**Assistant Dean, Loyola University Maryland School of Education
Parent, Baltimore City Public Schools**