



# MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

*Expanding Opportunity and Unleashing Potential*

15 West Gude Drive ♦ Suite 100 ♦ Rockville, Maryland 20850

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**BILL:** House Bill 1169

**TITLE:** Montgomery County - Board of Education - Mandatory School Holidays MC 6-25

**DATE:** March 3, 2025

**POSITION:** Oppose

**COMMITTEE:** Ways and Means

**CONTACT:** Patricia Ursprung, Coordinator, Legislative Affairs

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The Montgomery County Board of Education opposes House Bill 1169.

This bill requires the Montgomery County Board of Education to close schools to observe Diwali, Ed al-Adha, Ed al-Fitr, Lunar New Year, Rosh Hashanah, and Yom Kippur. An amendment approved by the Montgomery County Delegation adds Juneteenth to the list. Another accepted amendment limits the required closure to school students only, rather than all buildings and offices as was stated in the original bill, and delays the implementation date until the 2026-2027 school year.

On September 26, 2024, the Montgomery County Board of Education adopted a legislative platform that contains priority issues and ongoing concerns. One of the ongoing concerns is preserving local autonomy. Based on this platform position, the Montgomery County Board of Education opposes legislation that would infringe on local control and impose unfunded mandates. Bills that fall into this category require specific school system action and may impact areas such as school calendars, school start times, curriculum, testing, procurement, and other operational decision-making. Some of these bills have a known fiscal impact, other times the fiscal impact is unintentional but still present.

House Bill 1169, as amended, infringes on local control because it dictates areas of the school calendar, requiring schools to close to student instruction on specified holidays. The bill also potentially includes an unfunded mandate as these legally mandated closures could result in a substantial fiscal liability for the school system. The significance of the possible unfunded mandate is unknown, and cannot be known until negotiations with our union partners occur, but estimates suggest the fiscal impact could be more than \$14 million in years where each of the specified holidays fall on a weekday.

As a result of this intrusion on local control that possibly results in an unfunded liability for the school system, the Montgomery County Board of Education opposes House Bill 1169.