



**Board of Education of Howard County
Testimony Submitted to the Maryland House of Delegates
Appropriations Committee
March 19, 2026**

**Board of Education
of Howard County**

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HB1176: FAVORABLE With AMENDEMENTS

Howard County – Board of Education Budget – Minimum Funding Ho. Co. 10–26

The Board of Education of Howard County (the Board) supports **Howard County – Board of Education Budget – Minimum Funding Ho. Co. 10–26** with amendments to shift the focus of the bill. Awareness of funding levels both proposed and ultimately allocated to the school system budget would increase transparency for the Howard County community.

The Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) estimates that on average it has received 51.0 percent of the total Howard County General Fund budget over the past 10 years. Given the fiscal impact on future budgets under HB1176 as originally introduced would be an increase to expected local funding for the school system, the intent of the bill is clear and supported by the Board. HB1176 recognizes the need to better align local funding to support the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future implementation and account for fixed-cost growth necessary to sustain services.

Altering the formula in Howard County alone, however, to a proportional funding model based on total county revenues breaks the per pupil cost share policy in Maryland and would put Howard County on an island when comparing student funding to other local school systems. The proposed amendment as introduced by Delegate Chao Wu, in consultation with the school system and the County, is in alignment with the Board’s position to shift the required 58 percent funding level to instead be a requirement for the County to report – in each annual budget proposed and adopted – the percentage of the county’s General Fund Revenue that is appropriated to the school system for that fiscal year. This would be required for the operating budget with an intent to provide consistent transparency of funding levels for the local Howard County community. By setting forth a measure for the monies to be included in this calculation, the amendments also ensure stability for year-over-year comparisons moving forward.

For these reasons, we urge a FAVORABLE report from this Committee on HB1176 as amended and passed by the Howard County Delegation.