Washington County
BOARD OF
EDUCATION

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BILL: **House Bill 1329**
TITLE: **Education – Public School Construction - Funding**
HEARING DATE: **March 11, 2026**
POSITION: **FAVORABLE**
COMMITTEE: **Appropriations Committee**
CONTACT: **Ms. Jamie Brown, Legislative Representative, 301-766-2946**

The Washington County Board of Education supports House Bill 1329, which would establish in state law a minimum annual public school construction funding level of $550 million beginning in Fiscal Year 2027.

Washington County Public Schools has forty-seven (47) school facilities to serve the needs of approximately 22,000 students. The need for new school construction and the repair and modernization of aging facilities is particularly acute in Washington County, as many of these buildings are ageing and in need of significant repair or replacement to provide safe, secure, and high-quality learning environments.

Over half of Washington County's public schools and instructional building inventory were constructed in the 1970's or earlier and have not had the benefit of a full renovation or modernization since that time. These buildings are in need of replacement or modernization both from the standpoint of failing, inefficient systems due to age, and to keep pace with current educational standards through the elimination of "open" schools designed around education philosophies of the era in which they were constructed.

Within the Washington County Board of Education's educational facilities 10-year plan are recommendations for five (5) major capital projects to address facility replacement and student seat capacity needs, and eleven (11) capital maintenance projects that address deferred maintenance and life cycle replacement of various building systems.

Washington County recognizes that it is not alone in needing to provide significant repairs to schools or to replace them. With limited school construction funding available, many school systems across the state are experiencing similar challenges. Increasing the public school construction funding amount by $100 million acknowledges this widespread need and reflects the impact that recent inflation has had on public school construction costs.

The Board of Education of Washington County strongly supports increasing state funding for public school construction to improve school facilities to enhance the learning environment for thousands of students across the State of Maryland.

Washington County Board of Education supports House Bill 1329 and requests the Appropriations Committee to issue a favorable report.

Thank you.

Cc: Washington County Board of Education Members
Washington County Delegation to the Maryland General Assembly
Dr. David T. Sovine, Superintendent
Dr. Gary Willow, Deputy Superintendent
Mr. Jeffrey Proulx, Chief Operating Officer