

APRIL ROSE
Legislative District 5
Carroll and Fredrick Counties

ASSISTANT MINORITY LEADER

Economic Matters Committee

Subcommittees

Banking, Consumer Protection,
and Commercial Law

Property and Casualty Insurance

Unemployment Insurance

Joint Committee on Legislative Ethics



The Maryland House of Delegates
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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

March 11, 2026

Support House Bill 976

Education Funding Accuracy Act

Appropriations Committee

Chair Barnes, Vice Chair Kaiser and Appropriations Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to present HB 976.

The purpose of this bill is twofold.

1. Accurately count the number of students attending school for the **entire school year** for the basis of per-pupil funding in the Blueprint funding formula.
2. To begin an annual report to supply data on students who begin attendance when counted on September 30th of each year but are no longer in school in subsequent attendance counts to include the final count of the school year. This report should include details on the students who have become labeled “whereabouts unknown” which is now coded as a (W-50).

There have been numerous news reports that the number of students who fit into the category of “whereabouts unknown” (W-50’s) was 6,126 in 2019. Fast forward to 2024 where that number has grown to 10,997.

It is **vitaly important** that we develop better and more transparent reporting on how many of these students are actually missing and unaccounted for in their school attendance and why. These numbers have grown, and we have been funding students to the tune of \$168 million dollars who may not have received any education at all, yet the taxpayer is paying for during the school year.

While there are many instances where students begin a school year and subsequently move to another school or move, we need to have a better way to track these students and to do so faster than waiting for a final report at the end of a school year with potentially many children not getting the education they crucially need and deserve and that taxpayers are funding across the state.

There have been discussions and additional data reports supplied, and this information is appreciated and helpful for this important discussion to make needed improvements to the current process. There are several amendments that have been requested and will be supplied for consideration by this committee.

We as a legislature have passed over the years many sources of support available to assist families who are in need. If we have students who are not being educated and whose families are not followed up with to see what support they may need, then we are failing these children.

In conclusion, we must do better for our students, their families and the taxpayers of Maryland.

I ask for a favorable report.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "April Rose". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Del. April Rose
District 5
Carroll and Frederick Counties