

# **SB 712 Testimony.pdf**

Uploaded by: Paul Corderman

Position: FAV

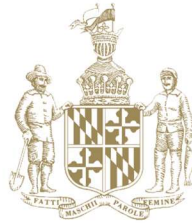
PAUL D. CORDERMAN  
*Legislative District 2*  
Frederick and Washington Counties

Budget and Taxation Committee

*Subcommittees*

Capital Budget

Education, Business and Administration



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

March 3, 2026

Senate Budget & Tax Committee  
Chair Guy Guzzone  
Vice Chair Jim Rosapepe  
3 West Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

**Testimony In Support of SB 712 - Primary and Secondary Education - Funding Accuracy and Full-Time Equivalent Enrollment Count - Alterations and Report (Education Funding Accuracy Act)**

Chair Guzzone, Vice Chair Rosapepe, and Members of the Budget & Tax Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to present Senate Bill 712. SB 712 brings greater clarity, consistency, and fairness to how student enrollment is calculated for the purpose of education funding. By defining enrollment count to include a three-year moving average for “Full-time equivalent enrollment”, SB 712 helps stabilize funding for school systems experiencing fluctuations, ensuring that students are not penalized due to temporary enrollment changes, and allowing for an approach that promotes thoughtful planning and protects continuity of services for our schools.

SB 712 also strengthens transparency and accountability by requiring a detailed public report on enrollment counts and funding allocations by county. By making this information accessible and including students categorized as “whereabouts unknown,” the State affirms its commitment to responsible stewardship of education dollars.

Thank you for your consideration of this bill, and we respectfully request a favorable report on SB 712.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "P. D. Corderman".

Senator Paul D. Corderman – District 2, Washington & Frederick Counties

# **Testimony in support of SB0712 - Education Funding**

Uploaded by: Richard KAP Kaplowitz

Position: FAV

SB0712\_RichardKaplowitz\_FAV

03/03/2026

Richard Keith Kaplowitz

Frederick, MD 21703

**TESTIMONY ON SB#0712- POSITION: FAVORABLE**

**Primary and Secondary Education - Funding Accuracy and Full-Time Equivalent Enrollment Count - Alterations and Report (Education Funding Accuracy Act)**

**TO:** Chair Guzzone, Vice Chair Rosapepe, and members of the Budget and Taxation Committee

**FROM:** Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Keith Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in support of SB#0712, **Primary and Secondary Education - Funding Accuracy and Full-Time Equivalent Enrollment Count - Alterations and Report (Education Funding Accuracy Act)**

Frederick County has the fastest growing school system in Maryland. With that growth has come significant funding challenges for those new students due to the current formula for funding of our students. The definition currently being utilized creates an inherent disadvantage to our system and the school systems in other areas within the state that have a growth curve. The current system does not have money for the new students reaching the counties affected until the following school year.

This bill will assist in removing this significant financial challenges local school systems have in providing for their new student populations.

This bill will accomplish that purpose by altering the definition of "full-time equivalent enrollment" in the calculation for State education aid to include the average number of students enrolled in kindergarten through grade 12 on September 30 and May 31 of the prior school year; requiring the State Department of Education to publish online and submit a certain report to certain standing committees of the General Assembly; and applying the Act to the calculation of education funding for fiscal years beginning after June 30, 2027.

**I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on SB#0712.**

**BTU Testimony SB712 2026.pdf**

Uploaded by: Cristina E Duncan Evans

Position: UNF



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**Senate Bill 712 – Primary and Secondary Education - Funding Accuracy and Full-Time Equivalent Enrollment Count - Alterations and Report (Education Funding Accuracy Act)**  
**Budget and Taxation Committee**  
**March 3, 2026, 1pm**

**UNFAVORABLE**

The BTU proudly represents thousands of educators, school support staff, and education professionals working in Baltimore City Public Schools.

We respectfully request an unfavorable report on Senate Bill 712, which would change the state’s education funding formula to base allocations on the average of two enrollment count days — one at the beginning of the school year and one at the end. While this proposal may appear to be a neutral technical adjustment, in practice it would disproportionately harm districts serving students experiencing poverty and high mobility — including Baltimore City.

Our students face significant housing instability, family relocation, foster care transitions, immigration-related moves, and other circumstances beyond their control. As a result, Baltimore City Schools serves a substantial number of students who enroll after the start of the year or who may not be present on a late-year count date. Under this proposal, districts would lose funding for students they educated for months simply because those students were not present on one of the two snapshot days.

The costs of educating those students, however, are real and immediate. Schools hire teachers, open classrooms, assign paraprofessionals, schedule special education services, and provide wraparound supports at the start of the year. These are not flexible expenses that can be reversed in April or May. If enrollment declines late in the year, districts cannot “un-hire” educators or dismantle services without causing disruption and harm to students.

This proposal would effectively require districts to educate 100 percent of the students who walk through their doors while funding them for fewer than 100 percent. Districts serving concentrations of poverty — and particularly those benefiting from targeted supports under the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future — would be especially vulnerable. The Blueprint was designed to stabilize and strengthen educational opportunity in communities facing systemic disadvantage. A two-count average system introduces volatility and uncertainty that undermines that goal.

Predictable funding is essential for responsible planning. School systems must negotiate contracts, staff classrooms, and design multi-year academic interventions based on stable revenue projections. Tying funding to an end-of-year enrollment count injects uncertainty late in the fiscal cycle, increasing the likelihood of budget shortfalls, staffing instability, and future program cuts.

We are also concerned that basing funding on a late-year count could create perverse incentives — discouraging appropriate student transfers or reassignments because of their fiscal impact. Funding mechanisms should never create tension between doing what is best for students and protecting district finances.

In short, this bill shifts financial risk onto districts serving the most vulnerable students, penalizes mobility tied to poverty and instability, and weakens the fiscal foundation necessary to sustain long-term reform.

For these reasons, the Baltimore Teachers Union respectfully urges an unfavorable report on SB712.

# **Testimony SB 712 Primary and Secondary Education -**

Uploaded by: Dawana Sterrette

Position: UNF

**Testimony of the  
Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners  
In Opposition of  
Senate Bill 712 –  
Primary and Secondary Education - Funding Accuracy and Full-Time Equivalent Enrollment  
Count - Alterations and Report (Education Funding Accuracy Act)**

**March 3, 2026**

The Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners (the Board) opposes Senate Bill 712. The bill would require two counts of students each year, on September 30 (current law) and May 31 of the prior school year. The Board does not see the need for dual counts, as the September 30 enrollment count is appropriate. Taking dual counts could have a detrimental effect on school board funding.

Should a school system lose enrollment (which may happen in more counties than the sponsor imagines), the concern is that there is still a need to provide resources to those students that come in and out of the school building. In Baltimore City, there is much mobility and there is a need to ensure that appropriate resources and staffing are available, as students are so transient in the City of Baltimore.

This would also pose issues with the state mandated minimum school funding requirements of the Blueprint. The Blueprint requires that at least 75% of per-pupil formula funds—and 100% of specific, targeted grants, such as the concentration of poverty grant—directly reach individual schools. This minimum school funding ensures resources follow students, with compliance reporting required for local education agencies. This new potential dual count would clearly upend minimum school funding.

For the foregoing reasons, the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners opposes House Bill 712 and urges an unfavorable report.

Dawana Merritt Sterrette, Esq.  
Executive Director, Legislative and Government Affairs  
Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners

443-250-0190

**SB712\_Ed Funding\_LWVMD\_3.3.2026.pdf**

Uploaded by: Gail Sunderman

Position: UNF



**TESTIMONY TO THE SENATE BUDGET & TAXATION and EDUCATION,  
ENERGY, AND THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEES**

**SB 712 - Primary and Secondary Education – Funding Accuracy and Full-Time  
Equivalent Enrollment Count – Alterations and Report 3 (Education Funding  
Accuracy Act)**

**POSITION: Unfavorable**

**BY: Linda T. Kohn, President**

**Date: March 3, 2026**

The League of Women Voters of Maryland (LWVMD) is a nonpartisan organization that supports policies that provide an equitable, adequate, and quality education for all children. LWVMD recognizes that the primary responsibility for funding public elementary and secondary education lies with the state. It supports a foundation program based on a weighted per pupil formula that is supported from general state revenues at a level high enough to eliminate inequities.

LWVMD opposes SB 712 – Education Funding Accuracy Act – because it would unnecessarily shift how Maryland counts enrollment by changing the definition of “full-time equivalent enrollment” to the “average” number of students enrolled on September 30 and May 31 of the prior school year. This change in the method used to calculate enrollment would reduce state funding for education.

Per-pupil funding is calculated in part based on full-time equivalent enrollment (FTE), which currently is the number of students enrolled on September 30 of the prior year. By changing how students are counted, SB712 is likely to reduce enrollment counts, which will then impact the state’s total obligation to fund public education. This leaves districts with fewer resources to provide interventions, such as those designed to prevent, reduce, or respond to chronic absenteeism.

SB 712 would also add to the administrative workload of both state and local education agencies and complicate reporting requirements without any apparent benefit. The additional resources required by the local education agencies and the state to implement the change would be redirected from other core activities. The change in methodology would adversely impact the enrollment comparisons from years prior to the change.

**LWVMD recommends an unfavorable report on SB 712.**

# **SB 712 - Oppose - Enrollment Counts.pdf**

Uploaded by: Jessica Goff

Position: UNF



621 Ridgely Avenue, Suite 300, Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
410-841-5414 · 800-841-8197 · Fax: 410-841-6580 · MABE.org

**BILL:** Senate Bill 712  
**TITLE:** Primary and Secondary Education – Funding Accuracy and Full–Time Equivalent Enrollment Count – Alterations and Report (Education Funding Accuracy Act)  
**HEARING DATE:** March 3, 2026  
**POSITION:** UNFAVORABLE  
**COMMITTEE:** Budget and Taxation  
**CONTACT:** Jessica Goff, Governmental Affairs Associate (jgoff@mabe.org)

The Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE), representing all 24 local boards of education in Maryland, respectfully **opposes Senate Bill 712 Primary and Secondary Education – Funding Accuracy and Full–Time Equivalent Enrollment Count – Alterations and Report (Education Funding Accuracy Act).**

Senate Bill 712 alters the definition of “full-time equivalent enrollment” in the calculation for State education aid to include the average number of students enrolled in K-12 on September 30 and May 31 (rather than just September 30). Annually, MSDE would be required to publish on its website and submit to the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee and the Senate Appropriations Committee, the enrollment count used to calculate full-time equivalent enrollment, disaggregated by county, the number of students in each county in each enrollment category, the full time equivalent enrollment number used to calculate funding for the upcoming school year, and each county’s allocation of per pupil state and local education funding.

Senate Bill 712 increases the risk of reducing funding for public schools in Maryland. Local school systems often see fluctuations mid-year, particularly in high-mobility populations. A second count in the spring could capture lower enrollment than the single fall snapshot, which would reduce state aid under the formula. School systems build budgets and staffing based on the students who walk in the door in August and September—not the students who remain months later. School systems hire teachers, assign paraprofessionals, open classrooms, contract transportation, and allocate services based on fall enrollment. SB 712 risks funding fewer students than are actually seated and school systems are required to serve at the start of the year.

Senate Bill 712 also creates budget instability and planning uncertainty. Local boards and superintendents build budgets months in advance, hire staff in the spring and summer, and make class-size and program decisions before school begins. By adding a second count and then finding the average, funding becomes less predictable. This

creates uncertainty, pressure on local governments, and a reduced ability to plan responsibly. This is in direct conflict with MABE's longstanding support of predictability and stability in funding formulas.

Senate Bill 712 also disproportionately harms school systems with higher rates of high-mobility and low-income students. School systems with higher poverty rates, greater housing instability, and higher student mobility will likely see larger enrollment swings over the year. Yet, those are the school systems with the greatest need. Averaging counts effectively penalizes school systems serving the most at-risk student populations.

Senate Bill 712 does not reduce costs when students leave. Costs like teacher contracts, facilities, transportation, etc. are fixed. Those costs do not change when a few students leave. Therefore, funding would become misaligned with actual costs.

Further, Senate Bill 712 would increase administrative burden and compliance costs. Two official counts would mean additional data verification, additional reporting, and additional audit exposure. Unless the State increases funding to account for this, it is an unfunded mandate.

School systems must hire and staff for every child who arrives in August and September. Averaging enrollment counts later in the year risks funding fewer students than school systems are required to serve. That creates instability, inequity, and structural underfunding. For these reasons, **MABE opposes SB 712 and kindly requests an unfavorable report.**

# **SB712 Oppose (Written).pdf**

Uploaded by: Riya Gupta

Position: UNF



**Testimony in OPPOSITION of  
Senate Bill 712: Primary and Secondary Education – Funding Accuracy and Full–Time  
Equivalent Enrollment Count – Alterations and Report**

**Budget and Taxation Committee / Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee**

**Position: Oppose**

March 3, 2026

Strong Schools Maryland is a network of education advocates dedicated to ensuring the full funding and faithful implementation of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. **Strong Schools Maryland urges an unfavorable report on Senate Bill 712**, which proposes altering the definition of "full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment" by averaging student counts from September 30 and May 31 of the prior school year.

The Blueprint for Maryland's Future sets an ambitious goal: a world-class public school system. That goal depends on predictable, equity-driven investment. Under current law, per-pupil funding is based on a September 30 enrollment snapshot. This approach gives local school systems reliable data early in the academic year, allowing them to hire educators, finalize transportation contracts, and allocate resources based on the students actually enrolled.

SB 712 conflicts directly with the State's constitutional budget timeline. If state aid is tied to a May 31 enrollment count, the General Assembly would be required to finalize billions of dollars in education funding weeks before that data exists. This creates a "data lag" that would force the State to rely on outdated projections, undermining the very "accuracy" this bill claims to seek.

This "two-point average" would also create a structural disadvantage for schools serving our most vulnerable populations. High-poverty areas often experience higher "student mobility" due to housing instability or seasonal employment.

- SB 712 effectively penalizes districts for student mobility.
- This approach risks stripping resources away from the schools that the *Blueprint* identifies as needing the most support, further widening the achievement gap.

Student attendance is vital, but SB 712 is not an attendance-improvement measure; it is a funding-reduction measure that is administratively unworkable within the State's legislative calendar. This legislation will not help us reach our goal of "World-Class" schools; instead, it will create unavoidable fiscal instability.

**For these reasons, we respectfully urge an unfavorable report on Senate Bill 712.**

*For more information, contact Kenzie Funk: [kenzie@strongschoolsmaryland.org](mailto:kenzie@strongschoolsmaryland.org)*

**SB712 - UNF - MSEA.pdf**

Uploaded by: Sean Johnson

Position: UNF

## **UNFAVORABLE**

### **Senate Bill 712 Primary and Secondary Education - Funding Accuracy and Full-Time Equivalent Enrollment Count - Alterations and Report**

**Senate Budget and Taxation Committee  
March 3, 2026**

**Sean Johnson  
Executive Director**

The Maryland State Education Association opposes Senate Bill 712, which would alter the definition of "full-time equivalent enrollment" in the calculation for State education aid to include the average number of students enrolled in kindergarten through grade 12 on September 30 and May 31 of the prior school year. If there is an interest in considering a second (or additional) data points, then we would recommend the full-time equivalent enrollment count to be the greater of the two (or more) collection dates.

MSEA represents 76,000 educators and school employees who work in Maryland's public schools and community colleges, teaching and supporting our almost 900,000 K-12 students so they can pursue their dreams. MSEA represents more than 44 local affiliates in every county across the state of Maryland, and our parent affiliate is the 3-million-member National Education Association (NEA).

Per-pupil funding is calculated in part based on full-time equivalent enrollment, which, for K-12 public school students, depends upon the number of students enrolled in their schools on September 30th of the prior year. This bill seeks to change reporting requirements to an average based on multiple points throughout the school year. Student attendance is essential for academic progress and success, and MSEA believes that robust attendance requirements should be promoted wherever possible. However, this change does not meaningfully promote student attendance; instead, it overcomplicates a data snapshot that is intended to ensure adequate funding for schools.

This legislation would increase administrative burdens and complicate reporting requirements to no apparent benefit.

**MSEA requests an unfavorable report of Senate Bill 712.**

# **SB 712 -Primary and Secondary Education - Funding**

Uploaded by: Zaniah Anderson

Position: UNF



**Mary Pat Fannon, Executive Director**  
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**BILL:** SB 712

**TITLE:** Primary and Secondary Education - Funding Accuracy and Full-Time Equivalent Enrollment Count - Alterations and Report (Education Funding Accuracy Act)

**DATE:** March 3, 2026

**POSITION:** Unfavorable

**COMMITTEE:** Senate Budget and Taxation and Education, Energy, and the Environment Committees

**CONTACT:** Mary Pat Fannon, Executive Director, PSSAM

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The Public School Superintendents' Association of Maryland (PSSAM), on behalf of all twenty-four local school superintendents, **opposes** Senate Bill 712.

This bill alters the definition of full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment that is used to calculate State education aid and local government education funding requirements to include the average number of students enrolled on September 30th, and May 31st of the prior school year instead of only the September 30 count from the prior year used under current law. The bill takes effect July 1, 2026, and is applicable to the calculation of education funding for fiscal 2028 and subsequent fiscal years.

PSSAM opposes Senate Bill 712 and advocates for maintaining the current methodology for counting students enrolled in public schools on September 30th to determine state and local aid amounts for the following fiscal year.

PSSAM cautions that this calculation change would present a number of challenges for local school systems. Most alarmingly, it would delay the final State and county funding appropriations until after the prior school year is over, complicating the implementation of the next school year's budget. Additionally, this methodology would create an unstable and unpredictable amount of funding in the middle of a fiscal year if a school system were to lose student enrollment during the school year.

Education funding is designed to support student needs, not to operate as an attendance enforcement mechanism. Conflating attendance accountability with funding calculations risks misaligning the purpose of state aid formulas. This legislation provides no meaningful, or positive mechanism to promote school attendance, instead it uses the threat of losing funding as a means to incentive change - a dubious public policy when it comes to ensuring a free and appropriate public education to Maryland's school children.

Based on the analysis of similar past proposals, this bill would more than likely reduce the state's investment in public education, disproportionately impacting jurisdictions with higher student absenteeism rates. Local school systems prioritize regular student attendance and invest heavily in programs aimed at preventing, reducing, and addressing chronic absenteeism. However, Senate Bill 712 ties state funding reductions to absenteeism rates—the very challenge that school systems are mandated to combat with additional resources. As a result, districts with higher absenteeism throughout the school year would face the greatest funding losses due to lower enrollment counts recorded later in the year.

Once again, local superintendents take the issue of student attendance very seriously and work diligently to ensure that every student attends school regularly. However, PSSAM believes this approach risks undermining efforts to improve student attendance by limiting the resources schools rely on to address absenteeism.

For these reasons, PSSAM **opposes** Senate Bill 712 and kindly requests an **unfavorable** report.

**SB0712 - State Board & MSDE - LOI.docx.pdf**

Uploaded by: Stefan Redding-Lallinger

Position: INFO

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**TO:** Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

**BILL:** Senate Bill (SB) 0712: Primary and Secondary Education - Funding Accuracy and Full-Time Equivalent Enrollment Count - Alterations and Report (Education Funding Accuracy Act)

**DATE:** March 3, 2026

**POSITION:** Letter of Information

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The Maryland State Board of Education (State Board) and the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) respectfully submit this letter of information regarding SB0712 - Primary and Secondary Education - Funding Accuracy and Full-Time Equivalent Enrollment Count - Alterations and Report (Education Funding Accuracy Act), which changes the method of calculating the full-time equivalent (FTE) student count for the purposes of calculating State Aid to Education and requires MSDE to submit an annual report by December 31st that includes all the data elements used to calculate State Aid.

Currently, the statute bases FTE student counts for State Aid on the number of students enrolled in kindergarten through grade 12 or their equivalent in regular day school programs for a given year, on September 30 of the prior year. The September 30 count gives MSDE two months to clean and verify LEA enrollment counts before submitting the data to the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), which uses the count for the state budget that is required to be introduced on the seventh day after the start of the subsequent legislative session. This budget is proposed in January and passed in April. Under current practice, education aid is calculated using enrollment counts from the previous school year.

The proposed legislation changes the FTE count to an average of two points in time, September 30 and May 31 of the prior school year. In order to be viable, the proposed changes would require one of two changes to the budget process. The legislature would either have to:

- a) Reconsider and amend the budget after the legislative session and the fiscal year budget has been adopted, in order to incorporate data from the proposed May 31 enrollment count, which would need to be cleaned and verified (likely by August of a given year), or
- b) Use enrollment data from two years prior to the budget for which the education aid is being calculated, increasing the lag between enrollment and budgets by one additional year beyond current practice (which would also require amending this proposed legislative language from “the prior school year” to “the school year two years prior”)

Both options outlined above present significant practical and policy concerns, as each would either require reopening and amending an already adopted budget or further extending the lag between enrollment counts and education funding. Local budget planning is also dependent on early reporting of estimated and final

state aid amounts to produce locally approved budgets that include staffing allocations. MSDE recognizes that methodologies for calculating state aid vary from state to state, and each has its benefits and drawbacks. The General Assembly has supported enrollment studies in the past, although not since the enactment of the Bridge to Excellence Act in 2002.

At this time, given the State's current fiscal status, both the State Board and MSDE are concerned about the potential implications of implementing a major change in the enrollment count mechanism, which may have significant impacts on funding for LEAs and State and local governments.

For further information, please contact Laurel Cratsley, Interim Executive Director of Government Affairs, at 443-571-5461 or [Laurel.Cratsley@maryland.gov](mailto:Laurel.Cratsley@maryland.gov).