



# PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

14201 School Lane | Upper Marlboro, MD 20772 | 301-952-6115 | [www.pgcps.org/offices/board-of-education](http://www.pgcps.org/offices/board-of-education)

**Board Chairman**  
Brannndon Jackson  
District 6

March 11, 2026

Education, Energy, and Environment Committee

**Board Vice Chair**  
Jonathan Briggs, M.Ed. MLS  
District 2

## **Senate Bill 863 - Prince George's County Special Education Service Delivery, Transparency, and Accountability Act**

**Board Members**  
Dr. Tiffini Andorful  
District 1

**From:** Dr. Shawn Joseph, Interim Superintendent, Prince George's County Public Schools

Pamela Boozer-Strother, MBA, CAE  
District 3

**Position: OPPOSE**

Aimee Olivo  
District 4

Chair Brian Feldman, Vice Chair Cheryl Kagan, and members of the Education, Energy and Environment Committee,

Robin Brown  
District 5

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Dr. Phelton C. Moss  
District 7

I want to begin by acknowledging Senator Washington's commitment to students with disabilities. I share that commitment fully. Every child in Prince George's County deserves the services and support required under federal law.

Zakyia Goins-McCants  
District 8

VACANT  
District 9

However, I respectfully ask the committee to oppose Senate Bill 863 for three reasons.

**Student Member**  
Erioluwa Ajakaye

First, accountability already exists.

**Secretary/Treasurer**  
Dr. Shawn Joseph  
Superintendent

Prince George's County Public Schools is currently operating under enhanced oversight from the Maryland State Department of Education. We have been designated a high-risk grantee under IDEA and are implementing a comprehensive corrective action plan that includes staffing improvements, IEP monitoring, professional development, and regular progress reporting to the state.

In short, the accountability this legislation seeks to create is already in place and actively being monitored.

Second, this bill creates duplication at a time when we need focus.

Our district is already undergoing multiple audits and monitoring processes related to special education. Adding another state-mandated audit and quarterly updates would not accelerate improvement. It would redirect staff time from serving students toward responding to additional layers of compliance.



## PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

14201 School Lane | Upper Marlboro, MD 20772 | 301-952-6115 | [www.pgcps.org/offices/board-of-education](http://www.pgcps.org/offices/board-of-education)

Right now, what our educators and administrators need most is the ability to focus on implementing the corrective plan that is already underway.

Third, this legislation creates a significant unfunded mandate.

In my proposed budget, I have already requested \$27 million in additional funding to strengthen special education services. This legislation would require roughly \$20 million more without additional funding to provide employee benefits. As of March 10, 2026, all 441 authorized dedicated aid positions are filled. There is no urgency for this unfunded mandate at this time.

When mandates come without resources, school systems are forced into impossible choices—cutting other programs in order to comply.

That does not strengthen services for students. It strains them.

Finally, I want the committee to know that we take this work seriously. We are hiring staff, expanding professional development, and working closely with the Maryland State Department of Education to improve outcomes for students with disabilities.

The responsible course now is to allow the corrective process already underway to work.

Members of the committee, accountability is already here, the work is already underway, our vacancies are filled, and our students cannot afford for us to pause progress in order to prove that we are making it.

For these reasons, I respectfully ask for an unfavorable report on Senate Bill 863.

Thank you,

Dr. Shawn Joseph  
Interim Superintendent  
Prince George's County Public Schools

**Board Chairman**

Brannndon Jackson  
District 6

**Board Vice Chair**

Jonathan Briggs, M.Ed. MLS  
District 2

**Board Members**

Dr. Tiffini Andorful  
District 1

Pamela Boozer-Strother, MBA, CAE  
District 3

Aimee Olivo  
District 4

Robin Brown  
District 5

Dr. Phelton C. Moss  
District 7

Zakya Goins-McCants  
District 8

VACANT  
District 9

**Student Member**  
Erioluwa Ajakaye

**Secretary/Treasurer**  
Dr. Shawn Joseph  
Superintendent