



Testimony - SB 1084, Montgomery County - County Board of Education - School
Operation Requirements MC 14-26

Favorable

Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

March 24, 2026

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Director of Political & Legislative Affairs on Behalf of SEIU Local 500

Honorable Chairman Feldman & Members of the Senate Education, Energy, and the
Environment Committee:

SEIU Local 500 represents more than 23,000 education and public service workers including over 10,000 dedicated educational support professionals in Montgomery County Public Schools who ensure our schools operate safely and effectively every day.

HB 1084 provides needed flexibility for Montgomery County Public Schools when responding to unexpected disruptions to the school calendar, such as severe weather or other emergency conditions that prevent normal school attendance like we have experienced in recent weeks. Under current law, schools must meet both a minimum number of school days and a minimum number of instructional hours. This bill allows the Montgomery County Board of Education, under limited and clearly defined circumstances, to meet either the required number of days or the required instructional hours, provided that schools remain open for at least 175 days and that the school system has already exhausted built-in weather closure days.

For the workers we represent, the most important provision of this legislation is the protection it provides for hourly employees. Educational support professionals—including paraeducators, food service workers, building service staff, and other frontline school employees—are often paid hourly and can lose wages when calendar disruptions shorten the school year.

HB 1084 responsibly addresses this concern by requiring the Montgomery County Board of Education to provide hourly employees with opportunities to make up lost wages through additional duties before the next school year. This provision recognizes that when scheduling changes occur, the workers who keep our schools running should not be forced to shoulder the financial burden.

This bill strikes a thoughtful balance between maintaining strong instructional standards for students and protecting the livelihoods of school employees. It also ensures transparency through required reporting to the Maryland State Department of Education and the General Assembly regarding how this flexibility is used.

Educational support professionals are essential partners in the success of our students and school communities. HB 1084 ensures that when school systems must adapt to unexpected circumstances, they can do so in a way that remains fair to the workers who support our students every day.

For these reasons, SEIU Local 500 respectfully urges a favorable report on House Bill 1084.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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