



MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Expanding Opportunity and Unleashing Potential

15 West Gude Drive ♦ Suite 100 ♦ Rockville, Maryland 20850

BILL: House Bill 73

TITLE: Public Schools - Water Safety and Swimming Course - Established

DATE: February 25, 2026

POSITION: Oppose

COMMITTEE: Ways and Means

CONTACT: Patricia Ursprung, Coordinator, Legislative Affairs

The Montgomery County Board of Education opposes House Bill 73.

This bill requires the State Board of Education to develop the curriculum for an elective water safety and swimming course, available to students in kindergarten through grade 8, and requires county boards of education to offer the course beginning in the 2027-2028 school year. Access to a pool would be needed for completion of the course.

On August 21, 2026, the Montgomery County Board of Education adopted a legislative platform that contains priority issues and ongoing concerns. One of the ongoing concerns is preserving local autonomy. Based on this platform position, the Montgomery County Board of Education opposes legislation that would infringe on local control and impose unfunded mandates. Bills that fall into this category require specific school system action and may impact areas such as school calendars, school start times, curriculum, testing, procurement, and other operational decision-making. The bills may have a fiscal impact, sometimes known, other times unintended.

House Bill 73 infringes on local control as it would impose a curricular mandate with an associated cost for the school system. This proposed legislation requires the development of a course on water safety and swimming. This course could only be fully implemented if students have access to a swimming pool. Currently, two schools operated by Montgomery County Public Schools have an on-site pool, meaning there would be costs associated with securing additional pool locations and transporting students participating in the class during the school day. Although the proposed course is elective, offering it is required.

As a result of the curricular mandate that includes an unfunded liability for the school system, the Montgomery County Board of Education opposes House Bill 73 and requests an **unfavorable** report.