

The Citizens Advisory Committee
for Gifted and Talented Education
Baltimore County, Maryland

1/27/2026

Chair Jheanelle K. Wilkins
Vice Chair Jessica Feldmark
Members of the House Ways and Means Committee
Maryland House of Delegates
Maryland General Assembly
Annapolis, Maryland

Chair Wilkins, Vice Chair Feldmark, and Members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Dr. Zamira Simkins, and I serve as Chair of the Citizens Advisory Committee for Gifted and Talented Education (GTCAC) in Baltimore County. I am writing in support of House Bill 96/Senate Bill 98, which would add GTCAC as a voting member of the Baltimore County School Board Nominating Commission.

GTCAC is a community organization that advocates for equitable, high-quality educational opportunities for gifted and talented (GT) and twice-exceptional (2E) students across Baltimore County. We provide a public forum for GT/2E issues, advise the superintendent and system leadership on student needs, and regularly review and comment on programs and services, curriculum, budget priorities, and teacher preparation in advanced academics. We also work to inform families, educators, and policymakers about best practices and emerging trends in gifted education at the local, state, and national levels.

With approximately 27% of BCPS students participating in GT programs, representation of GTCAC on the Baltimore County School Board Nominating Commission will ensure that the needs of these learners—who require differentiated instruction, enrichment, and social-emotional supports—are included in policy discussions and leadership selection.

Currently, the Office of Advanced Academics operates with limited staffing despite overseeing programs serving more than a quarter of the district's students. A formal GTCAC voice on the Baltimore County School Board Nominating Commission would ensure that the interests of GT and 2E learners are better represented when selecting the Baltimore County School Board members.

On behalf of GTCAC, I recommend approving the House Bill 96/Senate Bill 98 so that the voices of gifted and twice-exceptional students, as well as the families and educators who support them, can be meaningfully represented in the selection of Baltimore County's school board leadership.

Thank you for your consideration of this letter and for your service to Maryland families.

Sincerely,

Zamira S. Simkins, Ph.D.
GTCAC Chair
Baltimore County, Maryland