



**Board of Education
of Howard County**

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**Board of Education of Howard County
Testimony Submitted to the Maryland House of Delegates
Ways and Means Committee
April 1, 2026**

SB0764: FAVORABLE as AMENDED

Education - Minimum Wage for Education Support Professionals - Report on Estimated Cost

The Board of Education of Howard County (the Board) supports **Education - Minimum Wage for Education Support Professionals - Report on Estimated Cost** with amendments to limit the scope of the bill to a study of fiscal feasibility.

SB0764 as introduced required local boards of education to pay education support professionals a minimum wage of \$25.00 per hour beginning July 1, 2028. An “education support professional” is defined under the bills as a noncertificated public school employee designated as part of nonsupervisory bargaining unit. The Maryland State Board of Education would adopt regulations for school systems to carry out the provisions of the bill.

Our Budget Office estimates the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) has approximately 1,016 employees that make less than \$25 per hour. To bring them up to \$25 per hour would have an added cost around \$5.8 million dollars including benefits. The Department of Legislative Services [estimated statewide](#) the bill would result in total wages increases of \$198,900,000 in FY2026.

While staff understand the intent of SB0764 to recognize and uplift the importance of education support professionals, without dedicated funding, that increase as of July 1, 2028, would have a substantial impact on the HCPSS budget. The bill would also fundamentally alter the relationship of step/grade/classification for the HCPSS salary schedules, and also for the classification and compensation relationship to all other salary schedules and the relationship job classifications.

Given the cost-prohibitive nature of this bill in prior years, and an indication from the above analysis that the State could not reliably estimate the total breadth of the impacted employees, SB0764 as originally introduced differs in that it included a study to be conducted by December 1, 2026. This report would accurately illustrate the costs associated with taking on these salary increases on both a state and local level, which must be done prior to any mandates being enacted by the General Assembly. Staff supports the amended version of SB0764 as currently before this Committee to keep this study, with all other portions of the bill removed. In addition to the total cost estimates, the amended study rightly includes requirements for the identification of the feasibility of implementing the salary increases within the current funding allotted to local school systems.

As amended, we urge a FAVORABLE report on SB0928 from this Committee.