

2019 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Board of Education of Frederick County

Legislative Principles for Advocacy



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THE ROLE OF LOCAL BOARDS OF EDUCATION

Local boards of education are uniquely positioned to govern and make the decisions that directly impact our students, schools and communities. While guidance and regulations may come from afar, local boards provide critical steady and stable leadership to their districts in a way that takes into consideration local capacity, resources, needs and concerns.

- Local school boards, through their public meetings, attendance at events, and daily discourse and engagement with the community at large, provide citizens the venue for regular, meaningful public dialogue around specific educational goals and expectations for their community's students.
- Local boards of education function within the context of their communities' values and goals. They are best situated to evaluate their schools' strengths, weaknesses, and needs. They are best positioned to identify where, on the path of progress, their district lies, and to determine how best to move forward to meet the broader vision set forth at the state and federal level.
- School boards are also the best positioned to effectively communicate and reflect community concerns, feedback and suggestions on goals, laws and regulations set at the state and federal level. Acting as the local voice and advocate on education issues is an important piece of the local governance that school boards provide.

For these reasons, the Board of Education of Frederick County appreciates and values when legislators consider the role of school boards when deliberating on or enacting any legislation, policy, or reform related to education.

I. CONTINUED GOVERNANCE AND AUTHORITY for LOCAL BOARDS OF EDUCATION

The Board of Education of Frederick County believes that local school boards, through their public process of community-based decision making, are best able to balance educational goals, available resources, community input and to provide academic and financial accountability with regards to student learning and achievement.

The Board of Education of Frederick County **supports**:

- ✓ Continued autonomy for all local boards of education to adopt education policies that promote high standards for academic and fiscal accountability. Students are best served by having an independent local board of education that is engaged with its superintendent and the school community to discuss and to debate important issues that directly impact the quality of education. The success of Maryland schools is a testament to the effectiveness of this governance model.

The Board of Education of Frederick County **opposes**:

- ✗ Any executive, legislative or regulatory actions or initiatives that would have the effect of reducing or circumscribing local board governance, oversight, or budgetary authority.
- ✗ Any proposals to reduce or eliminate the governance and decision-making authority of local board and administrators as a condition for receiving increased state funding.

More specifically, on the following issues, the Board of Education of Frederick County supports the principle of local governance by local boards of education with the following positions.

CURRICULUM AND TESTING

- ✓ The Board of Education of Frederick County **supports** local decision-making authority in developing curriculum and assessments, in conjunction with the Maryland State Board of Education, as provided by Maryland statute.
- ✓ The Board of Education of Frederick County **supports** adequate field-testing of new statewide assessments and the use of multiple years of results in order to establish baseline or minimum “cut” scores, as a of measure student performance and/or as a requirement for graduation.
- ✓ The Board of Education of Frederick County **supports** adequate state funding to support the administration of any mandated assessment program.
- ✗ The Board of Education of Frederick County **opposes** any efforts to legislate any curriculum or assessment.

- ✗ The Board of Education of Frederick County **opposes** any efforts to prescribe any single assessment to determine student, teacher, school or school system performance.

SCHOOL CALENDAR AND START TIME

- ✓ The Board of Education of Frederick County **supports** legislation to allow flexibility to schools and school systems in meeting state mandates and regulations regarding school calendar and school start times.
- ✗ The Board of Education of Frederick County utilizes the school calendar as an instructional tool. As such, in order to develop its calendar, it utilizes a calendar committee that has widespread representation from the school community. The school calendar is designated to provide students with maximum instructional days. The local board of education, in consultation with its stakeholders, is best suited to determine the school calendar. Accordingly, the Board of Education of Frederick County **opposes** legislation that would mandate that all school systems commence or end the school year on or before a certain date.
- ✗ The Board of Education of Frederick County has surveyed the community in the past regarding start times, as well as bell schedules. We believe that local boards of education are best positioned to determine the optimal balance of educational practices, inclusive of school start times and bell schedules for students that reflect the academic needs of students, community interest, and available funding and resources. As such, the Board of Education of Frederick County **opposes** legislation that would mandate that all school systems commence school after, before or at a specified time.

CHARTER SCHOOLS

- ✓ The Board of Education of Frederick County **supports** local authority over public schools, including public charter schools, in alignment with the Public Charter School Act of 2003 and the amendments to the Public Charter Improvement Act of 2015.
- ✗ The Board of Education of Frederick County **opposes** legislation that would diminish the local board's role as primary chartering authority, or otherwise weaken the local board's academic or fiscal accountability oversight.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

- ✓ The Board of Education of Frederick County **supports** local flexibility to create and enforce consistent and fair disciplinary standards in order to respond to infractions of the rules committed by individual students.

- ✘ The Board of Education of Frederick County **opposes** legislation or regulations that would unduly limit the authority or ability of school administrators and local boards of education to ensure the safety of all students and staff.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

- ✓ The Board of Education of Frederick County **supports** strengthening funding for special education programs, including formula aid for all special education students and reimbursement for special education students in nonpublic placement.
- ✘ The Board of Education of Frederick County **opposes** mandates that do not include additional state allocations or that weaken the local school system's ability to meet the unique needs of the students and families it serves.

II. FUNDING FOR EDUCATION THAT IS ADEQUATE AND EQUITABLE

The Board of Education of Frederick County acknowledges the importance of a variety of components that equip our students to be empowered learners and engaged citizens who will achieve a positive impact in their communities and the world. The Board is committed to providing quality, well-rounded educational programs, from pre-kindergarten through graduation, while meeting the unique and varied needs of each and every student. The Board also understands the critical need for highly qualified teachers, administrators and staff in meeting school system goals, as well as the necessity for adequate resources and materials to optimize student learning.

The Board of Education of Frederick County supports:

- ✓ An aggressive level of school funding in the FY 2020 state budget, including full funding of state and local aid to public education, maintaining the per pupil foundation amount, the provision of increases through a robust annual inflation factor, and full funding of the Geographic Cost of Education Index (GCEI).
- ✓ Supports a per pupil funding allocation for students attending prekindergarten, without any offsetting reduction in compensatory funding.
- ✓ Sufficient funding to enable local school boards to provide equitable access and support for all students, including special education students, English Language Learners, economically disadvantaged students, and underperforming students in order to eliminate achievement gaps.

- ✓ Adequate funding for implementation of initiatives and mandates now required in implementation of Maryland's College and Career-Ready Standards (MCCRS), such as investments in curriculum, assessments, evaluation systems, professional development and technology.
- ✓ Supports funding to support the requirements of the College and Career Readiness and College Completion Act of 2013 and the needs of students for clear and robust pathways toward preparation for college and career, which have required additional investment for the development and implementation of specific courses, offerings (i.e. certifications, internships, high-school and college campus-based programs), additional assessments, transition opportunities, documentation and record-keeping, and financial assistance for students' participation in additional programs, such as tuition and fees for dual enrollment programs.

The Board of Education of Frederick County **opposes**:

- ✗ Any new state or federal policies or programs that result in unfunded or underfunded mandates.
- ✗ Any attempt to retreat from full funding as provided by the Bridge to Excellence Act or reduce the level of school funding.

III. ADEQUATE FUNDING TO IMPROVE SCHOOL FACILITIES AND CREATE CAPACITY

Frederick County is committed to utilizing resources strategically and responsibly to achieve our goals for students while inspiring public trust. The Board of Education is committed to ensuring optimal learning environments and acting as responsible stewards of our public buildings.

Though the county enjoys steady population growth, that growth poses challenges in keeping up with the demands for new seats while maintaining and renovating our older facilities to keep up with students' instructional needs.

The Board of Education of Frederick County **supports**:

- ✓ A state funding level of \$400 million for school construction and renovation projects for FY 2020 to provide the State's share of approved projects to annually fund major construction, renovation and systemic projects.
- ✓ A required state cost share, for those projects that are in the state construction program, to cover school construction cost increases resulting from new state laws, mandated in regulations.

- ✓ The development of innovative funding policies, strategies, and alternate financing models, including public-private partnerships, and alternative methods of delivery or procurement, to meet increasing school facility needs.
- ✓ Establishment of adequate financial support for construction or facilities strategies and practices that encourage efficiencies, sustainability, use of renewable resources and lessens environmental impact.

Project Priorities for State Funding
Frederick County Public Schools FY20 CIP Request to State
(Includes requests for State funds only in \$000)

	PROJECT	REQUEST	FY20 STATE REQUEST
1	Urbana ES Replacement	Construction Funding	\$15,584
2	Rock Creek Replacement (Site)	Construction Funding	\$2,028
3	Catoctin HS: HVAC Replacement (Phase 2)	Systemic Construction Funding	\$2,493
4	Parkway ES: HVAC RTU Replacement	Systemic Construction Funding	\$101
5	Carroll Manor ES: Window, Door, & HVAC Terminal Unit Replacement (Phase 2)	Systemic Construction Funding	\$461
6	Security Access Control Upgrades	Systemic Construction Funding	\$142
7	Monocacy ES: HVAC RTU Replacement (Phase 2)	Systemic Construction Funding	\$288
8	Green Valley ES: Domestic Water Generation & Storage Tank Replacement	Systemic Construction Funding	\$182
9	Windsor Knolls MS: Chiller Replacement	Systemic Construction Funding	\$195

TOTAL \$21,474

The Board of Education of Frederick County opposes:

- ✘ Any mandate regarding school size or standardized design for school facilities, which would limit local authority over design, construction, procurement, maintenance, or operations.
- ✘ The development of any competitive grant program that would compete with or replace funding for the current State Public School Construction Program.

IV. STUDENT HEALTH AND SCHOOL SAFETY AND SECURITY

The Board of Education of Frederick County supports:

- ✓ A collaborative approach between local boards and federal, state, local elected officials in developing and implementing local public school health, safety, and security programs.
- ✓ Local board discretion to adopt policies and allocate resources to support improvements in student behavioral, emotional and physical health and well-being.
- ✓ Federal, state and local government funding for local public school safety programs, and the wide array of behavioral and emotional health and public safety services provided by other public and private entities, which are essential to maintaining safe schools and access to a quality education for all students.
- ✓ Local discretion to adopt programs and policies to maintain and improve school safety, including positive behavior intervention strategies to prevent and mitigate disruptions, and emergency plans to deal with any crisis that may occur in the school.
- ✓ Adequate federal, state and local government funding to local public schools to implement, with fidelity, behavioral and emotional health and public safety programs.

The Board of Education of Frederick County opposes:

- ✗ Any unfunded mandate for physical or health instruction, and/or physical, health, behavioral, or emotional health requirements that do not include additional state allocations.
- ✗ Any statewide or “one-size-fits-all” approach that would dictate or limit local board authority, or the local board’s ability to meet the needs of local students and families.