

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2025 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 733
Ways and Means

(Delegate Miller, *et al.*)

Elections for County Boards of Education - Party Designation or Affiliation -
Certificates of Candidacy and Ballots

This bill allows for a candidate, in a nonpartisan board of education election, to disclose their party designation or party affiliation on the certificate of candidacy and have their party designation or party affiliation included on the ballot. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2025.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: General fund expenditures increase by \$10,800 in FY 2026 only. Revenues are not affected.

Local Effect: Local government expenditures increase by \$10,800 in FY 2026 only. Revenues are not affected.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Unless otherwise provided in specified provisions of the Education Article, members of boards of education must be elected on a nonpartisan basis. Candidates must, without party designation or regard to party affiliation, (1) file certificates of candidacy; (2) be certified to the ballot; (3) appear on the ballot; (4) be voted on; and (5) be nominated and elected.

In a primary election to nominate board of education candidates, any registered voter of the county, regardless of party affiliation or lack of party affiliation, is eligible to vote in

those contests for nomination. The candidates, equal in number to twice the number of offices to be filled, who receive the largest number of votes in the primary election are the nominated candidates for the general election.

Twenty counties have elected school boards, and four counties have combined appointed and elected school boards. The **Appendix – Local Boards of Education Membership** shows the selection methods, terms of office, and membership of the 24 local boards of education.

State and Local Fiscal Effect: State general fund expenditures and local government expenditures each increase by \$10,800 (\$21,600 total), in fiscal 2026 only. This assumes one-time development costs for modifications to the candidate filing and reporting systems within the Maryland Voter Registration, Candidacy, and Election Management System are shared by the State Board of Elections and the local boards of elections.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Baltimore, Cecil, and Frederick counties; Maryland State Board of Elections; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 9, 2025
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Appendix – Local Boards of Education Membership

The composition of the local boards of education varies with members serving three- to four-year terms. Twenty counties have elected school boards and four counties have combined appointed and elected school boards. Twenty-two boards have student members; however, only 8 boards allow student members to vote, which generally excludes authority to vote on matters relating to collective bargaining and personnel. Three counties with voting student members also preclude student members from voting on matters relating to operating and capital budgets. **Exhibit 1** shows the selection methods, terms of office, and membership of the 24 local school boards.

Exhibit 1 Local Boards of Education As of January 2025

<u>School System</u>	<u>Number of Members</u>	<u>Term</u>		<u>Means of Selection¹</u>
Allegany	6	4 years	E	5 from county at large 1 student (nonvoting, one-year term)
Anne Arundel	8	4 years	E	7 from councilmanic districts 1 student (one-year term)
Baltimore City	12	3 or 4 years	A/E	2 elected from city at large 9 appointed by mayor 1 student (one-year term)
Baltimore	12	4 years	A/E	4 appointed by Governor from county at large 7 elected from councilmanic districts 1 student (one-year term)
Calvert	6	4 years	E	2 from county at large 3 from commissioner districts 1 student (nonvoting, one-year term)
Caroline	7	4 years	A/E	3 elected from school board districts 2 appointed by Governor from county at large 2 students (nonvoting, one-year term)
Carroll	11	4 years	E	5 from county at large 5 commissioners <i>ex officio</i> (nonvoting) 1 student (nonvoting, one-year term)

<u>School System</u>	<u>Number of Members</u>	<u>Term</u>		<u>Means of Selection¹</u>
Cecil	6	4 years	E	5 from commissioner districts 1 student (nonvoting, one-year term)
Charles	10	4 years	E	1 from county at large 8 from commissioner districts 1 student (one-year term)
Dorchester	8	4 years	E	5 from councilmanic districts 3 students (nonvoting, one-year term)
Frederick	8	4 years	E	7 from county at large 1 student (nonvoting, one-year term)
Garrett	6	4 years	E	2 from county at large 3 from commissioner districts 1 student (nonvoting, one-year term)
Harford	11	4 years	A/E	6 elected from councilmanic districts 3 appointed by County Executive from county at large 1 superintendent <i>ex officio</i> (nonvoting) 1 student (one-year term)
Howard	8	4 years	E	2 from county at large 5 from councilmanic districts 1 student (one-year term)
Kent	6	4 years	E	5 from county at large 1 student (nonvoting, one-year term)
Montgomery	8	4 years	E	2 from county at large 5 from school districts 1 student (one-year term)
Prince George's	10	4 years	E	9 from school board districts 1 student (one-year term)
Queen Anne's	7	4 years	E	1 from county at large 4 from commissioner districts 2 students (nonvoting, one-year term)
St. Mary's	6	4 years	E	1 from county at large 4 from commissioner districts 1 student (nonvoting, one-year term)
Somerset	5	4 years	E	5 from commissioner districts
Talbot	9	4 years	E	7 from school board districts 2 students (nonvoting, one-year term)
Washington ²	8	4 years	E	7 from county at large 1 student (nonvoting, one-year term)

<u>School System</u>	<u>Number of Members</u>	<u>Term</u>		<u>Means of Selection¹</u>
Wicomico	7	4 years	E	5 from councilmanic districts 2 from county at large
Worcester	10	4 years	E	7 from commissioner districts 3 students (nonvoting, one-year term)

¹ E = Elected and A/E = Combined appointed and elected board: (1) in Baltimore County, members are appointed by the Governor from a list of names provided by the Baltimore County School Board Nominating Commission; (2) in Caroline County, members are appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate; (3) in Baltimore City, members are appointed by the mayor from a list of names provided by the Baltimore City Public School Board Community Panel; and (4) in Harford County, members are appointed by the county executive with the advice and consent of the county council.

² Although not in statute, the Washington County Board of Education reports that there is a student member on the board and that the student member can only concur on votes and must abstain from certain matters.

Source: Sections 3-101 through 3-1405 of the Education Article; Local Boards of Education