

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2025 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
Third Reader

Senate Bill 656

(Senator Sydnor, *et al.*)

Education, Energy, and the Environment

Ways and Means

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Baltimore County Board of Education - Alterations of Elected Member Districts  
and Establishment of Redistricting Process

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This bill requires that, beginning with the 2034 general election, the members of the Baltimore County Board of Education currently elected from each of the seven councilmanic districts in the county must instead be elected from each of seven school board districts established through a specified redistricting process. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2025.**

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Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** The bill does not directly affect State finances.

**Local Effect:** Any costs associated with the redistricting process under the bill are assumed to be absorbed within existing resources.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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Analysis

**Bill Summary:** Beginning after the 2030 U.S. Census, the school board districts from which members of the Baltimore County Board of Education are elected must be reapportioned after each decennial census and be effective for each general election where a member will be elected until the following decennial census. The reapportioned school board districts must be substantially equal in population.

By December 1 of the calendar year immediately following each decennial census, the Baltimore County Board of Education must submit a proposal to the Baltimore County

Delegation to the General Assembly on reapportioning the school board districts. The delegation must consider the proposal and introduce legislation to reapportion the school board districts in the session immediately following the date that the proposal was submitted. The legislation may differ from the proposal submitted by the board.

**Current Law:** The Baltimore County Board of Education consists of seven nonpartisan members elected from each of the seven councilmanic districts in the county, four members appointed by the Governor from the county at large, and one student member. The elected and appointed members serve a term of four years. The elected members are elected in gubernatorial election years and the appointed members are appointed by the Governor in presidential election years.

The Baltimore County Board of Education is 1 of 4 hybrid school boards in the State with both appointed and elected members. There are 20 elected school boards in the State. The **Appendix – Local Boards of Education Membership** shows the selection methods, terms of office, and membership of the 24 local boards of education.

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### **Additional Information**

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

**Designated Cross File:** HB 1529 (Delegate McCaskill) - Rules and Executive Nominations.

**Information Source(s):** Baltimore County; Maryland State Department of Education; Maryland State Board of Elections; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 18, 2025  
km/sdk Third Reader - March 24, 2025

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## Appendix – Local Boards of Education Membership

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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.

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### 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 Selection<sup>1</sup></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 Selection<sup>1</sup></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 <sup>2</sup>	8	4 years	E	7 from county at large 1 student (nonvoting, one-year term)
Wicomico	7	4 years	E	5 from councilmanic districts 2 from county at large

<u>School System</u>	<u>Number of Members</u>	<u>Term</u>	<u>Means of Selection<sup>1</sup></u>	
Worcester	10	4 years	E	7 from commissioner districts 3 students (nonvoting, one-year term)

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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