



Board of Education of Howard County
Testimony Submitted to the Maryland House of Delegates,
Appropriations Committee
March 12, 2024

Board of Education
of Howard County

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HB1440: UNFAVORABLE

Howard County Public Schools - Differences in Capital Budget Proposals - Report Ho. Co. 16-24

The Board of Education of Howard County (the Board) opposes **HB1440 Howard County Public Schools - Differences in Capital Budget Proposals - Report Ho. Co. 16-24** as a mandate on local board of education authority.

HB1440 as proposed by the Howard County Delegation requires the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS), within 30 days of approval, to publish a report on its website when the capital budget approved by the Board has differences from the Superintendent's proposed capital budget. The report must include: the differences between the proposed and approved budgets; and the detailed rationale for each difference. The report must also be provided to the General Assembly. A similar report must be published when the Superintendent's proposed capital improvement plan differs from the Board's previously approved plan.

HCPSS currently posts both the Superintendent's proposed capital budget and capital improvement plan and the Board proposed budget on its [Capital Budget Overview](#) website. Reports and discussions on changes made during the capital budget process, [which spans from August to May each year](#), are found on the public BoardDocs website. The reports required under HB1440 would be a redundant recap of the current process.

Legislation that limits local board decision-making authority may weaken the Board's bond with the local community and adversely impact the community's participation in the governance and operation of the school system. The Board agrees with the intent of HB1440 to be transparent with the community but should retain the local authority to determine how it communicates with constituents on matters within the Board's purview.

For these reasons, we urge an UNFAVORABLE report of HB1440 from this Committee.