

FEB 2 2026 PTACHC Legislative

County Council Dates

FEB 2 – 7:00PM – Howard County Council Legislative Session

Vote on CB-1; \$7.6M debt for Oakland Mills Middle

Vote on CB-3; Zoning accessory dwelling units **without APFO**

school overcrowding protections. 10 Amendments possible, none of which address school impacts.

Vote on CB-10; Ability (not mandate) to use excess surplus revenue for education in FY2028, no amendments

PREFILE for March – CB14-2026 (APFO exempt) age-restricted apartments allowed between Residential and commercial zoned properties

Feb 4, 8:30AM Howard County State Delegation (local bills related to Howard County)

<http://mgaleg.Maryland.gov> – Usually meets each Wednesday morning

HOCO 5-26 Voting age for BOE elections

HOCO7-26 Student BOE member voting

Feb 17 – 7:00PM – Testimony on March Council Bills

Feb 23 – 10:00AM – Work session on March Bills

2026 Legislative Agenda



The Free State PTA is committed to advocating for a high-quality, equitable education for every child in Maryland. Our legislative priorities for 2026 focus on strengthening instruction, improving school safety, and ensuring families and educators have the support they need for student success. We advocate for full support for students with disabilities, adherence to the Americans with Disabilities Act, and accessible resources for all families. We also prioritize meaningful parent and student engagement, along with transparency and accountability in educational outcomes and Blueprint funding.

Free State PTA's Advocacy Priorities for the 2026 Legislative Session

- *Ensure appropriate class sizes, and paraeducator support in the classroom.*
- *Following the American Academy of Pediatrics recommendation of starting school no earlier than 8:30 am.*
- *Ensuring children receive nutritional support they need with compassion and dignity, including universal meals and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits.*
- *Migrating to electric buses and using renewable energy sources and electrifying schools to move to a net zero model.*
- *Increased access to mental health services.*
- *The development of recommendations for reinforcing student attendance and setting positive expectations for student behaviors, including the use of school wide behavioral evidence-based programs.*
- *Reduce cell phone usage during instructional time to maximize student engagement and minimize distractions, by ensuring that students have their phones silenced and put away during class.*

Parent, Family and Community Engagement

- Policies making strong family involvement a requirement in all appropriate laws and programs. Schools should incorporate parent involvement into all aspects of educational programs and activities.
- Promoting positive standards for family-school partnerships to address six specific types of involvement that are especially beneficial to children's academic success, including: welcoming families into the school community, communicating effectively supporting student success, speaking up for every child, sharing power, and collaborating with community career objectives.
- Develop policy alignment between dual enrollment programs of community colleges and post secondary schools, with adequate communications to parents and guardians.

Operating and Capital Funding

- Maximizing student achievement and minimizing the achievement gap by advocating for an extension of programs that reduce summer and Covid-19 related learning loss.
- Improving public funding to equitably ensure high quality educational services for all special populations including Special Education, Gifted and Talented, English Language Learners, Economic Poverty, Homeless population, LGBTQ+, Military Families, Historically Underserved Populations, and other populations with special needs.
- Accountability measures to ensure Blueprint resources are being used effectively and equitably.
- Increased funding for special education or student support in recognition of increasing costs of providing special education services in school.

Use of Public Funds

- School finance reform that focuses on quality in every school from efficient construction to the quality of education, to excellence in delivery and outcomes.
- Public funds for public schools and opposing redirection of funding towards vouchers.
- Funding for ADA projects at schools.

Special Needs

- Shifting the "burden of proof" in IEP due process cases from parents to school districts.
- Capping the number of students assigned to special educators, school psychologists, pupil personnel workers, speech pathologists and school counselors via statute or State regulations.
- Requiring local and state education agencies and institutions of higher education to offer pre-service and post-service training on dyslexia and other literacy learning disabilities.

Facilities and Construction

- Funding HVAC improvements so that school systems can employ improved ventilation and filtration in order to reduce the concentration of airborne toxins, mold and pathogens.
- Reviewing and modifying state-rated capacity formula and teaching stations as appropriate.
- Sizable increases in funding public school construction, including more funds dedicated to building renovations or replacing old buildings.
- Evaluation of schools for ADA compliance.
- Using renewable energy sources, promoting the Green Schools program, and electrifying schools to move to a net zero model.
- Reducing exposure to known harmful substances, including lead and PFAS, in home, play, and school environments by testing and remediating in paints, plumbing, drinking water, athletic fields, and play surfaces.

Improve Quality and Ensure Equitable Public Education

- Programs that ensure high quality educational services to children from early childhood through high school graduation, ensuring college and career opportunities that ready people for success in life within a global economy.
- Providing communication to families in multiple formats and multiple languages.
- Homework practices that are fully integrated with lessons and learning allowing for student's appropriate time commitment, provide appropriate opportunity for family engagement and homework that is correctly sequenced with grading and testing.
- Establishing universal voluntary early childhood (Pre-K) education.
- Establishing appropriate virtual learning plans and programs to be executed as need occurs.
- Implementing Inclusive curriculum.
- Providing and encouraging evidence-based literacy and math instruction and strategies.
- Support diverse opportunities for students to obtain academic credit for equivalent extracurricular work outside of school.
- Providing accommodations to any students during and returning from an extended absence (illness, injury, immigration, legal issues, etc.) to keep them on track academically.
- Correlating state and classroom assessments to curriculum and homework assignments, and ensuring that they are aligned with fair and adequate pre-assessment reviews.

Safe Schools and Violence Prevention

- Training teachers, students, families and staff about school safety and violence prevention and how to notice the signs and report them.
- Recommended staff to student ratios of social workers, psychologists, counselors, therapists, and other mental health professionals that provide support to children, families, and communities in order to prevent violence.
- Common sense proposals to limit youth access to firearms, fix background checks, and implement gun violence research efforts.
- Along with proper signage, placing cameras and/or monitoring systems in school buildings in order to assist with monitoring the safety of schools.
- Evidence-based anti-bullying measures that include evidence-based restorative justice practices, social and emotional learning curriculum, and conflict management programs.
- Empowering parents as well as families to protect their children and minimize inconveniences to a bullied child.

Support for Teachers and Staff

- The use of teacher performance evaluations only when they are accompanied by strong programs of teacher training and improvement that are developed with the consent of professional associations of teachers and school administrators.
- Programs that prepare professional educators to teach a diverse student population of varying ethnicity, socioeconomic status, English language facility, and giftedness, and inclusion of students with special needs in regular classrooms to the maximum extent possible, and with an adequate amount of staffing
- Professional development days as well as teacher preparation and staff development programs.
- Resources to reduce illness, including the availability of tests, access to increased ventilation and filtration in their classrooms and adequate personal protective equipment.
- Dedicated staffing for instructional support.
- Enhanced mental health services for staff.
- Collaborating with local universities and community colleges in order to address the substitute teacher shortage and to provide enhancement that address learning gaps.

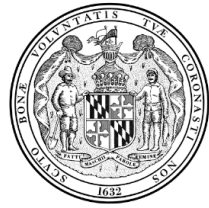
HCPSS Legislative <https://go.boarddocs.com/mabe/hcpssmd/Board.nsf/Public>

Information found in Leg Committee and BOE Agenda

NOTE – PTACHC provides as information only – HCPSS potions may not mirror PTACHC positions

Motion & Voting

- ★ Move that the Board support HoCo 1-26 Howard County – Public Schools – School Schedule Options.
Motion by Antonia Watts, second by Jennifer Swickard Mallo.
Final Resolution: Motion Carries
Yea: Linfeng Chen, Meg Ricks, Antonia Watts, Erin Alistar, Jacquelin McCoy, Andrea Chamblee, Jolene Mosley, Jennifer Swickard Mallo
- ★ Move that the Board oppose HoCo 5-26 Howard County – Voting Age – Board of Education Elections.
Motion by Linfeng Chen, second by Meg Ricks.
Final Resolution: Motion Carries
Yea: Linfeng Chen, Meg Ricks, Antonia Watts, Jacquelin McCoy, Andrea Chamblee, Jennifer Swickard Mallo
Nay: Erin Alistar, Jolene Mosley
- ★ Move that the Board support HoCo 7-26 Howard County Board of Education - Student Member - Voting.
Motion by Erin Alistar, second by Jolene Mosley.
Final Resolution: Motion Fails
Yea: Antonia Watts, Erin Alistar, Jolene Mosley, Jennifer Swickard Mallo
Nay: Linfeng Chen, Meg Ricks, Jacquelin McCoy, Andrea Chamblee
- ★ Move that the Board support with amendments HoCo 10-26 Howard County – Board of Education Budget – Minimum Funding.
Motion by Linfeng Chen, second by Antonia Watts.
Final Resolution: Motion Carries
Yea: Linfeng Chen, Meg Ricks, Antonia Watts, Erin Alistar, Jacquelin McCoy, Andrea Chamblee, Jolene Mosley
Nay: Jennifer Swickard Mallo
- ★ Move that the Board support HoCo 11-26 Howard County – Board of Education – Mandatory School Holidays.
Motion by Jolene Mosley, second by Linfeng Chen.
Final Resolution: Motion Fails
Yea: Linfeng Chen, Jolene Mosley
Nay: Meg Ricks, Antonia Watts, Erin Alistar, Jacquelin McCoy, Andrea Chamblee, Jennifer Swickard Mallo
- ★ Move that the Board oppose HoCo 11-26 Howard County – Board of Education – Mandatory School Holidays.
Motion by Antonia Watts, second by Meg Ricks.
Final Resolution: Motion Carries
Yea: Meg Ricks, Antonia Watts, Erin Alistar, Jacquelin McCoy, Andrea Chamblee, Jennifer Swickard Mallo
Nay: Linfeng Chen, Jolene Mosley
- ★ Move that the Board support CB10-2026 Excess Surplus Revenue - Modification.
Motion by Antonia Watts, second by Jennifer Swickard Mallo.
Final Resolution: Motion Carries
Yea: Linfeng Chen, Meg Ricks, Antonia Watts, Erin Alistar, Jacquelin McCoy, Andrea Chamblee, Jolene Mosley, Jennifer Swickard Mallo



Department of Legislative Services
General Assembly of Maryland
Dates of Interest
2026 SESSION
449th Session

FEB 2 2026 PTACHC Legislative

JANUARY							
				H	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	
25	H	26	27	28	29	30	31

FEBRUARY							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	
22	H	23	24	25	26	27	28

MARCH							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	
29	30	31					

APRIL							
			1	2	3	4	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	
26	27	28	29	30			

- January 14** GENERAL ASSEMBLY CONVENES (noon, Wednesday)
- 21 Final date for Governor to introduce budget bill
- 21 Final date for the Governor to introduce the capital budget bill
- 23 10th Day – SENATE AND HOUSE BILL REQUEST GUARANTEE DATE
- 26 13th Day – Administration bills introduced in the Senate after this date referred to Senate Rules Committee
- 28 15th Day – Final date for introduction of Governor’s Salary Commission, General Assembly Compensation Commission, and Judicial Compensation Commission recommendations. Legislative action must be taken within 50 days after introduction of the joint resolutions of the Governor’s Salary Commission and the Judicial Compensation Commission.

- February 9** 27th Day — SENATE BILL INTRODUCTION DATE
Senate bills introduced after this date referred to the Senate Rules Committee
Deadline for members to send LBI requests to DLS to guarantee preparation by 55th day.
- 11 Governor delivers the State of the State Address (noon)
- 12 Day before House Bill Introduction Date; “Hopper” will close at 5:00 P.M.
- 13 31st Day — HOUSE BILL INTRODUCTION DATE
House bills introduced after this date referred to the House Rules and Executive Nominations Committee
Deadline for members to send LBI requests to DLS to guarantee preparation by the 55th day.
- 22 40th Day — “Green Bag” appointments submitted by Governor (Delivered on Friday, February 20)

- March 9** 55th Day — Final date for introduction of bills and LBIs without suspension of Rules
- 17 63rd Day — Committee Reporting Courtesy Date
Each Chamber’s committees to report their own bills by this date
- 23 69th Day — Opposite Chamber Bill Crossover Date
Each Chamber to send to other Chamber those bills it intends to pass favorably.
Opposite Chamber bills received after this date subject to referral to Rules Committees (Senate Rule 32(c), House Courtesy Date)

- April 6** 83rd Day — Budget bill to be passed by both Chambers
- 13 90th Day — ADJOURNMENT “SINE DIE” (Monday)

- May 13** Final date for an extended session (Wednesday)

POST-SESSION

- May 3** 20th Day after adjournment — Final date for presentment of bills to Governor
- June 1** Other than emergency bills and as otherwise provided, earliest date for bills to take effect
- June 2** 30th Day after presentment—Governor to sign/veto bills by this date
- July 1** Budgetary, tax, and revenue bills to take effect
- October 1** Usual effective date for bills



FEB 2 2026 PTACHC Legislative

Sate bills found on <https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebiste/>

Bills of note

Land Use, Density, Overcrowding, Class sizes

SB31, SB36, HB548, HB337, HB64, HB473

Operations, School start times, Cell Use

SB103, HB128, HB163

Student Representation

HB140, SB144

Safety, Monitoring

SB71, SB158, HB395, HB73, HB76, HB110, SB51

Blueprint

HB78, HB73

Budget, MOE

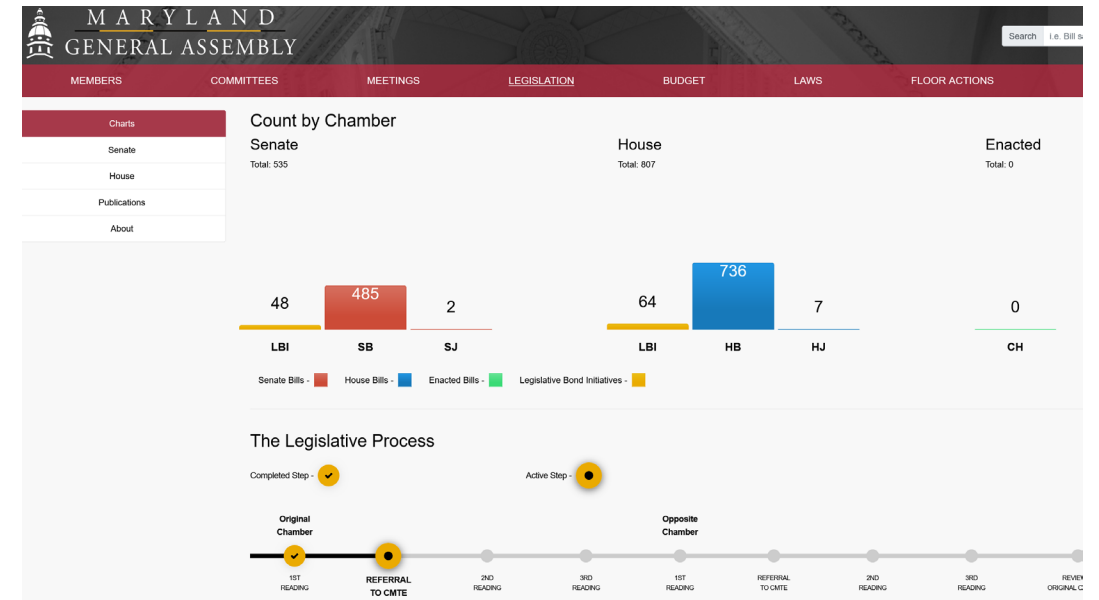
HB 562 Maintenance of effort Modernization Act

Record Keeping

HB358

Post College Reediness

HB29



What to do?

- *Learn more**
- *Disseminate info to your PTA**
- *Attend Hearings and Work Sessions**
- *Vote on Positions**
- *Testify**
- *Write**
- *Vote**
- *Be involved in advocacy**

On that note – PTACHC will host a primary election forum for all Howard County candidates March 14th 2026 11AM-1PM At Wilde Lake HS Auditorium