



House Bill 926

County Boards of Education - Spending - Reporting Requirement

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**
WITH AMENDMENTS

To: Ways and Means Committee
From: Robin Clark

Date: February 27, 2013

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** HB 926 **WITH AMENDMENTS**. HB 926 would require each county board of education to submit a per-student funding report to the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) every three years. The report must include the State, local, and federal per-student spending at each school for students who qualified for State funding for compensatory education, limited English proficiency, and special education, as well as magnet students and all other students. County governments and taxpayers would benefit from this additional information on county board spending.

Counties, along with the State, currently provide educational funding to county boards of education. According to the Department of Legislative Services, in fiscal 2009, county governments were the source of 48% of all funding for public education in Maryland and provided \$5.5 billion to their schools in fiscal 2013. As counties provide such a large portion of the county board budget, counties request that the bill be amended so that when the county board reports per-student spending to MSDE, they also report it to their county government. As budgets are developed yearly, counties would benefit from the per-student spending report each year (rather than the triennial cycle in the current bill), and ask that the Committee fairly weigh this potential benefit against the administrative burdens that it may impose on board staff.

For most counties, education funding exceeds the funding for all other programs combined. For this reason, counties are appropriate stakeholders in educational expenditure reporting, to realize long-term needs and opportunities for cost-savings through joint procurement or collaborative services and to ensure that the county's non-education spending complements the service offerings by its schools to best serve the community.

For these reasons, MACo recommends the Committee issue a **FAVORABLE** report on HB 926 **WITH AMENDMENTS**.