

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2026 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

Senate Bill 40 (Senator Sydnor)
Education, Energy, and the Environment

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

This emergency 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.

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.

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.

After each decennial census, the Chair of the Baltimore County Delegation to the General Assembly must introduce legislation to reapportion the school board districts.

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.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has been introduced within the last three years. See SB 656 and HB 1529 of 2025.

Designated Cross File: HB 41 (Delegate McCaskill) - Government, Labor, and Elections.

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

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 17, 2026
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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. All 24 boards have either student members or student representatives who regularly present at board meetings; 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 2026

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

School System	Number of Members	Term		Means of Selection ¹
Charles	10	4 years	E	1 from county at large 8 from commissioner districts 1 student (1-year term)
Dorchester	8	4 years	E	5 from councilmanic districts 3 students (nonvoting, 1-year term)
Frederick	8	4 years	E	7 from county at large 1 student (nonvoting, 1-year term)
Garrett	6	4 years	E	2 from county at large 3 from commissioner districts 1 student (nonvoting, 1-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 (1-year term)
Howard	8	4 years	E	2 from county at large 5 from councilmanic districts 1 student (1-year term)
Kent	6	4 years	E	5 from county at large 1 student (nonvoting, 1-year term)
Montgomery	8	4 years	E	2 from county at large 5 from school districts 1 student (1-year term)
Prince George's	10	4 years	E	9 from school board districts 1 student (1-year term)
Queen Anne's	7	4 years	E	1 from county at large 4 from commissioner districts 2 students (nonvoting, 1-year term)
St. Mary's	6	4 years	E	1 from county at large 4 from commissioner districts 1 student (nonvoting, 1-year term)
Somerset ²	8	4 years	E	5 from commissioner districts 3 students (nonvoting, 1-year term)

School System	Number of Members	Term	Means of Selection¹
Talbot	9	4 years	E 7 from school board districts 2 students (nonvoting, 1-year term)
Washington ³	8	4 years	E 7 from county at large 1 student (nonvoting, 1-year term)
Wicomico ⁴	11	4 years	E 5 from councilmanic districts 2 from county at large 4 students (nonvoting, 1-year term)
Worcester	10	4 years	E 7 from commissioner districts 3 students (nonvoting, 1-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 Somerset County Board of Education reports that there are three nonvoting student representatives who give presentations at board meetings on current events of interest at each of the three regular high schools in the county.

³ 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.

⁴ Chapter 429 of 2025 codified at least one nonvoting student member on the Wicomico County Board of Education. The Wicomico County Board of Education includes four student representatives who give presentations at board meetings on current events of interest at each of the four high schools in the county. At each meeting, one of the four student representatives sits with the regular board members on the dais for the full meeting, while other student board members come forward to speak as needed.

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