



MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

850 Hungerford Drive ♦ Room 123 ♦ Rockville, Maryland 20850



Bill: Senate Bill 271
Title: Capital Grant Program for Local School Systems With Significant Enrollment Growth or Relocatable Classrooms
Committee: Budget and Taxation
Date: February 10, 2015
Position: **SUPPORT**
Contact: Michael Durso, President, Montgomery County Board of Education

The Montgomery County Board of Education strongly supports Senate Bill 271.

This bill would increase the amount of money from \$20,000,000 to \$40,000,000 that the Governor is required to provide in the State budget for *the Capital Grant Program for Local School Systems With Significant Enrollment Growth or Relocatable Classrooms* each fiscal year.

The Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) continues to experience a burgeoning increase in enrollment and diversity along racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic lines. In seven years, we have gained more than 16,000 students, greater than the *combined* growth in Anne Arundel, Howard, Frederick and Baltimore Counties. Over the next 6 years, we anticipate enrolling another 11,000 students!

At the same time, we are severely challenged by limited capacity in our school facilities and will continue to have to make significant expenditures in the capital budgets to accommodate these student enrollment increases. Significant additional state construction dollars are critical and providing adequate school capacity will not be possible given the existing state school construction funding stream.

Over the years, MCPS has sought to balance the fiscal difficulties facing the county with the need to address our overcrowded schools and aging facilities and infrastructure. While more than 17% of public schools students in Maryland are enrolled in MCPS, year after year, we typically receive only 13% of the appropriated school construction funds. At a minimum, this bill would help bring our share of state school construction dollars in line with our share of student enrollment.

For these reasons, we support this bill and ask for a favorable report.