

Bill No.: _____
Requested: _____
Committee: _____

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By: **Delegate C. Watson**

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Howard County Board of Education – School Year – Start and End Dates**

3 **Ho. Co. 25–19**

4 FOR the purpose of providing that the authorization for a county board of education to
5 extend the length of the school year for a certain number of days beyond a certain
6 date without approval from the State Board of Education does not apply to the
7 Howard County Board of Education; requiring the Howard County Board of
8 Education to set the start date and end date of the school year for the public schools
9 in the county each year; making conforming changes; and generally relating to the
10 start date and end date of the school year and the Howard County Board of
11 Education.

12 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
13 Article – Education
14 Section 7–103
15 Annotated Code of Maryland
16 (2018 Replacement Volume and 2018 Supplement)

17 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
18 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.
[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1

Article – Education

2 7–103.

3 (a) Except as provided in subsections (b), [(e)] (F), and [(f)] (G) of this section,
4 each public school under the jurisdiction of a county board:

5 (1) (i) Shall be open for pupil attendance for at least 180 actual school
6 days and a minimum of 1,080 school hours during a 10–month period in each school year;
7 or

8 (ii) If normal school attendance is prevented because of conditions
9 described in subsection (b) of this section, shall be open for at least 1,080 hours during a
10 10–month period;

11 (2) Shall be open for pupil attendance a minimum of 3 hours during each
12 school day; and

13 (3) May not be open on Saturdays, Sundays, or holidays in order to meet
14 the 180–day or 1,080–hour requirement of this subsection.

15 (b) (1) If a county board submits a written application to the State Board that
16 describes a demonstrated effort by the county board to comply with subsection (a) of this
17 section, the State Board may permit:

18 (i) The following adjustments:

19 1. An increase in the length of the school year for more
20 school days than the number of days extended by a county board under paragraph (3) of
21 this subsection; or

22 2. A decrease in the length of the school year;

23 (ii) Exceptions from the requirement that the school year be
24 completed within a 10–month period;

25 (iii) Adjustments in the length of the school day; and

1 (iv) Schools to be open on holidays.

2 (2) These adjustments may be granted only if normal school attendance is
3 prevented because of:

4 (i) Natural disaster;

5 (ii) Civil disaster; or

6 (iii) Severe weather conditions.

7 (3) **(I) THIS PARAGRAPH DOES NOT APPLY TO THE HOWARD**
8 **COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION.**

9 **(II)** A county board may extend the length of the school year for up
10 to 5 school days beyond June 15 without approval from the State Board.

11 (4) Education funding from State or local sources may not be reduced if
12 there are less than 180 school days in any year because of an approved application under
13 paragraph (1)(i)2 of this subsection.

14 (5) In case of emergency, the State Board may open schools on holidays.

15 (c) (1) The following days are public school holidays:

16 (i) Thanksgiving Day and the day after;

17 (ii) Christmas Eve and from then through January 1;

18 (iii) Martin Luther King, Jr. Day;

19 (iv) Presidents' Day;

20 (v) The Friday before Easter and from then through the Monday
21 after Easter;

22 (vi) Memorial Day; and

1 (vii) Primary and general election days.

2 (2) If the federal and State observances of a holiday are on different days,
3 the board of education of each county shall determine which date shall be the date of
4 observance for the public schools within the county.

5 (3) The public schools shall devote a part of the day to appropriate exercises
6 for the following days:

7 (i) Washington's Birthday;

8 (ii) Lincoln's Birthday;

9 (iii) Veterans' Day;

10 (iv) Columbus Day;

11 (v) Arbor Day; and

12 (vi) Any other day of national significance.

13 (4) Notwithstanding any other provisions of this article, the public schools,
14 in the following counties, may remain open and in session on primary and general election
15 days:

16 (i) Calvert;

17 (ii) Caroline;

18 (iii) Dorchester;

19 (iv) Kent;

20 (v) Talbot; and

21 (vi) Worcester.

22 (D) NOTWITHSTANDING ANY OTHER PROVISION OF LAW AND SUBJECT TO

1 THE REQUIREMENTS OF THIS SECTION, THE HOWARD COUNTY BOARD OF
2 EDUCATION SHALL SET THE START DATE AND END DATE OF THE SCHOOL YEAR FOR
3 THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN THE COUNTY EACH YEAR.

4 [(d)] (E) Except as provided in subsection [(e)] (F) of this section, the State
5 Board shall divide the school year into the terms it considers appropriate.

6 [(e)] (F) (1) The county boards of Allegany, Anne Arundel, Calvert, Howard,
7 Montgomery, and Prince George's counties, and the Board of School Commissioners of
8 Baltimore City, may elect to operate one or more schools within the county or Baltimore
9 City on a year-round basis, provided that the 180-day and the minimum hour
10 requirements under this section are met.

11 (2) Nothing in this section precludes a county board from conducting a
12 year-round pilot study or program that is funded by the county board.

13 [(f)] (G) Publicly funded prekindergarten programs are not subject to the
14 requirements of subsection (a) of this section.

15 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July
16 1, 2019.

