



# MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

850 Hungerford Drive ♦ Room 123 ♦ Rockville, Maryland 20850



**Bill:** Senate Bill 767  
**Title:** Beginning of School Year - After Labor Day  
**Committee:** Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs  
**Date:** March 2, 2016  
**Position:** **OPPOSE**  
**Contact:** Michael Durso, President, Montgomery County Board of Education

The Montgomery County Board of Education strongly opposes Senate Bill 767.

This bill seeks to prohibit Maryland public schools from opening before Labor Day. While the recommendation from the *Task Force to Study a Post-Labor Day Start Date for Maryland Public Schools* asserts it is in the economic interest of the state to start school after Labor Day, it is essential to weigh that against essential school issues.

Maryland school systems are fully authorized to start schools after Labor Day. Prohibiting schools from starting before Labor Day ignores critical issues faced by schools that would be impacted by such a mandate. Determining the school calendar is complicated and requires balancing educational requirements, operational issues and unique community interests.

The Montgomery County Public School calendar has a longstanding history of being developed through a collaborative review by key stakeholders. Input is solicited from parents, staff, students and community leaders. Many years ago, MCPS did start school after Labor Day. However, since instituting our collaborative process, our community has consistently determined that it is in the best interest of our students to start school before Labor Day.

Maintaining local board authority on educational policies and administration is essential to the success of our public schools. We firmly believe that local board of education are best positioned to establish policies and operational processes, as well as to balance educational practices, academic needs of students, available resources and community interests.

For these reasons, we strongly urge an unfavorable report on this bill.