



# MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

*Dedicated to providing a high-quality education for every child*



**Christopher S. Barclay**  
President  
District 4



**Philip Kauffman**  
Vice President  
At-Large



**Shirley Brandman**  
At-Large



**Judith Docca**  
District 1



**Michael Durso**  
District 5



**Patricia B. O'Neill**  
District 3



**Rebecca Smondrowski**  
District 2



**John Mannes**  
Student Member



**Dr. Joshua P. Starr**  
Superintendent of Schools &  
Secretary-Treasurer

## *About Us and How We May Help You*

The Montgomery County Board of Education is the official educational policy-making body in the county. The Board is responsible for the direction and operation of the public school system. Our mission is to provide leadership and oversight for a high-quality educational system with community-supported goals, policies, and resources committed to benefit our growing and diverse student population.

The Board consists of seven county residents elected by voters for a four-year term and a student elected by secondary school students for a one-year term. Board members are elected countywide but run at large, or from the Board district in which they reside.

**Our Vision:** A high-quality education is the fundamental right of every child. All children will receive the respect, encouragement, and opportunities they need to build the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to be successful, contributing members of a global society.

In this brochure, we would like to let you know about the roles and responsibilities of the Board of Education, how to become involved in public education, and how we may be of service to you and your children.

## Standing Committees

There are five standing Board committees. The committees and their members are as follows:

### Communications and Public Engagement

Enhances the Board's use of external and internal mechanisms of communication; discussions and presentations at the Board table during business meetings; opportunities to gather perceptions and viewpoints from diverse segments of the community and staff; and other means to promote good communications and public engagement between the Board and its stakeholders.

**Judith Docca (Chair)**  
**Christopher Barclay**  
**Rebecca Smondrowski**

### Fiscal Management

Reviews issues pertaining to the management and audit of Montgomery County Public Schools' fiscal, capital, and human resources, including the Board's operating budget, the Capital Improvements Program, staffing plans, and allocations.

**Philip Kauffman (Chair)**  
**Christopher Barclay**  
**Michael Durso**

### Policy

Works with the superintendent and staff to develop draft policy to present to the full Board.

**Patricia O'Neill (Chair)**  
**Shirley Brandman**  
**Rebecca Smondrowski**  
**John Mannes**

### Strategic Planning

Provides a forum to consider the long-range direction of the school system; evaluates approaches to long-range planning; and makes strategic planning recommendations to the Board.

**Michael Durso (Chair)**  
**Shirley Brandman**  
**Patricia O'Neill**

### Special Populations

Reviews issues and instructional programs designed to meet the needs of special populations that require special education services, gifted and talented instruction, alternative programs, ESOL services, and multilingual support.

**Shirley Brandman (Chair)**  
**Judith Docca**  
**Philip Kauffman**

## Advisory Committees

The Board also has the following advisory committees: Ethics Panel, Family Life and Human Development Advisory Committee and Collaboration Board for Career and Technology Education.

## Meeting Times

Committee meetings are advertised on the Board of Education's website: [www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/boe](http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/boe). The public may attend the committee meetings but may not participate in discussions.

## The Board's Roles and Responsibilities

The powers and mandatory duties of the Board of Education are defined in the *Education Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland* and Title 13A of the *Code of Maryland Regulations*. The Board's primary responsibilities, aligned to support the strategic plan of the school system, include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Selecting and appointing the superintendent of schools.
2. Formulating and interpreting policies.
3. Adopting operating and capital budgets.
4. Making decisions on educational, budgetary, facility, and financial matters (including authorization of legal settlements).
5. Establishing curriculum guides and courses of study.
6. Making a continuous appraisal of the educational and administrative management of the school system.
7. Establishing school boundaries.
8. Communicating with citizenry, staff, and students.
9. Acting in a quasi-judicial capacity, in particular, deciding appeals.
10. Advancing a legislative agenda.
11. Appointing personnel.

## ***How are the Board's roles and responsibilities different from those of the superintendent?***

- ❖ The Board sets policies and the superintendent interprets and implements the policies.
- ❖ The superintendent recommends the capital and operating budgets, but the Board makes the final determination on the budgets that are submitted to the County Council and county executive.
- ❖ Upon appeal by a parent, the Board reviews decisions made by the superintendent.
- ❖ The Board appoints personnel. The superintendent assigns personnel and provides for their professional development.
- ❖ The Board holds legal title to property and enters into contracts for services. The superintendent monitors the provision of goods and services required under the contract.

## ***Board Meetings and Participation***

The Board usually conducts two business meetings per month. The all-day business meeting is usually held on the second Tuesday of the month, and the evening business meeting is usually held on the second Monday following the all-day meeting.

These meetings are usually held at the Carver Educational Services Center in Rockville, Maryland. Agenda and meeting materials are posted on the Board's website: [www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/boe/meetings/index.aspx#calendar](http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/boe/meetings/index.aspx#calendar).

Persons interested in providing comments during a Board meeting should contact the Board office at 301-279-3617. Generally, sign ups begin the Monday before the Board meeting. Speakers who wish to address issues relating to the day's agenda may call in from 10:00 to 10:30 a.m. to reserve a slot. Between 11:00 and 11:30 a.m., the unused slots may be reserved by speakers who wish to address other issues. Speakers are requested to provide twenty (20) copies of written testimony in advance of the meeting.

In addition to special public hearings, the Board holds hearings on its strategic plan, the annual operating budget, the capital budget, and school boundaries.

General guidelines for these public hearings are as follows:

1. Whenever possible, a public hearing will be scheduled one month in advance.
2. The public may sign up to speak beginning at 9 a.m. on the day three weeks prior to the hearing. The agenda for the hearing is closed when the maximum number of speakers is registered or at the close of business the day before the hearing.

## ***The Budget Process***

The Board must review and approve the operating budget and capital budget for the school system each year.

### **Capital Budget**

#### **By June 1**

Cluster representatives send the superintendent proposed solutions, priorities, or concerns the cluster has identified for its schools.

#### **Early October**

The superintendent holds a public work session with the Board to review enrollment trends and facilities planning issues.

#### **Mid-October**

Superintendent releases recommendations on boundary studies and/or planning studies that were conducted the previous spring.

#### **Around November 1**

The superintendent publishes a recommended six-year Capital Improvements Program (CIP) or amendments and one year capital budget.

#### **November**

Board holds a work session at which members may propose alternative solutions to boundary changes. The Board also holds public hearings on facilities and boundary proposals, with decisions scheduled prior to the end of November.

#### **December–January**

County Executive reviews the Board's CIP request and makes recommendations to the County Council.

## February–May

County Council reviews requested CIP.

## Spring

Superintendent releases recommendations for winter boundary studies and deferred items (if any). Board of Education holds work sessions and hearings before taking action on recommended winter boundary studies (if any).

## May

County Council approves the CIP and the Capital Budget.

\***Note:** December–early-May—Hearings and decisions occur regarding the state CIP.

## Operating Budget

### December

The superintendent recommends the budget's adoption to the members of the Board.

### January

The Board holds public hearings and work sessions to secure additional information on the recommendations of the superintendent and on items the Board itself is considering.

### March 1

The Board must adopt and submit the budget to the County Executive and County Council this date each year.

## June 1

The County Council must decide the amount of appropriations for each state category in the school system budget.

## In June

The Board makes adjustments to the budget to conform to County Council action and to reflect the final judgment of the Board on expenditure priorities.

## July 1

The school system's new operating budget takes effect.

## *Ombudsman—How the Board Office May Help You*

The ombudsman is appointed by the Montgomery County Board of Education and is considered an independent or neutral party who seeks to resolve school-related problems as quickly and efficiently as possible, especially for those for which a formal resolution process does not exist.

The ombudsman has the authority to access all files, with your permission. All employees of the school system are directed to cooperate with the ombudsman.

Although the ombudsman is available to answer questions regarding formal appeals, the ombudsman does not generally intervene in such cases.

You may contact the ombudsman at 301-279-3301.



ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND