

# BOARD OF EDUCATION OF WICOMICO COUNTY



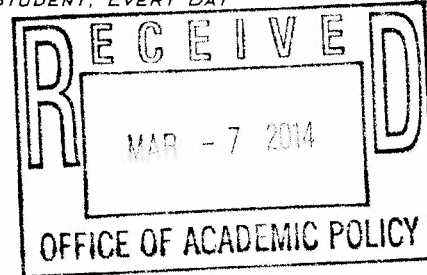
JOHN E. FREDERICKSEN, PH.D.  
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

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*SUCCESS - EVERY STUDENT, EVERY DAY*

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March 4, 2014

William Cappe, Education Program Specialist  
Maryland Department of Education  
200 West Baltimore Street  
Baltimore MD 21201

RE: Post-Labor Day School Start

Dear Mr. Cappe:

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the request that the State of Maryland statutorily require schools to open after Labor Day. Currently, schools may start before or after Labor Day, based on local decision-making for the best results for student achievement. I support continuing to make this a local decision to allow those closest to their students to make the decision on when to start school in the autumn based on student success, faculty effectiveness, and family needs.

Our students tend to respond the best when we can create the best environment for their learning. It also helps us to address local and state assessment procedures to make sure that the students are ready to do their best to compete with other students in their age cohorts across Maryland and America. We take everything available into consideration when making this decision such as: what our families prefer, faculty training needs (and professional development/training/evaluation plans), and any anticipated facility changes such as construction, refitting, and major renovations. Wicomico County is the source of the greatest agricultural commerce (by aggregate sales) in Maryland as well as having one of the most urban profiles (for our Salisbury metropolitan area), creating an added incentive for us to listen closely to our customers. By being responsive to our faculties and families, we boost attendance, increase the focus on learning, and build stronger bonds between families and our school teachers. We also consider weather issues, as several of our buildings lack air-conditioning and we seek to strike a balance that avoids the hottest weather.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on this topic. Please know that you're welcome to contact us if you have additional information needs.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John E. Fredericksen', written over a white background.

John E. Fredericksen, Ph.D.  
Superintendent