

Sayers, Margery

From: Rigby, Christiana
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 10:31 AM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Please do not increase class sizes to fill budget gaps

From: Leslie Toussaint <l2saint@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 3:45 PM
To: superintendent@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin <cball@howardcountymd.gov>; Walsh, Elizabeth <ewalsh@howardcountymd.gov>; Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>; Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>; Jung, Deb <djung@howardcountymd.gov>; Yungmann, David <dyungmann@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Please do not increase class sizes to fill budget gaps

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

County Executive Dr. Ball, County Council Members, and Dr. Martirano:

Last May I voiced my support for Amendment 6 to CB25-2018 introduced by Council members Ball and Terrasa in order to maintain current HCPSS class sizes under the FY19 Operating Budget put forward by executive Kittleman.

Fast forward one year later and I'm upset to learn we are having the same discussion under the executive leadership of Dr. Ball. Please find a solution to fund our school system that doesn't result in overcrowded classrooms. How can we possibly hope to be the top school system in the nation when every year we are scrambling to fully fund our schools?

Sincerely,

Leslie Toussaint
12540 Folly Quarter Rd.
Ellicott City, MD 21042

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 9:57 AM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Class size

From: Kelly McKim <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Tuesday, April 30, 2019 8:19 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Class size

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Today, in our staff meeting our principal mentioned the possibility of increased class size. This shocked me! As a county, we have been a leader in the educational field. We pride ourselves on the level of quality education we provide EVERY student. As a teacher, I get to know my students and families very well. In order to teach effectively, I need to know them. Recently, I taught a 2nd grade math class of 29 children. I was barely able to get to every student each day. I can't imagine how we can continue to effectively educate all of our students with increased class sizes. I am a product of this county and the school system. As a teacher, I can not afford to live here because of the high real estate costs. These costs are in large part due to the excellent school system. Please consider this when making your budgeting choices.

Kelly McKim
kellylynnemckim@gmail.com
6715 White Rock Road
Sykesville, Maryland 21784

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Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 9:57 AM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Special Education PLEASE

From: Allison Meade <Allison_Meade@hcpss.org>
Sent: Tuesday, April 30, 2019 8:35 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Special Education PLEASE

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

This year, we had a student who was not able to get the required services that they needed - one of the teachers who could have served him was split between two different schools and they other had 15 other kids on her caseload. This student was not able to get the services that they required for their speech, occupational therapy, or behavioral needs. Because of his needs not being met, his general education classroom teacher was acting as his special educator and so she was not able to teach her classroom properly. It caused a chain reaction of students not getting the education that they are legally entitled to. At the end of the day, it's about students getting the education that they deserve and they are required to get. Special education needs more funding so that all students, regardless of their disability or lack thereof, are getting the services that they require.

Allison Meade
Allison_Meade@hcpss.org
25 Queen Anne Road
Columbia, Maryland 21060

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 9:57 AM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Please fund our operating budget!

From: Katherine Pagani <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Tuesday, April 30, 2019 8:36 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Please fund our operating budget!

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

I'm sending out a brief plea on a personal level to ask for desperately needed funding for my department. Special Ed is dangerously understaffed. I believe that every child should be able to attend their neighborhood school and not be "shipped out" because of their special needs. I was tending to the needs of a student last week by myself and I couldn't control him. He ended up biting me and causing significant nerve damage to my arm and hand. I am in a "wait and see" situation now, as the doctor said it could take months for the nerve to heal. Please please give us the funds to get the staffing we need to tend to our children safely!

Thank you,

Katherine Pagani

Special Education Paraeducator

Katherine Pagani

chattykathy0516@gmail.com

7006 Bristol Place

Sykesville , Maryland 21784

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Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 9:56 AM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Special Education Students deserve instruction

From: Margaret Danaher <margaret_danaher@hcpss.org>
Sent: Tuesday, April 30, 2019 9:06 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Special Education Students deserve instruction

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Hello Council Members,

This will be a short letter because my time is very limited.

I am a special educator in a HCPSS elementary school. 5 years ago, I had caseloads between 6-8 students. I co-taught with teachers, modified materials for my students as needed and enjoyed teaching them and watching them progress and grow.

This year, I have "processed" at least 24 students. I still do some teaching but most of my time is spent on casework which means paperwork including of a clerical nature. I am unhappy. This is not why I changed my career path 15 years ago to be a glorified clerk who tries to squeeze in teaching as I can. More importantly, this is not what my students deserve. They have a right to adequate and appropriate staffing and use of school personnel.

I encourage you to do whatever you are able to restore an appropriate instructional environment for the special education students in Howard County.

Thank-you.

Sincerely Yours,

Margaret E. Danaher, MS

Margaret Danaher

margaret_danaher@hcpss.org

3429 Plum Tree Drive

Ellicott City, Maryland 21042

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Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 9:56 AM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Support the Budget

From: Joanne Addy <joanne_addy@hcpss.org>
Sent: Tuesday, April 30, 2019 11:41 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Support the Budget

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

To Whom It May Concern,

I understand the budget next year might be cut causing class sizes to be increased. I cannot stress enough how detrimental that would be to the students learning. We have classrooms with many needs beyond IEP and physical disabilities. Students need both academic and social support which is hard to do when class sizes are large. I chose to work in Howard County because the county puts students and their needs first. I realize it is difficult to decide where to cut the budget so we are financially secure but doing it at the expense of students is just not the right choice.

Thank you for your attention to this matter!

Joanne Addy
joanne_addy@hcpss.org
6037 Maple Hill Road
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

Sayers, Margery

From: Rigby, Christiana
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 9:54 AM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Proposed School Funding Cuts and Increased Class Sizes
Attachments: Save our teachers-2.pdf

From: Wesley Clarke <wlclark@me.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 5, 2019 10:11 PM
To: Ball, Calvin <cball@howardcountymd.gov>; superintendent@hcpss.org
Cc: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>; Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>; Jung, Deb <djung@howardcountymd.gov>; Yungmann, David <dyungmann@howardcountymd.gov>; Walsh, Elizabeth <ewalsh@howardcountymd.gov>; Yungmann, David <dyungmann@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: RE: Proposed School Funding Cuts and Increased Class Sizes

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

County Executive Dr. Ball, County Council Members, and Dr. Martirano,

A year ago, then Council-member Ball and then Council-member Terrasa introduced a bill to keep class sizes in Howard County at the same size and eliminate the threat of removing some of our talented and dedicated teachers.

Last week, several of our children came home crying with news that many of our teachers were put on notice that they may be transferred or terminated. Please determine a way to fully fund the budgetary line item "instruction" so that *all* of our teachers remain with Howard County, and at the schools where they have developed a relationship with their students. Even my third graders are keenly aware that the teachers who inspire them cannot be replaced with technology, and they asked me pointedly, "why would adults suggest that and larger class sizes, don't they know the importance of quality instruction, and that we (students) can't achieve that high-level education without individualized attention?" How are our teachers to effectively teach all of our students, including our precious ones with special needs, with increased class sizes?

We cannot expect to remain among the top school districts in our nation when each year we entertain the notion of not fully funding our schools. Many of us, myself included, moved to Howard County specifically for the school system. We must ensure that developers who advertise our school districts pay their share of the costs associated with the infrastructure their communities create, similar to our neighboring counties.

Sincerely,
Wesley Clarke
12142 Hayland Farm Way
Ellicott City, MD 21042

Sayers, Margery

From: Buffy Hartung <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Sunday, May 5, 2019 8:50 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Do not increase class sizes!

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Council Members ,

Please do not increase class sizes in Howard county schools. Howard county is renowned for its quality of education for our children. Increasing class sizes will greatly diminish the ability for students to learn. When class sizes increase, the teacher's ability to help individual students throughout the day decreases. It's a difficult situation to need to balance the budget however nothing is more valuable than a good teacher having time to work with each of the students. Please do not shortchange our students on their education by increasing class sizes.

Sincerely,
Buffy Hartung

Buffy Hartung
frogblue@gmail.com
6454 Woodburn Ave
Elkridge, MD 21075

Sayers, Margery

From: Wendy Williams-Abrams <wmrlz@hotmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 5, 2019 5:17 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Budget for HCPSS

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear County Council,

I am writing to you as a Howard County taxpayer, mother of four children in HCPSS, the president of the Manor Woods Elementary PTA, and as a former elementary teacher. I am very disturbed by the council's inability to fully-fund the budgetary needs of our school system. As the third wealthiest county in the country, I am perplexed by our county's fiscal shortfall. How is it that the fastest-growing county in the state is unable to fund the educational needs of its students? What are we doing wrong, on the county level, that our BOE is being forced to increase class sizes to unreasonable levels in order to stay within budget?

I have been talking to my children about how they feel when they hear that they will have more kids in their classes, and I think my 8th grader said it best. He said, "I sometimes don't understand what the teacher is teaching, and when there are lots of kids in the class, I feel like I can't ask as many questions because the teachers seem overwhelmed. For kids like me, it's really hard to be in huge classes. I can't imagine if they were any bigger." My sophomore said, "We already have 34 kids in my English class, and there's barely room to move in the classroom. We were told that we are going to lose two English teachers next year, which means that our classrooms will be even more crowded. We can't have any more kids in our classes!" My elementary kids are more distraught by what the increase in class sizes means for their related arts classes, and the need for more and more "sprinkling" of students.

As an educator, a parent, and a taxpayer in this county, I believe that it is your responsibility to ensure that our children's educations remain the top priority. People move to Howard County for our schools. If our school system begins to decline, and how can it not if class sizes increase, our county will no longer be as desirable. Our property values will decrease as people choose to move to neighboring counties where the school systems are adequately funded. Our county has ridden on the school system's reputation for a long time, but the reality of deferred maintenance, outdated technology, large class sizes, and insufficient facilities will eventually bring us to our knees. We voted for council members who would fight for education, fight for increased impact fees from developers, and who would make the tough decisions needed to bring our budgetary priorities into focus.

If development continues at its current rate, and we continue to gain approximately 1,000 new students each year, we will find ourselves in an even more dire situation. It is up to the county council to figure out how to increase revenue (not simply by increasing our taxes, but by recovering more impact fees from developers and businesses), get rid of any budgetary "fat", and renew its commitment to our school system. We must fully-fund the superintendent's budget.

I am attaching studies and articles that demonstrate the links between class size and student achievement. Please read them, seek more information, talk to teachers and students, and consider what we sacrifice when we cram more students into classes that are already too large.

Thank you for taking the time to read my email and consider my concerns. This is a pivotal moment in our county's history, and I don't want our children to look back on the decisions made during this county council's tenure and wonder what went so terribly wrong.

Sincerely,

Wendy Williams-Abrams
District 1
3144 Saint Charles Place
Ellicott City, MD 21042

<https://www.brookings.edu/research/class-size-what-research-says-and-what-it-means-for-state-policy/>



Class Size: What Research Says and What it Means for State Policy - Brookings - Quality. Independence. Impact.

Given the high cost of maintaining small classes, the current fiscal environment has forced states and school districts to rethink their class-size reduction policies. Russ Whitehurst and Matthew ...

www.brookings.edu

<http://www.centerforpubliceducation.org/research/class-size-and-student-achievement>

Class size and student achievement | Center for Public Education

Reducing class size to increase student achievement is an approach that has been tried, debated, and analyzed for several decades. The premise seems logical: with fewer students to teach, teachers can coax better performance from each of them.

www.centerforpubliceducation.org

<https://www.ilr.cornell.edu/sites/default/files/WP136.pdf>

Sent from [Outlook](#)

Sayers, Margery

From: panyongmei@gmail.com
Sent: Sunday, May 5, 2019 11:22 AM
To: CouncilMail
Cc: chao_wu@hcpss.org
Subject: Hcpss 2020 budge

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear county council members

As a HCPSS parents, I just surprisingly found that the 2020 HCPSS budge only increases 0.9%, not even enough to maintain the basic school operation. There are estimated 800-1000 more students coming into HCPSS in the new year, with around 11.5 million more cost according to BOE. By contrast, the increase of HCPSS budge is only 5.1 million, only half to cover the increased expense caused by more students!

The big deficit of HCPSS could be at the cost of increased class size, according to BOE's plan to solve shortage of school budge. Larger class size means more efforts managing big groups of kids instead of being able to really teach them. It means compromise of our teaching quality and losing excellent teachers. As a tax payer and HCPSS parent, I'm proud of supporting our high-quality school system which is attributed to our small class size! I hope tax payer's money can be appropriately managed and used for our kids.

I noticed other departments, such as Public Works, Police, Howard County Community College and Library System have higher increased budget, ranging from 6.2% to 2.5%. With more residential developments and more residents coming in Howard County, I would assume the tax income would increase? I'm wondering how HCPSS budge only increases by 0.9%? How much is the income increase for budge year 2020?

I would appreciate any feedback from you.

Thank you
Yongmei Pan, PhD
Proud parent of 2nd and 6th HCPSS students

Sent from my iPhone

Sayers, Margery

From: Brooke Dalesio <bdalesio27@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 5, 2019 9:37 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Class size increases

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Council Members,

I am writing to express my concern over the budget shortfalls that will likely result in class size increases across HCPSS. As an 18 year veteran educator and current College of Education faculty member at the University of Maryland at College Park, PTA President for Longfellow Elementary School's PTA, and parent of three HCPSS students, it is troubling that even with the wealth of research we have on the benefits of smaller class sizes in relation to student achievement and teacher production and job satisfaction, that your Council is still proposing these cutbacks.

I urge you all to put yourselves in the seats of these children and educators if this budget goes through as is. Imagine sitting in a class of 33, in a cramped classroom, with one teacher, trying to get individualized attention when you don't understand a concept or need to be pushed to learn the next standard. Imagine being a teacher with 33 students to plan differentiated instruction for daily, deliver lessons that address the various needs of 33 students in a class where students don't have space to work in small groups, grade 33 sets of papers/quizzes/tests, write 33 report card comments four times per year, hold 33 parent/teacher conferences, and prepare 33 students for the many standardized tests they are forced to administer every year. How can a teacher possibly meet the needs of 33 students in this way? Which students get left behind bc there just isn't enough time to teach them all what they need to know? Who is to blame when test scores go down and schools start looking less desirable and developers stop wanting to build in HoCo? Historically, schools and teachers are blamed, however, if this budget cuts funding for education in HCPSS, it will be a direct reflection on the lack of care and irresponsible decision-making of our elected county officials.

As all of you know, HoCo parents don't forget and vote accordingly. I urge you to do the right thing and fund HCPSS the way the kids and teachers of this county deserve.

Sincerely,
Brooke Dalesio
PTA President
Longfellow Elementary School, Columbia, MD

Sent from my iPhone

Sayers, Margery

From: Jodi Schwarzl <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Sunday, May 5, 2019 4:52 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Don't cut teacher positions

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Council Members ,

Dear Council Members and all involved in disseminating your school budget,

Teachers matter and so do classroom sizes.

Overcrowding a classroom is counterproductive.

The larger the classroom size the less time a teacher can give to each student.

The less time a student receives from a teacher, the more they fall behind.

The more students fall behind, the more additional resources they require.

The increase in students receiving resources will end up costing you as much (if not more) than you figured you'd save.

Cutting teachers and raising classroom sizes is short sighted with a byproduct of putting the students last.

I'm confident that you're final decision will meet the expectations of all the tax paying and voting residents.

After all housing prices are directly affected by the quality of the schools.

The last thing you need is to be the cause of a drop in property values because the schools lose credibility.

Keep your teachers, keep your class sizes small and keep the quality of your schools and the students' education high.

Thank you,

Jodi Schwarzl

Jodi Schwarzl

jhschwarzl@gmail.com

57 Finchley Court

Southampton, New Jersey 08088

Sayers, Margery

From: Jodi Schwarzl <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Sunday, May 5, 2019 4:51 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Don't cut teacher positions

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Council Members ,

Dear Council Members and all involved in disseminating your school budget,

Teachers matter and so do classroom sizes.

Overcrowding a classroom is counterproductive.

The larger the classroom size the less time a teacher can give to each student.

The less time a student receives from a teacher, the more they fall behind.

The more students fall behind, the more additional resources they require.

The increase in students receiving resources will end up costing you as much (if not more) than you figured you'd save.

Cutting teachers and raising classroom sizes is short sighted with a byproduct of putting the students last.

I'm confident that you're final decision will meet the expectations of all the tax paying and voting residents.

After all housing prices are directly affected by the quality of the schools.

The last thing you need is to be the cause of a drop in property values because the schools lose credibility.

Keep your teachers, keep your class sizes small and keep the quality of your schools and the students' education high.

Thank you,

Jodi Schwarzl

Jodi Schwarzl

jhschwarzl@gmail.com

57 Finchley Court

Southampton, New Jersey 08088

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Saturday, May 4, 2019 1:16 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Please Fund Our Schools

From: Madeline McErlean <Madeline_McErlean@hcpss.org>
Sent: Saturday, May 4, 2019 12:37 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Please Fund Our Schools

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Dear County Council Members,

I am a first year teacher. I currently teach 3rd Grade in Ellicott City. Last school year, I interned in HCPSS and received a Master of Arts in Teaching from Towson University. Even when last year's budget proposal was announced, 200+ teachers were at risk of surplus, and multiple HCPSS employees told me that I would not get hired in the school system that I loved, I stayed committed. I took 4 interviews and turned down 4 job offers from surrounding counties, hoping I would still have the opportunity to become an HCPSS educator. My wishes were answered when I received a single call for an HCPSS interview last July- and got the job.

As I come towards the end of my first year of teaching, I have done much reflecting on my experience as a Howard County educator. This year has had many challenges, beyond those that naturally accompany the first year of teaching. There have been 7 weeks this year (almost an entire marking period's worth of time) where I have been unable to meet and co-plan with my Special Educator to support my students with special needs, because a lack of adequate staff has pulled her to support students in another part of the building. If we are able, we try to communicate over the phone on weekends or weeknights to make up for missed planning time. This is time that we take away from spending with our own loved ones, and refreshing for the next whirlwind week of teaching and loving 8- and 9-year old children. There have been many days where I have been left on my own to manage and teach an inclusive math classroom of 22 students, several of whom should be receiving additional close ad ult support

for inclusion in the general education classroom every single day. On these days, so much of my time is committed to accommodating the needs and behaviors of my students with special needs, that I am often unable to guide and support my entire class in meeting that day's learning objective. Equitable learning is our most fundamental priority as HCPSS educators, and feeling as if we are falling short in sufficiently supporting and growing each student is absolutely debilitating.

As a new teacher who was shaped by HCPSS mentors and missions, I wish to continue working for the best school system in the United States. If we wish to maintain this prestigious status, adequate funding is absolutely vital. Please consider increasing the funds provided to help our students and teachers become the best they can be.

Thank you for your hard work and consideration.

Sincerely,

Maddie McErlean

Madeline McErlean

Madeline_McErlean@hcpss.org

417 Charles Street Avenue

Towson, Maryland 21204

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:58 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Budget and Class Sizes

From: Angela Pope <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 6:53 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Budget and Class Sizes

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

To the Howard County Council Members,

I implore you to search for and give more funds to the Howard County School system and to not increase classroom sizes or decrease staffing.

In the few times I have been able to teach small classes, I've been able to build stronger relationships with my students and spend more time ensuring students get the individual assistance they need. With less students to be in charge of, I had more time to communicate with parents, give more detailed feedback when doing formative and summarize assessments, and I could be confident that we would have enough materials in a class. Raising a middle school class size to 35 increases the chances of us not having enough materials, time or literal space to meet each student's needs. Students especially in the eastern and central part of the county are experiencing traumas at a higher degree and also need more counseling and mental health support, and we need a fully funded budget to support this need

Currently our school has already needed to surplus 2 teachers this year, due to re-districting lowering our total student population. If the budget HCPSS requested is not met, we will have to surplus 2.2 additional teaching positions. This means less staff to support students who are in crisis, a less flexible master schedule which won't be able to support collaboration amongst teachers and won't be able to ensure that all students are placed in the best class for them. A less flexible schedule also means our students with disabilities will either be all crammed into one class without enough support to go around during that class, or some students will be

placed in classes with 0 support, while others get all of their support. (Which would be an illegal violation of their individual education plan).

This budget could also imply a potential salary freeze. I have worked full time in Howard County for eight years, and I've never been able to focus solely on teaching because I've always needed to work 1-2 part time jobs. The majority of my co-workers (especially those who are new teachers or para educators and are on the first few steps of the HCPSS pay scale) have to supplement their income by working part time as well. Teachers and support staff can't dedicate their 100% best selves to teaching if they are worried about money, or splitting their time between teaching and working other jobs. That means less after school activities for students, less engaging lessons, less detailed feedback for student work, less time to communicate with parents, less time to grade and return work in a timely manner, and less energy to teach with positivity and build relationships. It leads to a quicker burnout and perpetuates the cycle of teachers quitting teaching within the first 5 years.

The perpetual decreases in budget have also meant that I personally am buying materials so my students can be successful. I have paid my own bills late multiple times to make sure my students have the materials they need, once my classroom budget has quickly run out.

If this budget doesn't increase this county is going to lose excellent teachers who choose to go to other school systems or leave the teaching profession in entirely.

Please allocate funds differently and find the funds to fully support HCPSS's budget proposal. It is irresponsible and insulting to our students/staff that the County and State government continually take more and more money away from the school system while expecting us achieve more each year. How can we teach children to become engaged and productive citizens of society when they consistently get a message from their local leaders that their education does not matter because they are not willing to fund it? As your constituent, I beg you to reconsider.

Sincerely,
Angela Pope
Howard County Teacher

Angela Pope
pope.afp@gmail.com

6300 Bayberry Court
Elkridge, Maryland 21075

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Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:58 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Please help prevent increased class size

From: Amy Barnes <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 7:00 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Please help prevent increased class size

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

I am writing to ask for your help to do whatever we can not to increase class size. Preventing additional residential building until infrastructure can catch up might help, but increasing class size, in what already feel immensely tight, cannot be the solution:(. These children are being asked to hide, run and fight from congresses inability to provide gun control, the least we can do is provide the children room to run. With desks, material storage, and the students themselves, these classrooms are not designed to fit the children that they have now. I am not sure how the fire department let's us get away with it now, let alone with additional bodies in the room. Please help us!!!!

Amy Barnes
abarnes79@gmail.com
5853 Blue Sky
Elkridge , Maryland 21075

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:56 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Budget cuts

From: Michelle Proudfoot <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 7:04 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Budget cuts

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Dear Council Members -

My daughter is a first year kindergarten teacher in the county. Her dream job! But through budget cuts and CRAZY class enrollment increases, she may lose it. Teachers put so much in to their students and to add on more is such a disservice to the teachers and the students. Howard county schools are supposed to be among the best. I don't see how this will stay the same with increasing the class sizes, losing the new, excited about their job, teachers and class sizes that will hinder mental health training and personal connections.

My daughter gets to work early and brings work home with her every night that has her working until 9-10 pm almost every night. Amazon packages come many times a month for classroom supplies and materials to use with the children she has now. That would have to increase if class sizes increase. The budget needs to be raised, not slashed. The teachers are the ones in the trenches, day in and day out. They need support, not cuts!

As much as she loves her job, supervising 23 five year olds is a yeoman's task. It is so hard to meet the needs of each child when there are so many...and class sizes are going to increase? This is insane. This is going to effect the kids more than anything and stress good teachers beyond their limits.

Say no to budget cuts and support the teachers of this great county!!!

Michelle Proudfoot

smaklp@yahoo.com

4826 Lauren Ct

Ellicott City , Maryland 21043

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:51 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Budget

From: Joyce Wood <Lynn_Wood@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 7:18 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Budget

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Hi!

I think it is a shame how little teachers and support staff make and how much is expected of them. I have worked in the school system now for 18 years. I hear how many at home hours and after school hours teachers put in. Also, money out of their own pockets for classroom items that are not provided.

Students are the back bone to our future. Why are teachers paid so little to prepare students for their future and our nations future???

Joyce Wood
Lynn_Wood@hcpss.org
8440 Ice Crystal Drive Unit K
LAUREL, Maryland 20723

▪

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:51 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: HCPSS funding

From: Margina Luecking <margina_luecking@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 7:20 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: HCPSS funding

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

PLEASE do not increase class sizes! i have worked in Howard County schools for over 20 years. The level and severity of behavior problems has increased dramatically. If class sizes increase, it will definitely negatively impact student learning and staff and student safety. We are over crowded and understaffed already. Please do not increase class sizes!

Margina Luecking
margina_luecking@hcpss.org
2024 Pleasant Villa Ave
Catonsville , Maryland 21228

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:50 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: School funding

From: Jennifer (Ginger) Segala <gjsegala5@verizon.net>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 7:21 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: School funding

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

The HCPSS budget must be increased to align with the needs and expectations of the Howard County citizens. No child is best served in classes over 30 in 3rd grade! There is not a single person who would say that raising class size to balance the budget is in the best interest of children.

I realize that Dr Ball did not do the hard work needed to keep his campaign promise to fully support the school system. Unfortunately, that means the hard work falls to the county council. Moving dollars around to do what is in the best interest of the school system is also what is in the best interest of the whole county. We can't be parading flags about equity for low income people on one side and then create a public school system that isn't actually decent for all. With the proposed class size increase, families who can afford to will push their kids into private schools in other counties to escape what is quickly becoming a third tier school system in many pockets of Howard County. Leaders must do what is RIGHT for ALL children of Howard County and fully fund the HCPSS budget.

Jennifer (Ginger) Segala
gjsegala5@verizon.net
5013 Stone Hill Drive
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:50 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Don't surplus teachers

From: Joan Cooper <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 7:27 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Don't surplus teachers

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Hi, my daughter will be starting Kindergarten in the Fall. I want her first educational experience to be positive, and if there are over 26 kids in the class this will be highly unlikely. Please don't surplus teachers and please put our kids first!

Joan Cooper
joandcoop@gmail.com
7383 kindler rd
Columbia , Maryland 21046

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:50 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Budgets and Staffing

From: Chris Kohout <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 7:40 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Budgets and Staffing

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Dear representative,

I understand one of the potential solutions to the budget shortfall is to cut staffing and raise classroom sizes. As a parent and volunteer in the school I have personally witnessed how larger classroom sizes lower productivity and decrease learning. With larger classroom sizes teachers have to spend more time managing student behavior and distractions that are inherent to a larger group of students. Further if a teacher wants to give individual attention while teaching a particularly challenging skill, the waiting time for the rest of the class while the teacher makes her way around the room becomes excessive. While in an ideal world students would be able to continue to work independently, this is not typically the case and many students will become distracted with socializing or other negative behaviors. Smaller class sizes are critical for teachers to continue teaching at the high standards and rigorous pace that have made Howard county schools excellent. Raising cl assroom sizes will jeopardize the quality of education.

Chris Kohout
chrisdkohout@yahoo.com
4647 Yorkshire Drive
Ellicott City , Maryland 21043

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:50 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: HCPSS Budget short fall affecting the class sizes

From: Prasad Karunakaran <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 7:44 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: HCPSS Budget short fall affecting the class sizes

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Dear Howard County council,

Just heard about the budget short fall and the decision by the council to increase the class sizes. I think this will impact the quality of education in the county. Please reconsider this decision.

-prasad

Prasad Karunakaran
pppprasad@gmail.com
7640 President Street
Fulton, Maryland 20759

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:49 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Budget Need and Class Size

From: David Floyd <david_floyd@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 7:54 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Budget Need and Class Size

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Hello,

I am writing about the current budget needs of the Howard County Public School System. The biggest problem teachers face everyday is not having enough time to give their students the personal attention they need to thrive. With 30 students in each homeroom, there is not enough time to form personal connections and check-in daily with every student they teach. With growing concerns about students' social and emotional well-being, we must have decreased class sizes. The biggest way to enable teachers to impact students' social and emotional well-being is to have less students in all classes. The only way to make this possible is to increase funding to hire more teachers. Schools would also benefit from having more than one school guidance counselor and school psychologist to help impact students' mental health and well-being in ways that classroom teachers cannot. This also requires increased funding to hire these support staff. Also, as an elementary Technology teacher we only are provided with 30 computers in our classroom for students. If a class exceeds 30 students then we cannot teach our classes effectively. Another thing to consider is that Chromebook carts only come with 28 laptops, if a class has 33 student there are 5 students without laptops. We would be unable to teach efficiently.

Thank you for your consideration,

Dave

David Floyd
david_floyd@hcpss.org
6058 Claire Dr
Elkridge, Maryland 21075

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:49 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Class sizes

From: Joanna Huling <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 7:55 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Class sizes

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

I am genuinely concerned that increasing class size will have a detrimental effect on students. All research shows that smaller class sizes yield better results for students. How can one of the best school districts in the state so blatantly disregard something so important for the well being of our children? We need smaller classes and more well paid teachers, not the opposite.

Our children depend on us to keep them safe, both physically and emotionally in our schools, and the recent actions of HCPSS will jeopardize both. Please help!

Joanna Huling
huling.offers@gmail.com
7476 Hickory Log Circle
Columbia , Maryland 21045

▪

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:49 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Increase funding!

From: Kimberly Merritt <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 8:01 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Increase funding!

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

We need to increase funding to keep class sizes from increasing!

Kim Merritt

Kimberly Merritt
mrskimmerritt@gmail.com2094navy
9926 frederick rd
Ellicott city , Maryland 21042

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:49 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Funding for HCPSS - Special Education

From: Mary Larocco <mary_larocco@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 8:04 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Funding for HCPSS - Special Education

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Dear County Council Members:

I am asking that you take the time to review the current county data that reflects the continual increase in the number of students that require specialized instruction due to their IEP's. In order to provide these students the instruction that they require, we are in desperate need of the funding required to provide adequate staffing. All students have the right to a free and appropriate education and without funding for special education staff, we are depriving these students of the education that they deserve. Please review this critical need and fund the requested budget. Thank you.

Mary LaRocco

Mary Larocco
mary_larocco@hcpss.org
12325 Sherwood Forest Drive
Mt Airy, Maryland 21771

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:48 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Class sizes

From: Amber Naden <amber_naden@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 8:04 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Class sizes

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Hello, I am a teacher at Worthington elementary. I have been teaching for 16 years, and as someone who started out in PG with a class of 27 Kindergartners, I know first-hand that class size is the most important issue facing teachers. Please, take the money needed from anywhere else. I'd rather make less, pay more in benefits, than spend the rest of my career with an unmanageable class size.

Thank you for listening,
Amber Naden

Amber Naden
amber_naden@hcpss.org
7856 Foxfarm Lane
Glen Burnie, Maryland 21061

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:48 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: HELP!!!

From: Bonnie Dorsey <bonnie_dorsey@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 8:09 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: HELP!!!

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Dear Council Members,

Please seriously consider adding money to the BOE school budget so that class sizes do not increase. Increasing class sizes would hurt our students- and we are tasked with helping them to succeed!!!

I am a first grade teacher. 28 students is NOT a reasonable amount to students to teach to read, to help them grow emotionally and socially, and to help with all the math skills that are new to these young learners. We are already stretched thin as it is, and this would take us over the edge. In addition, we need the resources to be able to teach these little people. Materials are needed. Seriously!

I am already working hours before and after school to keep up with the planning and grading work for 22 students. 28 students would add hours more work for me. We do not have materials easily available for this size class, therefore students would need to share materials until more games could be made for them to play.

I beg you to consider cuts in other areas of the county budget so that our students to do not have to pay the price. There are multiple studies of how small class size is one of the best

indicators of student success. Please consider this data before increasing class size. Our students deserve nothing but the best.

Yours,
Bonnie Dorsey

Bonnie Dorsey
bonnie_dorsey@hcpss.org
9243 Ridgefield Cir
Frederick, Maryland 21701

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:47 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: HCPSS Budget Class Sizes

From: Alexis McKenzie <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 8:18 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: HCPSS Budget Class Sizes

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Good Morning Council Members,

I wanted to express my support for the county council to further fund HCPSS. Allowing our class sizes to grow is detrimental to the quality of education our children will receive. Howard County is known across Maryland and the nation as a top school system. We can no longer hold that title if we allow our schools to become overcrowded and underfunded. Please consider supporting additional funds so our children have the opportunity to thrive at school.

Alexis McKenzie
amlaske@gmail.com
5945 Meadow Rose
ELKRIDGE, Maryland 21075

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Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:46 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: School Funding

From: Joan Gromada <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 8:20 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: School Funding

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Class size increases will have a detrimental impact on students. There isn't anyway struggling students can get the additional attention they need with classes that large. I bought my home in Howard County because of its education system but slowly our schools are becoming similar to other counties with large class sizes. At a time when test scores are being used to determine teachers' job performance how unfair to put even a greater burden on them. Please find our schools. Perhaps we don't need so many positions in central office?

Respectfully,
Joan Gromada

Joan Gromada
sarajoaj@yahoo.com
5034 Orchard Drive
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:46 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Budget Concerns

From: Courtney Proudlock <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 8:24 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Budget Concerns

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Dear Council members,

As an educator for the Howard County Public School System, I am directly affected by the budget. The increasing class sizes make providing quality education for all students difficult. In addition, the increasing number of students and decreasing faculty/staff in each buildings make monitoring student behaviors and maintaining a safe and supportive learning environment more difficult.

I personally purchase materials for my classroom frequently. I pay for color copies of materials, purchase paper, supplies for students who do not have their own materials, as well as supplemental instructional materials to enhance and enrich the students learning. This money comes directly from my pocket and is money I could be using for my own family.

The surplus process is also very emotional and stressful. It is very disheartening to wonder if I will have a placement for the following school year due to budget cuts. I was one of the Elementary World Language teachers that was affected last year when the budget was cut and that program was eliminated. It is not a good feeling to know that I have put in so much effort to provide quality language instruction for the students of Howard County and then have to wonder if there will still be a position for me the following school year. If I am put in the

surplus process again this year, this will be my second year in a row not knowing if or where I will be teaching the following year.

I sincerely hope that the board does not make the proposed budget cuts that will increase class sizes and eliminate staffing because this will be detrimental to the school system.

Thank you for your attention.

Courtney Proudlock

Courtney Proudlock
courtneyproudlock@gmail.com
486 Hawkrige Lane
Sykesville, Maryland 21784

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:45 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Fully Fund the HCPSS Budget

From: LeRay Blanding <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 8:24 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Fully Fund the HCPSS Budget

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

I am writing to request that you fully fund the HCPSS Budget request. Losing classroom teachers and increasing the size of classes in middle school to 35 students would cause a major disruption to schools and classrooms across HCPSS.

LeRay Blanding
lblanding75@gmail.com
9738 Summer Park Ct.
Columbia, Maryland 21046

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:45 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Howard County Class Size

From: Stacey Folkemer <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 8:28 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Howard County Class Size

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Good morning,

I have recently been made aware of the discussion to increase class sizes in Howard County due to budget constraints, and I'm writing to implore you to reconsider.

I know there are issues with the school system budget and a lot of push back around redistricting, but giving our valued teachers a class size so large is a disservice to them and not something I'd expect a school system as prestigious as Howard County Schools to find acceptable. Those of us who purchased homes in Howard County did so because we wanted to avoid situations just as this.

Thank you for your time.

Stacey Folkemer

Stacey Folkemer
staceyyfolkemer@gmail.com
5242 Lightfoot Path
Columbia, Maryland 21044

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:45 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: URGENCY OF NOW

From: Courtney Howe <courtney_howe@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 8:31 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: URGENCY OF NOW

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Hello to anyone I am able to share this with,

My name is Courtney Howe and I am a first year teacher at Bellows Spring Elementary school. I also am very likely part of what would be the 225 positions cut if the budget needs are not met. With that being said, I want to take the opportunity to tell you about my class, and what my position has allowed me to do this year. My class currently sits at 22 students, this year I began with 20 students and has 2 students added after February. In my class I have 7 students with IEP's (individualized education plan), which are from 2 different programs in my school. Of my other students, I have one below grade level student, and 2 above grade level students. That is the hard data, in arguable and what you can see when you look at piece of paper. My class is so much more than that. This year I have had an amazing opportunity to work with every single one of these students, and learn about who they really are as people not just learners. Through that time, I have been able to more accurately reach my students. Ensure that I am discussing topics and people who will help inspire them to become the most incredible adults. It has allowed me to figure out which students have an excellent home life, a safe consistent place to go, and also the ones who come to school for their safe place. It has allowed me to figure out which students love school and embrace challenging tasks, and which ones need a little bit more of a buy in to see the value in what they are doing. It has allowed me find the students who already in first grade "don't like who they are", who, "don't understand why they look different", who "are worried they won't have friends anymore if they

tell", who need an extra check-in everyday with a trusted adult, who love to help because at home it's how they feel seen. Every student needs an adult to care. Every student needs proper supports. Every student needs someone that cares for them unconditionally and has the time for just them. I can confidently tell you I work far beyond contract hours, and have spent thousands of my own dollars to ensure that I can meet the needs of my students. I can confidently tell you that I work so hard and make those sacrifices to ensure that I feel that I have done EVERY POSSIBLE THING to ensure I am helping those individuals who walk into my class each day. I can also assure you that if I had 5 more students in my class, I don't think I could feel like I have fully supported them. I would feel that my time is too short, or I didn't check in with that student like I should have, or that I just didn't even know a student had a certain need. Teaching is important, and right now you are holding the future in your hands. You are the decider of each of those students futures. You get to say whether or not they will have the caring adults in their lives that they need or not. You get to decide whether those teachers who spend hours every night work tirelessly to support those kids get to keep doing their thing. You decide whether or not we continue to serve our community or if we let down generations to come. I already said I have done every possible thing to support my students and my class, to prove that I choose the right place to be. Can you promise that you have done the same?

Thank you for your consideration and time. I know this is not an easy decision to make. I welcome you to come visit our school and see what we are able to do for our community and students.

Thank you,
Courtney Howe
1st Grade Teacher
Bellows Spring Elementary

Courtney Howe
courtney_howe@hcpss.org
8125 Old Stockbridge Dr.
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:44 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: HCPSS Funding imperative

From: Elena Desantis <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 8:33 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: HCPSS Funding imperative

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Dear County Council,

I am writing to address the funding needed in HCPSS.

My son was born premature and is making amazing strides to catch up thanks to the RECC program and his phenomenal teachers and aids. I believe it's imperative for our children's future, that we get more funding in HCPSS. Our county attracts the most qualified and highly educated teachers in the country and in order to continue to attract the talent we need for our children, we need to give them the tools they need to help our children be successful. If we don't get this funding, we are setting them up for failure. Thank you for all you do for this county.

Sincerely,
Elena DeSantis

Elena Desantis
eid.elena@gmail.com
Susini drive
Laurel, Maryland 20723

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:44 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: School sizes

From: Avery Spitz <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 8:38 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: School sizes

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

I feel taken advantage of as a tax payer, the schools already have a poor ratio for such a over inflated education program. Increasing sizes is not what we need. The teachers in middle school barely have time to help students learn. Cutting teachers is not a good choice.

Avery Spitz
averyellen@yahoo.com
5372 Dunteachin
Ellicott city, Maryland 21043

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:44 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Inadequate Staffing/Large Class Sizes

From: Christina Shumaker <christina_shumaker@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 8:42 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Inadequate Staffing/Large Class Sizes

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Dear County Council Members, Please do everything in your power to fight for our students. The slated class size changes are too large for students to get the adequate support needed to learn and grow academically. Every student in Howard County deserves the chance to succeed! Larger class sizes and decreased staffing equals a poor learning environment. This budget plan affects all schools in our county, but especially our Title One schools with the highest needs. I trust that together we can convince our board to do what is best for our students. After all, isn't that what education is all about?

Christina Shumaker
christina_shumaker@hcpss.org
14101 Barbara Circle
Cooksville, Maryland 21723-9603

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:44 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Please fund our schools

From: Dana Taylor <danamallerich@comcast.net>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 8:49 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Please fund our schools

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

HCPSS attracts new families and jobs. Builders sell houses based on the strength of our schools. Having class sizes in excess of 35 students is not acceptable and will negatively impact our children, our schools, our teachers and our community. Be the school system you promised us = help our children to learn and grow and not get lost in the crowd (which WILL happen to kids who are in the middle of the pack - it does know and it will only get worse.

Dana Taylor
danamallerich@comcast.net
10746 Folkestone Way
"WOODSTOCK, MD", Maryland 21163

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:43 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Fund Our Future!

From: Katie Bolger <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 8:53 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Fund Our Future!

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Hello,

I am writing about the current budget needs of the Howard County Public School System. The biggest problem teachers face everyday is not having enough time to give their students the personal attention they need to thrive. With an increasing number of students in each class, there is not enough time to form personal connections and check-in daily with every student they teach. There are also growing concerns about students' social and emotional well-being. We must have decreased class sizes and more support. The biggest way to enable teachers to impact students' social and emotional well-being is to have less students in all classes. The only way to make this possible is to increase funding to hire more teachers. Schools would also benefit from having more than one school guidance counselor and school psychologist to help impact students' mental health and well-being in ways that classroom teachers cannot. This also requires increased funding to hire these support staff. As a special educator, I see the struggles the students have when not able to get the needed attention and support with larger class sizes. The distraction in their environment is growing and the success and growth are falling. Please consider funding our needs, as I would like to see Howard County produce more great citizens, teachers, and young adults with the skills they need to be successful in life to their fullest potential.

Thank you for your consideration.

Katie Bolger

Katie Bolger
klbolge@gmail.com
1510 Rutland Way
Hanover, Maryland 21076

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:43 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Smaller Class Sizes

From: Mary McKnight <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 8:54 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Smaller Class Sizes

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

I was a teacher with our county for 29 years. Smaller class sizes = success. Pure and simple. Younger children with smaller classes= opportunity for knowing the whole child and effectively addressing their strengths and needs. The needs of today's child include a need for connection/relationship and this ability for teachers diminishes the larger the class size given today's curriculum requirements. If you are going to increase the class size, then you need to revisit the current curriculum and edit. I would be open to discussing/problem solving opportunities for/with our county.

Warm Regards,
Mary McKnight

Mary McKnight
breatheintoyourtoes@gmail.com
4838 South Haven Drive
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:42 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Funding for our students

From: Michaeline Van Reenan <michaeline_van_reenan@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 8:58 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Funding for our students

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Good morning,

I generally don't get involved in the political parts of teaching but this highly impacts our students who are the primary reason for what I do. If our school system is asking for a certain amount of money to fund programs, teachers, and resources, I trust it is necessary for student achievement. Working for HCPSS, I have learned that we are a strong, resourceful, and leading county in education, therefore, if these funds are requested, they must be needed. I trust that. In saying that, I am saddened to think that what budget was approved at this point, isn't even close to what is needed. The current approved amount would increase class sizes, decrease teachers and support staff, and probably limit our resources. All of these are important to student achievement. It is possible to teach 30+ students but definitely not effective to so. There is not enough time in a day to make it more effective. Support staff help to reduce the class size with instructional groupings. The resources we use each day are a part of our effective instruction so it is important to have those tools to teach and for students to use to learn.

For being the best county in the country, I would hope that we can stop letting money determine what is necessary to still be the best and most importantly, nurture our students and their academic future. Please fully fund our school system for our students.

Sincerely,

Michaeline Van Reenan

20+ years with HCPSS

Michaeline Van Reenan

michaeline_van_reenan@hcpss.org

6012 Kennard Court

Sykesville, Maryland 21784

▪

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:42 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: HCPSS Budget Need - Increased Class Size

From: Emily Gotowka <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 8:58 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: HCPSS Budget Need - Increased Class Size

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Dear lawmakers, I have recently learned that there is a proposal to increase class size across the board as a measure balance the budget. While I value fiscal responsibility, I think it would be a terrible mistake to increase class size. Our teachers are truly amazing, but they are already stretched thin. Our youngest children require and deserve a much smaller teacher to child ratio to promote an early love for learning. When class size increases too much, there is a greater chance for the child to feel left out and become left behind. If a child does not start loving school at an early age, the school will may encounter more challenges (behavioral & emotional) as the child grows. Also, increasing class size make it more difficult for students with 504 plans to receive the accommodations they need. Please consider other options. I appreciate all the effort you put into making these incredibly important decisions. Thank you,
Emily Gotowka

Emily Gotowka
emily.gotowka@gmail.com
3921 Foxhill Dr
Ellicott City, Maryland 21042

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:41 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Decrease class size, don't increase it.

From: Danielle Pientka <danielle@diydaniele.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 9:02 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Decrease class size, don't increase it.

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Hi. I saw the pending changes that call for a cut to teachers in HoCo, thereby increasing class sizes.

I'm a parent and had the experience of volunteering for career day last year. I visited kindergarten through third grade classrooms. These classrooms are already TOO full. We need to be focusing on decreasing class size, not increasing it.

You're expecting too much from teachers and these expectations are going to cost you long term- in turnover rates, lawsuits, extra tutoring costs, more IEPs, and in the performance of the kids.

I grew up in an extremely small school system with classroom sizes of around 20. The individualized attention that I received meant that I didn't slip through any cracks. Teachers weren't burnt out. They saw if a kid was bullying another kid. They intervened if someone needed extra help in school. Teachers stayed at our school for their whole career and they did a great job. They had the energy to care about each child.

Last year I walked into a kindergarten class for career day and saw the teacher attempting to clean pee out of the bathroom while also trying to keep control of a class that was too large

and had too many kids who needed extra support. They're not janitors. They're not there to babysit. They need to be able to teach.

The more you increase the class sizes, the more you're turning teachers into glorified babysitters. In the meantime, you're also setting the expectation that kids sink or swim in an environment where they have to do quite a bit of self study. This isn't fair for young kids or realistic.

I've seen what larger class sizes looks like long term- I worked in Baltimore City. It's ugly when teachers are so overwhelmed with large classroom sizes that 1st graders are running the halls with NO ONE to chase them.

"Where's Joe?"

"He ran out of the class with Sam" "When?"

"I don't even know, an hour or two ago? I called the office, but they were dealing with other crises."

Kids RUNNING LOOSE with NO STAFF AVAILABLE to chase them. This is how kids get hurt and how lawsuits happen- if one kid runs out the front doors and gets shot/hit by a car/lost, the school system starts seeing the cost.

I've seen kids report to teachers that they'll be jumped after school and the teacher ignored it- assumedly because they were so burnt out and had such high class sizes that they couldn't run crisis control. The kids got jumped by 3+ kids after getting off the school bus. Then the school gets to deal with the after effects of this- legal issues, requests for switching schools/bussing, etc.

I've had to deal with kids getting placed in classrooms that were over capacity. NO SEATS. No other classes to put them in. Teachers WHO WERE READY TO WALK OUT. These teachers desperately are working to do good and you can't keep taking away their power to do so. Disempowering teachers is a HUGE mistake.

Increasing classroom size is a slippery slope. As you increase, you see more budget issues because you start getting the financial costs of higher classroom sizes. Then you have to increase class sizes again to pay for those expenses. Repeat. Forever.

If you think your budget is tight now, consider the long term costs of cutting staffing at schools.

Please consider decreasing class size- don't increase it.

Thank you,
Danielle Pientka

Danielle Pientka
danielle@diydanielle.com
15440 Woodbine Morgan Rd
Woodbine, Maryland 21797

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Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:41 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Inadequate staffing

From: Janel Radford <janel.radford@verizon.net>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 9:07 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Inadequate staffing

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Dear Council Members,

I have two students attending HHS. They've been in the Howard County school system their entire lives. I am dissatisfied with a trend towards larger class sizes. This is such a detriment to the quality of education and student/teacher safety. My children are at HHS which is so overcrowded and with diminishing staff, class sizes are becoming even larger. Do we really want to sacrifice our children's education while putting even greater demands on our already overworked teachers? So much is at stake for students, teachers, and the whole community at large by increasing class sizes. Let's continue to improve our quality of education here in Howard County and not diminish it.

Janel Radford
janel.radford@verizon.net
7720 Sandstone Ct.
Ellicott City , Maryland 21043

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:40 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Classroom size

From: Antonia Watts <antonia.b.watts@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 9:12 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Classroom size

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Hello Mr. Jones,
My name is Antonia Watts and I live in Willowood. We spoke briefly during your campaign.

There is a petition circulating on Facebook saying that classroom sizes will increase significantly and that over 300 teachers will be surplus. Is this true? If so, with the increase in the budget, how is this possible and what can be done at this point to mitigate it?

Thank you,
Antonia Watts

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:39 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Current Budget

From: Erin Fowler <erin_fowler@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 9:15 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Current Budget

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Good Morning,

I am writing about the current budget needs of the Howard County Public School System. I am expressing my concern at the decision to increase class sizes. I currently teach fifth grade. When I heard about the increase to 33 students I started to do the math. Best practices teaches that teachers can reach more students when more time is devoted to them. In my reading block alone I would need to have 4 reading of groups of no less than 8 kids. EIGHT KIDS! That is not a small group. This is not only an issue for instruction but it's an issue of space and relationship building. We teachers are taxed with so much. I know a few more kids doesn't look like much but what if that extra student was your own son or daughter? Would you be ok with them receiving less because one teacher just can't do it all? I ask that you increase funding so that this does not happen! Thank you for your time!

Erin Fowler
erin_fowler@hcpss.org
Old Stockbridge Drive
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:39 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Increased Class Size Concerns

From: Kim Gjerde <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 9:19 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Increased Class Size Concerns

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Dear County Council Member:

I have been employed by HCPSS as a teacher since 1994. I am concerned about the current budget proposal, which would increase class sizes across the board. In a time when demands on teachers are greater than ever, it is appalling to think that money can't be found in the budget to keep class sizes reasonable. Howard County is one of the wealthiest counties in the United States and families come to Howard County from all over the United States and other countries for the world-class education their children will receive. I encourage you to find the money necessary in the proposed budget to keep our quality of education high and our teacher's sane!

Sincerely,

Kim Gjerde, teacher, and parent of an HCPSS student

Kim Gjerde
kimmiesmile@hotmail.com
8610 Hunters Drive
Frederick, Maryland 21701

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:39 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Teachers and the budget shortfall

From: Sue Vincent <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 9:21 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Teachers and the budget shortfall

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Teachers are our first line of defense for our children particularly for the child who is "different " in any way. We need more teachers not less. If there is a shortfall then first the politicians then the administration should take the hit not the teachers because class size directly impacts our children. Save the teachers, save our children.

Sue Vincent
vincentlrry@aol.com
9010 moving water lane
Columbia, Maryland 21046

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:38 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Vote to fund HCPSS

From: Avery McClelland <avery_mcclelland@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 9:22 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Vote to fund HCPSS

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Dear County Council Members,

I am writing as an educator of twelve years in HCPSS who is also a product of the system. The current budget needs for our school system impact every student, staff member, and parent in our county. I am dual certified in art and special ed and no amount of professional development or training aid large class sizes.

The number one quality I pride myself on as a teacher is my relationships with my students. As class sizes go up, it makes it that much harder to connect with students and truly get to know them. I've been a grade level paraeducator, special ed paraeducator, special education teacher, and now art teacher. These positions have all given me the opportunity to form and grow these relationships over not just one but many years of a student's time in elementary school.

Special education desperately needs the funding to add teachers and support staff. These students need additional support or their educational gap widens and they feel like failures. I teach at Bellows Spring Elementary where we are lucky to house many regional programs in which students with and without disabilities have the opportunity to be included in classes with each other. These students develop skills that become instilled and not taught like empathy, compassion, and patience. Nobody wins if you combine all these students into classes as

large as 33 students. You will have increased anxiety, behaviors, and students feeling left out. Students and staff are all stressed and feeling like they can't do their best.

Art is a favorite subject of a majority of students. It may not be a tested course, but in a time when addressing mental health is so important, I feel lucky that I am in a position to help students shine regardless of their educational abilities. Just today I had a student say to me, "I only came to school today because I couldn't wait for art." That was the only conversation I had the chance to have with her during class because sadly with class sizes of 30, when you take out time for directions and clean-up, I can give each student 1.33 mins of attention a week. Realistically, some students take up far more than that, meaning there are some weeks I can't even check in with some students. That's not fair to these kids who look forward to this all week, the kids who feel art is the only place they fit in. I was that kid.

I feel it's important to share the teaching moment I am most proud of from when I was a special educator. Several years ago I had the privilege of having twins with down syndrome on my caseload. One of them, Christopher, loved the band Maroon 5. Because of having a small caseload of students that year (small being 7), I was able to truly individualize their instruction. To this day I can still tell you their favorite foods, books, holidays, songs. I helped Christopher that year make a video about how he did all his school projects about Maroon 5. I connected his IEP objectives to this project so that he was working on them in an authentic way and not just a task for the sake of data. He internalized everything and made so much progress that year because I gave him my time. I also had enough support staff to make this possible. The rest of the story is that he got to meet the band because of this video and it ended up going viral around the world. But that is not the important part of this story. I am sharing this with you because it shows what can be accomplished with appropriate staffing.

People all over the country move to our county just for the amazing school system. I hope you will think about this as you vote at the end of the month on the budget. You are more than welcome to visit my classroom any time to be reminded of who these amazing people are that we need to invest in. Be prepared to be asked your age, be complimented on your shoes, or asked for help unclogging their glue bottle.

Thank you for your consideration,

Avery McClelland

Art Teacher

Bellows Spring Elementary (T, W, F)

Fulton Elementary/Cedar Lane School art inclusion program (M, Th)
avery_mcclelland@hcpss.org

Avery McClelland
avery_mcclelland@hcpss.org
8125 Old Stockbridge Dr.
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

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Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:38 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: School Funding

From: Elissa Hozore <elissa_hozore@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 9:27 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: School Funding

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Hello,

I am writing about the current budget needs of the Howard County Public School System. The biggest problem teachers face everyday is not having enough time to give their students the personal attention they need to thrive. With 30 students in each homeroom, there is not enough time to form personal connections and check-in daily with every student we teach. With growing concerns about students' social and emotional well-being, we must have decreased class sizes. The biggest way to enable teachers to impact students' social and emotional well-being is to have less students in all classes. The only way to make this possible is to increase funding to hire more teachers. Schools would also benefit from having more than one school guidance counselor and school psychologist to help impact students' mental health and well-being in ways that classroom teachers cannot. This also requires increased funding to hire these support staff.

Please also be aware that many of the materials and supplies are allocated based on classes of 30 (laptops, ukuleles, etc.) or 28 (chromebooks). It makes the class very ineffective if each student does not have the equipment the lesson depends upon.

Thank you for your consideration,

Elissa Hozore

Elissa Hozore

elissa_hozore@hcpss.org

Old Stockbridge Drive
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

▪

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:37 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: School class size

From: Hope Ripkin <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 9:46 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: School class size

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

How do you expect HoCo to continue to have thriving students with large class sizes? We are one of the wealthiest counties how are funds not available to supports our teachers and our future (the students).

Please put our kids first!

Hope Ripkin
hriplein75@gmail.com
8512 Clarkson Dr
Fulton, Maryland 20759-9629

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:37 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: fund our students AKA our future !

From: Joyce Love <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 9:56 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: fund our students AKA our future !

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

I'm writing to ask you to please consider approving more for our budget on behalf of the students, most importantly, but also the parents, teachers, and county residents. I grew up in Howard County and had some really great teachers along the way who inspired me to do the same. When I was 10, my sister was born with Downs Syndrome. This only inspired me more to go into special education as a career. When I came back one year from college when my sister was in 5th grade in Howard County "mainstreaming at the time", she had taken it upon herself to stay after and try out for the talent show. She sang a Barney song at the time called, "I love my sister"! She proceeded to stand on stage with a picture of me and sang her heart out! She brought the audience, my family, and all the staff to tears! She'd made a connection. Now with our county superintendent's vision of making connections, my heart is sad that staff is being cut and class sizes are increasing. I've been teaching special education for 20 years now and have seen many changes. Unfortunately, now we are feeling a little defeated as teachers. We need to make those close connections to understand children's perspective and viewpoints, but with increasing class sizes and diminished staff, it's becoming next to impossible.

When I was a younger teacher, I remember when class sizes were smaller. In fact, some general education teachers were even in the smaller "project rooms" with only 18 students. With the social/ emotional struggles our kiddos now have and the increased violence in schools, I cannot fathom these decreases in staff and budget! We don't want to lose these kids to suicide, not graduating, or just low self-esteem!

Please consider funding our needs, as I would like to see Howard County produce more great citizens, teachers, and singers (like my sister)! My sister, educated all the way through 21 in Howard County, is now a happy individual with a job at a local hair salon. Please keep funding us and promoting more great students to their fullest potential!

Thank you for your greatest consideration in this matter!

Joyce Love

mtkelly31@gmail.com

8125 Old Stockbridge Dr.

Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:37 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: HCPSS Budget

From: Jennifer Patel <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 10:11 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: HCPSS Budget

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Good morning,

Please reconsider the proposal to increase class size in an effort to cut costs in the budget. This would be an unfortunate solution with significant impacts. Studies have proven that smaller class sizes improve student achievement. Also, one of the best ways to improve student behavior and therefore performance is through building and fostering strong relationships. This is very difficult to do with such large classes. Especially for specialists who only see the classes once per week. Additionally, as a technology teacher, we just don't have the resources for teaching 33 students at a time. We are only supplied 30 computers, and often times at least one is broken needing repair. The schools with chrome books are allotted 28 computers per class, so this would also take technology away from being implemented in the classroom.

I know it is a tough task to find the funds, but please search for other solutions before increasing class sizes.

Jennifer Patel
jen.patel12@gmail.com
6102 Noah Way
Hanover, Maryland 21076

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:36 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: School Funding

From: Lisa Johnson <lisa_johnson@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 10:15 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: School Funding

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Hello,

I am a Special Educator at Clarksville Elementary in Howard County and am writing to you in regards to the HCPSS budget. I am very concerned about the current budget proposal, because while it does fund the teacher's negotiated agreement and health care, it leaves significant gaps in several high needs areas, such as staffing. If funds are not increased, class sizes will have to go up. This would negatively & directly impact the education of students in Howard County. For example, intermediate teachers will be forced to increase group size for reading instruction. This would negatively impact my students who receive differentiated instruction. Smaller class sizes allow for more personalized and differentiated instruction. We have students with wheelchairs and other modified seating. Currently we have 30 students in a class and the space to move is extremely limited. With 33 students, I am sure it would be a safety concern for all my students with mobility challenges to navigate through the classroom.

I am also a parent of a student with a specific learning disability and another autistic. My children need smaller class sizes to ensure they can successfully participate among their peer group. Larger class sizes lead to more difficulty with sensory regulation as the setting is louder and has more visual stimuli. I am pleading with you to please increase the funds to the HCPSS budget to ensure equal access among all student groups.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Lisa Johnson

Lisa Johnson
lisa_johnson@hcpss.org
8928 Tawes Street
Fulton, Maryland 20759

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:35 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: HCPSS Budget Needs

From: Tammy Royo Szczepanski <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 10:15 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: HCPSS Budget Needs

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Dear Council Members,

As a 54 year resident of Howard County congratulations on your tenure on the Council. Today I am writing to you as a teacher with HCPSS with 35 years of service, however my experience with HCPSS goes back to 1967 when I entered Kindergarten at Atholton Elementary school. Yes, I have seen the county grow and expand, but I have also witnessed how our amazing school system has continued to do more with less every year and the wear and tear to our system and our school buildings started about 8 years ago and now we no longer hold the top spot in the state for our test scores or appeal. Why you ask? Well the number one reason is increased class sizes to keep the budget in line. I work with amazing educators at my school, but increased class size has come with student behaviors that can no longer be managed with just a look or a word. This new generation of students is no longer coming to us with respect for learning or their teachers and now we are being asked to know the learner while managing upwards of 33 students per class next year. I see this as a lack of support for our future and feel that you hold the key.

Respectfully submitted, Tammy Royo Szczepanski - Howard County Resident since July 1, 1964.

Tammy Royo Szczepanski
sczskit@gmail.com

9934 Dellwood Avenue
Columbia, Maryland 21046

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:34 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Please Fund our Schools

From: Kelly Auxt <kelly_auxt@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 10:16 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Please Fund our Schools

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Dear County Council,

I am a teacher at Triadelphia Ridge Elementary School. I have worked in Howard County for 12 years. I am also a graduate of the Howard County Public school system. I truly love HCPSS. I worked in another county in the state and couldn't return fast enough to HCPSS. My main reason was because of how Howard County takes care of their students. I am now fearful that as a Howard County teacher I will not be able to take care of my students. Raising class sizes would be detrimental to the students and teachers of HCPSS. Today's students have unique learning needs in the way that they liked to be taught and how they learn. Raising the class size would make it extremely difficult to meet all of my students needs. I don't know how I would provide individualized instruction to my students when meeting in small groups. Small groups should be around 6-8 students. With increased class sizes, small groups for guided reading would be between 8-10. This does not afford me the time to work with each student during group time. This is a time that the students and I rely on for understanding concepts. Another concern with adding more students to each class is the physical size of the classroom. I do not have room for any more students, desks and their materials. This is a problem. The students feel cramped, get frustrated with their belongings being tripped over generally want space to spread out. It is already difficult to find the space to meet as a class on the floor for class meetings, an integral part of our day and building a positive classroom environment. Another concern I have with raising the class sizes is the extra work for me that

comes with it. I already take work home every night and every weekend in order to keep up with everything. When it comes time to complete progress reports and report cards I am already struggling to meet the time restraints in filling these out. Adding more students to my class just adds more pressure and anxiety to my plate. Our plates are already overflowing in Howard County. If you value us as teachers, neighbors and friends do not add to our class sizes. If you want the best for the kids of Howard County do not add to the class sizes. This has been a very stressful time for the teachers of Howard County. The constant yo-yoing of our emotions in hearing that our fellow co-workers and friends are going to be surplussed, then their saved and now they are going to be surplussed again is breaking down the faith of our county leaders and the atmosphere in our buildings. Please put your money where your mouth is. If you truly respect the work that us teachers do, then fund our schools. We could use a boost in knowing that the people we elect actually care about us.

Thank you for your time,

A Concerned Teacher

Kelly Auxt

kelly_auxt@hcpss.org

9402 Berkley Lane

Frederick, Maryland 21701

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:31 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Budget needs

From: Kelly Groves <kelly_groves@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 10:26 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Budget needs

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Hello all,

I am writing to you today re: the proposed budget for the Howard Co. School System. I am pleading w you to please read the letters that being sent from our teachers and explaining their current teaching situations. We have the best teachers here in Ho. Co. but w the proposed changes, there is no way we can effectively do our jobs. We, here at Bellows Spring Elementary, are already busting at the seams, w the increased population, but also w the many needs of our special education students. I would implore to you visit our school so you are able to make educated decisions by seeing 1st hand how we are currently operating. Increasing class sizes would be devastating.

The biggest problem teachers face everyday is not having enough time to give their students the personal attention they need to thrive. With 30 students in each homeroom, there is not enough time to form personal connections and check-in daily with every student they teach. With growing concerns about students' social and emotional well-being, we must have decreased class sizes. The biggest way to enable teachers to impact students' social and emotional well-being is to have less students in all classes. The only way to make this possible is to increase funding to hire more teachers. Schools would also benefit from having more than one school guidance counselor and school psychologist to help impact students' mental health and well-being in ways that classroom teachers cannot. This also requires increased funding

to hire these support staff.

Thank you for your consideration,

Kelly Groves

Bellows Spring Elementary.

Kelly Groves

kelly_groves@hcpss.org

8125 Old Stockbridge Dr

ELLICOTT CITY, Maryland 21043

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:29 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: no more budget cuts

From: paula dalonzo <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 10:50 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: no more budget cuts

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Thank you for re-considering the budget cuts to schools. I work in Special Ed and we really need funding to help our most vulnerable students. I also think it is unsafe and not in the students' best interest to overcrowd classrooms with increased class sizes. Some of our classrooms can't even physically fit extra desks in them. Overcrowded classrooms is not good for student behavior and best learning. Please consider an alternative to increased class sizes. It does not work for students or staff in schools. Thank you!

paula dalonzo
pdalonzo14@gmail.com
4856 ellicott woods lane
ellicott city, Maryland 21043

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:29 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Increase Funding to Howard County Schools

From: Jennifer Markwood <jennifer_markwood@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 11:13 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Increase Funding to Howard County Schools

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Dear Howard County Council Members,

I am writing this letter to implore you to increase funding to the Howard County Public School System's budget. Our entire Howard County community will suffer greatly with the current budget as class sizes have increased, teacher and support staff positions have been lost, and resources have been reduced. Students cannot learn effectively in large class sizes and teachers cannot meet the needs of their students or develop personal connections with them. Emotional and behavioral problems will increase which will affect the ability of everyone to learn. All of this will result in a decline in Howard County's ranking and reputation as having one of the best school systems and as being one of the best places to live. This will cause families to either not move to Howard County or to move out of Howard County which will create an economic decline for the entire county. Is this what you envision for our county? Please make the funds available to keep our schools strong and to do what is best for our children, our families, our educators and our entire county!

Sincerely,

Jennifer Markwood

Pre-K Teacher

Bellows Spring Elementary School

Jennifer Markwood
jennifer_markwood@hcpss.org
7121 Morning Light Trail
COLUMBIA, Maryland 21044

▪

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:28 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Cutting budget for public schools

From: Anna Nemirovsky <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 11:17 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Cutting budget for public schools

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

The proposed class size increases are unacceptable. At the time when the nation and the international education community keeps advocating smaller classes and more individual attention to students, Howard county is attempting to go back in time. Please do not support the proposed budget cuts! Help our kids to get the education they deserve with highly qualified teachers in a manageable environment.

Anna Nemirovsky
snemir@gmail.com
9918 Postwick Road
ellicott City, Maryland 21042

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:28 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: HCPSS funding

From: David Albert <david@dalbert.net>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 11:20 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: HCPSS funding

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Dear Council Members,

Like many Howard County residents, a primary factor in my decision to move here was the quality of the schools. I have been delighted with that choice but concerned over the increasing crowding, demands placed on teachers, and difficulty staffing STEM education positions.

Teachers are asked to work long hours to support extra-curricular activities and often provide materials for students from their own funds. The workload on the teachers and the rising class sizes are degrading an otherwise excellent school system.

As an HCPSS parent, I implore you to increase funding for HCPSS; it is the crown jewel of the county and must be protected.

Thank you for helping make Howard County such a wonderful place to live!

Sincerely,
David Albert

David Albert
david@dalbert.net

10718 Vista Road
Columbia, Maryland 21044

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:28 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Restore budget to decrease class sizes!

From: Kimberly Kennedy <kcpynekennedy@verizon.net>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 11:21 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Restore budget to decrease class sizes!

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Dear Members of the County Council.

For the second year in a row, I have seen the morale of a happy and student-focused staff, who works so hard every day for our 900 students, be sucked away by news of class size increases and surpluses due to the education budget not being fully funded AGAIN.

Leadership talks about building community and addressing mental health issues, yet the stressors related to these drastic changes are only going to increase mental health issues for stakeholders and decrease our ability to build community. As Dr. Martirano has said, "to teach a child well, you must know the child well" and that child must know you as an educator and trust you also. Imagine building this relationship with 33 students with varying needs with an already limited amount of time to do so due to the academic demands that must be met. I'm in awe of how students and teachers can continually be treated this way, in a way that is entirely contradictory to what is preached by our leadership.

As a parent, I'm even more furious and quite honestly, scared. My son will be entering 2nd grade at Hanover Hills Elementary and receives a number of special education supports as part of his IEP. His amazing teachers and staff work tirelessly to meet his needs and even with all of their hard work, he has struggled this year with peer relationships and the demands of 1st grade, even to the point of making threats against himself at one point this year. As you can imagine, I am terrified as a parent that there will be the same or more students who's needs must be met by even less staff members.

This budget issue must be worked out. Students do not deserve this! Teachers do not

deserve! Please restore the budget to decrease class sized to an optimal level and give our students what they deserve and need!

Sincerely, Kim Kennedy

Hanover Hills Elementary School Parent

Gorman Crossing Elementary School Educator

Kimberly Kennedy

kcpynekenedy@verizon.net

Elkridge, Maryland 21075

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:24 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Please increase the budget

From: Nicole Payne <nicole_payne@live.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 11:26 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Please increase the budget

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

To whom it may concern:

As an educator, when class sizes are big (25 plus students), it is difficult to foster a strong relationship with students to build a constructive and welcoming classroom environment. The class then usually turns to focus on a disciplinary means rather than educating on the necessary content.

Too many teachers work too hard to be surplus and that will be taking away their livelihood. It will also take away the livelihood of the teachers who are now trying to manage unmanageable class sizes.

Additionally, with more demands from the job (central office/students/parents/guardians), educators' growing families suffer due to the workload and lack of planning and grading time allotted to teachers in the secondary field.

Also, spending my own money to supply students with class necessities (such as pens, pencils, paper, binders, markers, highlighters, meals, etc) - cutting funds will only make it more difficult in the classroom to make sure the students are engaged and learning not just content, but life skills that will help them be successful in their future endeavors.

This budget cut would be detrimental to the entire county and the county's future.

Thank you for your consideration.

Nicole Payne

nicole_payne@live.com

1650 Village Green Dr

Woodbine, Maryland 21797

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:21 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Class Sizes and Surplus Directly Affecting Teacher and Students Academics and Well Being

From: Jenna Boule <jenna_boule@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 11:31 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Class Sizes and Surplus Directly Affecting Teacher and Students Academics and Well Being

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

To Whom It May Concern,

I am a kindergarten teacher in Howard County. I directly see the effects of having smaller class sizes on my students. When hearing the news that classes may be as large as 26 I was very worried for the academic and social emotional impact on our children. When teaching 24 students, It was already uncomfortable for students to find space on and around the rug (which only fits 20) and for all students to listen to story from their teacher. Our reading groups are the most important time that we have to work with students at their instructional level in a small group setting. Even with 24, we had students crammed at a table and had major difficulties making sure every student had room in a group appropriate to their level. When the classes are overcrowded, the activity and noise level increases which makes it very difficult for special education students or students with attention needs. Developing relationships with parents and students is also way more difficult when there is almost 30 students and families. The class sizes being raised will make the classrooms physically uncomfortable and make it very difficult and almost impossible for kindergarten teachers to provide the instruction and care that every student deserves. Regarding the surplus that could happen due to this change, this is a very emotional and upsetting event for teachers. I have been at my school for 5 years. I long term subbed and then got a position and now am pursuing my masters. The thought of having to pack up my entire classroom and move to a new school and learn all new routines as well as the time spent moving furniture and supplies while in my final year of my masters program

causes significant stress. I have always received positive feedback on my lessons and when being observed, but now I am concerned for my job and having to leave a team that has helped me grow so much professionally and that I work very well with. Every year, I am put on this emotional roller coaster where I am told I may be surplussed and I have to imagine what I will do and prepare for interviews. The emotional toll that this puts on myself and other teachers in my position is terrible. As a teacher that has received tenure and good marks on observation and who also is pursuing a Master's Degree to work towards a higher leadership position, this kind of treatment feels very unfair. When comparing myself to others in similar points in their careers it seems like more respect and consideration is being given among other fields. Education should be a respected career as well where teachers are treated as professionals. The number one priority for my classroom would be to lower class sizes to make sure that I can build relationships and reach every student. However, the opposite is happening. After working hard for years and pursuing higher education, I feel that there should be more respect for my job and placement but every year I am treated like a brand new employee and face the threat of being moved. Now I have to prepare for the possibility of starting at a brand new school and new grade as I am finishing my masters degree and internship as a reading specialist. I hope that something can be done to help the teachers that put in tireless hours to help our future and to help every student have an education where they are not one of thirty students in a class with one teacher. Thank you.

Jenna Boule

jenna_boule@hcpss.org

1901 South Charles Street Apt 457

Baltimore, Maryland 21230

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:15 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Budget Shortfall for HCPSS

From: Tracy Stansbury <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 11:42 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Budget Shortfall for HCPSS

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Hello,

I am writing about the current budget needs of the Howard County Public School System. The biggest problem teachers face everyday is not having enough time to give their students the personal attention they need to thrive. With 30 students in each homeroom, there is not enough time to form personal connections and check-in daily with every student they teach. With growing concerns about students' social and emotional well-being, we must have decreased class sizes. The biggest way to enable teachers to impact students' social and emotional well-being is to have less students in all classes. The only way to make this possible is to increase funding to hire more teachers. Schools would also benefit from having more than one school guidance counselor and school psychologist to help impact students' mental health and well-being in ways that classroom teachers cannot. This also requires increased funding to hire these support staff.

Thank you for your consideration,

Tracy Stansbury

Tracy Stansbury
tracy.stansbury@gmail.com
4612 East Leisure Court
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:15 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: HCPSS funding

From: gabrielle jacobson <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 11:46 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: HCPSS funding

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Dear Council members,

First of all, I invite each and every one of you to spend an entire day with me, or any other Special Educator in the County, to get a better understanding of the magnitude of issues we face each and every day to provide the best educational experience possible for our students. A 10-minute walk through just doesn't give you enough information.

There's no way to convey the number of directions we are pulled in at the same time...every day. No staffing formula could ever really convey how much support students (those with and without IEPs) need in order to be successful.

We are feeling the snowballing effects of students being asked to do too much, too early. Their brains aren't ready for much of the academic material we are forcing on them, and so we are left with the emotional and behavioral fallout. And it takes staff time to provide support. Time is the intangible in all of your formulas.

You can't imagine how much energy our amazing staff at Hammond Middle spends trying to coordinate care for our students. And to imagine that you want us to provide more mental health supports-per the Superintendent's mission-with LESS staffing is just laughable.

Truly, EVERY middle school student needs mental health supports, but as it stands now, only the ones who have risen to the top because of their disruptive behaviors or threats are receiving the most services. What about the child suffering in silence who doesn't even hit the radar through the fray of the more vocal students? How is that child being impacted for life because she/he isn't getting the attention they deserve?

We have a psychologist who splits her time with another school; and when she is here she's quite often in meetings. We have two guidance counselors who are buried in paperwork instead of helping students. Why not hire a Student Services staff person dedicated to paperwork only so that the mental health professionals can actually provide mental health services?

Just this morning I spent nearly 120 minutes with a student in crisis. I had to have support staff evacuate the classroom in order to keep the students safe. This meant that those staff members were pulled away from the students they were assigned to support and the students in my class missed nearly two periods of their specialized instruction. I can't fathom having even less staff to rely on.

Have you spent 50 minutes sitting in a room with 35 students and tried to have a meaningful learning experience? I would hope that you'd perform your due diligence and do just that. The type and severity of distractions might actually leave you speechless. I really want to know whether you could learn in an environment like that?

I hope you'll take me up on my offer to spend the day with me. I've already cleared it with my administrator. We'd welcome the opportunity for you to see, up close and personal, just how your budgetary decisions affect real, live children.

Thanks so much for your consideration,

Gabrielle Jacobson

Special Educator, Hammond Middle School

gabrielle jacobson

gabriellejacobson@yahoo.com

11078 Dorsch Farm Rd

Ellicott City, Maryland 21042

▪

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:12 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: School System Budget for 2019-20

From: Elizabeth Hughes <elizabeth_hughes@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 11:52 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: School System Budget for 2019-20

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Good Morning,

I am concerned by the news that the school system is potentially facing a \$28M shortfall for next school year. It is particularly alarming to me that financial savings will be made by reducing staffing and increasing class sizes.

When I started teaching in Howard County 15 years ago, class sizes were capped at 19 in primary grades and 25 in upper elementary. We had fewer special education students, and were better able to provide individual attention, differentiation, and support to our students.

My school currently has classes of up to 30 students, with a greater number of special needs students, including the UL and PL programs. I have observed a noticeable increase in students with anxiety and emotional challenges. Over crowding classrooms makes it virtually impossible to build relationships with students and provide the calm environment many of our students need to succeed.

In all the years I've lived in Maryland, Howard County has maintained a stellar reputation as a community with a great school system. Many families I know have moved to this county specifically for the school system.

I strongly believe that to continue the county's legacy of excellence and diversity, it is imperative to fully fund the school system budget for the 2019-2020 school year and beyond.

Thank you,

Elizabeth Hughes

Elizabeth Hughes
elizabeth_hughes@hcpss.org
6716 Ridgecrest Rd
New Market, Maryland 21774

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 5:10 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Budget Crisis

From: Candice Provino <candice_provino@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 11:55 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Budget Crisis

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

“Students don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care” – John C. Maxwell. This is perhaps one of the most important quotes in current educational trends. The present budget crisis in Howard County wants to increase class size. This would greatly diminish a teacher’s ability to convey how much they care, their ability to foster critical relationships that support ever evolving social and emotional needs, and meet individual students learning styles.

I challenge you to think back to high school, middle school, and even elementary school. Who are the teachers that you remember most? Do you remember what they taught you, or how they made you feel? If you are being honest with yourself – it’s going to be the ones that made you feel welcomed, loved, special in your own way, and the ones that made you feel like you wanted to go to school on any given day. I remember my American History teacher – I cannot really tell you what he taught us, but I can tell you that I loved being in his class, and never once wanted to miss it. He made us feel so loved, cared about, missed if we were not there. He asked us about our lives, and truly made each of the days I had him better. I had a really hard time in high school, and he was my ray of sunshine. I wonder if that would still be the case now that class sizes have increased so much in the last 20 years, not to mention right now?

Larger class sizes do not afford for these types of connections to occur. Without these relationships, countless students will be lost in the day to day interworking’s of the school day. This includes students on every end of the learning spectrum. Learning needs will not be met,

and the ever-increasing demands placed on teachers will become even more unattainable. Teachers are already spread too thin. Students are presenting with greater academic, and social and emotional needs, that are currently difficult to find ways to address. This causes great frustration, and burnout for amazing teachers. Classes are already too large, even one or more students dramatically changes the classroom climate and dynamic. If we continue to increase class size, we foster a broken education system that is focused on dollar signs, and not the individual child.

As a Physical Education teacher, class size has a direct impact on student learning and safety. We are often “doubled” which means we have two classes – which are often times sprinkled (see note below) inside a small gymnasium. For those who are not familiar with sprinkling, it is when one class is broken apart and spread into other classes for related arts. Typically, 25% of one class will be added to another. You can imagine this class size! There are some related arts classes with over 30 students in them. When two classes are in the gym, that is over 60 students. There has been talk of having to triple because of the proposed budget and class size – which would mean upwards of 90 students in the gym. I know many people do not value the importance of Physical Education. Whatever your opinion on the matter, student safety is of the utmost importance. With that many students and behaviors to manage, safety, and quality instruction are challenged.

This is the second year in a row I have been impacted by surplus, and budget cuts. I have worked hard to forge relationships at the schools that I am split between, as I know the value and importance of this for student success – not just in Physical Education. I often give up my lunch time to have lunch with students, or give students who may need extra support some small group, or 1:1 time with an adult. I love doing it, and will continue to do it no matter the outcome – however it makes it extremely difficult to continuously enter new schools and develop relationships. The number of students who face social, academic, and emotional challenges will only increase as class sizes do. It is quite frustrating as an educator to pour your heart and soul into your craft and a school, only to be told you have to leave.

This budget crisis needs to be resolved, and funded quickly. The community, our students, and teachers do not deserve this. The time is now to shine a spotlight on the importance of class size and student success. Please help a positive light shine on Howard County Public Schools, the amazing students and families here, as well as the dedicated, and incredible educators that make up this system.

Thank you,

Aleah Zinalabedini

Physical Education Teacher

Bellows Spring Elementary School
Gorman Crossing Elementary School

Candice Provino

candice_provino@hcpss.org

9999 Winter Sun Rd

Laurel, Maryland 20723

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 4:06 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Howard County School System 2019-2020 budget

From: Yang Tai <yang_tai@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 12:15 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Howard County School System 2019-2020 budget

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

To whom it may concern,

HCPSS staff were alerted yesterday that there is a shortfall in the budget. There will be an increase of class sizes.

Kindergarten = 26+ students

1 & 2 = 27 students

3-5 = 33 students

6-12 = 35 students

Over 250 teachers will be surplussed, which means many schools will lose good teachers.

This will dramatically influence the quality of education and a lot of excellent teachers will lose their job since it's K1-12. The teachers on surplus will have no place to go. Please consider increase the budget.

Yang Tai

Yang Tai

yang_tai@hcpss.org

7836 Quidditch Lane
Elkridge, Maryland 21075

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 4:06 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Support our Schools

From: Dana La Rosa <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 12:16 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Support our Schools

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

To Whom it May Concern:

My name is Dana La Rosa, and I am an elementary teacher in the Howard County Public School System as well as a member of the Howard County Education Association. I recently learned about the budget shortfall and proposed measure to increase class sizes to account for the discrepancy. Larger class sizes benefit no one, and only prevent our students from getting the education they deserve.

I have seen the proposed class size numbers for the upcoming school year and frankly, they are terrifying. My school already suffered staffing cuts during the 2018-2019 school year, resulting in increased class sizes. In particular, our class sizes went from approximately 26 to 30 students in grades 3 and 4. This may not sound like a lot of students, but it has made a tremendous difference as an educator. This year has been one of the most difficult years I have seen as an educator. Classrooms are cramped and overcrowded with every little room to move between desks, creating a fire hazard. We do not have enough materials for each student (computers, instruments, etc.) so every activity takes twice as much time because we have to rotate so that every child has a turn. With so many students in a class who need supervision at all times, particularly at the elementary level, I am rarely able to devote one-on-one time to any students who are struggling, and I cannot take the time to form relationships with my students. In addition, many of the students in our Title I school come from difficult home lives, and many of them come to school with behavioral and emotional issues that are

only exacerbated by being in larger classes with peers with whom they do not get along. Smaller classes allow us to put students in peer groupings so that they can have the support they need, rather than spending most of our instructional time dealing with student behavior. We have also lost staffing in special education positions, so many of our students with IEPs and 504 plans are not getting the support that they need to be successful.

I hope that the County Council will consider looking for ways to close the budget gap. Howard County has always had an excellent reputation as one of the best school systems in Maryland, but it will not continue to be that way if schools are underfunded and overcrowded.

Sincerely,

Dana La Rosa

9450 Ridgeview Dr.

Columbia, MD 21046

908-489-0754

Dana La Rosa

dana.m.larosa@gmail.com

9450 Ridgeview Dr

Columbia, Maryland 21046-1965

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 4:05 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: HCPSS budget funding

From: Tara Scully <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 12:25 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: HCPSS budget funding

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

As a product of the HCPSS and a life long resident in HoCo, I'm extremely disappointed to read the reports that class sizes could be increasing and teachers could lose their jobs due to a lack of budget. And we still aren't properly supporting kids with dyslexia and other learning and behavioral challenges. This has got to stop. We won't continue to be highly rated if we can't force developers to pay their fare share....so the houses they want to build will grow in value, when folks live here for the good schools. Please fully fund the budget and fix adequate facilities!

Tara Scully
taramscully@gmail.com
3102 Ramblewood Rd
Ellicott City, Maryland 21042

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 4:05 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Your crucial vote

From: Lori Jenner <lawdy60@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 12:28 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Your crucial vote

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Dear County Council,

I am taking the time to write to you because the decision you have to make regarding the budget impacts us all. Our school is a title One school and we currently receive extra funding to help us reach all of our students.

As the school counselor, I have seen a negative change in the dynamics in our classrooms and a decline in the mental health of our students. Teaching in the classroom has gotten trickier because the varying needs of our students and their families.

I ask you to come and observe in our schools to see the students and staff you say you represent. Our Student Support Team walks the building with Wallis talkies in order to be at the ready to help calm students in crisis and/or respond to difficulties within a classroom. Increasing class sizes would exacerbate these issues. Our jobs would be even more reactive rather than proactive.

I implore you to think of other ways to find money in the budget to keep staffing resources at the levels they are now. Perhaps it's time to encourage early retirement for those folks getting closer to or already at retirement age. New staff coming in would receive starting salaries at more than half the cost and classrooms could maintain a desirable level.

Thank you, Lori Jenner

Lori Jenner

lawdy60@gmail.com

5470 Hesperus Drive

Columbia, Maryland 21044

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Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 4:05 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: budget needs

From: Jen Fogler <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 12:44 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: budget needs

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Hello,

I am writing about the current budget needs of the Howard County Public School System. The biggest problem teachers face everyday is not having enough time to give their students the personal attention they need to thrive. With 30 students in each homeroom, there is not enough time to form personal connections and check-in daily with every student they teach. With growing concerns about students' social and emotional well-being, we must have decreased class sizes. The biggest way to enable teachers to impact students' social and emotional well-being is to have less students in all classes. The only way to make this possible is to increase funding to hire more teachers. Schools would also benefit from having more than one school guidance counselor and school psychologist to help impact students' mental health and well-being in ways that classroom teachers cannot. This also requires increased funding to hire these support staff.

Thank you for your consideration,
Jen Fogler

Jen Fogler
canmebeu@yahoo.com
8125 Old Stockbridge Drive
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 4:05 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Fund HCPSS at the BOE Request

From: Edward Cosentino <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 12:56 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Fund HCPSS at the BOE Request

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

It is imperative to provide the Howard County Public School System with proper funding required to operate our schools. As a long-time resident, I am concerned that we are not fully investing in the future of our school system. Unfunded initiatives, constant cuts, increased class sizes, and deferred maintenance will all catch up to us in the future.

Personally, as an employee, I am gravely concerned in the social and emotional well-being of our students. It is becoming increasingly hard to see students unavailable to learn and struggle in school. The Superintendent's budget addresses the concerns and needs. We finally have a leader who elevated these concerns, and we must support his vision.

Thank you,

Edward Cosentino

Edward Cosentino
ecosentino74@gmail.com
9349 Windbell Way
Columbia, Maryland 21045

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 4:05 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Class sizes should not increase!

From: Sarah Baumert <sarah_baumert@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 12:59 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: RE: Class sizes should not increase!

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

I work as a Family Liaison at a Title 1 school in Howard County, and am the parent of five students who attend HCPSS schools. I moved here four years ago and have appreciated the quality education that my children have received. I was very disappointed and discouraged this morning to hear that there were be changes next year due to budgetary constraints. The numbers I am seeing are staggering. I am not even certain that 30 upper elementary school students will fit comfortably into the classrooms both where I work, or where my children attend elementary school. As a former second grade teacher, I know that lower elementary teachers will be even more taxed as they try to meet the very diverse needs of up to 27 students. My older children attend Centennial High School, a school so crowded that families have been asked numerous times to consider enrolling their children elsewhere. How will my older students feel if they are asked to pack more tightly into classrooms ju st to access their basic educational needs? How will my daughter feel next year as she navigates the middle school for the first time? Will she be overlooked by her teachers because she is quiet and likely to disappear into the back of the classroom? Our children deserve the attention of quality teachers, teachers who are not stretched beyond belief. Our country is struggling with mental illness, and families are pressed for time and energy. Our school district needs to do everything in its power to hold on to our fabulous teachers, and to support all children. No child should have to squish into a classroom, and no student should squeak by because his or her teacher can not do more. Please protect our good schools and keep this a quality school

system. Do not allow classroom sizes to increase, and do not allow our teachers to be taken out of our schools.

Sincerely,
Sarah Baumert

Sarah Baumert
sarah_baumert@hcpss.org
9848 MIDDLE MEADOW ROAD
ELLICOTT CITY, Maryland 21042

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 4:04 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: URGEN Budget Needs

From: Kathryn Uhl <kathyn_uhl@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 1:00 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: URGEN Budget Needs

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Kathryn Uhl and I am a first year Special Educator at Hammond Middle School. I am deeply concerned about the budget needs of HCPSS. I fear for the needs of my students, the HCPSS community, my colleagues, and the future of Maryland. Without meeting the full needs of the budget, there will be a significant lack of resources and support. Firstly, staff will be physically and mentally unable to meet the needs of all students in such large classes. With each student having different needs, wants, and learning styles, teachers will not be able to teach classes well. Secondly, it is outrageous to expect teachers to use their own money to purchase materials for such large classes. Teachers do not make enough money to support themselves and their students as it is. If the budget does not pass, teachers will leave the profession because they will be tired of the financial burdens presented in Howard County. Finally, with an increase in class size, teachers will have to remain at school for even further extended hours. Currently, I work about 10-15 additional hours outside of teacher contracted hours weekly. It has taken a toll on my mental and physical health. I can only imagine how the struggles will increase if the budget does not pass. For the sake of student learning, teacher happiness, and the future of the state, I URGE you to support HCPSS' budget needs.

Regards,
Kathryn Uhl

Kathryn Uhl
kathyn_uhl@hcpss.org
5413 Kerger Road
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 4:04 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Teacher and Parent

From: Katie Stablein <Katie_stablein@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 1:00 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Teacher and Parent

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

I am a teacher in my 13th year of teaching and made the move this past year to HCPSS. Howard County has been my home for the last ten years. We have chosen to have our daughters attend HCPSS schools (after a year in private school). As a parent, I want the best for my child. I want her to be in the best learning enviroment.

Katie Stablein
Katie_stablein@hcpss.org
8475 Kings Meade Way
Columbia, Maryland 21046

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 4:02 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Proper Funding of HCPSS

From: Nicole Alston <nicole_alston@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 1:03 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Proper Funding of HCPSS

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

I moved to Howard County wanting to give my children the education they deserve. To not have to deal with overcrowding, deteriorating buildings and overworked teachers. But the rapid growth this county has had and will continue to have puts Howard County Public School System on a collision course with with the same fate like Baltimore City and Washington, DC public school systems. If adequate is not provided HCPSS will not be able to maintain its quality education system. Gone will be the days of being one of the best school systems in the nation. Priority has to be give to our students, teachers and the staff that supports both groups. Simply taking a single step out of the normal parameters for funding will not secure the school system's strength; but a leap will. As the County Council, we need you to go above and beyond and fully fund Dr. Martirano's requested budget.

Our school system has an array of talented teachers and staff but their talent is stifled by increased class sizes and additional administrative demands because faculty members have been surplus to other schools

Nicole Alston
nicole_alston@hcpss.org
8814 Blue Sea Dr
Columbia, Maryland 21046

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 3:57 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Teacher and Parent

From: Katie Stablein <Katie_stablein@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 1:14 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Teacher and Parent

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

I am a teacher in my 13th year of teaching and made the move this past year to teach in HCPSS. Howard County has been my home for the last ten years. We have chosen to have our daughters attend HCPSS schools (after a year in private school). As a parent, I want the best for my child. I want her to be in the best learning environment. I want her to be in classes where she can have the individual attention she needs. Adding students to classes is not what is needed to have her in the best learning environment.

As a teacher, I have classes with all types of learners, SPED, ESL, general ed learners. Adding more students per class takes away some of that individual assistance I can give my students. We are already short SPED teachers at times and taking away staff would take away the very important assistance some of our students need to ensure they have success in their classes. I have around 250 students each semester. Adding to that number increases my workload (planning and grading) greatly.

Taking away staff also put a safety concern in our buildings. Not have the staff to help students in crisis (or all other safety issues) would be a safety concern for everyone in the schools.

Taking away staffing would mean less time to help students grow mentally emotionally, and academically. It is so important to keep the current numbers to help all our students be successful. Thank you for your time.

Katie Stablein
Katie_stablein@hcpss.org
8475 Kings Meade Way
Columbia, Maryland 21046

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 3:56 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Proposed Changes

From: Julianne Meagher <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 1:32 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Proposed Changes

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Hello,

I am writing you today with great concern related to the recent proposed changes to the Howard County class sizes. The changes would not only cut the jobs of over 200 dedicated teachers, but would greatly increase the workload for those that remain. I am a product of Howard County schools and am incredibly proud of my education. In fact, that is one of the reasons my husband and I work so hard to maintain our residence in the county. So far, we have been amazed by the education our son has received at his county school. His teacher is nothing short of amazing. She knows my child's strengths and challenges and works with him on his level. She uses her own (unpaid) time to come up with constantly engaging and fun activities for her students. And she responds to my emails and questions well after work hours. I am amazed at how dedicated and loving she is to each and every child in her class and am often in awe that she can do this with her current class size. How can we ask a teacher to maintain this type of relationship, care, and competence when they are tasked with taking on more and more children? Today our teachers are asked to not only teach but counsel, console, provide case management, and often even put their own safety on the line as part of their everyday job. In my opinion, the county's proposal to increase class sizes is nothing short of negligence. Howard County loves to talk about the quality of their education and the success of their students. How, in good conscience, can you continue to do this if you are taking away those that are able to provide these services? I can't help but wonder what the

upper management, central office, or board of education will be sacrificing while asking our teachers to take on impossible loads. I will always be proud of my education in Howard County and I cannot stress the gratitude I feel for my son's current school and teacher. But I am greatly concerned about this current proposal and hope that those in power will take immediate, meaningful steps to change this proposal so that HCPSS can continue to be the school system that has provided quality education to so many.

Thank you.

Julianne Meagher
julianneameagher8@gmail.com
7915 Savage Guilford Road
Jessup, Maryland 20794

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 3:56 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: HCPSS Public Schools

From: Sofia Mulinazzi <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 1:32 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: HCPSS Public Schools

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

I'm an alumni of HCPSS public schools, and the class sizes you're proposing for schools is absolutely ridiculous. No kid will get the attention they need in a class of 35 children.

Sofia Mulinazzi
sofiamulinazzi@gmail.com
Rivers View Court
Columbia, Maryland 21044

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 3:56 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Please Restore Class Size

From: Christina Wanex <christina_wanex@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 1:38 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Please Restore Class Size

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

I am writing this letter to request that you not increase class sizes. This will have a tremendous impact: possible reduction in force, impacting families; surpluses of teachers who are part of a school community that took time to develop and who contribute valuable attributes to their team; and most of all- the actual instruction and well-being of the students. As a primary teacher of a class size of only 19- with very diverse needs, I feel like I did the year I taught third grade with 31 students in my homeroom and 33 in my math class. As it is now, I should have 7 different reading groups to meet the needs of my students, and I am only able to have 4 (when best practice is to 3 in a day)- putting me into a position to send students off to other teachers for groups, or not being able to challenge a children to the point that they should be due to having students who are not even on grade level yet, and even cutting writing instruction short to fill the gap in reading. Larger class sizes do not promote optimal hands-on learning opportunities, and it creates a situation where we run out of space to have a common area together in the classroom. Often times, desks can only be arranged in rows due to space needs. When I had 33 in my math class, students were sitting on storage cubes around small tables, with no desk to store their belongings for math. Please do not increase class size. Instruction will suffer and opportunities for closing achievements gaps will diminish. We won't have enough manipulatives either.

Christina Wanex
christina_wanex@hcpss.org

6911 Carroll Highlands Road
Sykesville, Maryland 21784

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 3:55 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: HCPSS Budget Concerns

From: Amy Potler <AMY_POTLER@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 1:52 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: HCPSS Budget Concerns

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Hello,

I am a Occupational Therapist in 4 Howard County schools and am writing to you in regards to the HCPSS budget. I am very concerned about the current budget proposal, because while it does fund the teacher's negotiated agreement and health care, it leaves significant gaps in several high needs areas, such as staffing. If funds are not increased, class sizes will have to go up. This would negatively & directly impact the education of students in Howard County, especially those with special needs. Howard County has a stellar reputation for it's inclusion philosophy. If class sizes are increased, it will have a negative effect on how our special needs students will be integrated into larger, more chaotic and less safe situations. I am pleading with you to please increase the funds to the HCPSS budget.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Amy Potler

Amy Potler
AMY_POTLER@hcpss.org

3638 Sharp Road
Glenwood, Maryland 21738

▪

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 3:55 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Making impossible, possible

From: Brittany Lewis <Brittany_Lewis@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 1:56 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Making impossible, possible

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

To whom it may concern,

I am a special education teacher in Howard County. This year I have experienced working long days without breaks due to a lack of staff and help around the building. Our teams work SO hard day in and day out to keep our students safe and to provide them with what they need. However, if our budget does not allow sufficient funding to bring on/keep our staff members, it is the students who will suffer. As our school continues to grow, our need for more staffing also grows. The decisions on this matter are made by respectable professionals. But teachers are the people who are in the classrooms daily and who are expected to nurture, monitor, teach, discipline, maintain, record data, communicate with parents, and so much more. We are expected to go above and beyond every single day. And we do. Every, single, day. We not only want more room in our budget but we NEED it in order to do our (important) jobs effectively. So, please, PLEASE, hear our voice and help our schools by providing us with the budget we NEED.

Respectfully,

Brittany Lewis

Hanover Hills Elementary School

Brittany Lewis

Brittany_Lewis@hcpss.org

5133 West Road
White Hall, Maryland 21161

▪

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 3:54 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: PLEASE RECONSIDER BUDGET...

From: Candice Provino <candice_provino@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 1:59 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: PLEASE RECONSIDER BUDGET...

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Candice Provino, and I am a Physical Education teacher at Gorman Crossing Elementary. I have been at my school for 16 years, and I love my job and my students!

When I received the news about the budget, I was very disappointed and scared for our Howard County School system. I cannot imagine losing staff members, while our student numbers and class sizes increase. In my subject area, increasing the intermediate class sizes to 33...means that when we have double classes, there will be a total of 66 students in our small gym at one time. This is definitely a safety hazard waiting to happen. And looking ahead at what our schedule may look like next year in second grade (since we are supposed to lose .4 PE staffing), we could possibly have a day where we have 3 classes (with the highest behavioral needs) and ONLY 2 teachers. This does not seem like it will work...does it? Nor will it be safe by any means!

Increasing class sizes and decreasing staff support is NOT a good idea. This idea does not have the best interest of students in mind at all. Giving students the attention and instruction they need and require, especially in elementary school, will be near impossible if class sizes increase.

Not only am I a teacher, but I am a mother of a 15 month old. Part of the reason I chose to live in Howard County was because I wanted my child to attend a Howard County school. Thinking about eventually sending my son to a public school in Howard County with increasing class sizes is making me reconsider sending him to public schools. I would love to have my child attend the school where I am working, but if the class sizes are as large as they say they may be...I will definitely be looking into private schools. I do not want my son to slip through the cracks...like some students unfortunately do in larger classes.

Please, please, please...reconsider the budget, with the students' well-being and success in mind. We need as many teachers as we can to make Howard County the best county!

Thank you,
Candice Provino
Gorman Crossing Elementary School

Candice Provino
candice_provino@hcpss.org
9999 Winter Sun Rd
Laurel, Maryland 20723

▪

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 3:54 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Class size and budget

From: Emily O'Neil <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 2:16 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Class size and budget

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Hello,

I recently read that due to budget shortfalls, class sizes for Howard County schools will be increased next year. I have a son entering kindergarten and a daughter who will attend school in a few years. I absolutely love Howard County and the superior school system that is available, in fact it played a large role in why my family settled here. The large class size is very concerning both for the students in their learning and the attention they can receive, as well as the quality of employment and job satisfaction for the teachers, which trickles down to the student experience. I would love to know how I as a parent and community member can help alleviate the budget shortfall and understand where this money is going instead. I feel that education should be one of our highest priorities. Thank you for taking the time to read my letter.

Sincerely,

Emily O'Neil

Emily O'Neil
terp4481@yahoo.com
9913 Evergreen Ave
Columbia, Maryland 21046

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 3:54 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Please increase funding

From: Lindsey Kim <lkim@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 2:18 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Please increase funding

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Dear County Council,

I have been an elementary teacher for the last 16 years. In that time, I've had large classes with all of their challenges. I've also had smaller classes and the luxury of getting to know my students better that comes with smaller numbers. I am now an ESOL teacher and routinely work with some of our students who need the most support.

It's this simple: the smaller the group of students, the better the teacher and students can get to know each other. We want our students to feel safe, successful, and known. When there are 33 upper elementary sized bodies squished into one room, this becomes less of a reality. Behaviors increase, and students with linguistic or disability-related needs have less time with the teacher. And Kindergarten. In September, Kindergarten really is like herding kittens. Please keep those classes smaller.

The students on my ESOL caseload have a lot of background knowledge, but are lacking the academic language to succeed in a classroom without linguistic support. More students puts more of a strain on classroom teachers and makes it that much harder for them to meet the varied needs of the students in the classroom.

Our school system's mission states:

HCPSS ensures academic success and social-emotional well-being for each student in an inclusive and nurturing environment that closes opportunity gaps.

Please increase funding so that our students have a learning environment that matches this mission.

Thank you,
Lindsey Kim

Lindsey Kim
lkim@hcpss.org
2119 Oak Forest Dr.
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 3:54 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Howard County Class sizes

From: Kwabena Davis <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 2:33 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Howard County Class sizes

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Please ensure that class sizes do not increase, the children in the lower grades are practically teaching themselves. I have volunteered as a WATCHDOG multiple times and the class sizes are unmanagable for 1 teacher as is.

Kwabena Davis
kwabena.davis@gmail.com
6344 Arbor Way
Elkridge, Maryland 21075

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 3:54 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: more funding NEEDED

From: Brianne Miller <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 2:39 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: more funding NEEDED

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

I am HCPSS parent and teacher. I am very concerned about the increase of class sizes and lack of funding.

This is extremely important!!! Class sizes are going to be raised if funding is not increased.

Kindergarten will be raised to 26 students per class

First and second will be 27 per class

Grades 3 through 5 will be 33 per class

Middle school 35 per class. THIS IS CRAZY and not best practice.

We are the one of the richest and best school systems in the nation. Our kids deserve better.

This is the reason good educators stop teach teaching... big class sizes, reductions, in supplies, and resources make it difficult to give our children the best.

Please give our kids the best! Find the money to help our kids be the best!

Brianne Miller
briannefriskmiller@gmail.com
2032 Meadow Tree Court
Cocksville, Maryland 21723

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 3:53 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Staffing decrease in HCPSS

From: April Williams <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 2:49 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Staffing decrease in HCPSS

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Good afternoon,

I am writing to you as both an HCPSS employee of 14 years and an HCPSS parent. I'll try to keep this short and to the point. One of the main reasons my husband and I chose to move to Howard county and pay a lot more for our mortgage and property taxes was simply due to our wonderful school system. I wanted my son and daughter to experience and receive the best education possible and I thought this was the right place. When my son entered as a Kindergartener last year I was quite disappointed at the amount of students in his class. And now I find out it's only going to get worse. This is very upsetting to me as a parent. People pay a lot of money to live in this county and one of the main reasons for many is because of the schools. Please don't take that away from our county! I have always been very proud to say that I work in the HCPSS and sadly it seems that pride has been diminishing over the past few years. The expectations for teachers are getting ridiculous. It's to the point where honestly, I don't see many people retiring from this career as has always been the case in decades past. Especially in the "tougher" schools like I and many others work in. I can't even imagine having more kids placed than they already are Please hear me as a concerned parent and staff of this county to reconsider this decision and keep HCPSS one of the best places to attend and work. Thank you!

Sincerely,

April Williams

Concerned parent and staff of HCPSS

April Williams

alovemd2@gmail.com

5505 Fox Tail Lane

Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 3:53 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: HCPSS budget

From: Adrienne Grein <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 2:51 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: HCPSS budget

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Dear Ms. Walsh,

I am extremely concerned over the recent revelation of the budget cuts being considered for our school system. I work in an elementary school in Alternative Education, and my children attended Howard County Public schools.

The loss of staffing and the increased class sizes will be detrimental to the education of our students. HCPSS has seen an increase in behavior problems and mental health issues in our students. By increasing our class size, we are ignoring the social emotional needs of many of our students. By decreasing our staff, when we should actually be increasing support staff, we are putting many students at risk. The impact of these behaviors (some of which involve physical violence) can be significant, causing emotional scars, anxiety, and even physical injury.

There are so many other concerns, regarding pay, cost of living, etc. We consider ourselves a "world class" school system? We will never be that, and will not draw top notch educators if we are not willing to invest in our schools. Who wants to move their family to a school system where their children will be in class sizes of up to 35? It's ridiculous.

I ask that the budget proposal be reconsidered. Our children are our future.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Adrienne Grein

Adrienne Grein
agrein@hotmail.com
6142 Fairbourne Ct
Hanover, Maryland 21076

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 3:53 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Potential Financial Shortfall

From: Terry Rainey <terry_rainey@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 2:53 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Potential Financial Shortfall

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Dear Committee Members,

Please fully fund our school system budget. I am a proud parent of 2 Howard County graduates. We moved here from out of state and bought a house in Howard County because of its excellent schools. We left our jobs out of state and took our kids out of the school system they were in because of budget cuts. We need to keep our system an extraordinary school system. By making cuts or short changing our students, we will see our schools become more ordinary rather than extraordinary. People will move away, property values will decrease (which will cause further shortfalls in the future since the revenue stream will decrease), and there will be less highly skilled jobs available in Howard County. As a homeowner in Howard County, I would rather pay a little more in property taxes than see our school system suffer and have to face the long term consequences that are associated with having a lower quality educational system. Please fully fund our schools so we can remain extraordinary and provide our kids the very best opportunities for their future.

Sincerely,
Terry Rainey

Terry Rainey
terry_rainey@hcpss.org

4949 Orchard Drive
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 3:52 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Time to Get Real

From: Melissa Schropp <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 3:01 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Time to Get Real

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Time to prioritize. I get it. There's a limited amount of dollars and they have to be stretched more and more. I get it. You need to do what's best for the county as a whole and allocate funds in a major that meets many competing needs.

There have been endless posts on Facebook from many counties making the same budget cuts. Class sizes spiking. Teachers being laid off. Don't add our county to this epidemic. Please don't do this to our teachers. Please give our students the attention they deserve. Everyone says teachers are angels for what they do. Teachers work miracles every day. I agree. If you make life more difficult for them they will rise to the occasion. I've seen this, but there's only so much you can ask of them. What do you think will be the consequence? There are only so many hours on a day a teacher can work. How do you grade-assess student progress when your caseload increases? You have to cut back on the quality of the feedback. What about that drama club they volunteer for afterschool? What about that extra class they were going to take? What about the early morning office hours they volunteer for kids who need help? Please don't force them to make these choices.

Our teachers, our students, our county deserves better. Find a way. Make it happen. This is not impossible and everyone knows it.

Melissa Schropp
melissaschropp@gmail.com

2234 mount Hebron drive
Ellicott city , Maryland 21042

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 3:52 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: HCPSS BUDGET NEEDS

From: Shiri Leibowitz <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 3:11 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: HCPSS BUDGET NEEDS

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

We moved to Ellicott City two years ago because of the incredible public school system. We heard many good things about the educational stuff and the children who attend the school. The teachers are very professional, hard working, and loving people who put their students first. They helped my son and daughter in many ways, academically and socially. My children love going to school and say it's their second home.

If you reduce the schools' budget, the children will not get the attention and help that they desperately need. School aged children need to feel that their teachers have time to help them which promotes their self-esteem and academic success. Also, the teachers will feel more motivated and appreciated for their hard work.

We are shaping our future generation and we want them to be good citizens.

Sincerely,

The Leibowitz Family

Shiri Leibowitz
leibowitzshiri@gmail.com
2426 Valley View Way
Ellicott City , Maryland 21043

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 3:51 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Priorities

From: Susan McAleer <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 3:24 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Priorities

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

People move to Howard County because of the great schools. These schools are great because of the amazing teachers. I retired from HCPSS after teaching 1st grade/Kindergarten for 32 years. I love our system and our county, but being a teacher was always a challenge. I retired at 55 which I think is young, but there were too many challenges--spending my own money and time at home on school work was the least of these challenges (but both happened on a regular basis). Meeting the needs of ALL children, including those with special needs, was becoming more and more frustrating with the lack of support that was needed--mainly in human resources, but also in materials. What was expected of me as a teacher with so little support was way too much. If our priority is really our children then we need to do what is best for them. Helping teachers meet the needs of children is what is best for them socially, emotionally, and academically. If we make class sizes larger, especially in those primary grades, teachers will not be able to create an environment where children's needs are met. This also includes an environment where they are safe and where they can develop relationships with their educators which increases their motivation to learn. Let's put our money where our priorities are and support teachers by keeping class sizes smaller so they can help children reach their potential. If we don't do this we will lose good teachers and be part of a community that puts obstacles in the way of children becoming healthy and successful adults. Please develop a budget that puts children and their needs at the center!!

Susan McAleer
susan.mcaleer@yahoo.com
9503 Glen Ridge Dr.
Laurel, Maryland 20723

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 3:51 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Please Reconsider

From: Lauryn Reade <lauryn_reade@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 3:29 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Please Reconsider

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to express my concerns regarding the budget predicament the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) has found themselves in. To my understanding, there is a large amount of money requested we will not be receiving. The significant difference given is sure to be very problematic and causes great concern.

My first concern, is the adjustments that will need to be made within the elementary, middle, and high schools to make up the different. HCPSS School Board has proposed increasing class sizes. As this sounds effective and like a solution on paper, it could not be more ineffective for the students. Research shows students learn more efficiently, build greater self-confidence, and are instructed better when they are in smaller classes. Teachers are able to circulate the classroom and assist students with their varying needs when numbers are kept low. In order for teachers to effectively teach students to the best of their abilities, the class sizes should be decreasing, not increasing. This also causes safety concerns with so many children in one classroom with only one adult supervising them.

Secondly, with larger class sizes, teachers' work load increases. As it stands now, teachers already have difficulty completing their assigned tasks within their contracted hours. Planning,

collaborating, grading, and teaching students is more than a 40 hour a week job. Adding more students only increases this workload without any additional money compensation.

Lastly and most crucial, is the amount of jobs that will need to be reduced in order to save the money not given. HCPSS is named one of the wealthiest and highest achieving counties in the United States. This standard was earned, not just given. The sudden change in staffing will surely impact that status and cause families to second-guess their decision to join HCPSS. Within each school building, hard working staff members are at risk of losing their job they have worked so hard to achieve, maintain, and grow professionally. Non-tenured teachers have put in their time and are striving to be a more-permanent member of this school system. The thought of laying off employees is heart-breaking and can surely be avoided.

With all these concerns in mind, I ask you to reconsider the amount of money allotted to HCPSS. I could not think of a more crucial and valuable outlet to invest in than the school system. We are building the future leaders of our country and without the additional money, an injustice is done to the students, staff, and families.

Thank you for your time,
Lauryn

Lauryn Reade
lauryn_reade@hcpss.org
6354 Arbor Way
Elkridge, Maryland 21075

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 3:51 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: HCPSS Budget 19-20

From: James Javorsky <James_Javorsky@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 3:36 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: HCPSS Budget 19-20

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Hi Mr. Jones,

I am a teacher at Thunder Hill Elementary School, and a Columbia resident. I was recently made aware of the shortcomings for the Howard County Public Schools 2019-2020 budget. The cuts that will be necessary if we cannot fully fund the budget proposed by Dr. Martirano will have a significant and lasting effect on our school system's place among the top districts in the country.

It is my understanding that the district is proposing increasing the size of already large classes to make up for some of the gap in funding. As a music teacher, I see my students for 60 minutes each week. With intermediate classes growing to over 30 students per class, that equates to less than 2 minutes of individualized attention per student per week. With increased requirements for assessments in every subject area, it becomes increasingly difficult to give students the proper amount of attention and feedback. This year, our school was forced to "sprinkle" our first grade students for related arts. This created class sizes of up to 29 students. Trying to differentiate instruction for 29+ students and give each student the attention they need and deserve is impossible in the time allotted.

I understand the difficulty of creating and maintaining a budget. However, the damage that will be done with these cuts might have lasting damage on our students, our families, and the Howard County School System as a whole. Dr. Martirano himself says, "in order to teach a child well, you must know a child well."

We must work to not only maintain current class sizes, but attempt to decrease them, providing each and every child with more individualized attention throughout their day.

Thank you for the work you do representing my family and the rest of District 2, and thank you for taking the time to hear my concerns.

Jim Javorsky
General/Vocal Music Teacher
Thunder Hill Elementary

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 3:49 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Kindergarten class sizes

From: Carla jefferson <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 4:02 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Kindergarten class sizes

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Hello, my son is in kindergarten in one of the hcps schools. At this time he has 24 students in his kindergarten class and that is astronomically high. I can't even imagine being a teacher with 26 kindergarten students in one class. With class sizes that high, I can imagine it extremely difficult for the teachers to truly develop a caring and nurturing classroom where each individual students needs are met. Essentially, there will be no such thing as small group instruction because each "small" group will likely consist of about 8-10 students. As a former special education teacher for k-2nd grade students, I can attest to the fact that "small" group instruction, where the group size goes up to at least 10 students, is very difficult for the teacher to instruct and monitor each students learning. That is unfair for the teacher and especially for the students. Please, for the sake of our students do not increase the class sizes. It will slowly have negative impacts on our students, teachers and school system as a whole.

Carla jefferson
yellowcj2018@gmail.com
8616 stonehouse drive
Ellicott city, Maryland 21043

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 3:49 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Class sizes

From: Jeannie-Marie Leoutsakos <jeannie-marie@jhu.edu>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 4:03 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Class sizes

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Hello,

Please do not increase class sizes. Larger class sizes will mean less attention for all kids, but will particularly impact kids with special needs. My son has autism and the overcrowding in his school (currently at 127%) has already adversely impacted him. More noise and more people bumping into him in the hallways causes him to panic and sometimes become aggressive. If class sizes increase as well I will probably have to take him out of the public school system. This is one of the richest counties in the U.S. The money is there.

Jeannie-Marie Leoutsakos
jeannie-marie@jhu.edu
2813 Millers Way Drive
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 3:48 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Urgent: Funds Needed

From: Jackie Bryant <jaclyn_bryant@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 4:28 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Urgent: Funds Needed

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Dear Councilmembers,

I am a teacher in Howard County, and I am writing to you to urge you to set aside additional funding for our county schools next year.

On Wednesday morning, we had a staff meeting to discuss the current outlook for next year, and the scenario laid out was worse than I could have imagined. We were told that without additional funds, we would be losing not 1 classroom teacher due to population numbers, but 4(!) classroom teachers. All grades would have the maximum numbers of students allowed in each class, and that is before we would even have kids who transfer in mid-year (which ALWAYS happens). If you have never taught a class of 33 students, you cannot possibly know how much of a strain it is on a teacher's morale, energy, and resources. And that's only one class! Most teachers in my building teach a morning class and an afternoon class, which would make that 66 students. We barely have enough time to plan, assess, grade, work in small groups, and provide meaningful feedback as is with classes of 25-28 kids. This means related arts teachers, who sometimes have to double up classes in the same class period, could be looking at more than 60 kids in PE at one time- a nearly impossible situation. Please don't make our difficult jobs even harder by spreading us more thinly than we already are.

I hope you will consider allotting urgently needed funding to HCPSS for next year to take the strain off of our current staffing and retain highly qualified members of our staff. Thank you for your consideration.

Jackie Bryant

jaclyn_bryant@hcpss.org

1134 Circle Dr

Halethorpe, Maryland 21227

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 3:48 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Our Children Need You

From: Susanne Bischoff <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 4:31 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Our Children Need You

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Dear County Council Members,

I come from a family of teachers. My parents started fighting for reduced class size in the late 1960s. In 1970, their district put a limit of 35 students in K-6th grade classes. With all of the research demonstrating the benefits of smaller class sizes, I am shocked to hear that 50 years later, current class sizes are still around that number!

Our mission at HCPSS, to ensure academic success and social-emotional well-being for each student in an inclusive and nurturing environment that closes opportunity gaps, is only achievable when teachers can truly get to know the needs of the students, both academic and social-emotional. It is not possible to split yourself 35 ways.

Research has shown that reducing class sizes has wide-reaching benefits:

- closing racial achievement gaps
- early identification of learning disabilities and fewer students placed in Special Education through the years
- improved behavior and reduction in discipline referrals
- lower incarceration rates
- improved graduation rates

Choosing to increase class size is choosing to make our mission mere rhetoric!

Please put our children's future at the forefront of your decision making.

Sincerely,
Susanne Bischoff
Special Educator

Susanne Bischoff
sdbischoff@gmail.com
1607 DEPRIEST DRIVE
SHADY SIDE, Maryland 20764

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 3:47 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Support our teachers and our students

From: Kimberly Keating <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 4:39 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Support our teachers and our students

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Good day,

We moved to this county for the school system. It's supposed to be one of the best in the nation. After 6 years we are nothing but disappointed. And now you want to further cripple our teachers and punish our students with this budget. Our schools are overcrowded, our teachers are overworked, and our students are the ones suffering. Howard county teachers and staff are already expected to do more with less and now you are making this even worse! You are losing good teachers (no, GREAT teachers) which this county sorely needs all because of budgeting issues. Fix this now. Find the money to support our future (may I suggest from developers since you insist on continuing to overdevelop this already overcrowded county!). Howard county is in a poor state of affairs and I voted my conscience in the last election to try and fix things. Do better. Be better. Our kids deserve it.

Kimberly Keating
keating.kimberly@gmail.com
2622 Kidwell Place
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 3:46 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Budget

From: Susan Karlheim <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 4:43 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Budget

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

To Respected Leaders in the County,

Please be advised that I fully understand the needs of the County to cut salary positions due to budget restraints. However, the County needs to be aware of the current inequity of teacher responsibilities in ALL buildings. For example in my building, I am personally responsible for over 200 students. I see over 280 come through my teaching area everyday. Across the building are teachers who see 50 students a day and some teachers who work with only 6 kids a day. We are severely shortchanging our diploma bound students for our certificate bound students. When one room can have a full time teacher and a full time TA, and an assistant for four students, we need to reevaluate our resources since we are spread so thin. Our Special Education Team leader should have classes and she does not. The ratio of Special Educators in a building that have assigned classes to their student body has to be reevaluated. One teacher should not have 220 students and 10 classes and another have 24 students with assistance and only 4 classes. YOU are burning out your content area teachers by using all your salary positions for such a small minority in the school system. I understand those parents have been strong advocates for their children and we all want the best for ALL our students but the pendulum has swung so far out of sight that MANY kids are having their instruction compromised by over extended teachers without the proper resources. Case workers constantly complain when they have to compile information on a student. Content teachers have to compile the information to provide the case workers with information

since most have "no idea" how the student is doing in the classroom since they do not visit the kids in the classroom. These same content teachers have submitted IEP, 504, and behavioral reports on all the kids and still found time to provide a warm learning environment with engaging lessons and communicate with over 200 parents and grade all submitted work. The responsibilities of a Special Educator and a classroom teacher are very off balanced. I would suggest that in the middle schools, that the 2.5 position that is projected to be cut come from the Special Education Department. Respectfully submitted,

Susan Karlheim
HMS Teacher

Susan Karlheim
Karlheim@aol.com
901 Meadowgreen Drive
Mount Airy, Maryland 21771

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 3:46 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: New Projected Classroom Numbers & Teacher Furlough

From: Robin Barnes <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 4:47 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: New Projected Classroom Numbers & Teacher Furlough

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

This proposal of classroom sizes is unacceptable. My son has had so many issues with bullying that his very kind, amazing and yet clueless teacher knew nothing about. He is currently a first grader. The increased classroom sizes will only make circumstances like his worse. Our school already has 1000 students and already creates a naturally overwhelming environment based on size. This is not the best set up for students or teachers. Please find the funds to better serve students, families and staff. Perhaps from the developers who've been allowed to over develop our area in the first place?

Thank you,

Robin Barnes, Mom of 5

Robin Barnes
robinebarnes4912@gmail.com
4413 Brittany Drive
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

▪

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 3:46 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Budget Gap

From: Olivia Kelly <olivia_kelly@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 4:48 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Budget Gap

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

I am shocked and astounded to learn of the county's "solution" to the lack of funding. As a Howard County educator, I was drawn to the county because of the high caliber of education being offered to students. As we continue to cut valuable programs and make changes that are harmful to student learning, such as increasing class sizes, that caliber falls. It is unfair to the students to decrease the quality of education being delivered, which is what raising class sizes will do. Lower class sizes are backed by research, not simply words.

Not only will the students suffer, but the educators will be burned out faster than ever. As the demands of teachers increase year after year, the challenges they face increase as well. Teachers continuously pour not only their salaries, but their time, emotion, and dedication into their students. To continue to add to the challenges teachers face is absolutely devastating for our community, and most importantly, our students.

Howard County has been one of the most prominent counties, recognized throughout the country for our high quality education. However, when we make changes that negatively impact student learning, we stray further and further from that high quality claim. As a county that emphasizes getting to know your students and making connections to increase achievement, how can we expect our educators to continue making meaningful relationships as we add more students to their rosters? In order to remain at the front of education, we need to make changes backed by research to increase student success. We need to fund the

decision to keep class sizes low in order to continue to deliver a high quality education, which every student deserves.

Olivia Kelly, HCPSS Teacher

Olivia Kelly

olivia_kelly@hcpss.org

5470 Hesperus Drive

Columbia, Maryland 21044

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 3:46 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Class size

From: Yoon Choi <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 4:53 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Class size

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

Reduce class size

Yoon Choi
kate.cha@gmail.com
9816 Madelaine Court
Ellicott City, Maryland 21042

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 3:45 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Health Services Staffing

From: Amy Wilson <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 5:06 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Health Services Staffing

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Opal Jones,

I am writing as both a parent to children who attended Howard County public schools and as an employee for the system. As a school nurse, our role is to care for the many medical as well as emotional needs of our students, faculty and visitors. This is becoming increasingly difficult due to the volume of students and acuity of their needs. Each school needs a nurse and a health assistant. I have well over 1300 students between 2 schools. To say each day is challenging is an understatement. For adequate care to our students and ensuring their safety, increased coverage in health rooms is needed.

Thank you,

Amy Wilson

Amy Wilson
amylynn0673@gmail.com
9226 Marydell Road
Ellicott City , Maryland 21042