

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Wednesday, May 8, 2019 3:16 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Unrealistic Class Sizes

From: Kristin Vucina <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 10:32 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Unrealistic 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,

It is disappointing to hear that 250 teachers will be let go, increasing class sizes in Howard County significantly. I don't know how a kindergarten class can effectively run with over 26 students. More thought needs to be put into this, especially considering the large tax dollars we pay in this county to go towards quality education. Quality education is not getting rid of teachers and increasing class sizes to unrealistic numbers.

Sincerely,
Kristin Vucina

Kristin Vucina
krisbelledc@gmail.com
3323 Governor Howard Drive
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Wednesday, May 8, 2019 3:16 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Funding

From: Ann Haas <ann_haas@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 10:31 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Funding

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

Opal Jones,

To All it Concerns,

Your probably flooded with emails from educators right now but I hope my email finds you well. We all have a tough job to do. We're the fact of larger class sizes and less teachers is a way of life not a math problem gone wrong.

I've only been a Para educator for a year and received a surplus letter. It makes me question should I continue this line of work. As a parent, employee and tax payer it is imperative that we fix the funding gap.

Thank you,

Ann Haas

Ann Haas

ann_haas@hcpss.org

Forest

Elkridge, Maryland 21075

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Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Wednesday, May 8, 2019 3:12 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Budget Needs

From: Katharine Dobrusin <katharine_dobrusin@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 10:31 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,
Katharine Dobrusin

Katharine Dobrusin
katharine_dobrusin@hcpss.org
6641 Cambria Ter
Elkridge, Maryland 21075

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Wednesday, May 8, 2019 3:10 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Funding for HCPSS

From: Erin Schultz <erin_schultz@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 10:31 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Funding 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,

I am writing with the hopes of encouraging you to provide more funding for Howard County Public schools. As a first grade teacher I cannot imagine having 27 six and seven-year-olds in my classroom and being able to give them the individualized attention that they need. It would also take away from overall instructional time as we would now be trying to fit in even more reading groups then we already have in the same amount of instructional time provided. Please, please, please work hard and find the funding for us...we, the teachers need it... but more importantly, the kids need it ...Thank you

Erin Schultz
erin_schultz@hcpss.org
7708 lake circle
Pasadena , Maryland 21122

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Sayers, Margery

From: Elizabeth Dodson <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Tuesday, May 7, 2019 10:00 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Please allocate more for education

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

Council Members ,

Hello,

I have reviewed the budget numbers posted by a member of the BOE and am concerned about the impact on increased class sizes at my child's school next year. I understand that this is because of large financial commttments coming due, however, this cost was foreseeable and should not be born by students and already underpaid/overworked teachers. Keeping Howard Country schools to the same excellent standards protects property values and makes it an attractive place for employers seeking top talent. It is worth a small increase in taxes to resist a slide that would reduce the quality of education in our schools.

I appreciate your consideration and will closely monitor related developments.

Thank you,

Elizabeth Dodson

Elizabeth Dodson
ekdodson@gmail.com
13168 Holly Loch Ln
Highland, Maryland 20777

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Tuesday, May 7, 2019 4:22 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Public School Cut Backs

From: Brandi Nadler <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Tuesday, May 7, 2019 3:41 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Public School Cut Backs

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

Opal Jones,

My family moved a couple years ago so our kids could go to a better public school. My kindergartener has an IEP for speech articulation, expressive language and has also been diagnosed with mild apraxia. It has made learning to read very difficult for him. There are many kids who have learning disorders that this will greatly impact but this even impacts kids greatly without learning disorders. It is unfair for children and teachers at public schools to be put in such unjust learning environments. I am appalled that any public schools in this country would allow such absurd ratios as those being proposed by budget cuts. Please help our children and our teachers get the learning environment they deserve. In the end we will suffer the quality of teachers and quality of education for our children.

Brandi Nadler
brandi.nadler@hotmail.com
14215 Clarksville pike
Highland , Maryland 20777

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Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Tuesday, May 7, 2019 2:53 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Funding

From: jyoti bijpuria <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 10:26 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Funding

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

Opal Jones,

My son has an ASD diagnosis and is doing well in the current size classroom at Worthington ES. If class sizes increase to a significant amount, it will be difficult for him and his peers to learn. Ultimately, more kids will be at risk for failing to achieve their goals. Please increase funding for HCPSS. It is the sole reason most people move here. If we don't get the funding we need, we will have a county no one can feel comfortable living in. Please imagine what this may look like in 5 or 10 years.

jyoti bijpuria
jyotibijpuria@hotmail.com
3914 OLD LEAF CT, ADDRESS 2 (OPTIONAL)
ELLCOTT CITY, Maryland 21043

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Tuesday, May 7, 2019 2:53 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Increase funding

From: Elizabeth Gluck <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 10:25 PM
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,

Class size is crucial to learning. When there are too many students in one class it is so hard to get one on one attention and for the teacher to have good classroom management. Please increase funding to either keep classes the same or to make them smaller!

Elizabeth Gluck
bethgluck1@gmail.com
4199 flower blossom drive
Ellicott city, Maryland 21043

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Tuesday, May 7, 2019 2:52 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Increasing class size for the school year 2029-2020

From: Nancy Barker <irshgal2@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 10:22 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Increasing class size for the school year 2029-2020

[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,

As a retired HCPSS teacher of 37 years in Howard County, I have seen a great deal of different ways to balance the budget and serve the students of this county. You CAN NOT, in good conscience, balance this budget on the backs of the teachers, support staff and children of this county. The numbers proposed for the classrooms this coming year are NOT MANAGEABLE even by the best of our teachers. Do you want the students to have a quality education or just "get by"? Please look for other ways to trim the budget. EVERY CHILD and teacher/support staff will be

ADVERSELY affected by this staffing error.

It is a GRIEVOUS ERROR, on your part, to think the teachers will let this go without a fight. Stand up for your staff & the kids. They MATTER THE MOST! Show them you have their backs & value their hard work & dedication to the students. Nancy Barker

Nancy Barker
irshgal2@comcast.net

Brookeville , Maryland 20833

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Tuesday, May 7, 2019 2:48 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Class Size and my child's safety, education

From: Shannon Franks <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 10:21 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Class Size and my child's safety, education

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

Opal Jones,

Good evening,

Today I learned that next year, class sizes will be 35 students for 8th grade due to a funding shortfall. This is not acceptable. My child attends a school where there are a high number of incidents and fights. They are not able to fully staff right now and this results in many substitutes. On one day that I spoke with the Principal she noted that there were 15 substitutes in the building and "keeping control" of the students was difficult. This was a discussion that came after many months of my daughter not having a Spanish teacher and the class constantly being out of control with the substitute of the day doing nothing. So much so, that one day a student entered the class and started flipping metal desks over, including my child's. Had my child not seen it happening, gotten up and backed into a corner, she would most likely have been injured. Why should my child have to run from her desk? How horrible is that? I am so sick and tired of everyone touting Howard County and HCPSS as a great place to live because I can tell you, and I've been here 19 years, that it is not all you would like people to believe it to be. I've watched it all fall apart over 19 years. Rubber stamping approvals for the rampant development at the expense of our schools and now you want to grill the BOE on why they need so much money? You cannot create a mess and then blame the organization that has to deal with the fallout from the Council's actions. I watch every BOE and Council meeting. The last meeting with the BOE it appeared as if some Council members were just looking for ammunition to use against the BOE instead of acknowledging the Council (past or not, the Council is the Council) had a large part in creating this problem and doing everything you can

to help fix it. So, reading that class sizes will now be increased to 35 next year, and knowing that there is such a struggle to keep the peace in my daughter's school, much less get any teaching done, I worry for her safety. If she is injured, the Council will have part of that responsibility to bear. That's not even discussing the hit that curriculum delivery will take along with the toll it will take on our teachers. Add to that I know teachers who will not teach in Howard County because the pay is too low, although they live here. I cannot express enough how frustrating it is watching all of this unfold. I would like to move, but we are unable to, financially, at this moment. Howard County is great as long as no one looks behind the curtain. I would like to think that we can course correct but watching the Council I don't think that is going to happen. It's upsetting to see.

Regards,

Shannon Franks

Shannon Franks

shannonkayfranks@gmail.com

7273 Calm Sunset

Columbia, Maryland 21046

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Tuesday, May 7, 2019 2:47 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Howard County Schools

From: Erin Alberts <albertserin@gamil.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 10:20 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: 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,

Please tell me why I pay these taxes? The mismanagement in a county as affluent and wealthy as we are is absurd. No doubt PG and Montgomery counties are laughing at us and rightly so.

Erin Alberts
albertserin@gamil.com
10604 Graeloch Cr
Laurel, Maryland 20723

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Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Tuesday, May 7, 2019 2:46 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Budget Shortfall

From: Kerri Ukstins <kukstins@ymail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 10:19 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: 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,

Please address this shortfall. Please. My children's class sizes are already at an all time high. Kids don't have places to sit in some classes. The amount of time the staff spends to quiet down such large groups takes away from time for content. To allow a kindergarten class to have 26 students is just unacceptable. This must be fixed. It's unconscionable that, in Howard County, Maryland, our government can allow this to happen. Unconscionable.

Kerri Ukstins
kukstins@ymail.com
7916 Helmart Drive
Laurel, Maryland 20723

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Tuesday, May 7, 2019 2:20 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Budget Concerns

From: Courtney Shoemaker <courtney_shoemaker@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 9:14 PM
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,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I'm writing to you today as a graduate of Howard County Public Schools, as a homeowner, taxpayer, and voter in Howard County, as a mother of two very soon to be HCPSS students, and most importantly—as a proud HCPSS teacher. When I left high school and entered college I felt immensely prepared for the academic demands and challenges because of the preparation I had received at Centennial High School. In fact, I often thought that the life of being a student in Howard County was more demanding than my time in college and graduate school. When I decided to become a teacher, this was the county I knew I wanted to work in. When my husband and I decided to buy a home and start our family, we wanted to do it here. Why? I believe we have one of the best school systems in the county. I'm proud to be a part of this system and I want my children to have the outstanding education that I did.

However, over the last few years continually having to deal with cuts and limited resources has put a damper on my feelings about our county and our schools. Now we are facing class sizes going up and the children are going to be the ones that pay. I'm not a complainer. I knew what I was signing on for when I became a teacher. Hard work, not a ton of money, a lot of stress—but, I love what I do. So I show up and so do the dedicated educators I work with.

We are tasked to teach children from diverse backgrounds with a wide variety of challenges. It is already a struggle to meet the needs of every child and to make sure no one falls through

the cracks. If class sizes are raised...children will fall through the cracks. And it won't be the child with explosive behaviors. It will be the quiet kid, who does what they are supposed to do. The kid we all would want in our class. We won't have a chance to get to know that kid and somewhere along the line, maybe not in first grade where I teach, maybe not even in elementary school...that child will suffer.

Furthermore, think about the impact of these large classes on teachers who are already dealing with limited resources. Yes, many of us will show up. Maybe we will be more tired, maybe we will snap at our families more, maybe we will be more stressed. But we will show up and many of us will show up to second or third jobs as well. And continue to grade papers until late at night, plan lessons on the weekend while our own children nap, and shop for supplies for our classrooms with our own money. But some of us won't show up, we will lose good people over this and we are not in a field where we can lose good people.

Please ask yourself if you would want your child in a kindergarten class of 26? Or a high school class of 35? Ask yourself why you chose to live here. Ask yourself why many of the people who voted for you chose to live here. How can we call ourselves the best, if children are not the priority?

Please provide the additional funding needed. Thank you.

Courtney Shoemaker

Courtney Shoemaker
courtney_shoemaker@hcpss.org
6428 Frothingham Ct.
Elkridge, Maryland 21075

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Tuesday, May 7, 2019 2:13 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Larger classroom sizes

From: Jerri Frick <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 10:18 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Larger classroom sizes

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

Opal Jones,

Today, I was notified that HCPSS has plans to downsize the number of teachers and increase class sizes due to budget issues. This is completely unacceptable. Larger class sizes may lead to lower student performance. Our students (and teachers) should not suffer because housing growth in this county is out of control. Too many school are already over capacity and more are planned to be over capacity once planned housing construction is completed.

Please remember that our children deserve the best education possible, and this is not possible with over crowded schools and classrooms.

Jerri Frick
jerrifrick@gmail.com
7951 Gavin Way
Laurel, Maryland 20723

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Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Tuesday, May 7, 2019 2:12 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: NO INCREASE IN CLASS SIZE

From: Michelle Markow <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 10:15 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: NO INCREASE IN 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 implore you to not increase class size! I realize you were only given so much to work with but this is the last place you want to cut. A teacher can not safely manage this number of children. There are safety issues at hand. Also Smaller class sizes result in better performing schools. High performing schools is the hallmark of Howard County. It is what draws people to this community. Increasing class size would no longer make us a world class school system. Take the money from somewhere else!!!

Michelle Markow
slp32903@yahoo.com
7124 Morning Light Trail
Columbia , Maryland 21044

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Tuesday, May 7, 2019 2:12 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: teacher cuts / class size increases

From: Mark Wu <marknwu@jhmi.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 10:13 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: teacher cuts / 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 Mr. Jones,

As a homeowner and parent in Howard County, I am writing to express my deep concern about the possibility of proposed budget cuts to the educational system. Given the importance of education, it is very disturbing to hear that cuts to reduce the number of teachers and increase class sizes are being considered.

As you know, our public school teachers are already underpaid, and overworked and play a critical role in the development of future generations of Americans. Nothing is more important than ensuring quality education for our children. Indeed, my family moved specifically to Howard County, because of its reputation for outstanding schools. Please don't destroy the quality of education in Howard county, to save some money.

Please consider budget cuts elsewhere, or if necessary raise taxes.

Respectfully,
Mark Wu

Mark Wu, M.D., Ph.D.
Associate Professor in Neurology, Medicine, Genetic Medicine, and Neuroscience
Johns Hopkins University
Rangos Bldg, Room 294
855 N. Wolfe Street
Baltimore, MD 21205

Lab: 410-502-2162
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Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Tuesday, May 7, 2019 2:11 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Budget Concerns

From: Sabrina Dailey <sabrina_dailey@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 10:13 PM
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,

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to ask you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System. It is important for several reasons:

1. Students need qualified and dedicated teachers and staff in order to thrive academically, mentally, socially and emotionally.
2. Many schools are already over crowded and/or in need of renovations.
3. Many schools are not equipped with adequate technology and other materials.
4. HCPSS has always been known as a stellar school system where people come from all over the world to get quality education for their children.
5. In order to attract and retain quality teachers and support staff, salaries must be competitive.

These are just a few reasons why the budget must be fully funded. Our future depends on it!

Thank you for reading this letter and for your attention to this critical matter.

Sincerely,

SMD

Sabrina Dailey
sabrina_dailey@hcpss.org
5900 Big Tree CT
Elkridge, Maryland 21075

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Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Tuesday, May 7, 2019 2:04 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Vote to fund HCPSS

From: Avery McClelland <avery_mcclelland@hcpss.org>
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 7:33 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 will be sending this letter every day until you vote to provide HCPSS the funding they need.

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: Tuesday, May 7, 2019 1:46 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: class sizes

From: Lisa Cramer <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 2:37 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,

May 3, 2019

Dr. Ball and County Council members,

I am writing to express concern over the FY 2019-20 class size increase and teacher surplus proposed by HCPSS this week. As an educator in Howard County, I know first hand the value that both my colleagues and smaller class sizes bring to the social-emotional and learning environments of our schools.

I cannot stress enough the importance of the student-to-teacher ratio. As our schools already grapple with overcrowding, to stress the children's learning spaces even more is detrimental to their overall success. It has been proven time and again that having lower ratios increases the quality of relationships as well as improvement in academic areas.

During the most recent campaign, Dr. Ball and others ran on these very issues so important to teachers and families in this community. "Education, education funding, school overcrowding, class-size increases" are priority issues that resonate with voters.

Our county prides itself not only on the standards set forth by qualified educators but also the diversity and the high success of our students, both traditionally academic and alternative in nature. Can you justify adding more bodies and less trained staff as best practices?

Recommendations per the National Education Policy Center reinforce what teachers in HCPSS already know:

Class size is an important determinant of student outcomes, and one that can be directly determined by policy. All else being equal, lowering class sizes will improve student outcomes. The payoff from class-size reduction is greater for low-income and minority children.

Conversely, increases in class size are likely to be especially harmful to these populations -- who are already more likely to be subjected to large classes.

While lowering class size has a demonstrable cost, it may prove the more cost-effective policy overall particularly for disadvantaged students. Money saved today by increasing class sizes will likely result in additional substantial social and educational costs in the future.

Generally, class sizes of between 15 and 18 are recommended but variations are indicated. For example, band and physical education may require large classes while special education and some laboratory classes may require less.

We teachers are on the front lines of this budget crisis. We are tasked with providing the services of an educator, a parent, a counselor and a police officer to an increasing number of children. We are asked to nurture, instruct and potentially shield our students from danger. We love what we do and truly believe our profession is a calling. Please help us perform these many jobs to the best of our ability and honor our many roles in the classroom.

To respect the children we teach and to give them the attention they deserve, our class numbers need to remain smaller in number and our teachers need to stay!

Sincerely,
Lisa Cramer
Kindergarten teacher
Centennial Lane. E.S.

Lisa Cramer
ru02Leese@yahoo.com
8705 Cardinal Forest Circle
Laurel, Maryland 20723

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Tuesday, May 7, 2019 1:45 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: School Counseling Supports & Learning

From: Tricia Adkinson <tricia_adkinson@hcpss.org>
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 3:18 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: School Counseling Supports & Learning

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

Opal Jones,

I think it is safe to say that we, as a nation, are navigating a mental health crisis. In order for students to attend to learning and work toward our school system vision of positively influencing the larger community, it is imperative that we stop increasing ratios! Access to adequate supports and consistent relationships are foundational in students being able to succeed.

This is only ONE piece to the mental health support puzzle, but already, elementary schools are operating with one school counselor for up to 750 students! The national recommended ration is set for 1:250. The demands from teachers, parents, and students are too much for me, and many other counselors, to meet with full integrity, despite our diligent efforts. Adding to classroom ratios will only have teachers stretched thinner than they already are, less likely to consistently feed relationships in a way that sets students up for success. Teachers, in turn, will be looking for more support to make this happen, which will not be there.

It feels as if we are a factory, being forced to push more and more kids through in the name of cost effectiveness. Please consider the social, emotional, and academic needs of all of the students that will be impacted (more than we know) by these cuts and proposed classroom numbers! If anything, we should be investing MORE individuals, staff, and resources; not less.

Thank you for your time.

Tricia Adkinson
tricia_adkinson@hcpss.org
8657 Town & Country Blvd. Apt. B
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

▪

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Tuesday, May 7, 2019 1:39 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: HCPSS Budget

From: Karen Jakubek <karen_jakubek@hcpss.org>
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 6:03 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,

Howard County Council Members I ask that you please reconsider the budget for HCPSS. Families from around the world seek out Howard County as a place to live because of the school system! I have to wonder if they would still come if they knew how we struggle with an incredible lack of student supports. Many of these families have children that require services that we cannot meet. The Special Education team at my school is always short in support staff to help with the children that need it the most. While I realize that HCPSS has to look within it's own operations to cut it should not be the people who directly make a difference in a child's life.

Thanks for your consideration.

Karen Jakubek

Karen Jakubek
karen_jakubek@hcpss.org
5106 Crystal Park Lane
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Tuesday, May 7, 2019 1:36 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: HCPSS Budget 2019/2020

From: Stefanie Moellmann <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 9:35 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: HCPSS Budget 2019/2020

[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 Member,

I am a new teacher here in Howard County, with this being my second year. When I graduated I had only applied to Howard County because of how prestigious the school system is, and I wanted nothing more than to teach in this great community. But as I am now seeing, the council does not see our school system as being as important as I think it is.

I teach in a title 1 school, where children come from a diverse background, many moving to Howard County from Baltimore, in order to have a great education. Many of these children have been affected by trauma and therefore need emotional support as well as instruction. I have 18, 6-7 year olds in my classroom. Many of them needing extra support, both instructionally and emotionally. As of now with 18 children in my class I can adequately give them the support they need and deserve. If my class size was to increase to 27-28, as the budget states, these children will not be getting the same individual attention and guidance that they need to flourish.

If class sizes were to increase I would need to have at least 5 to 6 reading groups in my classroom, as opposed to the 4 that I have now. Each group is required to have 20 minutes a day of small group guided reading instruction. With 60 minutes allotted a day I am able to see 3 groups a day and see my fourth only 3 times a week. If I had 5 to 6 reading groups in my class, they would not have the daily instruction that they require.

If I had 27-28 children in my classroom, I would not be able to rotate my math groups, which I am required to have only two groups, and make sure each individual child gets explicit

instruction. As of now I have 1 math group having 9 children and the other having 8, and it is difficult to give one on one attention to them now, especially with many needing emotional support as well. Each group would have 12 to 13 students, and there would be absolutely no real learning taking place at that time.

My job as an educator in a title 1 school is not just instructing students in math, language arts, and content all day long. It is so much more than that. I am there to listen to their fears, and worries. I am there to help them with their social interactions with others. I am there to calm them down when everything just gets too much to handle. And I can do that now with 18. But I will not be able to with 28. There just would not be enough time in the day for instruction, and to build relationships with them.

All the data shows, from many studies, that smaller class sizes are better for learning. It creates a better learning environment and it allows for a better classroom community to flourish. Please, increase the budget for our children. Give them the education they deserve by giving us the time to instruct them and guide them by having smaller class sizes. And please, feel free to come and visit any of our title 1 schools in the county. We would love to have you.

Sincerely,
Stefanie Moellmann

Stefanie Moellmann
sdonnely_721@yahoo.com
100 south Prospect ave
Catonsville , Maryland 21228

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Tuesday, May 7, 2019 1:35 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Budget cuts

From: Beatrice Withee <beatrice_withee@hcpss.org>
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 10:48 PM
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,

I am writing this letter as a Howard County parent and as an employee of the county. It saddens me that the proposed budget cuts will have such a negative impact on schools, students, teachers, and the community. Not only will the larger class sizes physically affect classrooms, but most importantly will negatively impact the social emotional connection that our superintendent has worked so hard to promote over this last school year. For the well-being of our children, teachers, and the future, please do not allow these budget cuts to occur.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Beatrice Withee

Beatrice Withee
beatrice_withee@hcpss.org
5248 Open Window
Columbia , Maryland 21044

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Tuesday, May 7, 2019 1:34 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Class Size

From: Susan Cochran <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Tuesday, May 7, 2019 6:02 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,

Please do whatever it takes to reduce class size. It's nearly impossible to meet all the needs of my 28 third graders (past three years) and the idea that the Board is considering up to 33 is ridiculous. I would suggest that we cut some of the fat in the budget by dissolving technology teacher positions. While the work of this program and teachers is well intended, the tech standards can be met by classroom teacher in much more seamless ways that are relevant to our students day to day learning. This of course would mean access to devices, which my school struggles with even with the new chromebooks added in April. I know where 60 devices could come from without the tech teachers positions. The budget shortfall could probably be met over a few years.

I teach third grade. We don't need 1:1, but one device to 3-4 students would go a long way. Given the need to differentiate and work with small learning groups, greater tech access would allow me to leverage tools like Canvas to optimize learning directly and indirectly. Many teachers in our county and other school districts district are doing just that with great success. Thanks for your considerations.

Susan Cochran
susancochran5@gmail.com
17308 Old Frederick Road
Mount Airy , Maryland 21771

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Tuesday, May 7, 2019 1:29 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Concerns about class size change

From: Kimberly Hendrickson <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Tuesday, May 7, 2019 8:19 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Concerns about class size change

[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. Jones, Ms. Rigby, Ms. Walsh, Ms. Jung, & Mr. Yungman,

It has been a pleasure and honor to work for the Howard County Public School System for the past 10 years. Howard County has continuously surpassed all other public school systems in Maryland, as HCPSS prioritizes it's students and teachers, always making decisions that are in the best interest of both. Although, HCPSS is in a budget deficit, increasing class sizes and cutting staffing is not an effective solution. This will be detrimental to student learning and teacher success/ satisfaction. A few more students may not sound like much; however, it makes best practices for reading and math instruction nearly impossible and adds countless hours of planning and grading every week for educators. We care so deeply for our students and their education and put countless time into planning for every child individually to ensure their success. Increasing class sizes will hurt our students and teachers. Please reconsider and continue to be the best public school system by doing what is right for our students and staff.

Sincerely,

Kimberly Hendrickson

HCPSS Elementary Teacher

Kimberly Hendrickson

kimberly.tavenner@gmail.com

17412 Kirstin Ct
Olney, Maryland 20832

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Tuesday, May 7, 2019 1:29 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Concerns

From: Karen Tavenner <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Tuesday, May 7, 2019 8:27 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: 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,

I am greatly concerned about the impacts of the proposed changes to the budget for the 2019-2020 school year. Howard County Public Schools are why we moved to Howard County in 1991. HCPSS rises above other school systems, providing high quality instruction and education to all their students. It is my concern that the budget cuts to staffing and increased class sizes will no longer allow for superior high quality instruction to be provided for all. I understand the budget concerns and needs; however, this is not a healthy solution.

Sincerely,

Karen Tavenner

Karen Tavenner

krtavenner@gmail.com

Michael Elizabeth Way

Hanover, Maryland 21076

▪

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Tuesday, May 7, 2019 1:29 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: HCPSS Budget Needs

From: Terry Tavenner <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Tuesday, May 7, 2019 8:38 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 County Council Members,

In 1991, my family to Howard County to ensure my children would have the best opportunities and education available. In 2005, my daughter graduated from HCPSS and went on to a 4-year university to study education. Immediately after graduating from college, she was hired as an elementary teacher with HCPSS and began her Master's degree with Johns Hopkins University. She has been a dedicated and passionate educator for the past 10 years. She loves her job, her students, her school. But, being a teacher is more than just a job for her. She pours countless hours into planning for her students, grading assignments and praying for their well-being and success. She no longer lives in Howard County but believe no other school system is equivalent to Howard County. Teaching is a hard profession. I do not want to see my daughter's passion lost because of increased class sizes leading her to feel that she cannot serve every child or burning out because of all the additional time and money put into preparing for her students. She chose to be a teacher to make a difference. Please provide her an environment where she can make the difference she is willing to work so hard for.

Thank you,

Terry Tavenner

Terry Tavenner

terry.tavenner@gmail.com

Michael Elizabeth Way
Hanover, Maryland 21076

Sayers, Margery

From: Harris, Michael
Sent: Tuesday, May 7, 2019 11:48 AM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Equity in HCPSS Operating Budget

-----Original Message-----

From: Jean Silver-Isenstadt <jeansi@verizon.net>
Sent: Tuesday, May 7, 2019 10:50 AM
To: boe@hcpss.org; CouncilMail <CouncilMail@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Equity in HCPSS Operating Budget

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

Having received my own K-12 education in HCPSS and having raised 3 kids who have done the same, I am sad to have to write a plea for greater equity among our schools, but there it is. Our county has thrived on the reputation of our schools—which were made uniquely strong in the first place through a robust commitment to equity of opportunity and an inclusive, anti-bias ethos. Howard County is losing its way if this foundational vision must be pleaded for. A community is only as strong as its faith in itself.

-Jean Silver-Isenstadt
WLHS '86

Sayers, Margery

From: Kathleen V. Hanks <Kathleen_Hanks@hcpss.org>
Sent: Tuesday, May 7, 2019 11:47 AM
To: Fran Donaldson; BoE Email; CouncilMail
Cc: Rafiu Ighile; Stephanie Ennels
Subject: RE: [External] Equity in HCPSS Operating Budget

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

Dear Ms. Donaldson:

Thank you for contacting the Board of Education regarding the Board of Education's Requested FY 2020 Operating Budget. Your email will be saved as written testimony for the public hearing process on the Board of Education's Requested FY 2020 Operating Budget. Please note that written testimony is part of the public record maintained by the Board Office and is uploaded online to BoardDocs as part of the public hearing. The public is able to submit written testimony until 9 a.m. on Tuesday, May 28, 2019, at BOE@hcpss.org.

Note, the Board is scheduled to have a work session this Wednesday, May 8 at 4 p.m., a budget work session with the County Council on Wednesday, May 15 (at the Council's Offices), and also on Monday, May 20 at 6 p.m. All meetings will be televised and web streamed live.

Once again, thank you for contacting the Board and providing valuable input.

Kind regards,

Kathy Hanks
Administrator
Board of Education
Phone: 410-313-7194
Fax: 410-313-6633
Email: kathleen_hanks@hcpss.org

-----Original Message-----

From: Fran Donaldson <frandonaldson@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 7, 2019 10:55 AM
To: BoE Email <boe@hcpss.org>; councilmail@howardcountymd.gov
Subject: [External] Equity in HCPSS Operating Budget

As a former Howard County Elementary Principal, I am supporting more funding for equity in our school system. Every student deserves to have their needs met no matter which school they attend!

Sincerely your in Education,
Fran Donaldson

Sent from my iPhone

Sayers, Margery

From: Kathleen V. Hanks <Kathleen_Hanks@hcpss.org>
Sent: Tuesday, May 7, 2019 11:47 AM
To: Jean Silver-Isenstadt; BoE Email; CouncilMail
Cc: Rafiu Ighile; Stephanie Ennels
Subject: RE: [External] Equity in HCPSS Operating Budget

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

Dear Ms. Silver-Isenstadt:

Thank you for contacting the Board of Education regarding the Board of Education's Requested FY 2020 Operating Budget. Your email will be saved as written testimony for the public hearing process on the Board of Education's Requested FY 2020 Operating Budget. Please note that written testimony is part of the public record maintained by the Board Office and is uploaded online to BoardDocs as part of the public hearing. The public is able to submit written testimony until 9 a.m. on Tuesday, May 28, 2019, at BOE@hcpss.org.

Note, the Board is scheduled to have a work session this Wednesday, May 8 at 4 p.m., a budget work session with the County Council on Wednesday, May 15 (at the Council's Offices), and also on Monday, May 20 at 6 p.m. All meetings will be televised and web streamed live.

Once again, thank you for contacting the Board and providing valuable input.

Kind regards,

Kathy Hanks
Administrator
Board of Education
Phone: 410-313-7194
Fax: 410-313-6633
Email: kathleen_hanks@hcpss.org

-----Original Message-----

From: Jean Silver-Isenstadt <jeansi@verizon.net>
Sent: Tuesday, May 7, 2019 10:50 AM
To: BoE Email <boe@hcpss.org>; councilmail@howardcountymd.gov
Subject: [External] Equity in HCPSS Operating Budget

Having received my own K-12 education in HCPSS and having raised 3 kids who have done the same, I am sad to have to write a plea for greater equity among our schools, but there it is. Our county has thrived on the reputation of our schools—which were made uniquely strong in the first place through a robust commitment to equity of opportunity and an inclusive, anti-bias ethos. Howard County is losing its way if this foundational vision must be pleaded for. A community is only as strong as its faith in itself.

-Jean Silver-Isenstadt
WLHS '86

Sayers, Margery

From: Fran Donaldson <frandonaldson@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 7, 2019 10:55 AM
To: boe@hcpss.org; CouncilMail
Subject: Equity in HCPSS Operating Budget

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

As a former Howard County Elementary Principal, I am supporting more funding for equity in our school system. Every student deserves to have their needs met no matter which school they attend!

Sincerely your in Education,
Fran Donaldson

Sent from my iPhone

Sayers, Margery

From: Jean Silver-Isenstadt <jeansi@verizon.net>
Sent: Tuesday, May 7, 2019 10:50 AM
To: boe@hcpss.org; CouncilMail
Subject: Equity in HCPSS Operating Budget

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

Having received my own K-12 education in HCPSS and having raised 3 kids who have done the same, I am sad to have to write a plea for greater equity among our schools, but there it is. Our county has thrived on the reputation of our schools—which were made uniquely strong in the first place through a robust commitment to equity of opportunity and an inclusive, anti-bias ethos. Howard County is losing its way if this foundational vision must be pleaded for. A community is only as strong as its faith in itself.

-Jean Silver-Isenstadt
WLHS '86

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 8:18 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Crowding of school

From: Navneet Ota <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 10:11 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Crowding of school

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

Opal Jones,

HCPSS is the best school system Because of the teachers and standards of teaching but if there are more kids , less teachers, the standards will decline so we request for adequate budget for teachers and supplies.

Navneet Ota
nsotal6@gmail.com
10109 Bell Inn Ln
Ellicott City , Maryland 21042

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Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 8:15 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: The best interest of our children

From: Wenona Galotta <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 10:07 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: The best interest of our children

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

Opal Jones,

Howard County prides itself on providing high quality public education. If you increase class sizes and cut staffing, you are sending the message that you do not care about our children's educations and futures. As one of the wealthiest counties in the country, it is a complete travesty that we overcrowd classrooms and overtax our educators. These children our the future of our country, so we should be focusing on providing an education to prepare them to handle it. 21st century educations require students to be moving, collaborating and engaging in hands on activities. How will they do that in a room that's bursting at the seams with a frazzled teacher? There is no job more important than that of a teacher. Respect them enough and respect our children enough to pass a budget that will make high quality education a reality and not a memory.

Wenona Galotta
nonipony@aol.com
9336 Old Scaggsville Rd
Laurel, Maryland 20723

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 8:04 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Class size

From: Nina Shearer <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 10:05 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,

Please do not increase class size. This will decrease our teacher's ability to teach, and our children's ability to learn. It is heartbreaking that Howard county, one of the best school districts around, is contemplating laying off so many teachers and hurting so many children. This makes me very angry too. Our children deserve better.

Thank you
Nina Shearer

Nina Shearer
theshearerclan@gmail.com
10809 Graeloch Road
Laurel, Maryland 20723

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 8:01 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Increase class size propose

From: Idaines Anderson <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 10:04 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Increase class size propose

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

Opal Jones,

Council members,

One of the many reasons my family decided to purchase a home in Howard County was the reputation of the schools. Living in this county is at a great sacrifice to me since it causes me to have a daily 2-hour commute. However, I am starting to see a downward trend. The school rankings have down, schools are surrounded by trailers and most resources are private.

I have a 3-year-old who currently attends a Private Preschool. We have seen a great improvement in his language, cognitive and social skills and we credit the small class size. 1 teacher and 1 teacher assistant for 6 kids. We were not expecting such a small setting in kindergarten or elementary school but we're hoping it would be a small ratio. It already proved to be such a great success.

The proposal to increase class size due to budget cannot move forward. How can a teacher properly teach with such high numbers? Public education has already suffered due to the test-driven curriculum but increasing class size will be what will drive away families from Howard County. There is enough funding, but education needs to be valued. I do not work hard and commute far for my child to have a subpar education. Teacher retention, particularly excellent teachers require good income, resources, and reasonable class sizes.

As a community, we all benefit from an excellent school system. It increases property value that allows higher property taxes. Overall it is a win-win. Please be mindful of the effects this would have on everyone.

Sincerely,

Idaines Anderson

Idaines Anderson

idaines@hotmail.com

7937 Red Barn Way

Elkridge, Maryland 21075

▪

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 7:57 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Larger class sizes

From: Catherine Thornton <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:58 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Larger 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 parent and former employee of Centennial Lane Elementary. I honestly don't know how you will fit more students per classroom when the rooms are already packed. The cubbies where they keep their belongings are overflowing, teachers hardly have room for reading groups and the playground gets so packed on days the grass is wet that they can't run. Children can't run. They are forced to sit most of the day in these tight rooms and then don't have an outlet for energy. This is just the tip of the overcrowding iceberg. More kids per room will lead to an environment that is not conducive to learning. Please, for the sake of our children, stop this proposal for more children per teacher.

Catherine Thornton
betsy_48503@yahoo.com
9929 Carrigan Drive
Ellicott City, Maryland 21042

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 7:54 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Keep Howard County #1

From: winnifred overton <bpo111@verizon.net>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:58 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Keep Howard County #1

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

Opal Jones,

We have the best school system in the state! But funds are used up quickly, teachers have to spend so much of their own money to provide for their students, salaries are not keeping up with the financial necessities of families, and our students are needier than ever due to our complex society. Help us by providing more than just the basics to our schools! We are so proud of our teachers and our students! They deserve the best! Better to invest in our schools now than pay for the results of an inadequate education later.

winnifred overton
bpo111@verizon.net
6229 Sutton Court
Elkridge, Maryland 21075

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 7:51 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Budget

From: Patty Smith <patty_smith@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:55 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,

It is proposed that class sizes could increase to 35 students in a class. Some of our classrooms could not even accommodate that many students. I find it outrageous that anyone would suggest putting that many students in a classroom while at the same time spouting the importance of building relationships and mental health. If this is the best they can do to balance the budget, they don't really understand education at all.

Patty Smith
patty_smith@hcpss.org
5348 Sunny Field Court
Ellicott City , Maryland 21043

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 7:49 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Class size

From: Majbritt Jensen <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:52 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,

We moved to Howard County for the school system and student teacher ratio. If this changes we will move and go to another county and send our children to private school in that county if needed.

Majbritt Jensen
jensenfamilymail@gmail.com
8951 Tawes St
Fulton , Maryland 20759

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Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 7:47 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Classroom overcrowding

From: Victoria Bokhari <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:51 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Classroom overcrowding

[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 concerned about the recent budget plans that will result in a reduction of school resources and overcrowded schools.

So many families relocate to our great county because of our school system. This is certainly a path that will lead to failure, and our children will suffer, especially those that may require a little more attention or have special needs.

We have one of the wealthiest counties in the nation. That is, in part, because of the education we provide. Couldn't there be a way to use that wealth towards the educational system to make sure it remains great?

Victoria Bokhari
vixevee@hotmail.com
9010 Moving Water Lane
Columbia, Maryland 21046

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 7:43 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Overcrowded Schools

From: Lauren Palguta <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:50 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Overcrowded Schools

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

Opal Jones,

We saved everything we had so we could move to Howard County for the highly ranked schools. With little oversight to development and a focus on profit, our fantastic County has become severely overcrowded. We were always accepting of the outrageously high cost to own a home and pay taxes for the benefit of our children's education. You are now threatening our children's future, growth, and development by proposing additional increases to classroom ratios and budget cuts. I would like to remind you that this is important to a lot of people - people who you represent and who voted you into office.

In addition, Howard County has always attracted superlative teachers. What is the benefit for them coming to our school system? Too many kids in the class? Working more than one job to make ends meet? Using what little funds they have to purchase supplies?

I ask that you reconsider and ensure our schools are properly funded with appropriate ratios to facilitate learning.

Lauren Palguta
lsackl1@hotmail.com
8714 Chapel Hill Drive
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 7:27 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Do not increase class sizes

From: Karla Whittaker <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:47 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
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.]

Opal Jones,

I am strongly against increasing class sizes in Howard county schools. Our teachers are already overtaxed and our students suffer the consequences. There is just no way that students can receive adequate attention in these increasingly large classes. I expect better from a school system which continually touts itself as being "world class." I sincerely hope that education is not put on the back burner once again In this county.

Karla Whittaker
karlamjones@yahoo.com
4930 Worthington Way
Ellicott City , Maryland 21043

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 7:25 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: We could do better

From: Lizabeth Smull <lizabethsmull@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:47 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: We could do better

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

Opal Jones,

To those who care about the quality of teaching versus student ratio this is for you and education. Please think about a classroom that already has 27 chairs in it with one teacher trying to reach all of the students different learning needs. And then try and picture 3 more chairs, you just can't see it !

Sincerely,

Liz Smull
Para Educator at OMMS

Lizabeth Smull
lizabethsmull@hcpss.org
9465 catfeet court
Columbia , Maryland 21045

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 7:21 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Budget Concerns

From: Bridie Condon <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:44 PM
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,

As a special educator in the HCPSS school system, the current proposed budget is alarming. With a lack of funding and resources, staff caseloads continue to increase and support staff continues to decrease. This makes my job incredibly challenging and has come close to burning me out with this job. I stay up almost nightly until 11 pm completing work that there simply isn't time for during the school day. I'm split between two grade levels and rarely get a moment alone. Please consider the state of our school system. Consider our most vulnerable populations that require more support than what is currently allocated. This job cannot happen with less funding. Thank you.

Bridie Condon
bmcondon@hotmail.com
7820 Paragon Circle Apt. 311
Elkridge, Maryland 21075

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 7:20 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: HCPSS Budget

From: Donna Cruz <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:41 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,

The HCPSS is increasing class sizes and surplussing teachers to make up for a budget shortfall. This is an unacceptable practice to use children as pawns in a failed political system. Your actions today are destroying the future. As someone who has benefited from living abroad and witnessing other countries educational system, it is mismanagement such as this that proves why American children are not competitive in global educational standards. More children in a classroom creates more distractions, less educational and individualized time from teachers because additional students are dividing up what little individualized attention

Donna Cruz
donnajeen@gmail.com
11140 Marta Way
Fulton, Maryland 20759

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 5:08 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Class Sizes

From: Nicole Mazzei-Williams <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:39 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,

Hi- as a HoCo taxpayer I am increasingly frustrated by the lack of support for quality public education... the class sizes continue to increase, and less resources are being used for our public education. There are safety issues to be considered as well as educational issues, whereas one teacher cannot adequately meet the educational and safety issues for 30+children, nor should they have to! It's a shame when tax paying county residents have to resort to private education to meet the needs of their students that should be able to be served by a world-class educational system that HoCo is supposed to be.

Sincerely,
A concerned parent

Nicole Mazzei-Williams
nmazzeiwilliams@gmail.com
10004 Running Sand Knoll
Laurel, Maryland 20723

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 5:06 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Howard county schools budget

From: Kira Elbeyli <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:39 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Howard county schools budget

[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 sizes due to the Howard County Public School System budget shortfall is unacceptable. As a parent of an autistic child, I am worried for his safety and ability to effectively learn with that teacher to student ratio.

Kira Elbeyli
kraelbeyli@hotmail.com
6729 Pyramid Way
Columbia, Maryland 21044

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 5:06 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Huge safety concern

From: Joseph Quirk <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:39 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Huge safety concern

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

Opal Jones,

Good evening,

As a Howard county employee for the past seven years and a Maryland educator for 11 years, I have seen the school system change, some for good, and some for the bad.

I urge you to fully fund the gap's that are made in this year's budget. The county is thinking about increasing the class-size from 31 to 33 students for in grades 3-5.

We are going the wrong direction. We need to be dropping these numbers. As a PE teacher, we teach a lot of double classes in a very small gym. That is 66 5th graders in a small gym trying to learn. This is unacceptable and I have huge safety concerns that will lead to not only students not being in an optimal learning environment but being at a higher risk of injury.

Please consider funding the extra money needed to maintain the already over crowded schools. My son will be starting school in 2 years, and this is not the environment I would want him to learn in. I do want the best for all of my students, and we need to be going the other way in class sizes, supplying instructional material and dwindling value of salary due to inflation. We are supposed to be the best county in Maryland, we need to start acting like it.

Thank you for your consideration.

Your constituent,

Joe Quirk

Joseph Quirk
joequirkjr@gmail.com

10228 Scaggsville Rd
Laurel, Maryland 20723

Sayers, Margery

From: Rigby, Christiana
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 5:01 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: HCPSS Budget Letter

From: Patricia K. Reese <Patricia_Reese@hcpss.org>
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 3:58 PM
To: 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>; Ball, Calvin <cball@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: HCPSS Budget Letter

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

Members of the Howard County Council,

I want to share the letter that I wrote to Dr. Martirano and the Howard County Board of Education about the budget for HCPSS; it is included below.

Kindly,

P. Kayleen Reese

Social Studies Teacher and Instructional Team Leader

Centennial High School

Dear Dr. Martirano and Members of the Howard County Board of Education,

I am writing in regards to your response to the County Council's denial of the Howard County Public School System's requested budget. You have directed the schools to prepare to increase class sizes to 35 and thereby

cut teachers. It seems you would like the community to contact the County Council and County Executive and blame them for not adequately funding the school system, especially because Mr. Calvin Ball ran on a platform of supporting education. I realize this might be an effective way to get the money you want. However, as a teacher, I resent being used as a pawn in this battle. In addition, I believe there are other parts of the budget that can and should be cut.

In communications with various members of the County Council, I have been informed that the budget the school system received is an increase of \$30M over FY19, representing a budget that is 3.5% larger than last year.

In Dr. Martirano's tenure as Superintendent, there has been a significant increase in high level management positions on the organizational chart. These positions have very little, if any, direct impact on students or the quality of instruction in our classrooms and yet cost the school system a lot of money. There are several new positions like Community Superintendents, Directors of various programs, and entire new offices. This increase in Central Office can be seen in the budget. Since 2016 there has been a 24% increase in salaries for "Administration" (from \$12,342,223 to \$15,356,125). According to the budget document, "Administration" funds the salaries for the Board of Education, the Superintendent's office, central support services like financial assessment, legal, planning and payroll. Since 2016 there has been a 15% increase in salaries for "Midlevel Administration" (from \$58,487,662 to \$67,074,229) which includes Instructional Support Services such as central office instructional personnel, professional development, school based office staff, school administration, media processing, cable TV/video production and temporary employee services. The number of administrators in my building has not increased at all since 2016, and therefore, most of this growth must be at Central Office. Reallocating Central Office staff in these 2 categories alone could cut the budget deficit by over \$11M.

I also want to take the time to point out that secondary curricular offices have not grown since 2016. The staff in these offices are responsible for creating curriculum for teachers to use in our classrooms and therefore have a direct impact on students and the quality of instruction in every classroom in the county. As a social studies teacher, I can speak most definitively about the Office of Social Studies, which has a total of 3 members (1 of which is currently vacant) and 1 administrative position. There are 6 required courses in Social Studies from grades 6-11 and 28 elective courses for which this very small office creates curricular resources. The number of staff in this area is wholly inadequate. Yet, the curricular offices are not where the money for salaries in the budget is allocated. In addition, resource teachers in curricular areas are not as expensive to employ as high level management although they do have a direct impact on the quality of instruction in Howard County.

You say there is a mental health crisis among students, and you are correct. This is why you have increased school counselors and other support staff. What do you think the impact of having 35 students in a class will be on students' mental health? Already, teachers have too many students in a class and adding even a few more makes getting to know our students that much more difficult, not to mention the time it would take to

provide relevant, timely feedback so that all students may grow. Dr. Martirano says he puts students at the center of every decision he makes. This cannot be true given the state of our students' mental health. Why would increasing class size be in students' best interest? This is another reason I believe you are just using teachers as pawns to get the funding you want. Will you increase class size just to keep all the extra middle level management you have added? I hope not.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kayleen Reese". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

P. Kayleen Reese

Social Studies Teacher and Instructional Team Leader

Centennial High School

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 5:00 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Fund Our Teachers

From: Jennifer Wilson <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:38 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Fund Our Teachers

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

Opal Jones,

Please fund the HCPSS budget so that we can provide the education that our citizens expect and our students deserve. As a high school reading specialist I see first hand the needs of our lowest achieving students in a daily basis. These students need classes which are small enough so that their instructional needs can be met. The teacher will not be able to provide the direct instruction that our neediest students need. Not only will this hurt the academic progress of the student, but it also will have a negative impact on the students ability to progress through school and graduate. Please know these positions are not a luxury, but are a necessity. I invite you to spend a day at school with me, this will enable you to see the close instruction that our neediest students need, deserve, and expect.

Jennifer Wilson
jenanwil@gmail.com
10813 Henley Court
Columbia , Maryland 21044

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 4:56 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Fiscal Responsibility

From: Erin Ankeny <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:37 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Fiscal Responsibility

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

Opal Jones,

Lawmakers of Howard County,

It has come to my attention that increasing class sizes have been proposed as a solution to budget shortfalls. I urge you to reconsider. This means that our county is faced with losing hundreds of qualified teachers and increasing the likelihood that children in 504 programs could go without specialized assistance. I am speaking up on behalf of my family and other county parents who value and appreciate the schools in Howard County and expect our children to be in the best position to learn and thrive in school.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I appreciate all you do for our community.

Erin Ankeny

Erin Ankeny
erinankeny@gmail.com
8406 Bluestone Ct
Columbia, Maryland 21046

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 4:50 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Fully fund education in Howard County

From: Therese Garroway <tbgarroway@verizon.net>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:37 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Fully fund education in Howard County

[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 requesting you fully fund the education budget to ensure the safety and well-being of our children. Class size directly relates to student achievement and teacher retention. Our county educators have endured significant cut backs in the past years which have greatly impacted the experience our students have had in the classroom. Teachers are leaving because of the lack of resources. Students mental health and academic need are increasing and that demands more staff and smaller class sizes. Protect our schools, our children and our teachers from the mediocrity that comes with underfunding.

Sincerely, Therese Garroway, Howard County resident and educator

Therese Garroway
tbgarroway@verizon.net
Ashley Court
Ellicott City , Maryland 21043

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 4:44 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Please support the full budget proposed by HCPSS

From: Melinda Campbell <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:36 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Please support the full budget proposed by HCPSS

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

Opal Jones,

As an educator and parent it is important to me that the full proposed budget set forth by HCPSS is funded. Smaller class sizes means teachers are able to build stronger relationships with students. Stronger relationships mean more social-emotional support which potentially reduces suicide rates, bullying, and acts of violence in the school. I know two additional students in a class does not sound like a large increase but think about the time you have to invest with each of your relatives to build strong relationships. For the wellness and emotional well-being of our students and staff I ask you to support the full budget.

Thanks,

Melinda Campbell

Teacher and parent of 3 HCPSS kiddos

Melinda Campbell

dillcamp@gmail.com

7631 midtown rd

Fulton, Maryland 20759

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 4:41 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Staffing HCPSS

From: Heidi Shorter <hshorter@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:35 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Staffing HCPSS

[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 all you do for Howard County. As a teacher in our amazing school system I am concerned with the possibility of increasing class sizes. Currently, our school is bursting at the seams, I have no classroom to teach in, classes are sprinkled and when a computer does not work (which is OFTEN) I run out of equipment for the students because there are too many in one class. This is not conducive at all in giving kids the appropriate foundation in our schools. Please reconsider class sizes so that teachers can reach our students emotionally and uphold our superintendent's call to action. Thank you!

Heidi Shorter

hshorter@hcpss.org

Crossbow RD

Mount Airy, Maryland 21771

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 4:35 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Fund the budget gal

From: Diane Cohen <DIANE_COHEN@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:30 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Fund the budget gal

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

Opal Jones,

Please fund the full budget request. The new initiatives to strengthen our mental health and social services are vital in this era of school shootings and teen suicides. In addition, keeping our class sizes low, helps our teachers spend more time connecting with students and building strong relationships.

Diane Cohen
DIANE_COHEN@hcpss.org
10671 Quarterstaff Road
Columbia, Maryland 21044

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 4:29 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Class sizes

From: Michelle Weill <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:27 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,

Tonight I attended Kindergarten orientations at Longfellow ES for my oldest daughter. She will be starting there this fall and is my first child to attend public school in Howard County. I am a product of Howard County schools and fought hard to stay in this county so my children could have that same opportunity despite it being a hardship on us to afford housing here. My husband and I both have good, stable jobs, but we pay a good amount for our house which to us was worth it for the excellent public schools. Tonight I also heard that there would be a surplus of 300 teachers due to budget cuts and that all class sizes would be increasing. That was incredibly disheartening coming home from orientation and seeing how excited my daughter was for school. I feel frustrated for the teachers who will need to further split their time and attention and sad for the students who deserve more individualized attention. I understand budgets and needing to make changes based on needs and finances, but for a school system that attracts many people to this area, has a stellar reputation and will ultimately provide this county with educated adults who give back, it seems counterintuitive to take money where it is most needed. Please reconsider your budget options and continue to fund our most fundamental resources in this county, our schools and our children.

Thank you for your time and consideration, Michelle Weill

Michelle Weill
shelly395@hotmail.com

10847 Olde Woods Way
Columbia, Maryland 21044

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 4:26 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: HCPSS 2019-2020 budget

From: Kelly Balchunas <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:27 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: HCPSS 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,

Dear Councilmembers,

I am writing to plead that the HCPSS budget requires more funding than what has been proposed our county executive. I am a parent of MS and ES students in the system, as well as a substitute teacher with HCPSS. Since my oldest daughter started kindergarten in the 2012-2013 school year, I have seen a consistent, persistent decline in the learning environment at our school - a decline that has nothing to do with our stellar teachers. I have seen class sizes increase exponentially. I have seen schools bust at the seams with not enough room for students. Some personal examples include:

1. My 4th grade daughter has 34 students in her class. Do you know how difficult it is for any child to effectively learn, and any teacher to effectively teach, when there are 34 students in a class?
2. I have seen a decrease in the staffing ratios in other areas which require that teachers do more with less in a multitude of ways. We have 1 paraeducator for 7 classes in second grade. That is simply outrageous. When my daughter started kindergarten 7 years ago, the grade paraeducators were able to help students in small groups. Not anymore.
3. Related arts are hit very hard when staffing ratios decrease. Our staff was told today we would be losing 3.3 related arts positions. This means upward of 90 kids at one time for PE, in

a gym that can not accommodate that many students. It means music and arts teachers teaching classes of 50+ students.

4. Our staff was also told 4 classroom teachers would be eliminated. How can anyone justify surplussing classroom teachers when there are 34 students in my daughter's 4th grade class? And that is not an anomaly at our school, or many other schools for that matter.

I could provide many more examples of the negative effects of underfunding our schools. Our system cannot operate under the budget the CE proposed. It simply CAN NOT function under that budget.

I realize tough decisions need to be made, but shortchanging kids and shortchanging residents with less than necessary funding for HCPSS cannot happen. When HCPSS suffers, the county suffers.

Please fund our schools with the requested \$693M dollars that has been requested. It is not an extravagance. It is the bare necessity.

Thank you,
Kelly Balchunas
Resident, D5

Kelly Balchunas
usf1998@mac.com
10930 White Dahlia Drive
Woodstock, Maryland 21163

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 4:19 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Increased class sizes

From: Andrea Stremmel <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:26 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Increased 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 writing to express my distaste for the suggestion that our educators in Howard County are being told that there is a strong possibility that the school system will be increasing their class sizes. In no way is this an acceptable solution to our budget issues. These issues were caused by adults and the solution is being taken out on the backs of our children.

My other concern would be with the effect this Will have on our children in regard to mental health and early intervention. For many of our children their homeroom/1st period teacher is the first interaction with an adult that they may have. When you put an absurd number of children into a classroom, there is no way that their teacher can be fully present for all of the children. We are doing a detriment to our children, and their futures, if we proceed in this manner.

Please vote no to making our students and educators take the fall for poor leadership.

Andrea Stremmel
astremmel@gmail.com
9181 Windflower Dr
Ellicott City, Maryland 21042

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 4:19 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Needs more teachers

From: Binjal Ali <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:26 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Needs more teachers

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

Opal Jones,

This is unacceptable. We need to take care of our teachers.

Binjal Ali
binjal.ali@gmail.com
10018 Bluebell Way
Laurel , Maryland 20723

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 4:17 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Class sizes

From: Jennifer Soumah <jensoumah@verizon.net>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:24 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,

I was already concerned about the high number of students in my daughter's 4th grade class. She has 29 students. I just read this could go up to 33-35. I have already started looking at private school. I think with a smaller class size my daughter would excel in her academics. I think children are getting lost in the large classrooms.

Jennifer Soumah
jensoumah@verizon.net
Ridge Rd
Mount Airy, Maryland 21771

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 4:15 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: School Funding

From: Cheryl Rager <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:22 PM
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,

I am sad to hear about the lack of school funding. We claim to have the top school system however that cannot happen when our schools are not receiving the money they deserve. Having up to 33 students in a class is not acceptable. You are setting the teachers and children up for failure. I am urging you to fund the schools. Our future depends on it.

Cheryl Rager
giantsfan2716@gmail.com
4749 Hale Haven Dr
Ellicott City, Md, 21043

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 4:15 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: School Funding

From: Sandra Berger <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:22 PM
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,

Good evening, I attended a portion of the budget meeting tonight. I heard passionate testimonies for funding. I know it is hard to make budget decisions. In my work, I have to recommend where we invest and where we won't. It is quite difficult. Still, if we think of why this county is sought after by so many, the number one reason is for our schools. Our schools are why so many people want to move here, developers want to develop here and why so many people stay. We have committed teachers and administration who tirelessly work each day to make my children's learning fun, interesting and effective. My daughter's second grade teacher, Mrs. P. Lerner, (at SJLES) came to watch her after school play on her own time. She didn't have to do that, but she did. Naomi was so excited Mrs. Lerner was there! This is just ONE small example of the commitment teachers have to their students. Let's give them a chance to do what they do best - teach! Please find the budget fully and then some. Thanks.
Sandi Berger

Sandra Berger
sandijean@yahoo.com
2630 Thornbrook Road
Ellicott City, Maryland 21042

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 4:10 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Where does all the money go?

From: Karen Estrada <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:21 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Where does all the money go?

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

Opal Jones,

I realize that the current Council and BOE both have inherited somewhat of a mess financially speaking, but as one of the wealthiest countries in America, Howars County should be placing a greater priority on education, have strict AFPOs, and stop development until schools can be built to accommodate growth and current schools are brought up to date through renovation. All schools need to be on even footing when it comes to supplies and technology, which is certainly not the case right now. Larger schools, where there is often more "money" are getting better funding and more resources than some of the smaller, older, and demographically less wealthy schools, which are in greater need of resources. Without a strong budget and steady support of the programs, resources, and even facilities that a county that ranks high in the nation both for wealth and education deserves, the council and BOE are failing their constituents, and the future leaders of our county. Please support full funding of the education budget, for the sake of our students.

Sincerely,
Karen B. Estrada

Karen Estrada
karen.b.estrada@gmail.com
6429 BELLEVIEW Dr.
Columbia, Maryland 21046

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 4:06 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: School Budget

From: Jen Thomas <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:20 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: School 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: While a budget is super difficult to make, our schools should be the number I've priority for our dollars. Please consider what the increase in class sizes will do for our children and consider raising the school budget for next year. Thanks, Jen Thomas

Jen Thomas
jnp3211@yahoo.com
5291 Talbots Landing
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 4:05 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: HCPSS Budget concerns

From: Heather Moore <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:19 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 concerned about the budget constraints that could impact class sizes. My daughter has thrived in an HCPSS school because she has built relationships with each of her teachers, and has been given individualized attention in class.

If class sizes are increased, my daughter, along with every other HCPSS child, will not be able to have the same relationship with her teacher because there are so many students in class.

In addition, she has greatly benefited from smaller, small group sizes in reading and math. If class sizes are increased, those small groups are no longer smaller groups. She will not receive the attention needed from her teachers to target problem areas and help her as needed. Instead, the teacher will only be able to teach to the majority of the students' needs in the group, and not each child.

Thank you for your consideration,
Heather Moore

Heather Moore
mrs.hkmoore@gmail.com
8108 Sea Light Lane
Columbia, Maryland 21045

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 4:04 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: don't increase class size

From: Joanne Harkness <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:18 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: don't increase 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,

My children need teachers that are not burnt out

Joanne Harkness
joanneharkness@gmail.com
6096 Adcock Ln
Hanover, Maryland 21076-1054

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 4:02 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Class Size

From: Cindy Croft <cindy_croft@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:15 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,

Esteemed Council Members,

As a primary grade teacher in this county for over 20 years, I am writing to express my concern that we are once again looking at raising class sizes to meet the county's budget. Over the past few years, the class size ratio for primary grades has been raised from 1:19 up to 1:25. Now you are looking at raising the ratio to 1:27. Research clearly shows that class size has a direct impact on increasing student achievement, student test scores, student engagement, graduation rates, retention rates, drop out rates, college attendance rates, and non-cognitive skills such as persistence and motivation.

(<https://www.classsizematters.org/research-and-links/>). The recommended class size for primary grades is 15-17 students. We are looking at class sizes with over 10 more students per class than what is recommended. Smaller class sizes decrease teacher workloads and allow teachers to spend more time with each student, individualizing instruction as necessary. This raises achievement rates for all students. I understand that the school system has many financial needs and must find a way to cut a large sum of money from the proposed budget. However, it does not make sense to remove funding from the area which research has proven has one of the greatest impacts on so many factors of student achievement as an effective way to make up the budgetary shortfall. Thank you for your time, consideration, and support.

Cindy Croft
cindy_croft@hcpss.org

2857 deerfield dr
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 4:02 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Prioritize Our Students

From: Belinda Miller <belinda_miller@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:14 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Prioritize 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,

In a world where we are surrounded by so much negative news, let's prepare our next generation for success both academically and emotionally. We cannot increase class size and give students the support they need. Please fully fund the needs of The HCPSS.

Belinda Miller
belinda_miller@hcpss.org
6741 Hunter Road
Elkridge, Maryland 21075

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 3:58 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Class Sizes

From: Keiry Duran <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:11 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 Council Members,

I am a parent and volunteer at my child's school. I have seen first hand how teachers already have more than a full day and to think of adding more children to the class. I'm not sure how numbers are determined for classes when thinking about children with disabilities. I do see inclusion as a positive but believe that increasing class sizes will take away the personal dedication and time the teachers have with students. It is very important for my child's and others children's success that class size stay stagnant or better yet decrease. I love the new ideas in curriculum for elementary classes but adding bigger class sizes makes hands on activities and those that require supplies less practical. Please consider not increasing class sizes as it will be greatly detrimental to our children.

Thank you,

The Epperson- Duran Family

Keiry Duran
keirylduran@gmail.com
10268 Cabery road
Ellicott City , Maryland 21042

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 3:57 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: HCPSS Budget

From: Catherine Koch <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:07 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,

I have had the pleasure of working for Howard County Schools, specifically Laurel Woods Elementary School for 9 years. I entered HCPSS from another school system, and I was shocked with the quality and number of resources we had for our students. I am still impressed with the resources we have. At the beginning of this school year, as a 5th grade teacher at a Title I School I faced class sizes of 31 students. There was only one way to organize student desks in my classroom: in rows. Getting students to focus on their work, and being able to provide quality feedback when there are that many bodies in one space was incredibly difficult. We were fortunate to be given an additional teacher, which lowered our class sizes. I am now able to meet with reading groups of the appropriate size, and provide adequate feedback for student work. I understand that the budget may not allow for the full funding. And I truly appreciate that staff will receive our benefits and our step. But raising class size is not the answer. Class Size is one of the greatest changes we can make to support student success, and is one of the biggest stresses for classroom teachers. I would suggest making changes to staff that do not work directly with students. That way the impact on students is lessened. I appreciate your consideration when it comes to our budget.

Catherine Koch
clkoch99@gmail.com
12 S Potomac St
Baltimore, Maryland 21224

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 3:54 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Reduce class size

From: Erin Tunkel <erin_tunkel@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:07 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Reduce 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 request and urge that you keep class-size to a minimum. The dynamics of our elementary schools are changing. We are in high demand of counselors, psychologists, and behavior specialists. Keeping the class size small will help support the individual needs of each child. Thank you for your consideration.

Erin Tunkel
erin_tunkel@hcpss.org
1812 Kings Forest Trail
Mount Airy, MD 21771

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 3:54 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Against the Proposed Class Size Increase

From: Ulyssa Beaty <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:07 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Against the Proposed Class Size Increase

[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, it has been brought to my attention 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 mistake to increase class size. While our teachers are amazing, they are already stretched thin. I know my daughter specifically will have an increased difficulty learning in a larger class size. Also, increasing class size make it more difficult for students with 504 plans to receive the supposed accommodations they need. Please consider other options. I appreciate all the effort you put into making these incredibly important decisions. Sincerely,
Ulyssa Beaty

Ulyssa Beaty
ubeaty@gmail.com
9218 winding way
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

▪

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 3:53 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Budget shortfall

From: Akiba Perry <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:06 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: 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,

As a parent of two (soon three) students in HCPSS, I would like to implore county executives to address the budget shortfall without negatively impacting school and classroom sizes. Teachers are responsible for the quality and ranking of HCPSS, and school quality and (also housing values) will fall to reflect declines in staff and resulting increases in class size. Most importantly, as a parent whose children had been in private school until this year, I have been very pleased with my children's first experience with public school academically and socially. They both (10th grade and 6th grade) have been on Principal's Honor Roll all three quarters, and I credit their teachers with keeping them engaged and supporting their academic pursuits.

Akiba Perry
akibatperry@gmail.com
11406 Liberty Street
Fulton, Maryland 20759

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 3:52 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: School Funding

From: Peg Glasser <mglasser@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:06 PM
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,

I am writing with concern about rumors of planned increases in class sizes and decrease in numbers of teachers. I oppose this budget change. I'm retired and have no children of school age. However, my neighborhood is filled with wonderful children whose parents located in HoCo for the greatest American school district. Please don't let them down.

Peg Glasser
mglasser@comcast.net
11047 Nashville Ct
Ellicott City, Maryland 21042

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 3:49 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Funding for teachers

From: Holly Zinn <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:05 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Funding for teachers

[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 a teacher and parent in Howard County, I am deeply saddened by the news to increase class sizes and reduce staffing. We are losing connections and interventions with children by increasing class sizes. The impact of these actions today will be felt for many years.

Holly Zinn
hzinn26@gmail.com
4837 South Haven Drive
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 3:48 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Lower class sizes!

From: Colleen DeClue <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:05 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Lower 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,

My most effective tool as an educator is building relationships with my students. By pushing the class size to 33 students for third grade, how can I possibly give each student the individualized attention and instruction that they each deserve? We are in Howard County, where the standards are set extremely high. I already bring home enough work throughout the year but add on these additional students and the work will multiply. I understand that cuts need to be made somewhere, but please do not do this. This will set both students and teachers up for failure.

Colleen DeClue
colleenjack21@gmail.com
6905 Norwood Fry
Elkridge, Maryland 21075

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 3:48 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Increasing class sizes

From: Kaleigh Thomas <kaleigh_thomas@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:05 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Increasing 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,

My heart hurts tonight reading the awful news that HCPSS' budget has not been fully funded which is causing an increase in class sizes. From last year to this year, class sizes by 3-5 students and it has been so detrimental to the students especially the special education students whom I service. The amount of emotional and academic needs these students bring is immense. It is impossible for teachers to address social/emotional and academic needs of all 28 students this year. The thought of even larger class sizes is frightening. It's not fair to the children. It's our job to teach them to become the next generation of contributing members of society. With large class sizes, the amount of students falling through the cracks or needs that will be unmet is only going to increase. For HCPSS being the "best" county in the state of Maryland, you can do better for our students, their families and my fellow teachers.

Sincerely,

Kaleigh Thomas

Kaleigh Thomas
Kaleigh_Thomas@hcpss.org
5636 Waterloo RD
Columbia , Maryland 21045

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 3:47 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Don't increase class sizes please

From: Lori Sharp <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:03 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Don't increase class sizes please

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

Opal Jones,

The thought of increasing class sizes, and reducing the number of teachers, does a disservice to our children and the quality education our county has been known for.

My children are in 1st and 4th at CLES. My 1st grade daughter struggles with reading as is. The thought of her class size increasing makes me fear that she'll fall even further behind.

How can 1 teacher possibly assist that many students? I see parents in our neighborhood pulling their kids out and opting for private school instead. That never used to happen in this district. Makes me sad to see the path this is going down. Please make our children the top priority!

Lori Sharp
lorijmu02@gmail.com
10016 Inkpen Pl
Ellicott City, Maryland 21042-4960

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 3:46 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Howard County Budget Shortfall

From: Amy Stoddard <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:02 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Howard County 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,

The county budget shortfall impacting our school system is certainly challenging, however I would like to understand the analysis done on alternative options. There must be other viable solutions that do it impact our good teachers and ultimately our students. Please find an alternative solution. We have a mental health crisis in this country and it starts with children. They need to feel safe and cared for, and decreasing the amount of time and attention, or conversely adding unrealistic expectations of our teachers, is passing the buck and putting us further behind. Fund our schools appropriately and support our children and community.

Amy Stoddard
a.gignac12@gmail.com
6814 Grimes Golden Ct
Columbia, Texas 21"

▪

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 3:44 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Increase funding for Howard County schools!

From: Maria Smirolodo <marias709@verizon.net>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:02 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Increase funding for 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,

I was shocked to learn that our schools have a budget shortfall which will result in larger class sizes and the surplus-ing of teachers. When I cast my vote in the recent election, there was a provision that a percentage of casino revenues would be given to Maryland schools — not simply replacing existing funds, but increasing educational revenue overall. This passed and will become law in the fall. It is the only reason many of us voted to allow gambling in Maryland. Now our state leaders are not holding up their end of the bargain. We moved here for the excellent educational system, which sadly will diminish if these measures are implemented. Please re-fund our schools — what could be more important than our children??

Maria Smirolodo
marias709@verizon.net
6425 Quiet Night Ride
Columbia, Texas 219

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 3:43 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Classroom Sizes

From: Teresa-Angelica Weathington <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:00 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Classroom 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 Lawmakers,

It has been brought to my attention 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 mistake to increase class size. While our teachers are amazing, they are already stretched thin. 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.

Teresa-Angelica Weathington
tweathington@gmail.com
9407 Clocktower Ln
Columbia, Maryland 21046

▪

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 3:43 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Funding for the school

From: Daniel Pendley <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 8:57 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Funding for the school

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

Opal Jones,

Find the money requested. People live in the county for the schools.

Daniel Pendley
dan.pendley@gmail.com
10483 Route 108
Columbia , Maryland 21044

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 3:41 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Fund our schools budget

From: Courtney Skinner <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 8:57 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Fund our schools 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 Council Member,

I am a parent of two HCPSS students and I am also a teacher in the Howard County school system. I see on a daily basis how lack of funding greatly impacts the education of our students. Our buildings contain inadequate teaching space; making many learn in book closets and other makeshift classrooms. We do not have proper technology to provide our students with access to online research, tools and online educational programs. My son's middle school asked parents to purchase chromebooks since they lack proper technology in their school. As a special education teacher, I see first hand how our classes and programs are not adequately staffed to support childrens' needs. We lack staff to keep children safe and provide access to curriculum for children with disabilities. Cutting the budget, adding to class sizes and cutting staff is not the answer, if we are expected to compete in a world that is only made better by a quality education.

Courtney Skinner
courtneyskinner35@gmail.com
3020 Grotto Walk
Ellicott City, Maryland 21042

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 3:40 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Overcrowding and underfunding

From: Cherie Parlette <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 8:56 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Overcrowding and underfunding

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

Opal Jones,

It was very apparent this year that our school was over capacity when our entire 5th grade class and GT resource teachers all had to be moved to portables. Now to hear that in addition to this issue, we aren't finding enough teachers is baffling in a county where we pay very high taxes. This makes us ask the question... what are your priorities for the community? What is more important than our younger generations? To ask a more self serving question... How are we going to maintain the status of having some of the best public schools in the nation if this is the route we are going down???

Cherie Parlette
cfparlette@gmail.com
11321 Harrison Street
Fulton, Maryland 20759

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 3:40 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Howard County Class Sizes

From: Sarah Bae <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 8:55 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,

Dear County Council,

I am saddened to hear of the potential increase in class sizes for next school year. As a current first grade teacher of 23 students, I know that having up to 27 students will only hurt the students. To do my job well, I need to truly know each child and how he or she learns best. That is extremely difficult with large classes. Please, I urge you to reconsider increasing class sizes. This can not be what is best for students.

Thank you,

Sarah Bae

Sarah Bae
sarahbae20@hotmail.com
7377 Gardenvue Drive
Elkridge , Maryland 21075

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 3:32 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Budget cut

From: Donna Trang <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 8:52 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Budget cut

[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 size and decrease number of teachers to trim Howard County's budget. It is at the detriment of our children and the future of this county because the excellent education that is offered here will be sacrificed in order to trim your budget. Although it may take longer I am certain there are other areas that can be looked at in order to save. I can tell you having just moved here from Texas, we picked Howard county specifically for the schools. Why do you need to increase class size to achieve your budget ? I am sure if this continues you will see the quality of the communities suffer. School communities and relationships within a town are vital and integral parts of what make up great neighborhoods. You are threatening to make many people upset and unfortunately you will see this directly affect you in the next election. I beg that you reconsider the action you are about to take for the greater good of our children.

Thanks you,
Donna Trang

Donna Trang
donna.trang@yahoo.com
2716 west end circle
Ellicott City , Maryland 21042

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 3:32 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Budget request

From: Anna Gannon <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 8:50 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Budget request

[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 very concerned about the impact that lack of funding will have on my classroom. I am currently teaching in a room with the maximum capacity of 25 students due to the size of room I teach in. However, I teach the reading modules in two grades that are required for each student in their respective grade. Students are often prevented from engaging in activities that require movement, staffing restraints do not provide sufficient staff to provide assistance to our neediest students (ELL, SOED, below grade level readers, etc.), and lack resources (technology, textbooks, magazine subscriptions) to supplement the rigorous curriculum. It is imperative that this year's budget financially invest not only in overworked staff but to invest in staffing to provide the most effective staff to student ratio. We are overwhelmed trying to connect to students personally while trying to prepare engaging real world educational experiences. We need you to invest in us, our schools, our children to effectively secure the future of our community. You have this ability to partner with educators so that every child has the tools that they need to find success. I urge you to fully fund the requested budget for education funding.

Sincerely,
Anna Gannon

Anna Gannon
msgannon11@gmail.com

8851 Mission Rd
Jessup, Maryland 20794

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 3:31 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: I'm concerned....

From: Amanda Peter <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 8:48 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: I'm concerned....

[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 school 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. Now as a special educator, I have that many students on my caseload spread among 4 general education classrooms and even more math classrooms, making it very tough to reach

all of them and spend the required time for them to be successful. With the social/ emotional struggles our kiddos are facing 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!

Amanda Peter

mandy_peter@yahoo.com

Paragon Circle

Elkridge , Maryland 21075

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 3:29 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Budget Funding

From: Tim Reinhardt <tim_reinhardt@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 8:47 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: 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,

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing to advocate for full funding for the Howard County Public School System budget. Increasing class size diminishes the educational experience of every student. Classroom management will become more difficult, resources will not available, and differentiated instruction will be less effective. Our school has worked hard to provide the staffing required to meet the needs of our student population. Losing teaching positions will threaten the fundamental paradigm that has created the success enjoyed by Howard County thus far. Please fight for our funding, our class sizes, and our teaching positions. Please fight for our students!

Thank you for your consideration,

Tim Reinhardt

Tim Reinhardt
tim_reinhardt@hcpss.org
6720 Monroe Ave.
Sykesville, Maryland 21784

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 3:28 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: School Funding

From: Marcia Davis <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 8:47 PM
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,

Please fund our schools! One of the top measures of students success is small class size.
Research bears this out!

Marcia Davis
marciadavis255@gmail.com
6661 WINDSOR CT
COLUMBIA, Maryland 21044-4147

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 3:28 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: In need of your help

From: Molly Klein <mollyklein@verizon.net>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 8:47 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: In need of your help

[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,

Molly Klein

Molly Klein
mollyklein@verizon.net
7524 Summer Blossom Lane
Columbia, MD, Maryland 21046

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 3:27 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: The Education Budget

From: Kathleen Goffaux <kathleen_Goffaux@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 8:40 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: The Education 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 write to you to express my concern for our education budget this year. My hope is that you will fund the Howard County Public School budget fully this year. Class sizes are already at a high number. As a teacher in this county, I can not imagine having any more students sitting in my classroom each day. Teaching upwards of 175 students each day does not allow me to build the relationships needed in the classroom to help my students be successful. It also poses a safety hazard for my students. Our time and resources are already stretched very thin and adding even more students to each classroom seems unthinkable.

I understand that money is tight and cuts my need to be made somewhere but I can not understand how increasing class size and cutting educational resources can be good for anyone, students, teachers or the community. Please fully fund our future.

Sincerely,
Kathleen Goffaux

Kathleen Goffaux
kathleen_Goffaux@hcpss.org
12031 Keymar Road
Keymar, Maryland 21757

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 3:24 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Budget

From: Alison Rudo <akrudo1@verizon.net>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 8:34 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,

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,
Alison Rudo

Alison Rudo
akrudo1@verizon.net
6541, Meadowfield Court
Elkridge, Maryland 21075

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 3:23 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: funding the HCPSS budgetary needs

From: Christine Pearman <christine_pearman@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 8:33 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: funding the HCPSS budgetary 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!

Please be mindful of the importance of fully funding the HCPSS budget. After twenty years of teaching in the elementary school classroom, I am certain that larger class sizes would broadly impact our efficacy at a critical time in our nation's history. I am deeply concerned about the funding gap and how it would effect our school communities! We need your full support!

Thank you for your service~

Christine Pearman
christine_pearman@hcpss.org
9470 PINECONE ROW
COLUMBIA, Maryland 21045

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 3:22 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Funding

From: Sherry stephanos <toronto68@verizon.net>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 8:29 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Funding

[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 work in the School System. Class sizes need to be smaller. Why you ask, well if they are smaller the Teacher can actually teach and not worry about the kids acting up. The larger the class more kids are in with friends. If you think about pre-school there are 6 kids to a teacher so 12 kids in a class 2 teachers should be in there. Yes we are talking about older kids if in High School, or Middle, but it does not matter. Let's get back to teaching instead of managing the class. This is what is happening with LARGE class sizes. So funding our schools with more Teachers and Para's will limit large class sizes. Think about being a Teacher or Para in a classroom with 30-35 kids in your class and teaching them. Yes, hard you say. That is us or at least most of us. Please listen to all of us. Please STOP taking our jobs away. The kids need this too. Think about our IEP kids, 504 kids, Alt. Ed Kids, ALS Kids, IBP Kids. This would also limit behavior issues too. I see this everyday in classes. Please think about all of this when you are making your decision. We are important, Kids are important.

Thanks Sherry

Sherry stephanos
toronto68@verizon.net
10633 Delfield Ct
Laurel MD, Maryland 20723

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 3:19 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Class size - Teacher ratio

From: Lisa Siano <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 8:28 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Class size - Teacher ratio

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

Opal Jones,

Howard County Schools already have very over-crowded classrooms. School facilities are at a breaking point trying to squeeze more children in tighter spaces. Teachers are increasingly asked to do more and more for more children with less resources. It's time to build new schools, hire more teachers and reduce class sizes.

Thank you for your courtesies.

Lisa Siano
lsianoesq@gmail.com
5041 Castle Moor Dr
Columbia , Maryland 21044

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 3:19 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Please fully fund the HCPSS budget request

From: Cecilia Haley <cecilia_haley@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 8:26 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Please fully fund the HCPSS budget request

[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 middle school ELA teacher and ELA Team Leader for my school, I see first hand what a lack of resources means for my students.

A reduction in staffing means even fewer special educators in classrooms, and already our students with special needs do not get the one-to-one support and materials that would help them be and FEEL successful in the classroom. It is devastating to see our students struggle and then not be able to provide the support they need.

Smaller class sizes mean I can give my students more attention, build stronger relationships, look more closely at their writing, and offer more specific feedback in order to help each student with his or her skills in reading and writing.

As I teacher, I already spend multiple hours beyond the school day planning lessons, providing feedback, updating Canvas, responding to parent emails, and more. I can't imagine what an increased class size would do to my already overwhelming workload.

Frankly, I worry that teachers are getting so burned out by the demands of the profession that they will leave the job they love. Please don't make this job any harder by reducing funding and increasing class sizes. Our children are our future as both individuals and a county. They, and everyone in the county, deserve full funding in our budget, at a minimum.

Thank you for considering my letter.

Sincerely,
Cecilia Haley

Cecilia Haley
cecilia_haley@hcpss.org
8100 Aladdin Drive
Laurel, Maryland 20723

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 3:17 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: To whom it may concern,

From: Christy Emanuel <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 8:19 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: To whom it may concern,

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

Opal Jones,

The reason that I, and many parents move to Howard County is the public schools. Don't force us to leave because the quality of education is terrible. Make good choices.

Christy Emanuel
christyemanuel@gmail.com
7915 Tilghman st
Fulton, Maryland 20759

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 3:17 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: fund Smaller class sizes!

From: Lauren Honza <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 8:11 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: fund 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,

Class size is one of the most widely researched aspects of education. Time and time again, it is empirically proven that smaller class sizes improve education for students and teachers alike. While I understand that teacher salaries make up a huge portion of the budget, it saddens me that in one of the best counties in Maryland we are even talking about going backwards on one of the most highly effective variables. As a school counselor in the county, I can not stress enough, our kids needs are growing dramatically and our teachers are overwhelmed and overworked. Adding money to the school budget needs to happen for our kids and our educators. Tax the developers appropriately. Your students and teachers are tired of taking the brunt of others poor financial decisions.

Thank you for reading,
Lauren Honza
HCPSS School Counselor

Lauren Honza
lhonza81@yahoo.com
9368 Duff Court
Ellicott city, Maryland 21042

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 3:16 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Please do not increase class sizes

From: Tonia Dolinka <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 8:10 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Please 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.]

Opal Jones,

My son is currently in first grade and flourishing at centennial lane elementary school. He speaks at length about the help he is getting from his home room teacher and his math teacher and how much he loves school. I know that smaller groups and more one on one time is a big reason my son is doing so well. As a mother and a former educator I'm appalled that in a county as wealthy as Howard county (and with the taxes I'm paying) the discussion of more kids and less teachers is even occurring. What we need is less new developments and more focus on building new schools to help with overcrowding, not the opposite. We need to do what is right for our children not our pockets or bottom line. Our voices will be heard.

Tonia Dolinka
tdolinka@gmail.com
3808 font hill drive
Ellicott cit , Maryland 21042

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 3:14 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: 35 for class sizes is a BIG MISTAKE

From: Noelle Mineart <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 8:06 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: 35 for class sizes is a BIG MISTAKE

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

Opal Jones,

You continue to burden teachers with more work while expecting them to have the time to support the mental health of students. You tell special educators that they need to service students inside the classroom, but then you place 32 needy students in the same class and expect 2 teachers to give them everything they need. Despite our protests you continue to pack the curriculum with more and more content each year, acting as if we have all the time in the world. You tell us to differentiate for the various learners in our classroom, but we never have enough planning time. You tell us to use technology, but never provide adequate training. How are we supposed to service 35 students EFFECTIVELY and help them to be prepared for college if we are unable to do this at current class sizes. You keep reaching higher and higher, which continues to leave lower level students in the dust. What types of citizens are you trying to produce? By raising class sizes, instead of decreasing them, you will CONTINUE TO DAMAGE the future of state as a whole. You will continue to produce learners that have no real transferable skills. Learners that are afraid to try because they are unable to receive the support they need to succeed. How dare you put your political agenda or line your pockets at the expense of our children. How dare you determine that students should not be provided with the appropriate skills to be successful in our digital world because you refuse to support them and those who service them.

You are cutting the legs out from under the students who need the most help by simultaneously ignoring the people who specialize in actually teaching children while

continuing to raise expectations. You are creating a lose-lose situation and thus ruining the future of HCPSS and Maryland.

Noelle Mineart

janmineart@gmail.com

4243 dunwood terrace

Burtonsville, Maryland 20866

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 3:00 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Budget

From: Lauren Bhatia <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 8:03 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,

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. Currently our special educators have 16-18 students on their caseload. With growing concerns about students' social and emotional well-being, we must have decreased class and caseload sizes. The biggest way to enable teachers to impact students' social and emotional well-being is to have less students in all classes and special education caseloads. The only way to make this possible is to increase funding to hire more general education and special education 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,

Lauren Bhatia

Lauren Bhatia

laurenwismans@gmail.com

6348 Burnt Mountain Path

COLUMBIA, Maryland 21045

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 2:59 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Threat of Increasing Class Sizes

From: Katie Jennifer <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 8:03 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Threat of Increasing 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,

Currently I am in my fourteenth year of teaching with HCPSS. It is with a heavy heart that this is the first time I feel driven to write a letter of concern.

How can we possibly believe that our students and staff can handle increased classes sizes? We know what the research says. We have studied it endlessly. Increasing class sizes decreases the quality of education that each child can possibly receive. In addition, the quality of the work environment declines.

There will be an increase in stress put on the the educators, specifically lead teachers. There is simply not enough time to give each child the maximum amount of time and attention they need if the number of students in each class continues to rise.

When will it stop? When will we look around and realize the damage is far to great and we've gone too far?

Please, please reconsider where budget cuts will impact HCPSS. It can not be the quality of the students' education. It can not be the quality of the work environment for the staff.

Thank you.
Katie Jennifer

Katie Jennifer
katieajennifer@yahoo.com
6401 Woodvale Pl
Elkridge, Maryland 21075

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 2:58 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Hcpss funding

From: Stephanie Wickstrom <stephanie_wickstrom@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 8:02 PM
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,

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,
Stephanie Wickstrom, Psy.D.

Stephanie Wickstrom
stephanie_wickstrom@hcpss.org
9361 Kendal cir
Laurel, Maryland 20723

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 2:55 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Budget decisions

From: jill ruppe <Jill_ruppe@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 7:50 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Budget decisions

[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 classroom teacher in Howard County. When I began here in 2002, my first grade class had 18 students. We found out this afternoon that our fourth grade classes could have up to 33 students each next school year. Even having 30 students this year has been overwhelming. I want to give students individual attention and prompt feedback on assignments for a highly productive educational experience. With so many students, this is proving extremely difficult. This budget decision MUST be reconsidered, for the sake of our students and the teachers. Thank you very much.

jill ruppe
Jill_ruppe@hcpss.org
10249 wetherburn road
ellicott city, Maryland 21042

▪

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 2:52 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Concerns for the proposed budget

From: Megan Tiralla <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 7:49 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Concerns for the proposed budget

[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 teacher in Howard county I feel I must express my concerns with the proposed budget. When I first started teaching in HCPSS 12 years ago, low class sizes was a point of pride for the county. Now low class size is not something we can claim and I have noticed a direct impact on the education I am able to provide my students. In a 4th grade class of 27 students with mixed abilities it is impossible to differentiate instruction to meet all of the needs of students. Small group instruction is made up of 8 to 10 students, where it used to be 5 or 6 in a small group. Our students are suffering with our resources being spread too thin. Increase the budget to lower class sizes and provide more resource teachers such as school psychologists and counselors to our schools.

Megan Tiralla
mlgerretson@gmail.com
427 aylawn drive
Millersville, Maryland 21108

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 2:52 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: HCPSS Budget concerns

From: Heather Moore <heather_moore@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 7:46 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 very concerned about the budget needs of HCPSS. Increased class sizes will have strong impacts on students and teachers. For students, more individualized instruction cannot happen with more students for teachers to give attention to during the school day. In addition, with the growing concern and the need for social and emotional growth and learning in our children, having more students gives less time for teachers to build a relationship with each student to help in understanding each child's needs or making them feel safe. In increasing class sizes, students with special needs will feel more anxious and overwhelmed with the noise and stimuli that more students in one classroom will bring.

For teachers, increased class sizes will also have negative impacts on their health and performance as a teacher. Stress levels from having to meet the needs of more students, more discipline problems, and having more students in the classroom will rise causing teachers' health to decrease. As teachers have more students to teach, also comes more paperwork - papers to grade, report cards to write, parents to communicate with about progress, etc. Teachers already spend a substantial amount of time outside of school hours to get these things done, and adding more students will only increase these hours.

As a school system, with increased class sizes our ratings, scores, and well being of everyone in the system will decrease. We must have lower class sizes.

Thank you for your consideration,
Heather Moore

Heather Moore
heather_moore@hcpss.org
8108 Sea Light Lane
Columbia, Maryland 21045

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 2:50 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Do not cut our budget!

From: Stephanie Dean <stephanie_dean@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 7:45 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Do not cut our 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 the full time counselor in an elementary school of over 900 students. Our school is overflowing due to numbers, needs of our students and families, and behaviors. Our teachers are struggling to teach in classes of 25 because of that overflow. I cannot imagine their struggle if class sizes increase. Kids who want to learn are losing instruction because the teachers and support staff are tied up responding to high flyers. High flyers aren't getting anything out of lessons because they can't get their basic emotional needs met, which is all due to the fact we don't have enough staff to help them. We simply do not have enough bodies, space, or resources to help meet the physical, emotional, and academic needs of our students.

I am struggling to support the mental health of kids, teachers, and families because I am only one person in a school of 1,000 people. We are fortunate to have a second .5 counselor, but it is NOT enough. And I know we are not the only school in this county with these issues. We are all spread so thin because there aren't enough resources to meet the needs of our students and families AND staff. Thinking that I may not get to move up a step in my salary or may lose a .5 co-counselor due to budget cuts is discouraging, infuriating, and asinine.

Cutting the budget is only going to make these issues more severe, and HCPSS will lose good educators who don't feel adequately compensated. Please, please, please do not cut the budget.

Stephanie Dean
stephanie_dean@hcpss.org
44 Ridge Ave
Edgewater, Maryland 21037

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 2:48 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Education funding

From: Susan Lavun <susan_lavin@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 7:42 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Education funding

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

Opal Jones,

Fully funding education should be a priority! Early intervention is vital in building an educational foundation. Small class sizes, adequate support staff, and competitive salaries for educators, including support staff is important to the well being of our children.

Susan Lavun
susan_lavin@hcpss.org
Graftons View Ct
Elkridge , Maryland 21075

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 2:47 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: HCPSS Budget Needs

From: Kim Nguyen <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 7:38 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,

Dear Council Members,

Please allows for more budget funding to HCPSS. Having a student-teacher ratio of 33:1 is neither beneficial to the students nor the teachers. Please think of the education of the young minds, and allow for more budget allocation for HCPSS.

Kim Nguyen
knnguyen0001@gmail.com
12118 Darnestown rd suiteB
Gaithersburg , Maryland 20878

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 2:46 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: HCPSS Budget and school needs

From: Willow Maldonado <layne199@verizon.net>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 7:38 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: HCPSS Budget and school 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,
Willow Maldonado

Willow Maldonado
layne199@verizon.net
Claire dr
Elkridge, Maryland 21075

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 2:46 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: budget crisis

From: Leah Berglund-Halvorson <leah_berglund-halvorson@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 7:25 PM
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,

Dear Howard County Council Representatives,

The purpose statement at the top of my resume states that I will create and maintain a safe, nurturing environment where diversity and learning are valued.

I am a 5th grade teacher at Clemens Crossing Elementary School. This is my 22nd overall year of teaching, my 17th year in Howard County. I am very distressed as I think about the budget cuts that are facing our school system, and the effect that these cuts will have on my ability to fulfill my goals as an educator.

The projected cuts that are floating around as the budget is negotiated this month are to the detriment of our children. This morning, for example, I learned at our staff meeting that Mental Health initiatives scheduled to be implemented in the 2019-20 school year may fall into the proverbial circular file. Increased awareness, safety and action to help children understand and advocate for themselves and their peers will essentially be devalued instead of given the increased attention that mental health issues demand.

We also have learned that class sizes are likely to increase. I currently have 26 children in my 5th grade classroom, and my students have a variety of individual needs, spanning learning and mental health issues. When I hear the number 30, my head starts to spin. Clemens Crossing is not a Title 1 school with all the benefits and support that follow. As a staff, we work

tirelessly to provide the safety and support that our children need to be successful. We have supportive, encouraging administrators. What we need is a realistic student/teacher ratio.

At the same time, our school's technology is aging, and we are limited to four computer carts that are falling into disrepair for almost 500 students. During PARCC testing this week, an entire computer cart issued an error message informing our students that their work might not be saved. How can we meet assessment mandates when our technology does not support it?

HCPSS provides excellent e-tools, such as Canvas and G-Suite, that enhance instruction, but without working, available computers our students cannot access these and other applications at school. And perhaps more importantly, we need to be able to teach our students how to be responsible digital citizens. Being a digital citizen is no longer optional, it's integral in our society. Navigation, communication, personal safety, and interaction with reading, writing, and mathematics applications, science simulations, primary and secondary sources, and associated tools are all woven into our instructional pedagogy. Dare I say, these are all also fundamental to the accountability placed on standardized testing.

Economically, the value of my salary has declined. I am not going to dwell on that issue beyond saying that it is disheartening in the face of increasing class sizes, inadequate technology and dwindling classroom support. The promises of teaching in one of America's most affluent counties within one of the country's most affluent states feels deflating in the face of the current situation.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I wish you well as you work to resolve this budget crisis.

Sincerely,

Leah Berglund-Halvorson
CCES 5th grade

Leah Berglund-Halvorson
leah_berglund-halvorson@hcpss.org
654 Shimmering Run Ct
Sykesville, Maryland 21784

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 2:43 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Fully fund the Educational requests in the County Budget for 2020

From: Jillian O'Brien <Jillian_O'Brien@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 7:23 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Fully fund the Educational requests in the County Budget for 2020

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

Opal Jones,

Please fully fund the educational budget requests for Howard County Public System as a part of the county's 2019-2020 budget. If not fully funded, our students, staff, and families of Howard County will suffer consequences including less planning due to strain from additional students in every class, less one-on-one involvement with teachers for every student due to being stretched thin across meeting the needs of ever growing classrooms, more teacher turnover losing quality educators to other counties and states who offer sufficiently funded budgets, special education students without enough qualified staff to cover their required "hours" within each school, staff burnout and much much more. I work at the Elementary level in Howard County, so I'm sure that there are so many more challenges that will be endured in other levels- middle and high. More and more students are experiencing mental health needs and social/emotional learning is crucial- but I feel unable to directly connect and meet those needs personally and deeply with a classroom size of approximately 30. This will get even worse if you do not fully fund our request.

Thank you for considering this when you approved the Howard County budget for Fiscal year 2020.

Our students are our futures. Remember that their little minds will be in charge when we are elderly.

Jillian O'Brien
Jillian_O'Brien@hcpss.org

8948 Blade Green Lane
Columbia, Maryland 21045

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 2:43 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Dear County Council,

From: Wendy Cohen-Holbrook <wcholbrook@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 7:21 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Dear County Council,

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

Opal Jones,

I have been teaching in Howard County for 17 years, first as a special educator and now as an ESOL teacher. I have taught at all three levels in this county and am proud that our system is interested in providing the best possible education to our county's students.

We were told today that our school (BBMS) may lose up to three instructional staff due to funding issues. I cannot imagine how we could provide the attention and instruction our students need with fewer staff.

If HCPSS is not fully funded for the coming year, I hope that you will request an accounting from our superintendent as to why Central Office is adding staff when schools need front-line instructional staff.

Thank you for your consideration.

Wendy Cohen-Holbrook
wcholbrook@comcast.net
5941 Cedar Fern Court
Columbia, Maryland 21044

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Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 2:42 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: For Our Students

From: Mary Thierer <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 7:14 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: 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,

Hello Members of the County Council,

I am a Second Grade Teacher 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 teachers' 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 and directly impact the education of students in Howard County. HCPSS, one of the highest rated school systems in the USA, will become known for its overcrowded classrooms and its shortage on vital resources for our students. Without more funding, the increased class sizes mean that classrooms become overcrowded, resources are limited, and interactive learning becomes limited due to lack of space and resources. This is NOT the direction one of the greatest school systems in the country should be moving in. The technology currently available to our students is extremely limited. If our class sizes were to increase, there is no way we can reverse this trend. We need to think of our students, after all they are our future. We cannot afford to move backwards. We owe it to our children and to our students to empower them with the needed skills to be productive citizens in the 21st century. We can't afford to fall short because there is too much at stake. I am pleading with you to please increase the funds to the HCPSS budget. It's the right thing for our children, for our school system and for our future. Education is way too important to fall short.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Mary Kay Thierer

Mary Thierer

mkthierer@gmail.com

1213 Marriottsville Road

MARRIOTTSVILLE, Maryland 21104

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Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 2:23 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Do not increase class sizes

From: Shalini Leon Guerrero <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 7:09 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
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.]

Opal Jones,

To whom it may concern, The quality of HoCo public schools is one of the main prides of our community. I'm sure I'm not alone in saying I would support budget shifting from other areas and tax increases specifically allocated to increasing teacher salaries and keeping class sizes small.

Shalini Leon Guerrero
shalinilg671@gmail.com
4840 joyful way
Ellicott City , Maryland 21043

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Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 2:19 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Class sizes

From: Katie Stanton <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 7:09 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, I have been an elementary school teacher in Howard County for 12 years. I have taught Grades 1, 2, 3 and 5 as a classroom teacher. I love my job and couldn't see myself doing anything else! I love educating young people and helping them realize their full potential. The idea of class sizes going beyond 30 students is very concerning to me. I taught one year with a class of 30 students as a 3rd grade teacher. That was one of my most challenging years yet! The sheer volume of students made my job extremely difficult. My "small groups" for reading and math were not as small as they should have been for best practice. Students were not able to have my individual attention as much as I would have liked. It is also hard to form a relationship with and get to know your students well when there are so many! All of that was not fair to that class of students, they deserved a better student teacher ratio. Hours every week were added to my weekend workload with grading papers and working on interims and report cards. Parent teacher conferences were challenging as well just due to the amount I had to hold. All of this occurred with just 30 students, I cannot imagine having a class go into the mid 30s!! Teachers in this country are already exhausted and overworked. We already work late after school and on the weekends when it should be family time. We are seeing a drop in people wanting to become teachers and further increasing the difficulty of the job will not help our profession. Our class ratios need to be upheld where they are, lowered if ever possible, but absolutely not raised. I fear the already exhausted and overworked teachers will have an immensely more challenging job if class sizes increase anymore. This will also be a huge detriment to our students as they will not be able to receive as much individual attention

from their teachers. We also value and work hard in this county to build a feel of community with our classes and students, and an increase in sizes will only negatively impact that aspect of our jobs. Please help us keep our already difficult jobs where they are for the sake of our students and our wellbeing. Thank you for taking the time to hear my concerns.

Katie Stanton

kathleenstanton5@hotmail.com

16201 Opd Frederick Rd

Mt Airy, Maryland 21771

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 2:18 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: [Possible Phish Fraud]Approval of HCPSS Budget

From: Pam Riley <tigger@teachers.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 6:15 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: [Possible Phish Fraud]Approval of HCPSS Budget

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

WARNING: Your email security system has determined the message below may be a potential threat.

It may pose as a legitimate company, tricking victims into revealing personal information.

If you do not know the sender or cannot verify the integrity of the message, please do not respond or click on links in the message. Depending on the security settings, clickable URLs may have been modified to provide additional security.

Opal Jones,

I am writing this letter asking you to approve the school board budget. I have been a support staff in elementary school for almost 15 years and a parent of a past student and now a parent of a teacher. Each year things are getting worse. Support staff being cut does not allow us to help the student/teachers. When you have a hundred or more students at recess and only 2 maybe 3 adults to supervise them, it is a safety concern to me. This is were a lot of the bullying takes place and we have no time to support the students. Ten of my years have been working with students with behavior concerns, increasing the class sizes is not a solution, it's only a band-aid. There is no way a teacher can teach 30 or more students with the number of behavioral concerns in their class without the help of support people. Remember we are teaching the next generation of every job out there, we can't do that with things always being cut. I'm asking you to approve the budget.

Pam Riley
tigger@teachers.org
8001 Cocan Way
Elkridge, Maryland 21075

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 2:17 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: HCPSS School funding

From: Karen Spangler <karen_spangler@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 7:04 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: HCPSS 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,

I have been working in Howard County schools for sixteen years. The news of possibly larger classes and staff cuts is very alarming. If we cut staffing and increase class sizes, I don't see how we can still claim to be one of the best school systems. Even non-educators understand that the teacher to student ratio has a huge effect on student achievement. Please don't let this happen to our students.

Karen Spangler
karen_spangler@hcpss.org
10933 Hammond Drive
Laurel , Maryland 20723

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 2:16 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Lack of Support & Frances!!!!

From: Madge Johnson <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 7:03 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Lack of Support & Frances!!!!

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

Opal Jones,

Most of my years of teaching have been in Howard County, and the other years in Anne Arundel , and Montgomery County. I LOVE teaching.....but I am exhausted at the end of the day due to over-sized classes with students who have so many different needs, and this exhaustion does affect one's health. My frustration comes from NOT being able to meet the needs of ALL students without adequate assistance. I find my evenings and weekends involved with planning lessons, and buying supplies needed for class. Something has to change to meet the needs of ALL students AND teachers alike!!!!

PLEASE HELP US!!!!

Madge Johnson
madgejohnsrhs@yahoo.com
10777 CORDAGE WALK
Columbia, Maryland 21044

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Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 2:09 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Increase Funding for Education

From: Sonia D'Urbano <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 7:00 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Increase Funding for 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 Sirs and Madams,

Please don't allow funding for education to be decreased. How are our children to learn with larger class sizes and fewer educators? As it stands now, our schools here in our County are overburdened and portable classrooms seem to be the norm. This is not acceptable. Increase in home construction, means more children in our school system, how can the Council see it fit to cut on education and increase class sizes? As a parent and Howard County employee this smells fishy. Please reconsider for the future of our County.

Sincerely,
Sonia D'Urbano

Sonia D'Urbano
sdurbano@gmail.com
6721 Iron Ore
Elkridge, Maryland 21075

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 1:08 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Please Think of Our Future

From: Heather Green <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 6:59 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Please Think of 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,

Good evening County Council Members,

I cannot be in attendance at the meeting tonight. However, I am one of the teachers being potentially surplusd due to the budget shortfall. In a school of over 900 students, we cannot afford to lose teachers. We are already experiencing staff shortages as it is. Class sizes are too large and student needs are not being met as a result. Us educators cannot effectively teach or reach all children in these classes as a result.

I am a media specialist in an elementary school at that, where they sprinkle students into other classes for related arts because there are not enough of the specialists as it is. If class sizes are to increase even further, the related arts classes will exceed the proposed number of children to be in each class. Behavior concerns will increase; learning will decrease; and relationship building will decrease. Students enjoy their specials time because they can focus on different areas of education. Please do not ruin their time spent with us.

Please think of your children or grandchildren or nieces or nephews, whether or not they are in HCPSS. Please imagine what these proposed class sizes would look like, how they would impact them educationally and emotionally and even physically. These classrooms were not built to safely house over 30 children. Please keep the children of Howard County in mind.

Please keep the teachers and support staff in mind. If we want to be a world class education system as we claim to be, please do not increase class sizes. Please do not surplus our staff.

Please think of our future. It is imperative.

Thank you for your time,
Heather Green
Library Media Specialist

Heather Green
hgreen112@hotmail.com
2530 Lawndale Road
Finksburg , Maryland 21048

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 12:46 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Fund our schools

From: Valerie Mcbee <valerie_mcbree@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 6:59 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: 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,

To Whom it May Concern,

Howard county schools are consistently ranked in the top of state and national listing. This can not be maintained if class sizes are increased and support staff is cut. The number of students increase every year. We are asked not only to teach our content, but we are also asked to connect with, support, and train our students to be productive citizens. More funding is needed to maintain a high quality school system.

Thank you for your consideration.

Valerie Mcbee
valerie_mcbree@hcpss.org
3230 Old Fence Rd
Ellicott City, Maryland 21042

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Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 12:45 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Budget!!

From: Jenn Roberts <jennifer_roberts@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 6:57 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,

I'm a math teacher at HMS. I'm super confident in what I do & I especially love teaching on grade level. I love co-teaching and I work for those moments when something clicks and math is no longer something everyone dreads. I'm never going to be as nearly successful in this endeavor if I'm now potentially teaching 30+ whatever the number is inside my classroom. Building relationships, asking genuine questions to every single child, creating a positive classroom environment, making enough room for each student..... and learning itself will be hurt from not passing this budget.

If that doesn't help realize how much this would hurt us and the other letters you received .. think about it this way.. would you want to be in a room potentially by yourself with 34 kids? A room barely the size to seat 25 comfortably. I didn't think so.

Jenn Roberts
jennifer_roberts@hcpss.org
5160 ilchester woods way
Ellicott city, Maryland 21043

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 12:44 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Funds

From: Kelly Mcculley <kelly_mcculley@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 6:55 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Funds

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

Opal Jones,

Being a Howard county employee, words can not express the sinking feeling in my stomach this morning while our principal spoke about the consequential budget cuts Howard County is facing. 27.4 million dollars is more than just money. It's funding to provide support and supplies for students who need it, it's keeping up with the ever changing technology to support staff and student needs, it's providing a meal for children who may not receive dinner or even breakfast before coming to school and holding true to their expectations of sitting in a classroom for 7+ hours a day. Especially now during "testing season".

Many of Our students are already currently drowning in class sizes of 20-30+ Children with more and more enrolling every day. Although adding an additional 2 students per class may not seem like much to you, it makes a huge difference to the student who is already struggling with challenging distractions with one teacher and minimal support in the classroom.

I grew up in Howard county myself, in a single parent household which is more common than one would think in this area. My dad was constantly struggling to keep us in Howard county due to their reputation of a school system.

Now that I behind the scenes with my career possibly on the line because of lack of funding for our public schools... it saddens me to know there is money and funding available to constantly build new developments (which also contributes to higher populations within schools), funding to pay six digit salaries to higher county employees, and of course making sure Howard county upholds its reputation of being "one of the best counties in the country" all while the rest of us struggle to keep up with those expectations.

Please consider the adjustment of funding to allow staff to keep their jobs (while still being able to provide for their families) as well as updating old technology/programs in order for us to keep up with planning, supporting students and making school a safe and enjoyable place for us all to be.

Kelly Mcculley

kelly_mcculley@hcpss.org

1427 Ingleside ave

Gwynn oak, Maryland 21207

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 12:43 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Lack of funding to the schools

From: Sarah Rahman <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 6:55 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Lack of funding to the 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 lack of overall funding for Howard County public schools has left large gaps in several high need areas such as: necessary staffing in special & general education, lack of professional training, behavioral supports, and equity initiatives. The needs of the children must be met so that they can receive the best education possible and teachers and other school need the resources to do it!

Sarah Rahman
sr.rahman64@gmail.com
8507 Horseshoe Rd
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

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Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 12:40 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Please fund the budget

From: Kim Hartner <kim_hartner@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 6:53 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Please fund 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,

Dear Council,

I am writing to beg you to find the money to prevent class sizes from increasing. Take away my step increase, just please don't add more kids to my already large class. I'm a third grade teacher. Increasing the maximum number of students to 33 would create an unsafe working/learning environment. It is IMPOSSIBLE for me to be an effective teacher, differentiating instruction for that many students in ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies, and Health. It is IMPOSSIBLE to teach that many students in small reading groups with the allotted time for ELA. We have Being a Writer(Elementary Writing Program) and SEL(Social Emotional Learning Program) cutting into this precious time and adding more students to our classes will only cause the students who are reading above grade level to receive less direct instruction. This is reality. Not to mention the increase in paperwork, grading, and report card comments. There are not enough hours in a day as it is for teachers to do their job effectively. Adding more students to our classes will only make our jobs miserable and quite frankly more might go elsewhere to seek refuge from the insanity. We are teachers, doing the best we can for each and every student. Increasing class sizes is NOT the answer. Please please please consider the numbers and give us more money to allow our budget to be funded so that those of us behind the scenes working our tails off day AND night so that our future will be full of intelligent, self-sufficient humans can do our job effectively.

Sincerely,
Kim

Kim Hartner
kim_hartner@hcpss.org
646 E Watersville Rd
Mt. Airy, Maryland 21771

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Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 12:39 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Class Sizes

From: Sandy d'Aquino <sandra_r_daquino@mcpsmd.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 6:52 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,

I teach in Montgomery county, but continue to live in Howard county and send my 3 children to Howard County schools because I know Howard County is the best. I am impressed by the amazing teachers and by the school system. But one thing that bothers me is the class sizes. I teach in a title one school, and most of our classes have 16-17 children. Our classes are "big" at 18-19. The thought of 31-33 kids in a class is nauseating. It is too many children to give kids the differentiation and individual attention they need. Building relationships with your students is essential, and 33 in a room is just not acceptable.

Sandy d'Aquino
sandra_r_daquino@mcpsmd.org
4338 Riviera Sun Dr
Ellicott City, Maryland MD

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 12:38 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Do not increase class size!

From: Maria Rocco <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 6:49 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Do not increase 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,

As a parent of 4 children in the Howard county school system I'm deeply saddened at the notion of increasing class sizes next year. Howard county is know for its school system, and this will greatly impact the quality of education for our children. There has a to be another way to prevent this from happening.

Maria Rocco
mrocco61@icloud.com
10620 Graeloch Rad
Laurel, Maryland 20723

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Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 12:38 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Budget concerns

From: JESSICA RITZAU <Jessica_Ritzau@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 6:47 PM
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,

Hello,

My name is Jessica Ritzau and I am a school psychologist here in Howard County. I help support the mental health, social-emotional, and academic needs of all of our students. I am very concerned about the proposed changes to the budget because I have seen firsthand the impacts of larger class sizes on our students with significant emotional and behavioral challenges. I have also seen firsthand that additional support and smaller class sizes can make a world of difference in giving these students the extra attention, love, and behavior supports they need to thrive. As a wife to an art teacher, I also see the stress that large class sizes places on teachers, and in turn, can impact their ability to best serve their students. I appreciate your consideration of these factors. If student's needs aren't being met emotionally and if they don't receive the love and attention they need, they simply are unavailable to learn. Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

JESSICA RITZAU
Jessica_Ritzau@hcpss.org
Talisman Lane
Columbia, Maryland 21045

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 12:36 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Class Sizes

From: Noreen Ramienksi <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 6:37 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,

It is imperative that you reduce class sizes if Howard County is to be a highly ranked school district. There is no way teachers can get to know the needs of students if there are over 25 students in an elementary school classroom. Teachers are already overworked and underpaid. If class sizes go up, it will make more teachers consider leaving the profession. It is a safety concern as well. Please consider reducing class sizes.

Noreen Ramienksi
noreenp79@gmail.com
10710 Cleos Ct
Columbia , Maryland 21044

▪

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 12:32 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Class size

From: Kathryn Painter <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 6:32 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,

The proposed class sizes based on budget cuts are absolutely crazy. Please think of the students in your county here and the taxes that we pay. There must be another way. Each student should be receiving individualized education.

Kathryn Painter
kathrynpainter@gmail.com
5436 Harris farm lane
Clarksville , Maryland 21029

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 12:31 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Our Kids

From: Dallas Wiles <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 6:29 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Our Kids

[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 meet their student's needs due to class sizes. 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. Including smaller caseloads for special educators. The only way to make this possible is to increase funding to hire more teachers and avoid surplussing support professionals. With the the current U.S. mental health crisis, there's an increasing number of children committing suicide, and making life threatening remarks regularly. It's essential to also have 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. There are other places to cut from without surplussing staff positions in a rapidly growing county. Teachers deserve better, our students deserve better, and our community deserves better.

Thank you for your consideration,

Dallas Wiles
wiles.dallas@gmail.com

856 Margo Court
Sykesville, Maryland 21784

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 12:30 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Funding for schools

From: Led Tanis <mletanis@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 6:24 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Funding for 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 was appalled to learn today that HCPSS would consider raising class size which would result in losing staffing. We are already spread too thin and this will have a detrimental impact on the students we claim come first. It is in your control to reallocate funds and protect class sizes.

Led Tanis
mletanis@comcast.net
904 Longbow Road
Mount Airy , Maryland 21771

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 12:27 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Class sizes

From: Danielle Adam <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 6:19 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,

I am writing with the goal to persuade an increase in funding to directly influence class sizes. HCPSS is known for effective instruction. This is not possible when class sizes are too big. Having 27 students in a primary class makes reading groups nearly impossible, regardless of behaviors in the room. If a room does have even one student with behavior in the room, the other 26 students are likely to lose even more of the very little teacher-time they will be given as one of 27 students. It is cruel to both students and teachers to increase class sizes and disregard the needs of our young students.

Danielle Adam
Danielle.spurlock@gmail.com
10383 Waverly Woods Drive
Ellicott City, Maryland 21042

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 12:25 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Increase in class size is unacceptable

From: Ellena McCarthy <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 6:17 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Increase in class size is unacceptable

[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 because I am concerned about the proposed increase in class size. Our teacher are amazing but stretched as it is. In addition, increased class size really hurts children with 504 plans because more children makes it more difficult for teachers to implement accommodations. Please consider other options for balancing the budget.

Thank you for all you do,
Ellena McCarthy

Ellena McCarthy
ellena.v.mccarthy@gmail.com
3845 Ross Road
Ellicott City , Maryland 21043

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 12:24 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Howard County Public Schools buget

From: Stephany Bart <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 6:17 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Howard County Public Schools buget

[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. With increasing the number of students in the classrooms this also will hinder those student with 504's and IEP's. We don't want these children to fall through the cracks. With larger class sizes all of these children will not be prepared of the future.

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. THINK OF THE KIDS!!! They are our future

Thank you for your consideration,

Stephany Bart
sbartz2786@hotmail.com

6717 Summer Rambo Ct, Apartment, suite, unit, building, floor
Columbia, Maryland 21045-5405

▪

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 12:11 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Class size

From: Kimberly Williams <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 6:10 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,

To whom it may concern,

The idea that one teacher can continue to meet the differentiated needs of more and more students in their classes is insane.

Teachers work extremely hard and one more, two more children in a class does make a huge difference. Teachers are continuously asked to do more with less. Human resources are always cut and yet we want teachers to be a teacher, counselor, psychologist, care giver, mediator, social worker and the list continues. We are losing great educators because we always need them to do more to meet the learning goals for every student by being equitable in their learning practices and yet we keep taking away the supports they need to make this happen. Social, emotional and academic needs are important for all students so please do not put more and more students in a classroom and expect one teacher to be a superhero every single day. They love their jobs they love their kids but for middle school teacher this could average of 175 students a day, Is this truly realistic? How many of you have face-to-face contact and need to meet the needs of a 175 people A-day? Please reconsider the stress and workload of our teachers. If we spread them too thin the children are the ones who lose!

Kimberly Williams
khaydenwilliams@gmail.com
9873 Softwater
Columbia , Maryland 21046

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 12:11 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Funding for education is important.

From: Justin Riley <Justin_riley@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 6:02 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Funding for education is important.

[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 to strongly encourage you to fund Howard County's proposed budget for the 2019-2020 school year. As a current teacher, a Howard County Resident, and an Alumni from our school system, I live, work, and relax in our community. Howard County School System made me who I am today and set me on a path to touch children's lives with special needs to help them live a healthy and productive life after they leave the school system. Teachers are what inspire all other professions when we expose our students to different content areas. As a Special Educator currently, I am split between two grade levels with 16 students on my caseload and all of the teaching and paperwork that comes along with those students. But my job does not stop there; I am a member of our Academic Intervention team in which we monitor and assess interventions being used for our below grade level students. I am also a member of our Instructional Intervention Team in which we help specific students who are referred by their teachers that need targeted instruction in a specific area (Math, Reading, Writing, Behavior, Social) and is sometimes a precursor to special education. I am also a member of our internal crisis team in which Safety Care trained members within the building are called to respond to students that are an immediate threat to themselves, others, or property. Through this, I might have to restrain or seclude students for their safety and mine. In which many times I have put my safety aside for the safety of the student. You may be wondering with all these things going on when I have time to eat lunch, complete paperwork,

or go to the bathroom and the truth is 90% of the time I don't, and the work is done on my time at night and on the weekends. Such as tonight, I am still at school at 5:50 and will be going home to work on an IEP that needs to be sent home with a student on Friday. If other teachers and I were to bill the county for the work we have to do on our time your budget would need to be at least doubled. My priority is the students, and as a Council Member, yours should be your constituents, which are the parents of the students I serve. I know the County is against limiting development in Howard County, but if we continue to grow and are currently not able to meet the needs of our current residence through schools, fire, and police then how can we help the further development and the future residence. Getting rid of Teachers and supports by increasing classroom sizes and changing Special Education staffing ratios is not the answer. The answer is that the people we elect need to figure out a way to support the current residence and the future residence that you were elected to serve in the first place. As one of my professors in college told me and has stuck with me throughout my career, "watch what you say and do because little eyes are watching you." I believe that you can also take this into account with your profession as a politician. Thank you for Hearing my concerns, and I hope that you can all decide that Teachers are never in this line of work for the money (but being able to live on a sustainable salary is a necessity) but for the students that we serve.

Justin Riley

Justin_riley@hcpss.org

8001 Cocan Way

Elkridge, Maryland 21075

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 12:04 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Increase school funding

From: Rachael Wood <twinmommy13@msn.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 5:57 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Increase 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,

I was saddened to hear that our budget is in such a deficit that we are going to need to cut positions here in Howard County schools. There is no reason why a county as rich as Howard county should have so many students being pushed into their classes. Have you ever tried to teach 26 kindergarten students at one time?! Why should elementary teachers have up to 33 students in a class. How are we supposed to help students make progress and grow? How are we supposed to close the equity gap with students? How are you supposed to get to know the students and build positive relationships? When and how are teachers going to get all of their grading done? It's sad to see that so many positions will get cut. In my school alone we are losing 6.2 teaching positions. Our school is still growing! This makes no sense. We need the funding for our students and for the future of Howard County! Lastly, our goal as a school system has been to increase the number of minority teachers to help them mirror the students we are servicing. Since we are cutting so many positions, we will no longer be able to make these new hires possible. That is sad news.

Rachael Wood
twinmommy13@msn.com
1706 Reynolds St
Crofton, Maryland 21114

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 12:04 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: The impact of increasing class sizes

From: Abigail Braswell <ABIGAIL_BRASWELL@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 5:54 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: The impact of increasing 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 whom it may concern,

I am a teacher and a parent of students in HCPSS. After hearing about the potential for increasing class sizes I was so upset. The impact on students will be significant because we already have a heavy workload and the ever-changing curriculum to keep up with. Increasing class sizes will limit the amount of individualized and differentiated instruction we can provide students. With class sizes as they are, I hear teachers complaining about the size of reading groups- mind you our language arts office asks us not to have more than 6 in a group. Most teachers have 8-10 in their groups already. Having an increase in sizes will only make them larger and it'll be so difficult to find materials for larger groups (most books only come in sets of 6 or 8) and effectively teach those groups. I can see the impact of large class sizes on my own child in kindergarten since his class is at the maximum number allowed currently. He is a good kid and often is overlooked because the students with the most significant needs or deficits are services first. Please do not increase our class sizes. This is the LAST place that the money should come from.

Abigail Braswell
ABIGAIL_BRASWELL@hcpss.org
431 Woodbine Rd
Woodbine, Maryland 21797

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 12:01 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Funding for Special Education

From: Mary Arsenault <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 5:43 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Funding for 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,

I'm a Student Assistant in the Special Education department of an elementary school. I've been working in Special Ed in Howard County for over 15 years, the last 8 as an HCPSS employee.

Due to the shortage of staff caused by underfunding this has been by far the worse year for me as well as the students I try to help. To say I am overwhelmed and frustrated is an understatement; and I don't shoulder the responsibility that the certified teachers have to shoulder. We've all been overwhelmed this year. We're a very professional group, so I don't think our students have suffered too much, but I can't help but believe that more progress could have been made had we had more hands. I guess that's what I'm writing about. We need more people to help and a living wage for those people.

Special Education is where I see it most, but general education is in the same boat. We all need more people and the funds to pay them!

Thank you for your consideration.

Mary Arsenault
mimi.arsenault@gmail.com
8535 Old Frederick Rd
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 12:01 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: School Budget

From: Samantha Rowe <SAMANTHA_ROW@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 5:40 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: School 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 am writing to you as a parent and as a HC teacher. News was delivered to us teachers today about how the budget deficit will directly impact the schools. I am sure you understand that this impacts our students directly. The increase in class-size would be devastating to our students. I currently teach 3rd grade with a classroom of 28 students. I cannot imagine having up to 33 students in my classroom. At the moment, I feel that with all of the administrative duties required of teachers, I barely have enough time to meet each individual student's needs. It takes a long time to grade all of these papers, and as a parent it is difficult to spend hours each night planning, grading, and being the 'Mom' I need to be for my own children. This results in the fact that it is difficult to give constructive feedback, which is critical to improving a student's and parent's ability to know what is expected in that grade. As a teacher this increase will also directly impact my own family. With more students, more time is needed to plan, grade, and communicate with families. The quality of feedback that I will be able to give a parent will suffer. With possibly 33 students, there won't be enough time to foster a relationship with each child, that our county prides itself on. As a teacher I give my all to my students, but with a class size this large I will not be able to give my students the individual attention that is so needed at this age.

It also concerns me as a parent. The county has allowed so much building in this county, that we have built schools that are the size of high schools, our high schools are bursting at the seams. When will this all come back to haunt us? Have we forgotten our priorities? Will our

schools continue to be rated so highly with such large numbers? Our schools are behind in technology, we have book closets that haven't been updated in 30 years. We can't continue down this path if we want to be considered one of the best school systems .
Thank you.

Samantha Rowe
SAMANTHA_ROW@hcpss.org
4137 Brittany Drive
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 12:00 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Please fund our schools

From: Greg Walsh <gwalsh1@umbc.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 5:27 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,

One of the reasons I voted for many of the county council members was because they were educator supported. The news that Howard County might have to increase the class sizes is just unthinkable. My elementary school would lose 4 teachers. On top of one that was already slated to be surplusd which means a total of 5 teachers. Please, please, please find the money so that class sizes do not have to be increased. Our first concern is always our children. They cannot learn in class sizes of 33. That is what our school is slated to have in 3rd, 4th, and 5th grades and that is 33 to START with. It would end up being even more as the year went on. Kindergarten would be 27! It's unimaginable. Please support our schools, children, community, and educators by finding the funds to fully support our schools, especially class size. Thank you for taking the time to read my letter. I appreciate all you do in service for our wonderful county.

Greg Walsh
gwalsh1@umbc.edu
9684 Horsham Drive
Laurel, Maryland 20723

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 11:58 AM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Educational Budget Cuts

From: JAMIE SCHARDT <JAMIE.SCHARDT@GMAIL.COM>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 5:18 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Educational 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,

Hello,

Please allow me a moment to address my concerns with the prospected budget for Howard County Public Schools for the 2019-2020 school year. It is my understanding that numerous positions are being eliminated resulting in significant class size increases. This shift is of great concern to me as a parent and as an educator.

To begin, I want to emphasize the important role our children and youth play in the long term success of our community. Howard County is currently one of the top counties in the country in large part to our school system. Additionally, crime rates are lower than that of our neighboring counties. While correlation is not causation, we need to consider this link between education and crime. While it may save money in the short term to cut back on education, it very likely could lead to higher costs to the county in the long term. Please consider researching the scientific links between the cost of education compared to the cost of crime.

In order to avoid higher costs due to crime and delinquency in the long term, we need to consider what is best for our students right NOW!

Humans, by nature, learn by watching others and they need to know that they are important. Many need to know that there is someone who believes in their success, even when they may not. Our school system provides this. It does not simply teach academics. It helps students build healthy relationships with themselves, by teaching self regulation, with their peers, by

teaching cooperation, with their mentors, by teaching how to respect authority, and with the community. When a teacher is responsible for facilitating these relationships along with teaching the rigorous curriculum that has produced highly skilled adults in our community, we strip away the opportunity for these students to make those meaningful social connections. AS such, the potential success of our community for the future is now diminished.

As you make your decisions for various program funds, please ask yourself, "How will this benefit our community's children?" and consider the future consequences we will have to face years down the road be it higher crime or reduced economic success.

Thank you for your consideration,
Jamie Schardt

JAMIE SCHARDT
JAMIE.SCHARDT@GMAIL.COM
8687 HAYSHED LANE
COLUMBIA, Maryland 21045

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 11:57 AM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Class size and Staffing Budget

From: Jeanine Hintz <jeanine_hintz@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 5:11 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Class size and Staffing 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 a first grade teacher in Howard County. I can not stress the importance of smaller class sizes. It is not beneficial for the students or the teachers to have over 27 first graders in a class. It is so hard to meet the individual needs of all your students. The classroom space is limited, which limits the creative and student led activities that we can do. If staffing is reduced and class sizes increased, then we can't give the one on one attention to those who need it, or provide small group instruction. Smaller class sizes and adequate staffing should be a priority in our county. Our children deserve it!!

Jeanine Hintz
jeanine_hintz@hcpss.org
14073 Monticello Dr
Cooksville , Maryland 21723

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 11:56 AM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Help me (and about 126 OTHER teachers) be able to stay at the school we love!

From: Megan O'Neill <megan_oneill@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 5:08 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Help me (and about 126 OTHER teachers) be able to stay at the school we love!

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

Opal Jones,

Good evening,

I am a first year teacher at Hammond Elementary school. I fell in love with the environment, climate, and community the minute I stepped into this school to interview. I felt so lucky to be hired at this amazing school. I have become so involved in the schools community and been able to work with such wonderful colleagues.

I will be devastated by the pending HCPSS budget cut. Not only will teachers be forced to leave schools they love, the students they love, and the community they love, but class sizes will increase. Right now I teach a 1st grade class of 20 students. If the maximum class size increases to 26 students in 1st grade, instruction WILL suffer. It is already a lot to handle with only ONE teacher and TWENTY 6-year olds. These students require and deserve time and attention.

Honestly, teachers are changing the world and we can't do that if we are overloaded. We will get burnt out.

Education shouldn't be about the money. Education is about doing all that we can to ensure our youth is given the best opportunities to succeed in the future. Increasing class sizes and surplusing great teachers will NOT benefit our students.

I plead that you take into consideration what a 1st grade class of 26 students and 1 teacher would like like; what a 5th grade class of 33 students might look like. I plead that you take into consideration the future of America when making this budget decision.

Megan O'Neill

megan_oneill@hcpss.org

8430 Jopenda Dr

Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 11:22 AM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Board of Education Budget Concerns

From: Elizabeth Schultz <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 12:53 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Board of Education 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 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,
Elizabeth Schultz

Elizabeth Schultz
betsy.blom@gmail.com
3784 College Avenue
Ellicott city, Maryland 21043

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 11:21 AM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Additional Funding

From: Marie Acluche <marie_acluche@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 12:43 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Additional 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 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,

Marie Acluche
marie_acluche@hcpss.org
1673 Forest Hill Ct
Crofton, Maryland 21114

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 11:20 AM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: HCPSS Budget

From: Colleen Skrynecki <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 12:27 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,

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,
Colleen Skrynecki

Colleen Skrynecki
Colleen92278@aol.com
7939 Brightwind Ct
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 11:19 AM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: HCPSS Budget Needs

From: John Skrynecki <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 12:25 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,

Good Morning,

To drive in Howard County and see the countless new developments. Luxury condos on this road, luxury apartments in this neighborhood. It really is an impressive sight. With all of this unbridled building and expansion is, as you could imagine, a population increase. Beautiful new homes with good schools certainly makes people want to move and that is good.

Unfortunately, there is a negative side to that. Classroom sizes have swelled, making it more difficult for teachers to effectively reach all learners. Teachers regularly have to manage and teach classrooms of 30 or more students without much support. With the growing emphasis on Social-Emotional Learning, it is challenging for the teacher to connect with that many students on a personal level, which does not provide the students with the consistent social-emotional support. Couple this with seemingly less and less money available adds to the strain. Many teachers have to and do buy their own supplies, materials, and books. They do this because they care about their students and want them to be successful and that is noble. As you know, our teachers always have the children's best interest at heart and will do anything to help them succeed, including spending their own money. But this does not mean that it is right for them to have to do that. In a county as affluent as Howard County, it is incomprehensible that there is not enough money for education. How the county has managed to misuse the existing revenue is also mind boggling, but that is for another day.

Teachers are encouraged to use technology in their classroom as much as possible. It is a valuable and wonderful resource that can allow students to access other parts of the world that were previously unimaginable. Unfortunately for students in Howard County, that resource is hardly available enough. Most schools do not even have one laptop cart per grade, making it difficult to find time to use them. Making matters worse is that many of the laptops have already eclipsed their life expectancy and are prone to issues that require fixing. This would be fine if class sizes were manageable, but that is hardly the case. When a class of 30 students gets an older cart with 25 working computers, it is not fair or equitable to have some students share while others do not have to. It puts a burden on the teacher to accommodate and turns many teachers off to using technology.

As I watch the rampant growth and expansion of the county, I can't help but feel for our students and teachers. High stakes and expensive testing on old and decrepit computers. Swelling numbers in the classroom and dwindling resources. When will we prioritize the needs of our students and teachers? When will the county government stop prioritizing new development and buildings and start to invest in our future by providing a world class learning environment? When will we stop kicking the can down the road and start taking the education of our future leaders, doctors, lawyers, teachers, and police officers seriously?

John Skrynecki

jskrynecki@gmail.com

7939 Brightwind Ct

Ellicott City , Maryland 21043

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 11:19 AM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: We Need Additional Funds

From: Karen Lightfield <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 12:25 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: We Need Additional Funds

[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,
Karen Lightfield

Karen Lightfield
karenlightfield@gmail.com
6231 Sutton Court
ELKRIDGE, Maryland 21075

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 11:17 AM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Budget Needs/Concerns

From: Rhoda MacCormack <rhoda_maccormack@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 12:19 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Budget Needs/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 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,
Rhoda MacCormack

Rhoda MacCormack
rhoda_maccormack@hcpss.org
8125 Old Stockbridge Dr.
Ellicott City , Maryland 21043

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 11:16 AM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Budget needs

From: Kara Scott <Kara_scott@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 12:15 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,
Kara Scott

Kara Scott
Kara_scott@hcpss.org
20600 Darnestown RD
DICKERSON, Maryland 20842

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 11:16 AM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: HCPSS Budget Needs

From: Troy Westendorf <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 12:01 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,

Hello,

I am writing about the current budget needs of the Howard County Public School System. The biggest problem my wife faces everyday is not having enough time to give her students the personal attention they need to thrive. With 30 students in her homeroom, and 25 students in her math class, there is not enough time to form personal connections and check-in daily with every student she teaches. 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,
Troy Westendorf

Troy Westendorf
troy.westendorf@gmail.com
8504 wild wing way
Columbia, Maryland 21045

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 11:12 AM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: We Need Additional Funds

From: Karen Lightfield <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 11:59 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: We Need Additional Funds

[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 additional funds to support our students in HCPSS. The lack of overall funds leaves gaps in several high need areas and I am concerned with losing additional staffing in special & general education. I am a kindergarten teacher with 30 years experience educating five year olds. I am very concerned that raising our class sizes to 27 will be detrimental to the individual attention that is needed to teach these young learners.

Karen Lightfield
karenlightfield@gmail.com
6231 Sutton Court
ELKRIDGE, Maryland 21075

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 11:08 AM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: HCPSS Budget Needs

From: Jessica Westendorf <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 11:58 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,

Hello,

I am writing about the current budget needs of the Howard County Public School System. The biggest problem I face everyday is not having enough time to give my students the personal attention they need to thrive. With 30 students in my homeroom, and 25 students in my math class, there is not enough time to form personal connections and check-in daily with every student I 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 our classes. The only way to make this possible is to increase funding to hire more teachers. We would also benefit from having more than one school guidance counselor and school psychologist to help impact out 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,
Jessica Westendorf

Jessica Westendorf
jebwestendorf@gmail.com
8504 Wild Wing Way
Columbia, Maryland 21045

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 11:07 AM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: HCPSS Budget Needs

From: Stacy Rubin <stacy_rubin@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 11:42 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,

Good morning. My name is Stacy Rubin, and I am an ESOL teacher at Gorman Crossing Elementary School in Howard County. I am writing to you on behalf of the many hard working teachers and incredible students attending the HCPSS. I am proud to have taught in this county for almost 18 years; however, I am extremely disappointed with the direction I have seen us take in the last few years. Appropriate funding for our schools should be a TOP priority. Due to the lack of funding, we have made major cuts in staffing, which has had a negative impact on class size. The key to great teaching is to differentiate material according to our students' needs; however, with our class sizes increasing, it is nearly impossible to know each student on a personal level and establish rapport on a deeper level. Less staffing also means that our students with special needs are not having goals/objectives specifically met on a consistent basis. I have spoken to different special educators (at various schools across the county) who are physically ILL because they know they are out of compliance due to lack of staffing, and they are worried about their students' needs being met (and legal ramifications as well). This is unacceptable! We should not be put in this position. I implore you to not only put our students FIRST, but to also consider the emotional and physical well-being of your educators. Not only am I a teacher, but I am also a mother of two children who attend a school in Howard County. PLEASE reconsider the budget and understand that your priorities are misplaced. I apologize if I am coming across in a disrespectful tone. I honestly appreciate you reading this letter, and I do hope that our voices encourage you to reflect on this situation. Sincerely,

Stacy L. Rubin
ESOL Teacher and mother

Stacy Rubin
stacy_rubin@hcpss.org
8609 Watkins Run Ct.
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 11:07 AM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Please help fund education as promised

From: Melanie kelly <melanie_kelly@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 11:40 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Please help fund education as promised

[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,

It has come to my attention that MANY teachers could lose their positions due to the raising of class sizes! I am so disheartened to hear this as long time HCPSS teacher. Everyone always promises more money for education but once elected that money seems to disappear... So so sad... Are our children not more important than the other "things" this money is going toward. Let's be 100% real... People move to howard county for the schools above everything else! The schools are the pride and joy on HC. When I began teaching class sizes were manageable 18-21 students in a room. We have classes with THIRTY children in them!!!!!! Absolutely ridiculous!!! This is not an environment that is conducive to learning in any way shape or form. People WILL begin moving elsewhere if the class sizes don't get smaller. As I said the schools are the reason people move here and in order to keep people moving to HC the schools need to live up to the great reputation that HC has. I truly hope you will increase the budget so that hard working teachers are not losing their positions. So many of our young and new teachers are the best the HC has and we will lose them to other counties such as MOCO which pays a LOT more and is right up the road... I hope to hear good news about this in the coming weeks. Do the right thing please!

Melanie kelly
melanie_kelly@hcpss.org

5818 Bellanca Dr.
elkridge, Maryland 21075

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 11:06 AM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Class size

From: Kelly McKim <kelly_mckim@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 11:08 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,

Good Morning-

Yesterday, I wrote a letter concerning class size. This morning at our staff meeting more information was shared concerning possible changes for next year, so I wanted to reach out again. I can't begin to image how hard it must be to create a budget. I know that you have many stakeholders that you must consider when servicing the community. As a teacher though, I MUST advocate for smaller class sizes. My principal shared that without the extra funding requested, we could lay off 230 teaching positions in our county. Class size ratios could be as large as 26 students to one teacher in Kindergarten, 25-27 in first and second grade, and upwards of 35 students per class in intermediate. That is unacceptable for a county that pride itself on providing a quality education. We MUST do better for our students, staff, and community that benefit so greatly by the amazing, quality education provided by quality educators and funded by a supportive County Council. I implore you to find the money. It must be a priority. You can not build your community on the backs of overworked and overloaded teachers. I can not afford to live in the community that benefits directly by my daily efforts. I can not afford to live here because of the superior education afforded to ALL Howard County students.

Kelly McKim
kelly_mckim@hcpss.org

6715 White Rock Road
Sykesville, Maryland 21784

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 11:05 AM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Budgeting for Students and Staff

From: Gabriela DiMarco <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 11:05 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Budgeting for Students and Staff

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

Opal Jones,

The number of students in our school is not diminishing, but rapidly expanding. There is barely enough space within the building walls to house our 900+ student elementary school. We need more funding, not less, to operate and meet the needs of all of our students. As a teacher, my paraeducator is constantly getting pulled to other grade levels because of inadequate staffing and coverage as it is. It is inconceivable that students will be forced to learn in larger class sizes when the research shows that small ones are more beneficial. I have spent hundreds - if not thousands - of dollars of my own personal money to get materials for my classroom because there just isn't enough funding within our current budget to acquire engaging, meaningful learning materials for my students. If HCPSS is going to be a leader in education as it is viewed in the state of Maryland and across the country, we need to start acting like it. We absolutely need to negotiate a better budget agreement to adequate staff and serve our students.

Gabriela DiMarco
gabrielaedimarco@gmail.com
9999 Winter Sun Rd
Laurel, Maryland 20723

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 11:04 AM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Class size and budget deficits

From: kristin bogus <kbogus@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 11:01 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Class size and budget deficits

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

Opal Jones,

As an employee of the HCPSS, I am very concerned with the possibility that our class size could be increasing, and staff may be decreasing, making it necessary for 33 students per class in the 5th grade where I work. Not only is this a crime for such a "wealthy" county, but it places pressure on teachers to deliver a quality education and for students to get the attention and guidance they need.

I find it ironic that we are having perspective teachers tour our school today, only to find out this morning that our principal will be losing 6.1 positions next year, thus contributing to the overcrowding in the classrooms. With all the development scheduled for this area, I don't know how we will continue to grow and offer the high quality education Howard County is used to. I know as an employee, I and my co-workers will continue to offer the best instruction, guidance and support, but I feel that this will make our jobs more stressful in the future.

Please consider reworking the budget so that the loss of qualified teachers and student class sizes are not affected. Thank you for your consideration

Kristin B. Bogus

kristin bogus
kbogus@hcpss.org

8813 cardinal forest circle
laurel, Maryland 20723

▪

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 11:02 AM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: HCPSS Budget

From: Eileen Volker <EILEEN_VOLKER@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 10:48 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,

Hello,

I am a Technology Teacher 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, in every Instructional Technology classroom across the county, there are only 30 computers to instruct students and currently the proposed class sizes for intermediate grades are up to 33 students! Without more funding, the increased class sizes mean that 3 students each class would not have a computer to learn on! The same is true for all Library Media classes across the county which utilize carts of laptops for instruction. A cart has between 28 - 30 laptops. This doesn't even account for the fact that many laptops are out of date & often in disrepair. HCPSS does not have enough funds to purchase more up-to-date computers. I am pleading with you to please increase the funds to the HCPSS budget.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Eileen Volker

Eileen Volker
EILEEN_VOLKER@hcpss.org
15 Silktree Ct
Catonsville, Maryland 21228

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 11:01 AM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Funding

From: Jennifer Smith <jennifer_a_smith@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 10:07 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Funding

[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 hate that educators have to continue to grovel and beg for funding in this county in order to meet the growing demands. Howard County Public Schools are known for the quality of education. As the population increases, the staffing needs to increase too.

I would assume that County Council would support funding for the additional personnel, programs, and materials in order for Howard County Public Schools to remain the leader in education.

Sincerely,

JA. Smith

Jennifer Smith
jennifer_a_smith@hcpss.org
1158 Elm Road
Halethorpe, Maryland 21227

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 11:01 AM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: High Needs

From: Nastasha Knight <nastasha_knight@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:15 AM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: High Needs

[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 just informed of the budget constraints and as a special education teacher I am in shock that this is even a possibility. I am fortunate to work with an incredible group of people who are determined to meet the needs of all of their students. However, if the staffing were to decrease and the class sizes were to increase I do not see how that will be possible. We currently need more staff to accommodate not only the academic needs of our students but the behaviors. It would be unsafe to have large classroom sizes and less staff in a building with students who have behavioral concerns. If I am dealing with the behaviors in the building I am now forced to work extended hours to complete my work in a timely manner. As we move forward with the discussion of budget, can we please keep the students in mind. They are the ones who suffer!

Nastasha Knight
nastasha_knight@hcpss.org
999 Winter Sun Rd
Laurel, Maryland 20723

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 10:59 AM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Fully Fund the HCPSS Budget

From: Mandy Crawley <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:14 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,

Dear Council Members,

I am writing to urge you to fully fund the HCPSS budget. I am a special educator at Gorman Crossing Elementary. It is a fantastic place to work and a caring environment for children to learn. We are at almost max capacity in our school building at 900+ students. Upon hearing about the possibility of larger class sizes due to an unfulfilled budget there was a lot of anxiety among teachers. A class with 26 kindergartners or 33 students in grades 3,4,5 would create undue safety hazards, an inability to individualize instruction and not to mention a problem with physical space to educate children comfortably. As a special educator who was told we are losing a special educator before all these budget talks, I am worried. I am worried that my ability to effectively provide supports and services will be hampered by a lack of staffing and a fully funded budget. I am worried that some of the neediest children in the building may be in an overcrowded classroom or in a gym class with 66 children. Not fully funding our budget means less teachers, but the catch is the number of students stays the same! It makes no sense when we are already at max capacity. We, in fact, need more staffing but do the best we can to educate all students and keep them safe. Please do what you can to make our jobs easier and the education of our kids matter.

Sincerely,

Mandy Crawley
Special Educator, M.Ed
Kindergarten/Second Grade
Gorman Crossing Elementary
Howard County Public School System

Mandy Crawley
mlw3157@yahoo.com
7824 Otterbein Way
Hanover, Maryland 21076

▪

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 10:58 AM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: HCPSS budget

From: Megan Hodgins <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:02 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,

Hello. I am writing as a HCPSS educator and parent of HCPSS students. I'm concerned about the projected cuts in staffing for our schools and cuts in budget of mental health programs in our schools. Our exceptional education system is a major reason why my family is moving from Carroll County to Howard County for our daughters to begin their educational career. I also struggle to understand how we as teachers can continue to meet the ever changing needs of our students if class sizes increase and support staff decreases. Our children are our future and these projected "solutions" cause more harm than good.

-A hardworking educator and parent

Megan Hodgins
megchory@gmail.com
10510 Hunters Way
Laurel, Maryland 20723

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 10:56 AM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: HCPSS budget

From: Suzanne Ludicke <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 8:51 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,

As a current HCPSS educator for the past 16 years, I urge you to reconsider the current budget. Reducing the amount of staffing and increasing the amount of students in each classroom would be extremely detrimental to our schools. Cutting the mental health needs is very upsetting. HCPSS prides themselves on providing for our students academically and emotionally. How could we continue to provide for our students without the proper resources? This is unacceptable. I am a kindergarten teacher at CCES, and I am very concerned about the possibility of having up to 26 students in my classroom. Kindergarten is a place to build foundations and relationships. It is the beginning of the learning career. Class sizes should not surpass 20 in kindergarten so we are able to meet the needs of each child especially when the students enter the school and teachers are also learning what they need on a day to day basis. We have a lot of behavioral needs and if class sizes are too large, how we will effectively manage? Thank you for your consideration. Suzanne Ludicke, parent and educator in HCPSS

Suzanne Ludicke
suzanneludicke@gmail.com
11445 Iager Blvd
Fulton, Maryland 20759

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 10:45 AM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Budget

From: Marisa Kavka <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 8:51 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,

As a staff member and as a parent in hcpss I feel increasing class size would be detrimental to the success of our school system. Please keep in mind the health and well being of our children and staff.

Marisa Kavka
marisakavka@yahoo.com
10340 Maypole way
Columbia, Maryland 21044

■

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 10:44 AM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: HCPSS Budget

From: Mary Ann McCue <mary_ann_mccue@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 8:49 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,

I am a kindergarten teacher and am very concerned with the increase in class sizes and the cutting of mental health support. I am noticing an increase in the need for social emotional learning to be focused upon in kindergarten. We need to be able to provide the support to students starting when they enter school. Early education lays the foundation for all learning in future years. It is crucial and necessary to have the support and resources needed in order for our students to be successful learners and well rounded social emotional needs met.

Sincerely,
Mary Ann McCue

Mary Ann McCue
mary_ann_mccue@hcpss.org
6331 Ema Court
Elkridge, Maryland 21075

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Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 10:42 AM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Need funding for additional counselors at our school

From: Beth Goodman <BETH_GOODMAN@hcpss.org>
Sent: Monday, April 29, 2019 12:44 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Need funding for additional counselors at our school

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Opal Jones,

Hello All!

I am a teacher at Oakland Mills High School, and I love my job and my students. As you may know, from being in Howard County, we have many students at our school who experience trauma before they ever arrive at our doorstep. In order to teach our students, they need to be ready to receive instruction. Students who are experiencing trauma need more than teachers are able to provide in a classroom of 20-32 students. Even with additional training in how to help students who are experiencing trauma, we would not be able to meet these student's needs. Our school really needs specialized counselors available specifically to work with students whose personal lives require more than we are able to provide in a 55 minute class period.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Beth Goodman

Beth Goodman
BETH_GOODMAN@hcpss.org
8706 Yellow Bird Ct
Laurel, Maryland 20723

Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 10:42 AM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: High needs in HCPSS.

From: Deborah Vo <deborah_vo@hcpss.org>
Sent: Monday, April 29, 2019 12:50 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: High needs 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,

Dear County Council members,

Please know how important it is that in HCPSS we receive the recommended additional staffing in special & general education, behavioral supports, and equity initiatives. There is no way we can continue to provide the education our students need without this necessary funding.

Deborah Vo
deborah_vo@hcpss.org
2800 Stansway Ct
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

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Sayers, Margery

From: Jones, Opel
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2019 10:42 AM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Please Fund Special Education

From: Melissa Scobell <Melissa_Scobell@hcpss.org>
Sent: Monday, April 29, 2019 9:20 PM
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Please Fund 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 Council Members,

I have seen the effects of limited budget clearly this year at Laurel Woods Elementary School in the department of Special Education. I work as a PreK special educator as a half day employee and also as an employee in the afternoon at BBES. At the beginning of this year we, as a team, spent countless hours before school on Wednesdays problem solving how we can support our special ed students with a limited staff and an always growing need. I started this year with 3 students on my caseload and took on 3 Kindergarten students to help the rest of the special educators in the building since we lost a staff member this year due to budget cuts. I am ending the school year with 11 students on my caseload for just my morning place of work (16 students total including my afternoon placement). This may not seem like a lot of students, but I am servicing 3 different classrooms in the morning (2 prek classes and a Kindergarten class) and it is impossible for me to do this as a half-day employee. I have 1.5 hours of instruction time I can provide during my half day schedule daily and student hours that total more than 10 hours daily of needs. I was lucky to gain the help of an excellent para-educator this year, but she is also split between three classrooms and our combined total hours of service we can provide fall short of what our students need on an average day. When we add in all of the meetings, paperwork, and emails/phone calls to parents on top of an already too heavy schedule... the students suffer. That is the bottom line.

Last year I was able to work just in the two PreK classrooms and provide services throughout the morning for both classes and my students are flourishing in Kindergarten. One will be dismissed this year from his IEP and the others are leaps and bounds more successful and able to keep up with grade level work with some support. My students this year, in contrast, are not where they need to be for Kindergarten and it is clearly lack of time and resources.

My story is a small example of the special education department at Laurel Woods on a whole. I have seen a Kindergarten student not receive sensory support he desperately needed due to an overworked OT (she works in 4 different schools!) and lack of resources from the county. Instead of flourishing in Kindergarten, this student destroyed his classroom multiple times and his cries for help were not met, which created an unsafe environment for our students up until right before Spring Break. The list of the effects of removing one special educator from our midst due to budget cuts could go on and on. Next year, due to further budget cuts, we will lose another special educator to a sorely needed ALS program at our school and we will also lose a paraeducator. Next year our students will lose even more than they already are.

I could go on to explain how many hours outside of the school day I need to work and neglect my own children due to filling out paperwork and not taking my planning time, but I hope you come away from this letter with an understanding of how budget cuts for Special Education has been detrimental to the county as a whole and it is tragic to see our resources dwindling even more next year.

Sincerely,

Melissa Scobell

Melissa Scobell

Melissa_Scobell@hcpss.org

9701 Early Spring Way

Columbia, Maryland 21046