

Sayers, Margery

From: Beth Magen <bmagen@comcast.net>
Sent: Friday, May 17, 2019 9:42 AM
To: CouncilMail; boe@hcpss.org
Subject: Budget Shortfall - Elementary Technology

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

Dear HoCo County Council and BOE,

I am extremely dismayed to see that one of the options for dealing with the HCPSS budget shortfall includes reducing the time each student spends per week in Elementary Technology classes by half, from 60 to 30 minutes. 30 minutes is hardly enough time to get the students to focus and learn anything at all. The United States is struggling to compete on the world stage when it comes to STEM. Reducing critical learning at early ages in technology is NOT the way to ensure we are preparing our students for the future.

While I don't want to see cuts to any program, one area that seems to be off the table is reduction of instrumental music. While instrumental music and the arts are important for a well-rounded education, Instrumental music is being prioritized over teaching ALL children relevant technology skills in our elementary schools that they can employ in the classroom and in real life. Instrumental music only impacts those children who choose to participate and can afford to rent or buy an instrument. General music is still in the schools.

In a time when world leaders are advocating for STEM education and the need to be ready for a digital world, HCPSS is prioritizing instrumental music for only a percentage of children over technology education for all elementary children.

Please reconsider the reduction of technology education time as you attempt to remedy the budget shortfall.

Thank you,

Beth Magen

7127 Rivers Edge Road

Sayers, Margery

From: Michelle Ho <mhvan2000@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 17, 2019 9:40 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Howard County Public School GT Program

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

Dear Councilman,

I have recently learned about the budget shortfall and cutting program, GT and Technology program. GT and Technology program are one of the very important program in our county and it's make our county one of the best school system in the country. Congress has also released STEAM act and Artificial and Intelligence(AI) and Machine Learning(ML) Act. We are living in the world that has many cyber attacks. Our adversaries can't wait to make us vulnerabilities and attack our country. Therefore, building and investing in the next Generation is critical and important. This is why parents and teachers in Howard County really value GT program to support the future needs.

Please maximize funding to fill the budget gap for HCPSS.

Thank You,

Michelle

Sayers, Margery

From: Kristin Clark <kc@wellbeingmedicalcare.com>
Sent: Friday, May 17, 2019 8:21 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Budget FY2020

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

Dear Members of the County Council,

I am writing to express my hopes that the budget for the music and educational programs continues to provide the resources at their current levels. In The Power of Habit the author writes that the reason that we teach children music is because we are teaching good habits. As we work on societal issues such as obesity and the opioid epidemic we need to understand that a key to success is understanding cues and rewards and learning to develop them around behaviors that are good for body, mind and spirit. Teaching children these things from a young age is really important. Playing music is a renewal activity. At this time I think burnout is an issue for our teens. Treating burn out is not about doing less but rather it is about being able to devote time to a renewal activity and be mindful in that moment and to build on that momentum. I do not think we are at a time where we should reduce our music programs or our teaching staff.

Sincerely,

--

Dr Kristin Clark

Wellbeing Medical Care
Restoring the Patient-Doctor Relationship

Sayers, Margery

From: Margaret Glyder <glyders@comcast.net>
Sent: Friday, May 17, 2019 7:35 AM
To: CouncilMail; boe@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin; superintendent@hcpss.org
Subject: FY2020 Budget

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

Dear Mr. Ball, Mr. Martirano, County Council & Board of Education Members:

I want to express my concern about the current Howard County and HCPSS budget cycle for FY2020. I have lived in Howard County since 1996. Over the past 22 years, I have seen Route 100 built, homes infilled into neighborhoods originally developed in the 1960's, schools expanded to accommodate full day kindergarten and temporary classrooms added to all schools to accommodate overcrowding caused by new development everywhere in our county.

I am disturbed that any of you would think that surplusing teachers is a good idea. Teachers are not line items in a budget! My schools - Centennial High, Burleigh Manor Middle and Centennial Lane Elementary - are already overcrowded. How is it serving my family and my children by removing our resources? The current budget proposals treat students, teachers and the community we are all a part of as if it doesn't matter.

I urge you to find a solution that does not take teachers out of our schools and our communities.

Sincerely,

Margaret Glyder

9905 Springfield Drive, Ellicott City, MD 2104

Sayers, Margery

From: Kejing Chen <jjing_dan@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 16, 2019 3:46 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Concerns on HCPSS budget shortage and school program cut

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

Dear Howard County Council,

The local news show that there are proposals to cut HCPSS education program including music education, GT program, and others, across Howard County elementary, middle, and high schools, due to insufficient budget. As a parent of two students in the HCPSS, I am very concerned about the situation that HCPSS has insufficient budget and plans to cut education programs for the students.

Spanish language education program was already cut last year due to reported shortage of budget. Now more programs are being planned to cut, including music, GT, and others. I am strongly opposing this plan since sufficient budget and education program should be available for the kids in the county. I ask that you consider a budget strengthening but NOT CUTTING the current educational programs for the students.

Thanks,

Colin Chen

2004 Crescent Moon Court
Woodstock, MD 21163
Tel: 443-798-1961

Sayers, Margery

From: Steve Chen <steve.x.chen@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 16, 2019 2:57 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Against the planned cut to public school GT and music programs

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

Dear County Council Members,

As a parent of two Howard county elementary school students, I'm against the planned budget cut to the school's GT and music programs. Since the county and its officials have long been proud of the quality of the public school and have repeatedly vowed to keep it that way, I don't understand why there is a planned cut to the GT and music program in the coming year. Does it mean the the county officials think it's OK to sacrifice the education of school children in order to maintain or even increase the benefit of adults including the school officials and teachers? Of the cut has to be made somewhere, I would rather see its from the adults instead of the children.

Best regards

Steve Chen

Father of two children who is enrolled at Waverly Elementary.

Sayers, Margery

From: Rigby, Christiana
Sent: Thursday, May 16, 2019 1:46 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Education Funding: Increasing Property Taxes by 23%

From: Sunmy Brown <s_brown0304@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 14, 2019 6:32 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>
Cc: Feldmark, Jessica <jfeldmark@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Education Funding: Increasing Property Taxes by 23%

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

2019 May 14,

Dear Howard County Council,

I recently read an alarming article published in the Baltimore Sun that County Executive Calvin Ball may consider raising property taxes in Howard County by 23% or eliminate the entire police department budget in order to fully fund education in this county. I am astonished and discouraged to find out that these are the two options he is considering.

As an educator, I know how crucial it is to adequately fund schools so that teachers can meet the needs of all students. In order to maintain high quality education in Howard County, class sizes need to be reduced, eliminate overcrowding in schools, provide teachers and support staff with access to excellent materials, school facilities need to be upgraded, etc. I could go on and on. However, I am also a single mother, on a teacher's salary. By raising property taxes by 23%, this will make it almost impossible for educators like me to live in this county. I will literally be forced to consider options moving to a county with lower property taxes, which will be an incredible burden and life-change placed on my son and I. Currently, I live on Columbia-assessed property so I am not only paying Howard County taxes, but also Columbia-Association fees and taxes.

Increasing property taxes in Howard County will also force others such as those living on a fixed income, to consider life changes as well. Essentially, property tax increases will disrupt family livelihoods, segregate communities by socio-economics, and destroy the diversity that exists in Howard County.

I am imploring each member of the County Council to truly think about the impact this property tax increase will have on the retirement community, lower income families, lower-middle class families, and public servants who work tirelessly to serve the community. I am confident each member of the County Council can look at other alternatives to funding education, without raising property taxes.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter.

In Service,

Sunmy Brown
Ellicott City, MD

Sayers, Margery

From: Michael D. Kilberg <Michael_Kilberg@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 16, 2019 11:23 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Important Aftermath Digital Citizenship Email

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

The teacher in me can't let that formatting problem of my original email go. Please use the link below to see the original google doc and read it with proper looking paragraphs.

[Council Letter](#)

Michael Kilberg
Technology Teacher
Centennial Lane Elementary

Sayers, Margery

From: Michael D. Kilberg <Michael_Kilberg@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 16, 2019 11:08 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Re: Aftermath of work session (Important: Saving Digital Citizenship)

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

I apologize for the awkward formatting. I copied from a google doc. Apparently, outlook did not like that.

From: Michael D. Kilberg
Sent: Thursday, May 16, 2019 11:02 AM
To: councilmail@howardcountymd.gov
Subject: Aftermath of work session (Important: Saving Digital Citizenship)

After watching the entire work session yesterday, I was left with some hope given that some council members said they could potentially find money. However, if they did, it would be with the goal of potentially earmarking that money for specific purposes. I ask that you please request some of that money to save the technology teaching program from trimming.

There is only one topic that I am aware of that Dr. Martirano has had to reach out to every parent in the school system about. That topic is cyberbullying. I give my fifth graders a project called Activate every year in which they choose a topic and create materials for distribution to get the word out and make a change. This year and every year, some students on their own choose cyberbullying as their topic. It is a real concern for them in their everyday lives. This is a still [work-in-progress website](#) and petition that has been created by my students this year on cyberbullying. This will go out to every member of our community when finished.

Digital citizenship can only get better in this country if we teach our elementary school children how to properly use technology. Technology in the hands of children who are not taught how to properly use it is useless or in the worst-case scenario a weapon. If the thought is that homeroom teachers would pick up the slack in the area, I would ask with what time are they doing that?

The strategic call for action says the county mission is to ***ensure academic success and social-emotional well-being for each student in an inclusive and nurturing environment that closes opportunity gaps***. We as technology teachers are providing these students with the knowledge of how to properly navigate this technological age thus ensuring better social-emotional well-being. We are equitably closing opportunity gaps for those who socioeconomically would not have the technological exposure and expertise at such a young age. If you would like to learn more about why teaching digital citizenship at an early age is important, please read this [fantastic article](#) that breaks it down as a positive behavior intervention and support.

While Dr. Martirano said several times in the work session that a technology teacher would still be in every building, the new structure of 30 minute classes would not allow the necessary amount of instruction and work time for the digital citizenship PBIS units to be taught in the way they should. My students are excited to be in my class and want to work on these projects. Imagine if you wanted to solve this Herculean task of the

budget problem and you were told you could only work for 7 minutes a week on solving that. Below is a reminder of how the 30 minute class time per week would break down.

15 minutes of typing practice (Necessary because state assessments are on the computer)

5 minutes of instruction time (There should be more but this would be all I could use)

7 minutes of student work time

Time to log out and line up

Please do what you can to maintain such an important program in HCPSS and today's world. Thank you for listening again.

Michael Kilberg
Technology Teacher
Centennial Lane Elementary

Sayers, Margery

From: Heidi S. Shorter <Heidi_Shorter@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 16, 2019 10:58 AM
To: Heidi S. Shorter
Subject: The TRUTH about Technology Teachers

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

First of all, thank you for all that you do to support the school system. At this time, I know you have a difficult decision. I want to share my support of the elementary technology program and also invite each of you to **come to my classroom and see all that takes place with these young learners. It is impressive to say the least!!**

Currently, Dr. Martirano' Strategic Call to Action focuses on connecting with students and supporting them emotionally while cultivating relationships with students to promote an environment for learning. In the digital world in which we live, this is now more important than ever! Our current generation does not know a world without smart phones, computers, tablets and being so connected.

THIS is what technology classes offer. Instruction that is infused with curriculum connections, that includes support and proper use of equipment that builds upon a solid healthy digital experience. Technology classes that only last 30 minutes will not provide the time for any of this. After all, elementary students are still learning the basics of logging in and how to use digital tools and they need processing time for their younger brains that allows all of this to happen. 60 minutes a week makes it tough. 30 minutes a week will make it impossible.

No one would build a house without a solid foundation.

There is no way our county can be expected to create future learners without a foundation of digital knowledge of how to SAFELY use technology as a tool for learning. Classroom teachers at this level are already stretched to the brim. Putting digital citizenship as well as the now required MSDE computer science outcomes on their plates will in no way allow teachers the time to foster any relationships with these young people when they are forced to add more to their already full plates.

Last, sadly, and most importantly, the problem of increased mental health problems in our young students continues to rise. We all know that a large contributor to this mental health crisis is the presence of the digital behaviors of our society and the social media life that our students are a part of. It is their world. There is so much that happens so quickly and so much that these young people need to manage. When we start instruction these students at the youngest of age on how to behave online and the importance of their own digital footprints we can help them navigate a bit more clearly and hopefully think about their own as well as others behaviors in safer and more productive way. How can we even attempt to make a difference in this area in 30 minutes a week? Seriously.

Dr. Martirano has called on all of us to take care of our children. Take care of them emotionally and support them in the world in which they come from and where they live. They live in a digital world whether we like it or not. And, teaching them from the beginning and showing them the right way will only support further what our superintendent has asked of us.

This cannot and will not be done in a 30-minute class period one time per week. Taking away proper technology instruction from our youngest learners will have a greater impact on the future of these kids and their mental health and is a risk I do not truly believe this county is willing to take.

Think about it. We need this technology instruction for our youngest learners more than ever.

Thank you,

~Heidi :)

TODAY is an Opportunity!

Heidi Shorter
Technology Teacher
Hollifield Station Elementary

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## Sayers, Margery

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**From:** Heather Tom <heathertom@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 16, 2019 10:53 AM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** yesterday's work session with the HCPSS superintendent and BOE

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

Hello, Council Members--

Thank you for making this email address available so that a Howard County resident like myself can contact you. I am married and a mom of three. My husband works full-time in Howard County, and I work part-time in Howard County. I'm writing because I attended the work session with Superintendent Martirano and the BOE yesterday for about 45 minutes in the afternoon (because that's what my schedule would allow), and I'd like to comment in response to statements made by two of the members.

For Councilwoman Jung-- As the discussion of Equity Programming began, you made a comment in reference to fund-raising by PTA's and booster groups at schools that some groups are able to raise \$50,000 in a snap. If you know of groups who have had that level of success in fund-raising that easily, I would like to know who they are so I can contact them and learn their secrets. As a PTA volunteer and volunteer for county-wide school-related organizations over many years, I have supported and been involved in many fundraisers to support my children's schools, and I have never seen \$50,000 raised in a snap. I suspect that you knew you were using exaggerations relative to amount of time needed and quantity of funds raised, but I'd appreciate it if you would speak with more accuracy.

The reality I see is that it's gotten more and more difficult, and organizations have had to get more creative, over the years to hold successful fundraisers to support our schools and our children, even in areas of Howard County that statistically seem to be wealthy compared to others. A fund-raiser recently held at Ilchester Elementary School raised just over half of that number you used, and that was a real achievement for the IES PTA. It was a fundraiser tied to kindness; and, it had a positive impact throughout the school, not just because of the end result, but also because of the ways in which acts of kindness were encouraged. The funds were not raised in a snap-- hours and hours of time and effort over a series of weeks by many volunteers and community members went into the fund-raiser. So, again, I would ask that you speak with more accuracy when in a work succession making comments that the public is witnessing and are the basis of recommendations you're making to the superintendent.

I also understand that your real concern is in regard to availability of funds for schools that do not have as much access to wealth, and you suggested that a Policy committee consider rules for distribution of funds raised by schools that are in wealthy areas. As you may be aware, this topic has come up before. When I donate my family's funds to school fundraisers, I do so in anticipation of benefits to my own children, my children's schools and our local community. Rules that would possibly force distribution of funds raised to other school communities, would, in my opinion, wind up being detrimental to the school volunteer organizations who still have the good fortune (through their hard work) to gain support from their communities in raising funds for materials and programs that the county government and school system seem unable to provide. If I want to donate funds to other communities, I will make that choice. The school system is welcome to request support for other schools, as is done for the Homewood School every year (and many PTA volunteers from other schools do step up and support Homewood), but I would disagree with the idea of putting rules in place.

For Councilman Yungmann-- One comment and one request-- I was watching the video of the meeting later in the afternoon when you seemed to question a statistic given by one of the HCPSS staff members that suggests an increasing number of families who are eligible for FARMs are coming to live in Howard County. You seemed to question the statistic based on the fact that, to quote you, "Howard County is expensive." I agree with you that Howard County is

expensive. I would assert that families are still taking the risk of moving here because they believe that it's the best decision to benefit their children, and then they work very hard to be able to live in Howard County. I know of one Latino family, for example, that operates two businesses next to each other on Route 40 in Ellicott City, and they live in a modest single family home located off of Route 1. Their children attend Howard County public schools. I've talked to the mom, and she has told me she is willing to work hard and put in long hours for the benefit of her children. I have seen her and her husband doing just that. I do not know for sure whether they are eligible for FARMS or not, and it's none of my business. I couldn't help thinking of them as you seemed to question the statistic. Also, please keep in mind, as I'm sure you're very well aware, that these are very serious topics having to do with people's jobs and our children's education, and they are not a joking matter.

For all of the council members-- I grew up in Dundalk in Baltimore County in the 1970's and '80's. We lived where we could afford to live and our family had roots. We went to the public schools to which we were zoned while our parents worked hard. They had faith that the school system and staff were doing the best they could for their children, and they volunteered (and still volunteer) to help at the local, state, and national levels. I find that it is different in Howard County. Many of the citizens who contribute to the economy every day moved here because we think it will be safe for us and our children, and we think the schools aren't just trying their best, they are the best. Please continue to fund the school system, especially in regard to Class Size and School-Level Staffing, Special Education, and FARMS, at the levels that will help HCPSS to be the best.

Thank you again for the opportunity,  
Heather Tom  
5446 Autumn Field Court  
Ellicott City, MD 21043

**Sayers, Margery**

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**From:** legislative\_herren@ptachc.org  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 16, 2019 10:44 AM  
**To:** Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail; boe@hcpss.org  
**Cc:** PTACHC President Brent Loveless  
**Subject:** PTACHC Position Letter on Budget  
**Attachments:** May 16, 2019.PTACHC ltr.pdf

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

**PTA Council of Howard County**

**5451 Beaverkill Rd.**

**Columbia, MD 21044**

**410-740-5153**

May 16, 2019

Calvin Ball, County Executive

Howard County Council

3430 Court House Dr.

Ellicott City, MD 21043

Board of Education

Howard County Public School System

10910 Clarksville Pike

Ellicott City, MD 21042

Re: Budget

Dear Howard County Executive Ball, Council Members, and Board of Education Members,

The Parent Teacher Association Council of Howard County (PTACHC) has taken great interest in the ongoing budget talks pertaining to funding the Howard County Public School System. As you continue in your talks and deliberations, we ask you to consider the recent vote of PTACHC delegates. The organization has taken the position that funding should, at a minimum, cover negotiated salary increases, fully fund the health fund, and provide enough funding for staff and resources for the expected enrollment growth so that class sizes do not increase above the target sizes listed on the current HCPSS website.

It was pointed out to delegates by BOE Member Mallo that school population increases are at least on pace with prior years with 481 additional students entering the Howard County School System since the beginning of this school year. Since traditionally most new enrollments occur in the spring and summer months, growth is expected, yet again, to be in or around 1,000 new students. Thank you for your continued efforts to work with and listen to each other and community leaders to find solutions to the complicated budget problems Howard County is facing. Let us continue to hold quality education as one of our highest values.

Kind Regards,

Karen Herren, Esq.

PTACHC Legislative Committee

[legislative\\_herren@ptachc.org](mailto:legislative_herren@ptachc.org)

**PTA Council of Howard County**

**5451 Beaverkill Rd.  
Columbia, MD 21044  
410-740-5153**

May 16, 2019

Calvin Ball, County Executive

Howard County Council  
3430 Court House Dr.  
Ellicott City, MD 21043

Board of Education  
Howard County Public School System  
10910 Clarksville Pike  
Ellicott City, MD 21042

Re: Budget

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expected, yet again, to be in or around 1,000 new students. Thank you for your continued efforts to work with and listen to each other and community leaders to find solutions to the complicated budget problems Howard County is facing. Let us continue to hold quality education as one of our highest values.

Kind Regards,

Karen Herren, Esq.  
PTACHC Legislative Committee  
[legislative\\_herren@ptachc.org](mailto:legislative_herren@ptachc.org)

## Sayers, Margery

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**From:** Sherri Sloat <Sherri\_Sloat@hcpss.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 16, 2019 9:46 AM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** Elementary Technology

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

Good morning.

I emailed last week, so I will not go into detail again, but after watching the last 45 minutes or so of the budget work session this evening and I am again deeply disappointed that in today's world of technology, Dr. Martirano and his team feel that elementary technology is expendable and unimportant. It only reiterates to me and my colleagues that he truly has no idea what it entails to be an elementary technology teacher. Because of this, I will be forced to return to the classroom next year (my evaluation year), which in turn, will cause a classroom teacher at my school to be surplus. I also believe that it is not a "one size fits all" approach, as Elkridge is a school of over 900 students, so it would not be equitable to have the same amount of technology teachers at every school when some schools in the county have half that number of students.

While I understand that the budget was not cut and that instead spending was left unchecked by HCPSS as a whole, I believe that you have it in your power to make certain that this cut doesn't take place.

I urge you to think about the impact cutting technology positions will have on our students in this world of advancing technology as you are writing the amendment to the budget.

Sherri Sloat  
Instructional Technology  
Elkridge Elementary School

Developer~Empathy~Adaptability~Belief~Input

## Sayers, Margery

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**From:** Johnathan Misamore <jmisamore@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 16, 2019 8:59 AM  
**To:** boe@hcpss.org; superintendent@hcpss.org; mavis\_ellis@hcpss.org;  
kirsten\_coombs@hcpss.org; vicky\_cutroneo@hcpss.org; christina\_delmont-  
small@hcpss.org; jennifer\_mallo@hcpss.org; sabina\_taj@hcpss.org;  
chao\_wu@hcpss.org; CouncilMail; Ball, Calvin B  
**Subject:** Dr. Martirano,

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

In yesterday's budget work session you continue to reference precision cuts to several programs included in the proposed HCPSS FY2020 budget. Specifically, you continue to reference elementary technology education teachers and the reduction of their positions. This would seem counter-intuitive considering how heavily the county continues to invest in technology to make our students career ready for advanced technologies of the future. Cutting them off from learning basic technology skills during their elementary years puts them behind students from other counties, states, and across the nation. This will make them less competitive throughout their education and eventual careers. I suspect this is not the mission of HCPSS and I urge you to cease your focus on precision cuts to important programs and look more broadly at spending across the county budget. You're taking the easy way out through the suggestion of precision cuts instead of tackling excess spending across all programs. You were hired to do the hard work, let's put the focus back on making sure that happens and that HCPSS can continue to be one of the leading school systems in the nation.

Sincerely,

Johnathan Misamore  
A Concerned Parent

## Sayers, Margery

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**From:** David Floyd <David\_Floyd@hcpss.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 16, 2019 8:36 AM  
**To:** superintendent@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin B; CouncilMail; Mavis Ellis; Kirsten Coombs; Vicky Cutroneo; Christina Delmont-Small; Jennifer Mallo; Sabina Taj; Chao Wu  
**Subject:** Don't Cut Instructional Technology

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

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

First, I appreciate you taking the time to consider my input regarding the proposed reduction in Technology Teachers at the elementary level. Although I could be viewed as biased as a Technology Teacher myself, I provide a unique perspective as I sit directly at the point of learning in this area.

In an era where we find our National leaders imploring our schools to focus on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) in order to keep pace with other nations around the world and future workforce needs, we see the leaders of Howard County Public Schools considering a drastic move backwards. It is in the technology classroom that students can explore STEM early and efficiently. On any given day, you can walk into an elementary technology classroom in Howard County and find students creating, problem solving, coding, collaborating with their peers, learning to keyboard, and integrating classroom content into exciting and innovative technology products. Our technology students are creative and excited about their learning.

It is also in the elementary technology classroom where our learners gain the skills they need to be 21st century learners in other curricular areas. We teach students how to be safe on the internet, how to be positive digital citizens today and for the future, how to use a host of tools like G Suite and authoring tools like Wixie, and teach our students how to use the chosen learning management system for HCPSS; Canvas. Handicapping us from being able to do our job well and completely will be a detriment to our classroom teachers. Kindergarten teachers depend on us to train the youngest learners to log in to the computers and to safely and efficiently navigate websites so that their students can use computers in their classrooms. Intermediate teachers depend on us to teach digital citizenship, G Suite, and Canvas so their instructional time is used efficiently. Teachers are allowed to USE the technology in their instruction because we have done our job in teaching our students HOW to use the technology. It is so very disappointing you would even consider removing our ability to do that.

Reducing our class time from 60 minutes to 30 minutes effectively destroys our program. On a good day (when the computers are working correctly and batteries aren't dying), it takes a room full of intermediate students (3rd-5th graders) around 5 minutes to log in to their computers. When you include time for instruction (5-10 minutes if it's a simple task and little student interaction), students are left with maybe 10 minutes of work time before things need to be wrapped up and students need to log out. This doesn't include the keyboarding time of 10-15 minutes per class period we currently provide for students. This also doesn't include any time for building relationships with our students, any type of transition difficulties that students frequently have, or any kind of technological difficulties

that increase every year because of the chronic underfunding of our equipment. Also, decreasing the number of Tech teachers to one per school will make it nearly impossible to see every student. Our school has over 800 students, there would not be enough time in the week to effectively see, not to mention build relationships, with all students.

In a time when our county is focusing on equity, I find it troublesome that you would consider reducing students' exposure to technology. Many students in Howard County do not have regular access to the kinds of technology and tools we provide to them weekly. Our students work with robotics, computer science, and create innovative solutions to problems regardless of what is available to them at home. If you cut our program as drastically as you are considering, some of our students won't lose out. Their parents will still pay for them to take coding classes, and attend summer camps where they can create and explore with technology. However, we have so many vulnerable kids that will lose that access. The access to technology that is helping to level the playing field will be gone. Those students will be lagging behind their peers in yet another area. Our elementary technology classrooms have no socio economic barriers.

I understand you have very tough decisions to make in the weeks ahead. As you move through this process, I implore you to consider areas which will impact fewer students. Cutting the elementary technology program will negatively impact every single elementary student in Howard County. All of them.

Thank you for all you are doing on behalf of our students.

Sincerely,

David Floyd  
Elementary Technology Teacher  
Bellows Spring Elementary School

David Floyd  
Instructional Technology Teacher  
Apple Teacher  
Bellows Spring ES

[Consistency](#) [Includer](#) [Positivity](#) [Achiever](#) [Responsibility](#)

## Sayers, Margery

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**From:** Jones, Opel  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 15, 2019 5:31 PM  
**To:** Sayers, Margery  
**Subject:** FW: Music program cuts

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

From: Tahirih Samadani <tahirihs@gmail.com>  
Sent: Tuesday, May 14, 2019 10:25 AM  
To: Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>  
Subject: Music program cuts

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

Mr. Jones,

As you already know, the Board of Education is planning major cuts to the music program here in Howard County. The cuts will reduce elementary school music teachers and access to certain grades to take an instrument at school. This is very disheartening. My oldest daughter has been leaning flute and playing in the band for 2 years now at Phelps Luck Elementary School. It has had such an impact on her that she choose (without any persuasion from husband and myself) to continue flute in Middle School at Bonnie Branch. My understanding is that Howard County has one of the top music programs in the US. It would be such a loss to make so many cuts. My understanding is that groups of instruments would have combined lessons. It sounds like one teacher could not possibly do this and produce the same results as what Howard County has achieved. I have two younger daughters that had also hoped to be part of the music program starting in 3rd grade with Orchestra but now they will have wait longer. Early access to these musical instruments has had a huge impact. The younger the children, the more readily they can pick-up a new skill. I'm sure you already know the benefits of music outside of the music program and the development of neurons in the brain that would not have developed otherwise leading to better achievement in other subjects. We already lost our Spanish program at PLES last year, please push for them not to cut the music program too. Our school has one music teacher for band and orchestra- they have already slimmed the music program down as much as it can go. Please do whatever you can do so that music program is not cut. Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Tahirih Samadani  
Esquire  
Parent of two students at Phelps Luck Elementary School

## Sayers, Margery

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**From:** Jones, Opel  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 15, 2019 5:29 PM  
**To:** Sayers, Margery  
**Subject:** FW: Budget shortfall

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**From:** Jan Shipley <info@email.actionnetwork.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 14, 2019 3:23 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,

Hello, I just want to say that ESY is not worth the effort or the money. One of the criteria is asking if the student shows regression during winter or spring breaks. But we have a 6 week break after ESY so it makes no sense to offer ESY. I think this would be very cost saving. Just saying! Thanks

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Jan Shipley  
js2268@gmail.com  
33 Westmoreland St  
Westminster, Maryland 21157

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## Sayers, Margery

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**From:** Jones, Opel  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 15, 2019 4:55 PM  
**To:** Sayers, Margery  
**Subject:** FW: No to increasing classrooms

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**From:** Jennifer Busby <info@email.actionnetwork.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 15, 2019 1:19 PM  
**To:** Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>  
**Subject:** No to increasing classrooms

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

Opal Jones,

My husband and I recently enrolled our 4th child into a Howard county elementary school. We feel that there should not be an increase in class sizes because children will not get enough individual attention and I'm sure it will put more stress on the teachers. Howard county is one of the top Counties in Maryland and I feel like this would put a strain on that and our community. Please do not increase classroom sizes!

Jennifer Busby  
JBusby1201@gmail.com  
8723 Hayshed Lane Unit 14  
Columbia , Maryland 21045

## Sayers, Margery

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**From:** PTACHC President <president@ptachc.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 15, 2019 4:09 PM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** Local PTA fundraising

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

Good afternoon Councilperson Jung. We greatly appreciate your support of education in Howard County. I listened to your statements this afternoon in work session regarding fundraising equity between local PTA's in Howard County. I appreciate your encouragement to discuss this topic and effort to recruit volunteers to discuss this through HCPSS policy review.

The PTA Council takes this matter seriously and would like the opportunity to discuss this further with you. Local PTA's work closely with HCPSS, but are separately chartered under the State PTA which in turn are chartered under the State of Maryland under National PTA bylaws as a 501c3 organization. The topic mentioned is not insignificant and has been a reoccurring item of consideration nationwide. This will involve a fair amount of research on both our parts to review appropriately, but the time spent to know the issue better will be worthwhile.

Brent Loveless  
President - PTACHC

## Sayers, Margery

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**From:** Angeli Rahman <angeli.rahman@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 15, 2019 3:26 PM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** Concern of cutting GT funds

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

I am writing to express my concern over the pending budget cuts to the GT program in Howard County. Like many families, we moved to the county for the schools. We had many options to choose from but selected Howard County for the amazing school system and specifically the opportunities that are presented to the students. Our girls are in 4th grade at Clarksville Elementary and have participated consistently in the GT offerings at their school since Kindergarten. Our school has two GT teachers. They are excellent educators and role models to our kids. Our kids love school but the days they love the most are the days they have their GT classes. These classes provide a fulfillment to curious students in a way that is difficult to address outside of this program. Note, each one of our two GT teachers' classes is filled to the maximum. The demand exists to keep both of these teachers.

I'd like to provide some context to our personal situation. We are a single income household and my husband works three hours driving distance away. He is a professor and part of his research covers educational systems. We have chosen to continue living in Howard County for the schools. He commutes weekly to support our kids and the amazing educational opportunities they have been and are given. The school system is tying us to this area. In our opinion and research, no other counties can compare to what we have here. When families like ours see educational cuts being considered, it is incredibly disheartening. Please know, there are many residents like us. It would be a shame to inadvertently drive away the community we have by cutting such critical educational programs.

Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance or provide additional information.

Angeli Rahman  
443.433.6039

## Sayers, Margery

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**From:** Jennifer Misamore <Jennifer\_Misamore@hcpss.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 15, 2019 2:55 PM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** HCPSS FY2020 Budget

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

To whom it may concern:

I am writing to express my concern regarding the suggested "Savings Items" that are being proposed as part of the draft FY2020 Operating Budget for HCPSS. Although budget constraints are increasingly common across government, commercial, and academic organizations of all types I believe it is in our best interest to closely evaluate both the perceived and concrete impacts of the proposed savings items currently being considered. It is apparent that the school board and senior management of the school system have been diligent in their assessment and proposed changes and these efforts are both appreciated and received with an open mind. However, as a professional educator with over a decade of experience in multiple counties I have the opinion that some of the cuts will directly impact our students not only now but as they progress into additional schooling and eventual careers. Therefore, I suggest that we cannot be short sighted in our efforts but ensure that we are making a concerted effort to find efficiencies in the system without hindering our students for the future.

One savings item directly impacts my position as an elementary technology teacher and that is the reduction of technology teacher positions in elementary schools. The increased use and availability of technology is undeniable both in our professional and personal lives. The use of technology will undoubtedly increase at a rapid rate over the next several decades in ways that we cannot even imagine at this time, much has been the case over the last twenty-five years. As a result, it is imperative for our students that we start building a foundation of technology skills and responsible usage starting in elementary school. We use our technology classroom time to teach them real life skills that will carry forward in their education, facilitating eventual advanced uses of technology both in school and their professional careers. We help to integrate this technology into classroom environments where teachers can create immersive and engaging lessons not thought possible only a few years ago. It is truly remarkable what our students can achieve, even at a young age, when properly mentored and given the skills to utilize the technology as it was intended to be used.

If one of the duties of HCPSS is to make our students "career ready" look no further than the start of technology education at the elementary level. These students are our future engineers, physicists, scientists, authors, artists, doctors, politicians, and jobs that haven't even been created yet because the technologies

haven't been invented. It is our duty not to fail our students by cutting their time in technology class, but to empower them with the skills they need to change the world with concepts never heard of before.

As a result, I'm asking you specifically to re-consider reducing the amount of time spent on technology education in elementary schools. Not only will this handicap our students as they enter future high tech education but also their eventual careers. Additionally, you're taking away opportunities for the creation of highly engaging and student-centered learning environments in all elementary classrooms.

I accept nothing than the best to prepare our students for the future and I am concerned we will fail at that duty if the proposed savings items in the FY2020 budget become a reality.

Respectfully,

Jennifer Misamore

## Sayers, Margery

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**From:** Sarangi Parikh <sarangi.parikh@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 15, 2019 2:47 PM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** HCPSS funding

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

Dear Members of the Howard County Council:

As a parent of 2 children in the Howard County Public School System (it will be 3 children in the school system this Fall), I urge you to maximize funding to fill the budget gap for HCPSS. Many of us have moved to Howard County for the amazing school system and programs offered at the public schools.

More specifically, my older 2 children have been fortunate enough to participate in the GT programs offered at the school. Between the two of them, over the last 6 years, they have engaged in almost every seminar, curriculum extension unit and GT course available at their school. These opportunities are extremely valuable to students who are quick learners. If these opportunities are not available, these students may not get challenged to their fullest abilities thus creating a situation where you have gifted and talented students claiming they are bored.

My children have personally gotten a lot out of these GT opportunities and have become more self-motivated and curious learners. They look forward to going to school everyday and are eager to take on new challenges. The GT programs help develop excited students that become life-long learners and I truly hope that there is a way to maintain funding as is for these programs.

Thank you for your time and consideration,  
Sarangi Parikh

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Sarangi P. Parikh, Ph.D.  
President & CEO  
SPP Consulting, LLC

## Sayers, Margery

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**From:** Laura Register <Laura\_Register@hcpss.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 15, 2019 2:39 PM  
**To:** Ball, Calvin; BoE Email; CouncilMail; CouncilMail; CouncilMail  
**Subject:** technology

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

Hi,

I am writing this email on behalf of the technology teachers in Howard County as a teacher and as a parent. As a GT teacher in Howard County, I rely on my tech teacher at CCES, Amanda Rausch, to teach my gifted students how to use various programs at an early age. These programs include Wixie, Canvas, Comic Life, and many more. Due to the fact that she teaches students these skills, I can spend my time focused on the curriculum and not teaching my students how to use the technology. My own children have been fortunate enough to have Mrs. Rausch as a teacher for 60 minutes a day, one day a week, and I can say that they are very technologically sound. Please do not cut these positions! We also need tech teachers to help out the teachers in our school when something goes wrong with the technology that we use on a daily basis. Not only is Amanda my colleague, but she is my best friend. Please, please., please keep these positions! Thank you for your time.

--

Mrs. Laura Register  
Gifted and Talented Resource Teacher  
Clemens Crossing Elementary School  
410.313.6866

## Sayers, Margery

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**From:** Lixin Zhang <lixinzhang@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 15, 2019 2:33 PM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** Fw: support full funding of the HCPSS budget

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

Dear Councilman /woman

This is Lixin Zhang. I am a resident of Howard County. I am writing this letter to express my strong opposition to the proposed cut of programs and staffing level at HCPSS to meet the budgetary goals. In particular, I am outraged about the plans to lay off GT teachers across the county at all levels.

We are facing great challenges in the 21st century to prepare our children for what they will face when they grow up -- automation, artificial intelligence, machine learning, just naming a few. Yet, the county not only refuses to provide the funding necessary to accelerate growth in student achievement, especially for those whose needs are already insufficiently met, it threatens to reduce the resources by further depriving the students and schools through laying off GT teachers. How can we expect our children to remain competitive if this is the attitude taken by the decision makers at our county level?

We chose to make Howard County our home because of its top-rated public school system. Our children's education is of paramount importance to us and is not what we are willing to sacrifice or compromise. Regarding the proposed cut of GT teachers, I just want to make it clear that gifted children are children with special needs too. They often find it difficult to relate to peers, have trouble paying attention, have motivation issues when they are not adequately challenged, and can develop anxieties simply because they are gifted and seek perfection. In other words, similar to students who have learning disabilities, gifted students require special attention from trained professionals. HCPSS is fortunate to be able to hire so many capable GT teachers who are passionate about what they do. They are great resources that the community uses daily. Should the decision be made to lay off these GT teachers, the County Council will have to face the voters and explain why they disregard the needs of more than 1/5 of the students countywide who are taught and positively influence by these wonderful GT teachers.

Whenever the county faces a budgetary dilemma, it seems that the politicians always look at reducing public school funding as the solution. Our children had nothing to do with creating the budget problems and shall not pay for the mistakes or miscalculations by the elected officials.

Again, I strongly oppose any plan to slash funding for students and schools. Our children's future must not be undermined. Our children deserve better than this. I will most definitely be voting with their futures in mind.

Sincerely,

Lixin



## Sayers, Margery

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**From:** Benjamin M. Weiskind <Benjamin\_Weiskind@hcpss.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 15, 2019 2:13 PM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** A GT Teacher's Perspective on the Budget

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

Good Afternoon Members of the County Council,

My name is Benjamin Weiskind, and I am a GT resource teacher at Clarksville Elementary School. I have given 17 years of my life to working in Howard County Schools. I have worn a badge of pride and honor for all of those years knowing that I am employed here and am part of the Howard County family. Our school system is the most incredible of its kind in the United States in that our motto is to make decisions based on the needs of the students. In HCPSS, we aim to meet the needs of every single student, including those with special needs, those who are musically talented, and those who need accelerated instruction. Every one of them has the right to have their needs met.

I have been fortunate to work with the GT students for a decade. Before that time, I did not truly understand the concept of meeting the needs of all kids. Cutting GT positions will fundamentally alter the nature and structure of the GT program here in HCPSS, a program unlike any other in the United States. It is undoubtedly the best GT model for how to meet the needs of all children in that it allows the resource teachers to find opportunities to work with all students, even if they are not identified as GT. We work on talent development by offering instructional seminars that are open to all students. That would not be possible were schools to only have 1 GT teacher. There is simply no way to meet with all of the students who want and yearn for some sort of opportunity for acceleration in areas of interest.

Kids do not see limitations. Adults do. If we remove that 2nd GT position, we will be imposing those limitations on the minds of these young children, who have the desire and right to learn at their level.

I grew up in Dayton, Ohio and recall a pivotal moment in 7<sup>th</sup> grade. A teacher told our class that we were all mathematically gifted. That statement forever changed my life. It showed me I could do better and that someone believed in me. I have the daily opportunity to provide that sentiment to children who, like all other students, deserve to be challenged.

Please preserve the opportunities of GT instruction in its current model for all children, opportunities provided by a program that set our county apart from any other in the state and the country.

Respectfully,

Benjamin Weiskind

-- Benjamin Weiskind  
Gifted and Talented Resource Teacher

Clarksville Elementary School  
410-313-7050

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## Sayers, Margery

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**From:** David Ryan <dcryan7@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 15, 2019 11:57 AM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** substitute pay issue re: HCPSS FY 2020 proposed budget

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

Council Members:

I have communicated at length with my Council member representative, your colleague, Ms. Walsh, my concerns regarding substitute teacher pay, and I am sending this email to you all so that my insights and research are also included as part of the public testimony. I have communicated this all as well with the Board of Education and relevant HCPSS personnel.

I am a relatively veteran substitute teacher, and I urge you to encourage the Board of Education to maintain as a priority the proposed \$6/day raise (my sources inform me that is the proposed amount) for substitute teachers as they approach final decisions regarding specific allocations for the HCPSS FY 2020 budget.

While I personally do subbing more as a way to "give back," the reality is that HCPSS' ability to fill teacher vacancies is reaching a discouraging, dare I say, brewing crisis situation, particularly on Mondays and Fridays. We subs and on-the-ground staff surely know that to be true, and my further research indicates that to be the case as well.

HCPSS used to, up until recently, be able to fill approx. 95% of daily teacher vacancies. Today, that figure is more like 85%. And on Fridays, the number of vacancies is often 600+, with only approx. 70 - 75% of those likely to be filled.

And while long-term sub positions used to almost always require certification, that prerequisite, in reality, has pretty much "gone out the window." (I don't do long-term subbing myself, but this highlights the overall situation.)

I have subbed for four years, mainly within the county's high schools, and the number of days I have been asked to cover all six periods in high schools has increased dramatically. Some of us subs, again, for philosophical reasons (I am not trying to make us heroes, it's just how we feel), do not shy away from accepting assignments from schools where teaching may be considered more of a challenge and/or discipline more of an issue. But working six straight periods in such environments can often be exhausting. Some subs are indeed saying "enough" and pulling back, especially while others within the system are being "locked in" for raises in the upcoming budget. (Remember too, we subs do not get any benefits.)

Subs do much more than act as sitters. Even the minimal requirements call for more than that. And most of us try to add some value to the instruction. In fact, some teachers rely on subs to actually teach content. For example, while I am not a former teacher, I do have a masters degree, and I happen to know Spanish, and so I often conduct skills review and introduce new concepts.

I invite you or any of your colleagues to "shadow" me some day to see what the current on-the-ground realities really are. Talk to HCPSS temporary services administration personnel. They will tell it to you straight as well.

There are of course other reasons for the sub shortage. For example, aspiring teachers have less need or feel less inclined to view subbing as an entry path. And the current overall high employment rate is another factor. There are indeed many subs who do rely on subbing to be one of their significant income sources, so to not raise the daily rate will undoubtedly lead to a smaller available pool.

I realize that one might ask, "Well, what would be so bad if schools increasingly cannot fill daily vacancies?" As I mentioned above, instruction quality would continue to be negatively affected, and staff and administrators would have to scramble even more to find coverage, which distracts them from their primary duties.

I respect that raising staff teacher pay is a current priority and that there are extreme pressures to reduce classroom size. But fostering suitable working conditions for staff also needs to be a priority. To not do that counteracts the other thrusts. And as I have tried to show, substitute pay is intricately woven with that.

I am not saying that raising the daily rate by \$6 will fully solve the brewing sub shortage crisis, but to not do that will most certainly serve to only make it worse.

Subs deserve a raise now given the pay raises that are being allocated throughout the rest of system. Substitute teachers do not have a union to represent them, so I am appealing to you to strongly advise the Board of Education / HCPSS to do the right thing.

Thank you for your consideration. Feel free to contact me with any questions or feedback.

And thank you for you what you all do in serving our fine county!

Respectfully yours,

David Ryan  
m: 301-717-3747  
4013 Arjay Circle  
Ellicott City, MD 21042

## Sayers, Margery

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**From:** Dianne Beer <dianne.beer@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 15, 2019 11:38 AM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** Budget for HCPSS

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

As a Howard County resident and parent of two kids in HCPSS, I'm writing with my concern about the budget.

I expect the Howard County Council to maximize funding to fill the budget gap for HCPSS, while preserving the current class size, for the benefit of all students AND members of our community.

Thank you,

--

Dianne Beer-Maxwell

## Sayers, Margery

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**From:** Pamela Abrams <pabrams26@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 15, 2019 9:15 AM  
**To:** CouncilMail; Michael Martirano  
**Subject:** Class Size & School Level staffing Impact on surplussed staff

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

To whom it may concern:

I am writing selfishly regarding the class size and school level staffing item on the agenda. I am a concerned parent for the Burleigh Manor Middle school community at large concerning the surplus of Beth Berkeley among other staff members at BMMS. Many times I have witnessed her dedication both to her field of social studies and more importantly to her students in a personal manner, all of whom are much better young people for having been taught by her. Three days after finding out she was being surplussed, which happened to be Teacher Appreciation Day, she attended the National History Day event this past weekend on her personal time. This is only ONE example of her commitment to the students of BMMS.

She is a remarkable teacher, one who is able to reach both the gifted students and those who struggle. As PTA president and parent for 5 years at BMMS, I have seen mediocrity and I have seen excellence. Beth Berkeley is an excellent teacher, co-worker, & parent. It is a shame that a teacher with her vision, imagination, dedication, and love of this school should be asked to leave. The saying "Last hired, first fired" should not apply in this situation. All of her years as a para-educator, media assistant, and her assistance in many aspects of this school cluster should also be noted in her resume for retaining her position. How does this successfully set her up for the future? She will eternally be the 'last hired' to any school she continues to be surplussed. The implication that these years of dedicated service should not be counted doesn't make sense to those of us that have always known Beth in the building.

Below is the copy of her letter (shared with permission) she sent to BOE and Dr Martirano but I wanted to send another communication regarding Beth's value at Burleigh Manor to yet another level! Thank you!

Pam Abrams  
(Parent & former PTA President, BMMS)

**From:** Elizabeth Berkeley <[elizabeth\\_berkeley@hcpss.org](mailto:elizabeth_berkeley@hcpss.org)>  
**Sent:** Friday, May 10, 2019 10:04 AM  
**To:** Michael Martirano  
**Cc:** BoE Email; [cball@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:cball@howardcountymd.gov); [ewalsh@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:ewalsh@howardcountymd.gov)  
**Subject:** Concerns

Dr. Martirano, Dr. Ball, Ms. Walsh, Esteemed Members of the HCPSS Board of Education,

The other night I attended the Work Hard, Be Kind award ceremony in support of one of the many amazing teachers in Howard County. I am very proud of everything she does for our community and I appreciate that she had the opportunity to be recognized for her work ethic and her never-ending desire to improve the community around her.

However, after receiving word that, if the budget is not fully funded, I will be surplus from the school and community that I hold close to my heart - and work so hard for - I began to question why I am in this profession, to begin with. In years past, I have been modest about my skills as an educator. As this is the second year that I am going through this upheaval, I will be modest no longer. I am good at what I do. I work hard for my students, I build relationships with them and their families, I reach out to those who need some extra TLC and work tirelessly to make sure that everyone has access to my curriculum. I volunteer with after-school programs such as Delta Scholars and invest MANY extra hours supporting students and families in completing National History Day projects including celebrating with them at the county, state, and national level on my own time. I am honored to say that I am a recipient of the GT Recognition award two years in a row. I incorporate technology, provide authentic learning opportunities for my students and provide choice in order to increase engagement. I attend all professional learning days, recently completed my Master's degree, and strongly believe in continuing education for teachers in order to evolve in a profession that should not remain stagnant. My peers, supervisors, students and their families respect me and trust that I will do everything that I can to make the whole child successful.

The fact that the audience laughed, Dr. Ball, when you mentioned the budget struggle during your speech at the award ceremony struck me to the core. My career is not a joke. The impacts this is having on schools, students, families, and me are not funny.

I strongly feel that I should not be surplus. I know that there are procedures to follow, and I know that that procedure points to me. However, in such an important profession it should not boil down to who is the last in, first out. We are talking about the impact on children and the future of our community. As a 10-year Howard County educator, whether or not this surplus comes to fruition or not, I feel it is a sad day when those in a position of power forget about the impact this has on the individual and the community.

Dr. Martirano, you always ask us to take care of ourselves. I cannot knowingly put myself through this every year. I have a son going to college this coming fall, with his sister only two years behind. I cannot handle not knowing what my fate is every year. My mental health right now is not good. I'm sad, I'm disillusioned, I'm anxious. My family feels it, too. How can I put them through this?

Actions (or lack of action) will cause you to lose teachers. Good ones. Ones that are needed. You may lose me - I spent the last few days updating my resume and job hunting. Later today I will create my first LinkedIn account. This will be for my sanity and that of my family. I don't want to leave teaching; I truly love my students with my entire being. I have always felt that this is where I am meant to be and I know that my students and their families would agree.

Please, for the sake of our community, fix this. For me, for my family, for my students.

Sincerely,  
Beth Berkeley  
7th Grade GT Geography and World Cultures  
Burleigh Manor Middle School

## Sayers, Margery

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**From:** Rachel B. Gelinis <Rachel\_Gelinis@hcpss.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 15, 2019 8:30 AM  
**To:** superintendent@hcpss.org  
**Subject:** Please Save Instructional Technology Positions in the HCPSS!

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

May 15, 2019

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

I am writing to you concerning the proposal for the reduction of staffing in Elementary Instructional Technology positions for the 2019-20 school year. I understand that our county is facing a fiscal crisis that is directly affecting the school budget; however, decreasing the instruction technology program to ease budgetary concerns is short-sided and will negatively impact each and every elementary student and will diminish HCPSS's standing as a public education school system model for the nation.

As a technology teacher, I have the privilege of coming to work each and every day knowing that I have a job that I am most passionate about. When students walk into my classroom they have a smile on their faces because they are coming to a class they enjoy. I value the time to develop relationships with my students that foster trust and respect. Under the HCPSS Strategic Call to Action, it states, "support students' social-emotional development and build healthy school relationships through restorative practices." It is not realistic for only one technology teacher to be able to develop these nurturing relationships with only 30 minutes of instruction once a week for 900 students, as proposed in the new budget.

In my classroom, students K-5 learn the foundational skill to be 21st century learners. Students have the opportunity to learn how to be a good digital citizen when interacting online or with social media. Research skills are taught early in my technology classroom to support classroom instruction, a skill which students will continue to rely upon throughout their formal education and beyond. Students have the opportunity to use platforms and tools to demonstrate their knowledge and creativity. Students who struggle with language arts or math, have thrived in my technology class. These students excel when it comes to computer science and coding. All my students are taught to think critically, analyze, collaborate, and be creative.

Mental health has been at the forefront of initiatives in the Howard County Public School System. As a technology teacher, we help teach our future adults the importance of use and guidelines of social media. It is essential that we promote responsible use of social media and impress upon our students the importance of critical thinking in an era where there is unlimited access to appropriate as well as inappropriate social media.

MSDE has put into effect computer science standards that must be taught as part of the curriculum. Having only 30 minutes of instruction a week with students is not going to allow that one technology teacher in each school to teach the computer science standards, the International Society for Technology Education standards, and be able to develop meaningful relationships with every student. At the start of the Kindergarten school year, it may take 30 minutes just to login all the students into the computers to begin learning!

Please take into consideration that our youngest student learners develop the foundation in technology that will carry them through their elementary years. Being able to access learning through technology is becoming more important each and every year. Our students need the skills that are an essential part of our society. Students learn to develop these skills upon entry into the HCPSS and never stop learning them throughout their educational careers. HCPSS is a model for enabling its students to develop these skills at an early age so that they can utilize these skills as they progress through their academic careers. To continue to stay at the forefront of public education, the HCPSS needs to fully fund the instruction technology program. Reducing instruction to our youngest learners who are enthusiastic and excited to learn will result in a diminished technology program that will negatively impact their ability to learn a most important skill that is simply essential today. HCPSS has a national reputation for excellence. Cutting the instructional technology program by half will certainly not enhance our system's reputation, but rather would demonstrate that HCPSS is no longer on the cutting edge of public school education. I sincerely hope that the instructional technology program will continue to be fully funded for all elementary school students.

Thank you,  
Rachel Gelinas  
Instructional Technology Teacher  
Hollifield Station Elementary School

Rachel Breslow Gelinas  
Instructional Technology Teacher  
Hollifield Station Elementary School

Discipline | Communication | Harmony | Arranger | Consistency

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## Sayers, Margery

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**From:** Eileen G. Volker <Eileen\_Volker@hcpss.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 14, 2019 11:26 PM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** HCPSS budget

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

Hello,

I am the Technology Teacher at Clarksville Elementary in Howard County and am writing to you in regards to the HCPSS budget. I appreciate that there has been a proposed increase in funding from previous fiscal years. However, the amount allotted would still leave HCPSS short of what it needs. **One** of the Potential Savings Areas proposed by our Superintendent to offset this budget shortfall is to reduce the number of Instructional Technology Teachers and to decrease Instructional Technology class time for our elementary students from 60 minutes to 30 minutes.

While I realize that the decision to allocate funds falls to the Board of Education and our Superintendent, I want the County Council to appreciate what's at stake in the education of our children. It would be devastating to the Technology instruction I provide each week, to only see my students for half the time. I would only be able to accomplish half of my current curriculum. I've spent the past few sleepless nights worrying about what I wouldn't be able to cover with our children... Online safety? Netiquette? Digital footprints? Cyberbullying? Online reputations? Balancing screen time? Coding/Computer Science? ...And so much more!

None of these *critical* 21<sup>st</sup> century skills should be on the chopping block. I implore you to consider increasing the funds to the HCPSS budget.

Sincerely,

**Eileen Volker**  
Technology Teacher  
Teacher Development Liaison  
Clarksville Elementary School  
410-313-7050

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## Sayers, Margery

---

**From:** Michelle Baker <Michelle\_Baker@hcpss.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 14, 2019 11:10 PM  
**To:** superintendent@hcpss.org; Mavis Ellis; Kirsten Coombs; Vicky Cutroneo; Christina Delmont-Small; Jennifer Mallo; Sabina Taj; Chao Wu; Ball, Calvin B; CouncilMail  
**Subject:** Proposed Reduction of the Elementary Technology Program

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

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

Our technological world is constantly evolving. How do we assure that our students find success and thrive today and in the future? Starting in kindergarten, Howard County students begin direct technology instruction for 60 minutes a week. We are the springboard for students to connect classroom content to real world issues and ideas and discover how that will drive their own success.

Empowered learners challenging themselves, problem solving both independently and collaboratively, and being creative grow from the opportunities they have to make their learning meaningful in the technology classroom. This stretches beyond the capacity of our general education classrooms. While it may be easy to imagine the storybook picture where it all integrates seamlessly because the student has a computer in their hands, that is not the reality. A tool cannot be used effectively if the skills aren't there. From the beginning, students are benefitting from direct instruction using Canvas, G Suite, and Wixie to establish the essential skills needed to successfully use the technology available to them for all that it is has to offer.

Although extremely important, technology education continues far beyond digital citizenship, internet safety, and keyboarding skills. In technology, first graders produced stop motion animation to share a personal narrative, third graders coded a robot to use a magnet and rescue a stuck "victim," and fourth graders designed kinetic creatures and built in the electronic circuitry. These students, as just a few examples, have now engaged in what was stand alone content. They worked through a design process, attempted to solve problems, failed and learned from those failed attempts to ultimately create an innovative new way to share their knowledge.

Learning styles vary significantly from student to student. The textbook classroom is not always the ideal scenario. Our students use what they learn in technology to flourish in academics and with self confidence that is not found in the classrooms. That first grade student who was struggling in his classroom to understand what a personal narrative meant and how to formulate his thoughts into sentences created a 1st place award winning stop motion video to tell his story.

The loss of technology teachers and therefore the reduction of direct technology instruction from 60 minutes to 30 would have a dire impact on every student in the Howard County school system's day to day learning and future success. Understanding that extremely difficult decisions need to be made, I plead with you to maintain the technology program, its teachers, and the opportunities it provides to our students.

Thank you very much for all of your time.  
Michelle Feldmesser Baker  
Educational Technology Teacher  
Longfellow Elementary School

## Sayers, Margery

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**From:** Jessica Scheffer <jessica.a.scheffer@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 14, 2019 8:47 PM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** Please support full funding for music!

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

Hello,

I am a parent of two young children in Howard County and we are thrilled to be going through the Howard County Public School System. One very important part of school is music education. Music gives children a way to learn outside of the "box" and to be creative. It expanded my way of thinking and expressing myself significantly when I was in elementary, middle, and high school and even in college! Music education is critical to the development of children and it **MUST** stay part of the curriculum at **EVERY** school. I understand that the budget is tight, but there are other ways to deal with that. Please do **NOT** consider cutting music. If I can help in any way, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,  
Jessica Scheffer

## Sayers, Margery

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**From:** Trudy M. Grantham <Trudy\_Grantham@hcpss.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 14, 2019 6:53 PM  
**To:** Japjit Sidana; BoE Email; CouncilMail  
**Cc:** Sandeep Sidana; Rafiu Ighile; Stephanie Ennels  
**Subject:** RE: [External] Concerned about proposed budget cuts

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

Good Afternoon,

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Note, the Board is scheduled to have 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,

Trudy Grantham  
Executive Assistant  
Board of Education of Howard County  
Phone: 410-313-1584  
Fax: 410-313-6833

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**From:** Japjit Sidana <japjit\_s@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, May 13, 2019 10:49 PM  
**To:** BoE Email <boe@hcpss.org>; councilmail@howardcountymd.gov  
**Cc:** Sandeep Sidana <sanj\_s@hotmail.com>  
**Subject:** [External] Concerned about proposed budget cuts

To Board Members and County Executive Calvin Ball

I am writing as a concerned parent of one, and soon to be two, students attending Pointers Run Elementary School. I have heard and read about the new budget proposal put forth by Dr. Martirano for the upcoming

fiscal year 2020. I was quite surprised and disappointed that there are significant cuts to our school budget being proposed, including GT teachers, technology, and music arts, as well as proposals to expand the class size. Our schools are the roots of our society including of our economy. The curriculum at our school fortunately has been robust and competitive, being able to effectively engage our children and help them be successful. I'm afraid that cutting back on the specialized and experienced staff in our schools and adding more burden in the way of additional curriculum and students to our home room teachers will have a definite negative impact on children's' education. This is a feeling that is shared by the many parents with whom I have discussed this issue. I urge you to not to approve the budget cuts to our education being proposed and preserve the quality of our education.

Japjit and Sandeep Sidana

## Sayers, Margery

---

**From:** Michelle L. Stein <michelle.l.stein@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 14, 2019 3:43 PM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** GT and Instrumental Music Programs in Howard County

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

As a parent of two children within the HCPSS school system, one in K and one in 4th, I am writing to ask you to maximize funding to fill the budget gap for HCPSS, including funds for the GT Program and ES Instrumental music programs.

These programs are huge components of the quality education received within Howard County. They are not available to the same degree within other surrounding counties and make our educational system one of the best.

The GT program at Waverly Elementary has afforded my older daughter with opportunities to learn in an enriched and accelerated environment, has enabled her to cultivate her interests in various topics that were only briefly discussed in class, and has inspired her to love learning. The GT program has increased her creativity and writing skills, further developed her ability to think innovatively and ask questions, and has had a significant impact on her overall self esteem. I look forward to my younger daughter being given the same opportunities.

The Elementary Instrumental Music program at Waverly Elementary has helped my older daughter to become a more well rounded student. As a result of the program and my child's involvement, she has learned dedication, cooperation, and responsibility.

I urge you to find funding for these programs, so that all children within Howard County can continue to be given opportunities to enrich their learning and become well rounded members of our community.

Thanks,  
Michelle Stein  
2680 Thornbrook Road  
Ellicott City, MD 21042

## Sayers, Margery

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**From:** Trudy M. Grantham <Trudy\_Grantham@hcpss.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 14, 2019 1:42 PM  
**To:** Robert B. Martin; BoE Email; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail  
**Cc:** Rafiu Ighile; Stephanie Ennels  
**Subject:** RE: [External] Support for Age Appropriate School Hours

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

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

Kind regards,

Trudy Grantham  
Executive Assistant  
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Phone: 410-313-1584  
Fax: 410-313-6833

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**From:** Robert B. Martin <robertbmartin@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, May 13, 2019 3:21 PM  
**To:** BoE Email <boe@hcpss.org>; CalvinBall@howardcountymd.gov; councilmail@howardcountymd.gov  
**Subject:** [External] Support for Age Appropriate School Hours

Dear Board of Education and County Council,

This is one of the simplest acts we can do as a county to improve the lives of our teen aged students. Please consider the following.

I am writing to you to ask that you please provide funding for an improved bus routing system, as requested in this year's HCPSS budget. Among other benefits, this will allow better identification of start time options that can minimize increased transportation costs.

I strongly believe that HCPSS schools should start later for our teens. Evidence shows that teens are healthier, happier, and do better in school when they receive adequate sleep. Starting school later is one of the simplest acts we can do to improve the quality of education in our schools by allowing students to sleep later. Because the chronobiology of teenagers naturally shifts to staying up later and sleeping later, they cannot get enough sleep by going to bed earlier.

Many other school districts that have implemented later start times for their students have results that are extremely positive. More students get the recommended amount of sleep, resulting in higher test scores and graduation rates, as well as lower rates of suicide, car accidents, drug use, and depression. The rise of mental health issues in our teens needs to be addressed, and adequate sleep is one part of the solution.

Adequate sleep is a baseline foundation upon which any growing body and mind need to build upon. Please consider increased funding towards the transportation costs in order to make this change happen. This way we can start chipping away at some of the root causes in the rise of suicide, obesity, teen road traffic accidents, attention deficit disorders, and so many other related issues.

We want HCPSS to lead the way in promoting the health and intellectual readiness of our students, so let's be the collective catalyst for change.

Please make every effort to implement later school start times for middle and high schools in Howard County. In particular, please provide funding for an improved bus routing system, as requested in this year's HCPSS budget. Among other benefits, this will allow better identification of start time options that can minimize increased transportation costs.

Sincerely,

Robert B. Martin

## Sayers, Margery

---

**From:** Trudy M. Grantham <Trudy\_Grantham@hcpss.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 14, 2019 1:17 PM  
**To:** Yi, Xin; CouncilMail; BoE Email  
**Cc:** Rafiu Ighile; Stephanie Ennels  
**Subject:** RE: [External] HC BOE: Save the Music and GT program

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

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

Kind regards,

Trudy Grantham  
Executive Assistant  
Board of Education of Howard County  
Phone: 410-313-1584  
Fax: 410-313-6833

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**From:** Yi, Xin <yi.sheen@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, May 13, 2019 1:21 PM  
**To:** councilmail@howardcountymd.gov; BoE Email <boe@hcpss.org>  
**Subject:** [External] HC BOE: Save the Music and GT program

Dear Council and BOE members:

We've heard our precious Music and GT programs at HCPSS are risking being cut or reduced. Funding for education is not sufficient for our kids. Facing an increased student population, we ask that Howard County Council allocate enough funding to BOE as necessary please. Having enough GT programs attracts top students and higher school performances. Many residents move to Howard County because of high

performances from our schools. If the schools starts to go downhill, it's not hard to see people moving elsewhere, property values & taxes reducing, leading to more fiscal burden for this county.

Please do not let this domino effect happen in Howard County, and save our Music and GT programs for HCPSS. Thank you very much!

Sheen Yi

## Sayers, Margery

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**From:** Trudy M. Grantham <Trudy\_Grantham@hcpss.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 14, 2019 1:10 PM  
**To:** Sherman Canapp; BoE Email; CouncilMail  
**Cc:** Debra Canapp; Amy Syversen; Patricia K. Hammer; esorchestra@hcpss.orgemail; gjsegala5@verizon.net; Rafiu Ighile; Stephanie Ennels  
**Subject:** RE: [External] HCPSS Elementary School Music Program Funding

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**From:** Sherman Canapp <SCanapp@vosm.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, May 13, 2019 12:52 PM  
**To:** BoE Email <boe@hcpss.org>; councilmail@howardcountymd.gov  
**Cc:** Debra Canapp <Dcanapp@vosm.com>; Sherman Canapp <SCanapp@vosm.com>; Amy Syversen <Amy\_Syversen@hcpss.org>; Patricia K. Hammer <Patricia\_Hammer@hcpss.org>; esorchestra@hcpss.orgemail; gjsegala5@verizon.net  
**Subject:** [External] HCPSS Elementary School Music Program Funding

Dear Members of the Howard County Board of Education,

Six years ago we moved our family from Montgomery County to Howard County due to the incredible public school system. Both our children (Isabella 5th Grade and Caden 10th Grade) are extremely gifted in music and have excelled due to the strong programs and teachers in Howard County.

My wife and I have established our businesses in Howard County and are strong supporters of the community. Recently, we were informed that the funding for elementary school music programs may be discontinued. This is appalling and unacceptable. We feel strongly that music and arts are essential in establishing a well rounded education, that there is great synergy between music and other academic disciplines (such as mathematics), and that it provides tremendous social support, adolescent growth and enrichment. We have personally experienced these positive effects in the lives of our children who began music in elementary school.

With the HCPSS being one of the strongest programs in the country it seems reasonable that you should be further developing the program, not dismantling it. You are in the process of removing one of the the treasures that brought our family as well as others to Howard County. We strongly hope you will reconsider this action.

Respectfully,

Drs. Sherman and Debra Canapp

Sherman O. Canapp Jr., DVM, MS, CCRT  
Diplomate, American College of Veterinary Surgeons  
Diplomate, American College of Veterinary Sports Medicine & Rehabilitation

Chief of Staff,  
Veterinary Orthopedic & Sports Medicine Group

President & CEO,  
Orthobiologic Innovations, LLC  
R&D in Regenerative & Sports Medicine

Founder & CEO,  
**Project GO (Global Orthopedics)**  
*People helping animals helping people...*

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Fax: (240) 295-4401

<http://www.vosm.com>

<http://www.ortho-bio.com>

<http://www.project-go.org>

## Sayers, Margery

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**From:** Trudy M. Grantham <Trudy\_Grantham@hcpss.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 14, 2019 12:45 PM  
**To:** Sherman Canapp; BoE Email; CouncilMail  
**Cc:** Debra Canapp; Amy Syversen; Patricia K. Hammer; esorchestra@hcpss.orgemail; gjsegala5@verizon.net; Rafiu Ighile; Stephanie Ennels  
**Subject:** RE: [External] HCPSS Elementary School Music Program Funding

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Respectfully,

Drs. Sherman and Debra Canapp

Sherman O. Canapp Jr., DVM, MS, CCRT  
Diplomate, American College of Veterinary Surgeons  
Diplomate, American College of Veterinary Sports Medicine & Rehabilitation

Chief of Staff,  
Veterinary Orthopedic & Sports Medicine Group

President & CEO,  
Orthobiologic Innovations, LLC  
R&D in Regenerative & Sports Medicine

Founder & CEO,  
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*People helping animals helping people...*

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<http://www.vosm.com>

<http://www.ortho-bio.com>

<http://www.project-go.org>

## Sayers, Margery

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**From:** Joan M. Tellish <Joan\_Tellish@hcpss.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 14, 2019 11:39 AM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** School System Budget

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

Dear Howard County Council~

My name is Joan Tellish and I am currently a Mathematics Support teacher with HCPSS. I service 3 schools. I have been a teacher for 24 years, the past 17 with HCPSS.

I am dismayed with the budget shortfall. I have been reading all of the articles and am wondering why this all just came to be last week? The school environment is one filled with stress as teachers are finding out they are suprlused while others are in fear of losing their positions. So much for social emotional health!

I have read and reread Dr. Martirano's list of possible cuts. Wow! I am aware that the County Council is doing everything in their power to find additional funds. I want to advocate first to please, please do not raise class size. Through my years as an educator and providing support to teachers, I have found that low class size is crucial. Elementary teachers are expected to teach ALL subject areas and to differentiate when needed. There are so many levels of learners in each class, each with their own unique style. Large class size will take away everything that we have worked so hard for. In many schools, student behavior affects learning, and now we want to increase class size?

Mathematics and Technology are the future of education. Math helps students to think analytically and to have better reasoning skills. Problem Solving is needed for the jobs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. I read where GT positions could be cut - leaving one at each school. As a former GT teacher this saddens me, however, I plead that if these positions are cut, please have them teach math. The CEU's and Instructional seminars are "fluff". Our students need good math instruction.

Thank you for your doing all that you can to problem solve and to find a solution for this situation.

Joan Tellish  
Mathematics Support Teacher  
Howard County Public School System  
Bushy Park, St. John's Lane, Worthington



## Sayers, Margery

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**From:** Michael D. Kilberg <Michael\_Kilberg@hcpss.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 14, 2019 9:29 AM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** Thank you for listening

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

I wanted to say thank you for listening to my testimony yesterday. I started yesterday's testimony with somewhat of a joke about how Mrs. Kucler's child asked out of band that morning to stay and finish a project for me. The shame of this process is that I have to make a joke where I pit myself and my program against another outstanding colleague. This is Mr. Owen's email address (Frank\_Owens@hcpss.org) if you wanted to reach out to him and listen to his passion for teaching.

The truth of the matter is that Mr. Owens is outstanding and deserves all of the people who were there to support him and the music program. The sad part is that parents there apologized to me after the testimony because they were representing the music department with their 3 minutes and not mine. Parents should not feel forced to spend three minutes of testimony choosing which great program they want to save from trimming.

I was in All-State Chorus myself in high school and music has played a huge role in my life. I have written parodies like [troubleshooting](#) to the tune of Taylor Swift's Trouble to help teach the kids about the computer log in process (not my best singing). My own students have created [raps](#) about the American Revolution and [original songs](#) about it as well. When we have a great county with a great education system, all of these programs are intertwined.

We are preparing these students for success in a global world. Currently, my 4th grade students are in communication with a CEO of a tech company attempting to get some changes made to the way the program works. As you know, students from my school used their tech skills along with the time and effort of GT teachers to get a law written banning coal tar in our county. Those students already have a leg up on others just for the experience of creating presentations and making real change. With the trimming, the likelihood something like that happens is much smaller.

Our tech program has collaborated with Music, Art, GT, PE, Math, Science, Language arts, and Social studies in our project-based learning approach. Please take the time to listen to the rap and the the original song. Again, what these students who are 11 or younger are able to produce is truly amazing. They just need the time and instructors in order to do it. Thank you for listening and working with the Board of Education to come up with a solution that does not have the kind of impact that this trimming would.

Michael Kilberg  
Tech Teacher  
Centennial Lane Elementary