

Sayers, Margery

From: Pamela Palmer <pamsavonbiz@aol.com>
Sent: Monday, June 10, 2019 12:41 PM
To: boe@hcpss.org; CouncilMail
Subject: Equity in HCPSS Operating Budget

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

Hello,

This email is to show my support for the creation of more equity in the Howard County School System. Please be sure to consider ALL students in your funding decisions and ensure that the students who most need the resources receive what they need.

Thank you.

Pamela Palmer

Sayers, Margery

From: Amy Grutzik <agrutzik@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, June 9, 2019 10:09 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Thank you!

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

Dear County Council,

I would like to thank you for voting to add \$400,000 to the HCPSS FY20 operating budget for the purchase of a new bus routing system and for recognizing the importance of using updated technology to help achieve the goals of the County Council, the BOE, and the Community.

Last week during the HCPSS BOE operating budget meeting, they voted to use this money for the bus routing system for FY20.

Thank you again for your support for this much needed system.

Amy Grutzik

Sayers, Margery

From: Kpetty79 <kpetty79@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 6, 2019 1:17 PM
To: CouncilMail; Ball, Calvin; boe@hcpss.org; superintendent@hcpss.org
Cc: Derek Petty
Subject: Re: Concerns About Howard County's Budget, Especially As It Relates to HCPSS' Budget

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

Dear County Executive Ball, County Council Members, Board of Education Members and Superintendent Martirano:

I am truly concerned about the decisions made on how to spend the money allotted to HCPSS. I understand that you are left to deal with a mess by your predecessors (especially the short sighted decisions to allow over development of the county without collecting adequate fees from the developers) but I urge you to reconsider how you spend the money for the schools.

I am incredibly concerned and disappointed that the BOE decided to prioritize extra music over technology and para support. I have nothing against extra music and I know there are benefits; however, ALL kids will still receive music as a related art regardless of your budget decision. Delaying orchestra to third graders for one year is a far better option than cutting para support to our kids and giving our kids less technology instruction in a world where technology is a necessary skill in every profession.

I am relieved you aren't increasing class sizes but let's not forget the classes are already at capacity (if not over). The paras are necessary to instruction. I don't know how you can expect our teachers to teach the curriculum to 25-30 kids of varying developmental levels without being able to send kids who struggle to the paras for more intensive instruction. Allowing our kids to slip academically because of lack of appropriate teacher support will lead to our county slipping from being one of the best in the country.

With respect to technology, I'm dumbfounded. I'm sure you know our world is constantly advancing technologically. Technology skills are necessary for every profession and people who fail to have these skills are often not hired or fired. If you are truly interested in the future of our kids (and the reputation of the schools), you should find a different way to allocate the funds than cutting technology to 30 minutes. Thirty minutes gives the teachers very little time, if any depending on the grade, to teach anything of substance. Our kids will suffer from this decision, especially those whose access to technology is limited. Even those kids in wealthy households May not have true computers and certainly not the necessary software to prepare adequately for their future.

Therefore, I encourage the BOE to reconsider how it is allocating the money. Please do not cut paras, increase class size, or cut technology. All of this is necessary to maintain our impressive school system and reputation.

Finally, the County Council needs to reconsider allocating more money to the school. This county has allowed massive development without stopping to think how this will impact our schools or other services (hospital, police, etc.).

Thank you for your consideration.
Katy and Derek Petty

Sent from Katy's iPhone

On May 21, 2019, at 10:34 PM, kpetty79@aol.com wrote:

Dear County Executive Ball, County Council Members, Board of Education Members and Superintendent Martirano:

Thank you for trying to come together to find a budget solution that will not directly impact the classroom. I was happy to hear that the county council plans to add some funding back to HCPSS' budget, which will help avoid increasing class sizes and cuts to the GT program; however, I am disappointed that this may come at the expense of the technology program.

As I'm sure you know, technology is here to stay and is necessary for our kids to understand, no matter what career path they may take. Cutting the time allotted for technology would negatively impact the education and growth of the students, which in turn will impact their success in their future careers. I implore you to find a way to support the technology program, even if that comes at the expense of the music program, which I understand would only impact those kids who choose to take extra music in the form of orchestra or band. In a perfect world, it would be great to have all of these options, including music. However, in light of the budget crisis, it is irresponsible to cut a necessary program like technology that all students need, regardless of their future journey, to benefit the few students who choose to participate in an optional music program.

I have heard that thought was given to cutting technology classes in elementary school from one hour per week to 30 minutes per week. If true, I do not see how the children will get a meaningful education in technology, since it likely takes a long time for the kids to get settled and signed on to the computer, as well as to sign out and line up. Before making these decisions, you might want to visit technology classes in various grades to see what percentage of time is actually spent teaching to determine if decreasing class time to 30 minutes results in effectively eliminating the program.

Even beyond preparing our students for their future careers, technology teaches so many more necessary life skills. For instance, technology classes teach our students to be good citizens and avoid online bullying. They teach the students cyber safety and how to safely use the computer and internet. While my husband and I teach our kids these lessons, not all children have access to computers in the home where their parents can teach them these skills.

Please reconsider your proposals on making cuts to the technology program. Please find a way to avoid increasing class sizes and maintaining the GT and technology programs.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.
Katy and Derek Petty

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

From: kpetty79 <kpetty79@aol.com>

To: councilmail <councilmail@howardcountymd.gov>; CalvinBall <CalvinBall@howardcountymd.gov>; boe <boe@hcpss.org>; superintendent <superintendent@hcpss.org>

Sent: Thu, May 9, 2019 11:53 pm

Subject: Concerns About Howard County's Budget, Especially As It Relates to HCPSS' Budget

Dear County Executive Ball, County Council Members, Board of Education Members, and Superintendent Martirano:

My husband and I moved to Howard County 15 years ago with the plans of starting a family. Although we were both raised and educated in Montgomery County, we purposely chose Howard County because of the excellent reputation of its schools. Now that we have children in elementary school, I must say we have been disappointed by what we have experienced thus far. The teachers' morale has always seemed low and it seems that the schools are lacking in resources. We were hopeful that teacher morale

would increase after former Superintendent Foose's exit. While the teachers appear receptive to Superintendent Martirano and he has made positive changes, the morale continues to suffer because of the constant threat of budget cuts, surplussing of teachers, and elimination of necessary resources and programs brought on by the lack of funding by the county.

Over the last few weeks or so, we have been following the hearings concerning the county's budget, especially as it relates to the money allotted to the school system. We were incredibly disappointed to hear that one of the proposals to accommodate the lack of full funding requested by HCPSS was to increase class sizes. Presently, my children are at an elementary school that has over 940 students, requiring 8-10 portables to accommodate them all. This means that each child's class size is already very large and my older child is "sprinkled" into related arts classes. As it stands now, I have no idea how my children are able to get the quality education advertised by HCPSS with such large classes. If you increase class size even more, I am greatly concerned that my children will become just a number and that they will fail to get individualized assistance from the teacher when necessary. Further, I do not understand how you can expect teachers to reach all of the students in the classroom and effectively teach them the curriculum. This seems like an unworkable proposal that will ultimately lead to many disappointed residents questioning why they moved to this county in the first place. I think you will also find that our quality teachers will ultimately leave their jobs and move on to something less stressful.

I am also disappointed to hear that the school is considering cutting the GT programs and surplussing GT teachers at the elementary level. If you shrink the GT program, I think it will negatively impact HCPSS' reputation. From what I understand, the GT curriculum is not something that can be easily absorbed by the homeroom teachers. Thus, you will hurt teacher morale again as they are forced to take on more kids and more complicated curriculum with less resources. This equation is not conducive to a positive and supporting learning environment that exemplifies the caliber of students in this county.

At the end of the day, the County Executive, the County Council, the Board of Education and the Superintendent need to come together and figure out how to balance the budget so that the kids will not suffer further. Please think outside of the box and consider what needs to be done to not only balance the budget now, but also what is needed for the future so this untenable situation is not repeated every single year for years to come. For instance, the County Executive and County Council need to focus on recovering more money from developers in our county that can be passed on to the schools. The County needs to stop allowing exceptions for developers to build in areas where the schools have reached capacity. It is unconscionable that the County has allowed overdevelopment which in turn has caused a lot of the overcrowding and underfunding problems we see in the schools. The unchecked development has also caused a lack of infrastructure to support the increased population caused by the developers' desire to build on every green space. The constant uncertainty in this county as to whether it will have enough money to fund the county resources and programs, including its schools, is going to cause residents to flee to cheaper counties where class sizes are smaller, especially if Howard County residents do not feel they are getting the value of their very high property taxes. While those neighboring counties may not presently have as good of a reputation as HCPSS, their smaller class sizes where kids get individualized assistance is growing more appealing by the day.

My husband and I are watching how you handle these issues. We do not vote party lines or for incumbents simply because their name is familiar. Rather, we cast our vote based on what you have done to improve Howard County, especially the schools. We hope that you will focus your efforts on improving Howard County and not let special interests persuade you to take actions detrimental to its residents, including its youngest residents, the children.

Thank you for your time.

/s/

Katy and Derek Petty
6935 Newberry Dr.
Columbia, MD 21044

Sayers, Margery

From: Link, Lisa J. (GSFC-443.0)[X3M Systems, LLC] <lisa.j.link@nasa.gov>
Sent: Thursday, June 6, 2019 6:54 AM
To: CouncilMail; Ball, Calvin
Subject: HoCo School Budget Citizen Inquiry

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

Good Morning,

Thank you for all you do. My name is Lisa Link. I have been a resident of Howard County for 13 years. I moved here, like many others, to start my family in a wonderful community, with great schools. I am saddened to hear of the budget issues that have led to many educators being let go for the 2019/2020 school year.

My question is, how can we continue to build in this area, and not ask developers to put more money toward the schools people come here for? The area is already heavily populated, yet building continues. Why eliminate positions that help the children learn, when the number of students is increasing? It seems much more could be asked of developers. Please increase developer fees to aid in resolving budget shortfalls for HoCo schools. We want our schools to remain the best!

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Lisa Link
JWST Configuration Management Specialist
301-286-5573

Sayers, Margery

From: Carly Aderton <carly.aderton@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 5, 2019 10:53 PM
To: superintendent@hcpss.org; boe@hcpss.org; Chao_Wu@hcpss.org;
michael_martirano@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail
Subject: School budget cuts including elementary technology

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

Hi,

First of all, thank you for all of your hard work and long hours and for your service to the county. I can only imagine how exhausting it must be. I appreciate that you're trying to do the best you can within the constraints that exist.

I'm writing about the school budget. I live in this county solely for the schools as I think most parents do.

I don't understand how a county known for its schools could be letting them decline, especially in this good economy.

I haven't scrutinized the budget but wish that options for increasing revenue could be explored, if they haven't already. Are increased property taxes an option? Not sure of the political ramifications, but if it is the right thing for the students, I beg you to consider it or other ways.

The HCPSS curriculum has far exceeded my expectations. It's amazing. I do not understand the decision to cut elementary technology. In this century it seems only to be increasing in importance. I don't want anything cut but certainly not the must-haves, of which I believe technology is a part. Also the bang for the technology buck seems huge. Halving the curriculum and cutting positions for fewer than \$2M in total savings doesn't make any sense to me. Elementary school is laying very important foundations for how to responsibly use technology and deal with our increasingly digital and virtual world. It's a chance to use the 20/20 hindsight of having lived with fast technological advancements with no front end training or regulation and dial back the negative ramifications.

I beg you to please not let the quality of any student's education suffer. They are the future, and they deserve it, and it benefits all of society. Please do not sacrifice the schools. There has got to be a way to solve this budget problem without harming those whom we have the greatest opportunity to positively affect, our children.

Thank you,
Carly

Sayers, Margery

From: heather.urner@yahoo.com
Sent: Wednesday, June 5, 2019 7:12 PM
To: Jung, Deb; CouncilMail; Ball, Calvin B
Subject: RE: Education Budget

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

Good Evening,

I would hope that a review of the email would be an opening to wear hay constituents are watching constituents are paying attention constituent are aware of the budget cycle the steps of the budget. We know that council are decides before the board of education, who then takes the money that we've approved and uses it for education. Our county is watching , our county is paying attention. Let's make sure we give our education system all the money they need so they don't have to do the cuts.I would hope that that would be the mindset to take away from all the emails from all the contacts from all the conversations. Lets stop with resting on MOE and give Education the funds to where BOE doesn't have to make the tough cuts.

Thank you
Heather Urner

On Wed, Jun 5, 2019 at 3:56 PM, Jung, Deb
<djung@howardcountymd.gov> wrote:

I appreciate you sharing your concerns.

I agree with you that the school system needs more funding. Unfortunately there is nothing more that the County Council can do regarding the funding of the school system.

Our budget vote occurred on May 29. Councilmember Walsh and I sponsored several amendments -- totaling \$8 million -- to close HCPSS's budget shortfall, but we were unsuccessful in persuading our other Council colleagues to support our amendments. We did manage to get support for an extra \$2 million: \$1.3 million for instruction, \$300,000 for substitute teacher pay raise, and \$400,000 for transportation costs associated with enrollment growth. But it isn't enough.

The Board of Education and the Superintendent met Monday night and made decisions about how to trim its budget in light of the funding it received from the County and State. It is my understanding that there will be no cuts to the music department. It appears, based on that meeting, that the BOE will make cuts to middle school paraeducators and elementary technology teachers.

I wish I could share happier news with you, but I can't. Next year, the schools will have the same funding issue. As a county, we are not preparing for the future nor are we preparing our children for the future.

You can find more information about the BOE budget decisions from the recorded meeting at: <https://hcpsstv.new.swagit.com/videos/28807>. The final budget will be adopted on Thursday.

Thanks, Deb

Deb Jung

Councilmember, District 4

Howard County Council

3430 Court House Dr., Ellicott City, MD 21043

410-313-2001

From: heather.urner@yahoo.com <heather.urner@yahoo.com>

Sent: Tuesday, June 4, 2019 3:00 PM

To: Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>

Cc: CouncilMail <CouncilMail@howardcountymd.gov>; Ball, Calvin <cball@howardcountymd.gov>

Subject: Re: Education Budget

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

Good Afternoon Councilman Rigby,

I hear the increased funding you say. It still leaves school with shortfall.

If you have questions with BOE having to cut paras due to shortfall, give them more money so they don't have to find cuts. Listen to BOE when the Board is asking for money and give beyond MOE so they don't need to look to using reserves. You control the amount of budget they have to work with.

Thank you

Heather Urner

On Tue, Jun 4, 2019 at 2:50 PM, Rigby, Christiana

<crigby@howardcountymd.gov> wrote:

Good afternoon Heather,

Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts on the FY20 Education Operating Budget with me this year. Through this long budget process, I am glad that the County Council was able to come together on May 29th and pass a budget with over \$48 million in *increased* funding for our school system.

The [mission of the Howard County Public School System](#) is to ensure “academic success and social-emotional well-being for each student in an inclusive and nurturing environment that closes opportunity gaps.” It is my hope that the school system works to guarantee this academic environment with the additional \$48 million in funding they are receiving in FY20, with a strong focus on instruction and maintaining a beneficial classroom experience for students and teachers. Any decision to disrupt our children’s education by increasing class sizes and targeting programs *when funds are available* would be concerning and shortsighted.

The additional \$48 million in funding accounts for a 5.6% increase in overall funding for the school system over last year, the highest revenue growth for HCPSS in a decade. With such a substantial increase to their budget, it is extremely unusual that the school system is suggesting staff reductions and increased class sizes as savings options. Furthermore, the school system is exploring savings options that would cut equity funding, such as reductions in elementary paraeducators that serve some of our neediest children.

The Council is taking these funding issues very seriously, and I recognize that new revenues will need to be raised to provide the education system that Howard County residents are accustomed to. In addition to raising the school facilities surcharge on developers, I will be exploring other new revenue sources for FY21 to address budget shortfalls facing the school system.

Once again, thank you for taking the time to reach out to my office during this budget season. Parents and taxpayers deserve transparency and accountability from a system that we entrust our children to every day, and I will continue to advocate for that accountability on behalf of every child in the school system. I am confident that the County and the school system will commit to working together to ensure that our schools have the future funding they need.

Yours in service,

Christiana

Christiana Mercer Rigby

Councilwoman, District 3

Serving North Laurel, Savage, Columbia, Jessup and Guilford

Howard County Council

3430 Court House Drive, Ellicott City, MD 21043

crigby@howardcountymd.gov

410.313.4101



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Sayers, Margery

From: no-reply@howardcountymd.gov
Sent: Wednesday, June 5, 2019 4:22 PM
To: ruthwalker3@me.com
Subject: email for Dr. Calvin Ball

First Name: Ruth
Last Name: Walker
Email: ruthwalker3@me.com
Street Address: 2847 Hunt Valley Dr
City: Glenwood
Subject: email for Dr. Calvin Ball

Message: June 5, 2019 To Each of Our Elected County Council Representatives, I tried to resist writing this message. Each morning I awaken at 3am and wonder how our current financial crisis for our school system budget got to this point. I think about how the fourth graders at our (Title I) school want to collect change to contribute to the deficit. I think about why the foundation of this school system is being shredded. Mostly, I lay awake and wonder if there are any possible solutions. The funds you have provided for the upcoming year were sufficient. Then you voted to approve "additional" funding of \$1.7 something million. What was enough was no longer enough? Some how we came to a showdown on June 3, 2019. Suddenly, at the last minute, the programming at elementary schools is under attack. The foundation of the school system and its reputation seem to be pawns in a kind of brinksmanship. To sink a ship, you bomb the hull. To implode a building, you start with the foundation. To render an institution impotent, you start with the most vulnerable. I am not writing this to "save my job. I am writing with tears in my eyes as a plea to find the courage to refocus the rhetoric back to the real reason we are all here. The deficit will continue to haunt us until there is a vision and a plan to resolve it with minimal impact any of our instructional programs at any level, but especially our youngest students. We will continue to search for those visionaries but right here, right now, we are facing the most devastating "reductions" to "programming" at any instructional level ever witnessed in Howard County. We have weathered other storms. Dr. Ball and other members of the county council were instrumental in orchestrating the recent change in leadership of the school system and most influential in helping to resolve the miscommunication and misunderstanding associated with a replacement school for the Talbott Springs neighborhood. There have been other funding shortfalls. Our community and elected officials have navigated through those challenges without a severe impact on the the foundation of HCPSS – our children. You do not need more rhetoric. You may have grown weary of our pleas for more money. I know I have. I did not want to be one more request for more money. Right now, we need a hero or a group of heroes to stop the insanity of the very real threat to our elementary schools and for those who cannot speak for themselves. We have heard the promises from Central office to "fix it" next year for the last several years and it never seems to come to fruition. Again this year, you have provided historic levels of funding for HCPSS. Is it possible to be the heroes we desperately need to Save Our Elementary Schools for this budget cycle? Is it possible to consider deferring some county level project costs for a year while the citizens mobilize to bring this recurring budget issue to the floor long before the last minute to midnight? I am asking for those fourth grade students who sincerely believe they can help solve our problem by collecting and donating their change. Sincerely as a taxpayer and teacher, Ruth Walker 2847 Hunt Valley Drive Glenwood, MD 21738

Sayers, Margery

From: Meg Ricks <capizziricks@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 5, 2019 2:09 PM
To: superintendent@hcpss.org; boe@hcpss.org; 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.]

Like many other residents, I've been watching with great interest the long and difficult budget process unfold. I'm deeply saddened that the amendment proposed by council members Walsh and Jung did not get passed. It is heart breaking to see cuts to what our school system can provide being debated year after year. I understand, as the council emphasized, that it's not a budget cut as the total amount is going up over previous years, but it is a cut in what our school system is able to provide. As our county continues to grow, so do the expenses and 'maintenance' funding will not cover it.

I am very worried about the cuts to technology instruction and to para educators at the elementary level that were recently voted on. These cuts will be deeply felt at our large elementary school and at every other elementary school in the county. Our Paras are already filling in so many other gaps in our school every day. Who will fill the even larger gaps next year? Thirty minutes of technology time in a week won't even be enough time to get all of the kids logged into computers, let alone to help the kids most in need of technology skills they can't get at home to catch up to their peers. These particular cuts seem penny wise and pound foolish. We should not have to choose between a music program that makes instrumental music available to so many kids who wouldn't otherwise get that opportunity, the people who help keep things running at every school for little pay and acclaim, and effective technology instruction for those most in need of it.

I ask the board of education and superintendent to find another way to cut expenses that won't put additional burden on our elementary schools.

I ask the county council to do what you need to do to raise the revenue necessary to fully fund our school system. I'm willing to pay more taxes if it will go to help our schools, but first make the developers pay comparable fees to our neighboring jurisdictions. We cannot afford to continue subsidizing their profits.

Thank you for your time.

Sayers, Margery

From: Chandra Sekaran Venkataraman <vchandrasn@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 4, 2019 9:44 PM
To: CouncilMail; Ball, Calvin; 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
Subject: HCPSS Elementary school - Technology instruction

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

Dear HCPSS Executive and Board Members,

I'm writing this letter to help save technology instruction for HCPSS elementary schools. We learnt the committee is considering reducing the instruction time from 60 to 30 minutes in the upcoming academic year.

As you know, technology plays a vital role in today's world especially in student's learning and preparation for higher education. Technology is also an integral part of our lives and I feel it is imperative for student to learn the technology and tools in a conditioned environment like HCPSS schools.

Therefore, I request you all to kindly keep the current 60 minutes instruction time for technology in HCPSS elementary schools.

Thanking you,
Chandra Sekaran

Sayers, Margery

From: Kathleen V. Hanks <Kathleen_Hanks@hcpss.org>
Sent: Tuesday, June 4, 2019 6:20 PM
To: sandra.m.bathgate@verizon.com; superintendent@hcpss.org; BoE Email; CouncilMail
Subject: RE: [External] Testimony- Please reconsider Para's and Math help

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

Good Evening,

Thank you for contacting the Board of Education regarding the Board of Education's Requested FY 2020 Operating Budget. Your email will be saved as written testimony for the public hearing process on the Board of Education's Requested FY 2020 Operating Budget. Please note that written testimony is part of the public record maintained by the Board Office and is uploaded online to BoardDocs as part of the public hearing. The public is able to submit written testimony until 4 p.m. on Tuesday, June 4, 2019, at BOE@hcpss.org.

The remaining Budget Meeting Schedule is as follows:

Thursday, June 6, 2019 at 4 p.m. – Adoption of Budget

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

Kind regards,

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

From: sandra.m.bathgate@verizon.com <sandra.m.bathgate@verizon.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 4, 2019 3:59 PM
To: Superintendent <superintendent@hcpss.org>; BoE Email <boe@hcpss.org>; 'councilmail@howardcountymd.gov' <councilmail@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: [External] Testimony- Please reconsider Para's and Math help
Importance: High

Good Afternoon,

I am reaching out to ask the Board to reconsider the decisions made last night during the BOE work session. I understand that cuts and savings need to come from somewhere if the County Council cannot provide more funding.

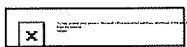
The choices made do not reflect a strong foundation for our elementary school students. My initial reaction was to tell my husband that we need to move out of the county. Please understand that I have very strong roots here so that type

of reaction is due to feeling like my child will not get the help he will need. I grew up here. I have stayed here and I am a proud graduate of Hammond High School. I want my son to have a chance at a quality education in Howard County.

The cuts to the Paraeducators, Reading and Math assistance (MST, MIT, RST) and Technology teachers and time allows our elementary school students to be negatively affected. If this support is cut my son along with many others will struggle. There will not be the help of a Para or a Math specialist to work with him. How will our teachers keep up and how will our children learn what is required? This is your problem to solve!

I do not agree with the decisions from the work session and ask that you reconsider other options. Please think about our children and what help they need to get started in life.

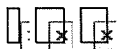
Thank you,



Sandra M. Bathgate, PMP, ITILv3

Manager
Strategic PMO
Verizon Business Group

M 301.367.5803
13100 Columbia Pike
Silver Spring, MD 20904



Sayers, Margery

From: Laura Davis <Laura_Davis@hcpss.org>
Sent: Tuesday, June 4, 2019 6:15 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Wee still need your help!

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

Dear Councilmembers,

First, thank you for the extra \$1.9 million dollars that you approved for HCPSS last week in your annual budget vote. I was able to view the Board of Education budget work session last night, and I cannot imagine how many more painful cuts would have been made had it not been for the \$1.9 million you already approved.

However, despite that money, lack of funding is having a direct impact on elementary school classrooms next year. Technology teachers were reduced from 62 to 42, and Para educator positions were cut by 88. These positions are absolutely vital to the health of our elementary schools in HCPSS.

I am currently an Instructional Technology teacher at Thunder Hill Elementary and it will virtually impossible to be an effective teacher with only 30 minutes of instruction. It takes my Kindergartners 25 – 30 minutes just to log in for the first month. As a tech teacher do so much more than typing and teaching canvas as some people have suggested. We teach them digital skills, protecting their personal information, how to create strong passwords, what is cyber bullying and what to do if you experience it. We also integrate grade level curriculum into teaching our standards. My 5th graders are creating podcasts, my 4th graders are learning to build websites, learning how to make appropriate comments online. My kindergartners are using VR googles to learn and visit each of the American symbols, my 2nd graders are using Wixie to demonstrate their understanding of various life cycles through animation that they create. These are just some of the lessons I teach. My kids are learning programming and get to use various robots in my room. Please reconsider funding our program!

Para educators are the unsung heroes of HCPSS. All of our Para educators are overworked, underpaid, and tasked with an enormous amount of work. You are asking the remaining 132 elementary paras to do the impossible- serve 2+ grade levels of students with a 6.5 hour school day, plus perform duties such as lunch and recess, PLUS substitute teach when substitute coverage is unavailable. Cutting Para educators will have a huge ripple effect in elementary schools.

I am requesting two things:

1. That the County Council immediately and with all deliberate speed send supplemental funding to HCPSS to prevent these devastating cuts from happening in the FY2020 school year.
2. That the County Council take a hard look at revenue streams and work to ensure that we don't continue to have structural shortfalls year after year.

Many of you campaigned on fully funding HCPSS. I implore you to reconsider your vote from last week and send supplemental funding to HCPSS to prevent catastrophic cuts to elementary schools before it is too late to fix them.

Respectfully,

Laura Davis

Laura Davis
Technology Teacher/RA Team Leader
Thunder Hill Elementary

Achiever * Includer * Discipline * Woo * Communication

Sayers, Margery

From: tellhoco@howardcountymd.gov
Sent: Tuesday, June 4, 2019 4:49 PM
To: Feldmark, Jessica; Sayers, Margery; Singleton, Julia; Respass, Charity
Subject: Case: CS0002269 – opened and unassigned

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



SUPPORT CASE

Case Number: CS0002269

Case Opened: 06-04-2019

Short Description: HCPSS Budget

Constituent: Tania Lamba

Priority: 3 - Moderate

[VIEW CASE](#)

Details:

06-04-2019 04:48:51 PM EDT - Matt Lupo Work notes

From: tania lamba <vania_lamba@yahoo.com>

Sent: Sunday, June 2, 2019 8:03 PM

To: Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>; Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>;

Walsh, Elizabeth <ewalsh@howardcountymd.gov>; Jung, Deb <djung@howardcountymd.gov>;

Yungmann, David <dyungmann@howardcountymd.gov>; mavis_ellis@hcpss.org;

kristen_coombs@hcpss.org; vicky_cutroneo@hcpss.org; christina_delmont-small@hcpss.org;

jennifer_mallo@hcpss.org; sabina_taj@hcpss.org; chao_wu@hcpss.org; superintendent@hcpss.org; Ball,

Calvin <cball@howardcountymd.gov>; boe@hcpss.org; CouncilMail <CouncilMail@howardcountymd.gov>

Cc: Aman Bawa <asbawa_2000@yahoo.com>

Subject: Proposed Changes to Howard County School

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

Tania Lamba and Amandeep Bawa

6818 Owings Overlook Highland, Maryland | 301-455-9139 | vania_lamba@yahoo.com

June 2, 2019

Howard County Board of Education and
Howard County Council members
Dear Howard County Board of Education and
Howard County Council members:

I want to start this letter by mentioning that me and my family are very distraught with the news about the changes being considered by the Howard County Government and Board of education to address the school systems budget shortfall. We have 2 sons in the Howard County Public school system and the strong education record of Howard County with its strong GT program was the main reason that we chose to build our house in Howard County. Up until now Howard County has remained a great county when it comes to education and I am shocked that the local Government and Board of Education are willing to make changes that will definitively have a huge negative impact on the education of our children and will take the Howard County schools off the list of top schools in Maryland. It is common knowledge that if we do not invest in the school system and in the education of children we are going to have a downhill course with the next generation not having the foundation of a strong education. From a business standpoint, I also don't know how this will make sense as we are currently living here and paying high taxes for the sole purpose of giving our children a good education and once you take that away, people will not be attracted to living in this county and that will affect local businesses as well.

All the changes proposed will lower the standard Howard county has kept as an educational county. Cutting down on the number of GT teachers is a terrible idea. In my son's middle school there is not enough space for some kids to get into GT math even though they have the capability. Lowering the amount of GT teachers is going to make matters worse. If there are a large number of students that test into GT we should have the appropriate resources to meet the needs of our students.

Adding more kids into a classroom will make classrooms hard to control, making it harder to teach and will negatively impact the ability for the teachers to effectively do their jobs.

We are also very saddened by the proposal to decrease elementary school music teachers and delaying the start of band and string education in elementary schools. Howard County has remained a great county when it comes to music education but with these changes once kids enter middle school they will be behind the kids who had that experience in other counties/states and will not be able to compete with them.

People like us invest so much money to live in Howard County and avail its educational system for their children. The changes proposed will affect our schools and the education of the next generation and more to come. Howard County is known for its amazing education. Let's not change that.

Sincerely,
Tania Lamba and Amandeep Bawa



www.howardcountymd.gov



Ref:MSG0708519

Sayers, Margery

From: sandra.m.bathgate@verizon.com
Sent: Tuesday, June 4, 2019 3:59 PM
To: superintendent@hcpss.org; boe@hcpss.org; CouncilMail
Subject: Testimony- Please reconsider Para's and Math help

Importance: High

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

Good Afternoon,

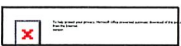
I am reaching out to ask the Board to reconsider the decisions made last night during the BOE work session. I understand that cuts and savings need to come from somewhere if the County Council cannot provide more funding.

The choices made do not reflect a strong foundation for our elementary school students. My initial reaction was to tell my husband that we need to move out of the county. Please understand that I have very strong roots here so that type of reaction is due to feeling like my child will not get the help he will need. I grew up here. I have stayed here and I am a proud graduate of Hammond High School. I want my son to have a chance at a quality education in Howard County.

The cuts to the Paraeducators, Reading and Math assistance (MST, MIT, RST) and Technology teachers and time allows our elementary school students to be negatively affected. If this support is cut my son along with many others will struggle. There will not be the help of a Para or a Math specialist to work with him. How will our teachers keep up and how will our children learn what is required? This is your problem to solve!

I do not agree with the decisions from the work session and ask that you reconsider other options. Please think about our children and what help they need to get started in life.

Thank you,



Sandra M. Bathgate, PMP, ITILv3

Manager
Strategic PMO
Verizon Business Group

M 301.367.5803
13100 Columbia Pike
Silver Spring, MD 20904



Sayers, Margery

From: heather.urner@yahoo.com
Sent: Tuesday, June 4, 2019 3:00 PM
To: Rigby, Christiana
Cc: CouncilMail; Ball, Calvin
Subject: Re: Education Budget

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

Good Afternoon Councilman Rigby,

I hear the increased funding you say. It still leaves school with shortfall.

If you have questions with BOE having to cut paras due to shortfall, give them more money so they don't have to find cuts. Listen to BOE when the Board is asking for money and give beyond MOE so they don't need to look to using reserves. You control the amount of budget they have to work with.

Thank you

Heather Urner

On Tue, Jun 4, 2019 at 2:50 PM, Rigby, Christiana
<crigby@howardcountymd.gov> wrote:

Good afternoon Heather,

Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts on the FY20 Education Operating Budget with me this year. Through this long budget process, I am glad that the County Council was able to come together on May 29th and pass a budget with over \$48 million in *increased* funding for our school system.

The [mission of the Howard County Public School System](#) is to ensure “academic success and social-emotional well-being for each student in an inclusive and nurturing environment that closes opportunity gaps.” It is my hope that the school system works to guarantee this academic environment with the additional \$48 million in funding they are receiving in FY20, with a strong focus on instruction and maintaining a beneficial classroom experience for students and teachers. Any decision to disrupt our children’s education by increasing class sizes and targeting programs *when funds are available* would be concerning and shortsighted.

The additional \$48 million in funding accounts for a 5.6% increase in overall funding for the school system over last year, the highest revenue growth for HCPSS in a decade. With such a substantial increase to their budget, it is extremely unusual that the school system is suggesting staff reductions and increased class sizes as savings options. Furthermore, the school system is exploring savings options that would cut equity funding, such as reductions in elementary paraeducators that serve some of our neediest children.

The Council is taking these funding issues very seriously, and I recognize that new revenues will need to be raised to provide the education system that Howard County residents are accustomed to. In addition to raising the school facilities surcharge on developers, I will be exploring other new revenue sources for FY21 to address budget shortfalls facing the school system.

Once again, thank you for taking the time to reach out to my office during this budget season. Parents and taxpayers deserve transparency and accountability from a system that we entrust our children to every day, and I will continue to advocate for that accountability on behalf of every child in the school system. I am confident that the County and the school system will commit to working together to ensure that our schools have the future funding they need.

Yours in service,

Christiana

Christiana Mercer Rigby

Councilwoman, District 3

Serving North Laurel, Savage, Columbia, Jessup and Guilford

Howard County Council

3430 Court House Drive, Ellicott City, MD 21043

crigby@howardcountymd.gov

410.313.4101



[Sign up for our newsletter!](#)

|

Sayers, Margery

From: Karissa Strawley <karissastrawley@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 4, 2019 12:33 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Please help us with funding for our Paraprofessionals, Technology Teachers and other Student Support Staff

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

Dear Councilmembers,

First, thank you for the extra \$1.9 million dollars that you approved for HCPSS last week in your annual budget vote. I attended the Board of Education budget work session last night, and I cannot imagine how many more painful cuts would have been made had it not been for the \$1.9 million you already approved.

However, despite that money, lack of funding is having a direct impact on elementary school classrooms next year. Technology teachers were reduced from 62 to 42, and paraeducator positions were cut by 88. These positions are absolutely vital to the health of our elementary schools in HCPSS.

Technology teachers are helping our little ones learn to be safe in a world where we exist increasingly online. They are preparing our children for careers where being technologically literate is fundamental to being able to compete in a job market. Technology is also where students learn the skills needed to complete the mandatory federal standardized testing, which is entirely online. I have proctored standardized testing where students do not know how to use the computers, and I can tell you firsthand that it does affect their scores and their ability to demonstrate their knowledge in a meaningful and complete way.

Paraeducators are the unsung heroes of HCPSS. I have worked in schools with 1 para for the ENTIRE BUILDING and I can tell you right now, it does not work. That one para did her best, but there were so many students with needs and not enough minutes in the school day. She was overworked, underpaid, and tasked with an impossible job. You are asking the remaining 132 elementary paras to do the impossible- serve 2+ grade levels of students with a 6.5 hour school day, plus perform duties such as lunch and recess, PLUS substitute teach when substitute coverage is unavailable. Cutting paraeducators will have a huge ripple effect in elementary schools.

I am requesting two things:

1. That the County Council immediately and with all deliberate speed send supplemental funding to HCPSS to prevent these devastating cuts from happening in the FY2020 school year.
2. That the County Council take a hard look at revenue streams and work to ensure that we don't continue to have structural shortfalls year after year.

Many of you campaigned on fully funding HCPSS. I implore you to reconsider your vote from last week and send supplemental funding to HCPSS to prevent catastrophic cuts to elementary schools before it is too late to fix them.

Respectfully,

--

Karissa Strawley Bryant

Sayers, Margery

From: Jackie Bryant <jebryant7@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 4, 2019 12:25 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Please send supplemental funding to HCPSS

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

Dear Councilmembers,

First, thank you for the extra \$1.9 million dollars that you approved for HCPSS last week in your annual budget vote. I attended the Board of Education budget work session last night, and I cannot imagine how many more painful cuts would have been made had it not been for the \$1.9 million you already approved.

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Many of you campaigned on fully funding HCPSS. I implore you to reconsider your vote from last week and send supplemental funding to HCPSS to prevent catastrophic cuts to elementary schools before it is too late to fix them.

Respectfully,
Jackie Bryant

Sayers, Margery

From: Amanda Wadsworth <awadsworth71@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 4, 2019 9:42 AM
To: CouncilMail
Cc: boe@hcpss.org
Subject: The Gutting of HCPSS

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

Dear Council Members,

As an elementary principal, I wanted to share my great disappointment in your lack of financial support during this budgeting process. Without your financial support, the impact on our elementary schools is horrendous.

With a reduction in paraeducators, we will lack the support for interventions of our most needy students. We will have teachers spending their planning time doing clerical duties versus planning for effective instruction. We will have a limited ability to cover teacher classes when no substitutes pick up. There will be less support in and out of classrooms because the limited number of paraeducators will have to cover multiple lunch and recess shifts.

With the reduction of technology, we will no longer have the time for technology teachers to implement high quality 21st century projects and collaborate on content effectively with our grade level teachers. If you could see the work generated by our students in technology class, you would fully understand the terrible loss this reduction creates.

In losing our RST and MST positions, we are losing the biggest "game changer" I have observed in my administrative career in terms of teacher professional development. This hands on support has improved teacher instruction across the board. These individuals are a tremendous support to new teachers, struggling teachers and teachers simply wanting to grow. They model lessons, lead the planning and implementation of PD and support students. This is one of the programs that makes HCPSS unique and a premier school system.

As we move ahead in the next few days, I strongly urge you to consider an amendment to save these programs. Certainly in a County as ours, we can find money to support the future, our children.

Sincerely,
Amanda Wadsworth
Principal Centennial Lane Elementary

Sayers, Margery

From: Jackie <jacquelyndebella@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 4, 2019 12:39 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Additional funding request

[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 Members ,

I was at the Board of Education Meeting from 4:30 to 8:30 PM and then watched on television until the meeting ended. It is absolutely absurd that this is happening .

It is clear that the county council underfunded the budget and now staffing cuts are the only option. The Board of Education has no other options . I watched these amazing people struggle for hours to balance the budget . They want to support the children and continue to provide the best education possible . The school system is the main reason people live here and you are asking them to cut the very programs that make our school system number one in Maryland - GT, instrumental music , and technology. We also need the paraeducators to legally support student IEPs and 504's. Without this curriculum and staffing , our students will fall behind and teachers will leave and take all their knowledge and training with them.

I know the vote on the budget already took place but I am hoping you can amend the current 1.3 million dollars and add at least an addition million to make it at least 2.3 million. That still gives us a deficit but will help lessen the gap.

I hope you will watch the board meeting and reflect on the needs of our children, the future.

Thank you for your time and consideration this request .

Jacquelyn DeBella
Mom of Nico , 2nd grader
Mom of Francesca , kindergartener
HOCO Laurel resident of 22 years

Sent from my iPhone

Sayers, Margery

From: Ameer Patel <ameeapatel@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 3, 2019 10:29 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Proposed budget changes

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

Dear Howard County Board of Education and Howard County Council members,

I am writing in regards to the proposed changes to the Howard County school system in 2020 due to the budget short fall. I have been deeply troubled by some of the changes being considered and would like to have my concerns noted. About 5 years ago, my husband and I moved to Howard County with our two young children in large part due to the wonderful school system. We strongly believe that a solid education is the backbone to a healthy functioning community and were thrilled to become part of a community that we thought upheld the same beliefs.

Here are some of my concerns regarding the proposed changes as I understand them:

1. I am **extremely disappointed** that there is consideration to decrease the number of Gifted and Talented teachers at the elementary and even middle school level. My understanding is that it is the board's objective to ensure "equitable learning opportunities", but that would mean providing the resources necessary to help students reach their maximum potential. Just as the county provides full time math and reading resource specialists to help those students who are struggling to meet standards, the county should also provide the appropriate resources to those students that meet GT standards so that they may continue to excel academically. Cutting GT programs would be especially damaging to those schools that tend to have a greater number of students that meet those higher levels. It is my understanding that there are already students who are unable to get into GT classes because there are not enough spots even though they may be qualified. This is an absolute shame and making GT cuts would only ensure that more students are refused the academic resources they should receive....especially in a county that claims to want to push its students to the furthest academic levels possible.
2. I also understand that the board is considering decreased the number of music teachers which would only delay the start of string instruction / orchestra until later years. There are numerous studies showing the importance of music and arts in the development of young minds and to be cutting this vital part of education is a travesty. It also penalizes our county's students when it comes to competitions if students from other counties are getting earlier and more frequent instruction.
3. Decreasing the number of elementary technology positions is an absolute move in the wrong direction. The world is only becoming more technology driven and our children need to keep up with the changing times. This means immersing them in technology as soon as possible so that they become comfortable with it and can later excel in technology driven field.

4. Increasing class sizes by 1 or even 2 students would only decrease the amount of attention that teachers can spend with each student. Our class sizes have slowly crept up and increasing class sizes only impedes a teacher's ability to effectively teach students. This is a known fact.

PLEASE reconsider making some of the proposed changes listed above. IF it is your goal to further the educational opportunities for our children, the above proposed changes would only deeply contradict that cause. As howard county residents we have invested in our community with the understanding that the county will in turn support our needs. That means thinking about the future and investing in our children's education.

I appreciate your time and consideration regarding these matters.

Sincerely,
Ameel Patel

Sent from my iPhone

Sayers, Margery

From: Julie Kastner <Julie_Kastner@hcpss.org>
Sent: Monday, June 3, 2019 5:10 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Early Intervention

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

Council Members ,

June 3, 2019

Dear Board Members,

When looking at the budget cuts, almost all of your recommendations impact elementary schools!

I have been a teacher in the HCPSS for 8 years. All of my years of teaching service have been at the elementary level from kindergarten to 1st grade. Elementary teachers have many so balls to juggle that it won't take much for before the balls start to hit the floor.

Our youngest students need an enriching environment and exposure to many different experiences. During this critical time, our students need music, enrichment, and assistance. Eliminating or cutting down our paraeducators because someone believes that they can be "shared" is not plausible. We really need MORE staff to meet the diverse needs of our growing population in elementary school. The fact is, this position needs more employees not fewer!

Also, class size is at a critical point in elementary school. The youngest learners will suffer the most. We speak of early intervention and best practices, but huge classes with little or no support are not best practice for 5 and 6 year olds. Kindergarten kids need the most attention. This is the age when they form their opinions about school. This is the age when they begin to form good or bad habits, and this is the age where we can make the biggest difference.

More and more students continue to be mainstreamed into general education classrooms with EXTREME needs. Our Special Education and support staff is completely overwhelmed with the changing needs of our students. Many students begin school without being identified

as special education students. It takes almost the whole year to go through the process of identification. Who suffers? The other kids in the class. We are not equipped to service the amount or severity of students we are receiving who need these extra accommodations. With the numbers of 23 plus students currently in our kindergarten classroom it is ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE to meet the needs of the students. Adding more students to an already oversized group will make a bad situation even worse!

I know the money has to come from somewhere. I will happily give up some of my salary, but don't make it impossible for us to do the job we love.

On June 3rd please start your decision making with cuts that DO NOT impact class size or services to our elementary students.

Do not erode the reason many people move to our county. What kind of reputation do you want Howard County Schools to have in the future? I want a school system that puts our youngest students first, not last, as well as, values the people whom make our school system great.

Sincerely,
Julie Kastner
Manor Woods Elementary School

Julie Kastner
Julie_Kastner@hcpss.org
6129 Downs Ridge Court
Elkridge, Maryland 21075

Sayers, Margery

From: Patrick Harrington <prharrin@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 3, 2019 12:25 PM
To: boe@hcpss.org; superintendent@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin B; CouncilMail
Subject: This is Crazy...Fully Fund HCPSS Schools Now!

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

Dear BOE Members, Dr. Martirano, County Council Members, and Dr. Ball:

I am writing as a resident of Columbia and as a concerned parent of two children in the Howard County Public School system.

I am shocked and frustrated that our County, which is the 3rd wealthiest in the country based on median income (<https://www.usnews.com/news/healthiest-communities/slideshows/richest-counties-in-america?slide=9>), continues to struggle to adequately fund its educational system, year after year.

This is particularly concerning for schools that have high concentrations of children in poverty or with special needs. The county, like much of the country, continues to experience a pervasive achievement gap between rich and poor populations, and between different racial groups. Yet we've seen several targeted budget cuts for high poverty schools in recent years. Any further across-the-board cuts like the ones currently proposed will be felt most by the schools with the greatest need.

The #1 reason why people choose Howard County over other areas in the Baltimore-Washington area is the public schools. If we keep chipping away at school resources, people are just going to leave for lower cost areas with better schools. Those who don't leave will remember this at the next election.

Fix this problem. Raise taxes if you have to. There is no reason why Howard County cannot sustain a top notch public education system. We have the means in this county. We just need some leadership and bold action.

Respectfully,
Pat Harrington

