

Jeri Shuster, M.D., P.A.

and Women's Center, Inc.

HOWARD COUNTY COUNCIL
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Jeri Shuster, M.D., Fellow of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
Kathryn Cervi, C.R.N.P., Women's Health Care Nurse Practitioner

SEP 13 PM 1:02

CR 112-2019

September 7, 2019

Dear Dr. Martirano, Howard County Board of Education, and County Executive Calvin Ball,

I am writing to you to object to your redistricting plan for my neighborhood (known to me and my neighbors as Chapel Woods, known to you as polygon 1185). Although I think it is unintentional, your plan is cruel to families and children in my neighborhood.

Your goal is to achieve an equity agenda in Howard County Schools. Therefore you have proposed redistricting that involves sending students from my neighborhood of Chapel Woods (polygon 1185) away from our neighborhood schools including Clarksville Middle School and River Hill High School. All of these schools are presently underutilized and could accommodate more students. Therefore, you could achieve your stated goal by sending additional students to join our community schools. In addition, you plan to move our Clarksville Elementary grads (where we have 26 students) to Harper's Choice while their school friends and neighbors from the past 6 years of school will be attending Clarksville Middle. Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine physicians will tell you this is UNREASONABLE and unwise. Why invite a problem that can easily be avoided?

According to your redistricting plan, a student who is beginning their junior year at River Hill HS, would spend their senior year at Wilde Lake HS. Does this seem reasonable? I think that most of us would agree that we would not want our teen to be forced into this situation.

It is UNREASONABLE to split up our Clarksville community. Why would you intentionally separate friends and families? Our neighbors in Meadow Vista (polygon 185) are not being forced to leave their current schools. They are walking distance to us. It seems like an ARBITRARY decision as to who was "selected." Therefore, I respectfully request deselection for my neighborhood.

It is UNREASONABLE to greatly upset, stress and anger a productive, happy, VOTING community. There has been an outpouring of angst among my friends and neighbors. Have students or families at Wilde Lake or Harper's Choice expressed a desire to be moved to Clarksville or River Hill? Are they expressing angst about their schools? (I suspect not, as the principal at Wilde Lake has a fabulous reputation). If they are distressed about their neighborhood schools and prefer to travel from Columbia to Clarksville, there does seem to be room to accommodate additional students here. Since there is room at the Clarksville schools, transferring Columbia students in would not require forcing students from my neighborhood to leave. Chapel Woods is close to our currently districted schools: 0.5 miles to Clarksville Elem and River Hill; 4.1 miles to Clarksville Middle.



As seniors, the reality is that many River Hill HS students drive to school. These inexperienced (also likely sleep deprived under your proposed redistricting plan) drivers currently travel from our neighborhood 0.5 miles on Route 108 to get to school. If they move to Wilde Lake, they will be on multiple roads, drive through multiple intersections and be placed at increased risk of being involved in a motor vehicle accident. This is an UNREASONABLE problem that you will have created as well as a potentially dangerous situation. I think that we have all seen what it's like to drive behind some of these kids, and would agree that less time during the morning rush hour is better.

I respectfully request that you reconsider your current proposal and that you allow Chapel Woods students to remain in their local schools.

Sincerely,



Jeri Shuster MD

Cc:

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Jeri Shuster, M.D., P.A.

and Women's Center, Inc.

September 7, 2019

Jeri Shuster, M.D., Fellow of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists

Kathryn Cervi, C.R.N.P., Women's Health Care Nurse Practitioner

Dear Christiana Mercer Rigby, Dr. Opel Jones and Deb Jung,

I am writing to respond to the statements that you were credited for in the Howard County Council Aug 13, 2019 news release. These statements were offered as justification for splitting up my community, particularly my neighborhood of Chapel Woods (polygon 1185), where you plan to exchange our Clarksville Middle School students for Harpers Choice Middle School students and swap our River Hill High School Students for Wilde Lake High School Students.

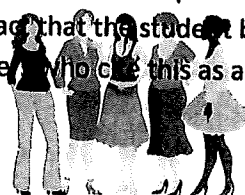
You are proposing a social science experiment with our children in order to achieve an equity agenda. You indicate that you believe that socioeconomic and racial segregation cause an achievement gap and reduce graduation rates for low income students and students of color. This is a correlation rather than scientifically proven cause and effect. It also fails to take into account many other potential reasons why we are seeing disparity in achievement and graduation in our Howard County Schools.

To test your hypothesis, you need to alter only one variable at a time rather than two or more, and your statement is unreasonable because it is unscientific and your plan is not designed logically. In an effort to achieve our goal of equity, you would need to consider a different plan than the one you have proposed. For example, you might move students from Harpers Choice Middle into Clarksville Middle or move students from Wilde Lake High School into River Hill High School. If you move students in both directions, you will be unable to determine what caused the improvement in education or why the redistricting plan did not achieve the desired improvement in graduation and achievement. I don't believe that you are trying to lower the performance of high achieving students by moving them to lower achieving schools. So if you are trying to improve the education of students from low achieving schools, it seems much more reasonable to move these students into high achieving schools if you believe that the cause of failure to graduate can be solved by increasing integration at high performing schools.

You also have two variables when you lump together socioeconomics and racial segregation. Your plan does not look at the effect of moving low income Caucasian vs low income students of color. Is the disparity caused by income or by race or by neither?

You have also linked together the variables of graduation and achievement. Has a "D" student who graduates achieved as much as a "B" student who drops out of high school? These are extreme examples and most of us would agree that graduation and achievement correlate, but graduation from high school alone is not proof of achievement.

There are a lot of other factors that may explain why kids are underachieving rather than attributing this problem to the geographic location of the school. Perhaps the cause of poor achievement in low socioeconomic schools is caused by the fact that the student body is frequently in a state of flux, moving from home to home. I know many teachers who see this as a problem. They tell me that their



classroom student composition changes by the month. Transferring a student from one school to another is not likely to improve education if they continue being transient. They will always be moving into a class that is already in progress and will have missed the groundwork necessary to understand the current lesson. This would be the case no matter what school they are attending.

Educators have told me that they have noticed a higher incidence of absenteeism among apartment dwelling students compared with other students. They point out incidents of apartment households where parents bring their children to school late or take them out of class early. If a student misses class, their academic achievement is likely to be lower than that of a student who attends class. Switching schools will not impact graduation rate or academic achievement if the student does not attend school. Do you have data about class attendance at our underachieving compared with our most successful schools and how this correlates with achievement and graduation?

Have you considered health factors that could be having significant impact on achievement in some schools? Medical conditions such as fetal drug or alcohol exposure, exposure to maternal smoking in utero can all impact on ability to learn, and these factors may or may not vary from one community to another.

Studies have shown that student achievement correlates with level of parental education. Can this disparity be overcome by exchanging students from one high school to another? Where is your data?

Perhaps the reduced graduation rate has to do with advancing students before they are proficient in basic reading and math skills? This would not be helped by changing schools, but it is a serious problem that does need to be corrected.

Have you considered how the effect of busing will impact on our students' sleep? It is likely that the increased transportation time necessary to bus students will result in less than the medically recommended hours of sleep for all students affected by your proposed redistricting. According to the Consensus Statement of the American Academy of Sleep Medicine, "less than the recommended hours of sleep is associated with attention, behavior, learning and memory problems and increases the risk of accidents, injuries, hypertension, obesity, diabetes, and depression, increased risk of self-harm and suicide attempts." (I am including the consensus statement for you). By contrast, sleeping the recommended number of hours improves health and learning. Don't we all want the best possible education for our kids? Why implement a policy that is likely to cause harm?

Your goals are laudable, but the logic on which you base these goals needs some realistic, organized planning. It also needs community support. At this time you have set us up for a truly cruel situation for some of our kids. A rising River Hill High School Junior this fall will spend their senior year at Wilde Lake? Is this reasonable? Is it kind? Is this what Howard County desires for its voting citizenry and their children?

Sincerely yours,

Jeri Shuster MD



Insufficient sleep in teenagers is associated with increased risk of self-harm, suicidal thoughts, and suicide attempts.

- Regularly sleeping more than the recommended hours may be associated with adverse health outcomes such as hypertension, diabetes, obesity, and mental health problems.
- Parents who are concerned that their child is sleeping too little or too much should consult their healthcare provider for evaluation of a possible sleep disorder.

*Recommendations for infants younger than 4 months are not included due to the wide range of normal variation in duration and patterns of sleep, and insufficient evidence for associations with health outcomes.

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BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

Healthy sleep requires adequate duration, appropriate timing, good quality, regularity, and the absence of sleep disturbances or disorders. Sleep duration is a frequently investigated sleep measure in relation to health. A panel of 13 experts in sleep medicine and research used a modified RAND Appropriateness Method¹ to develop recommendations regarding the sleep duration range that promotes optimal health in children aged 0–18 years. The expert panel reviewed published scientific evidence addressing the relationship between sleep duration and health using a broad set of National Library of Medicine Medical Subject Headings (MeSH) terms and no date restrictions, which resulted in a total of 864 scientific articles. The process was further guided by the Oxford grading system.² The panel focused on seven health categories with the best available evidence in relation to sleep duration: general health, cardiovascular health, metabolic health, mental health, immunologic function, developmental health, and human performance. Consistent with the RAND Appropriateness Method, multiple rounds of evidence review, discussion, and voting were conducted to arrive at the final recommendations. The process to develop these recommendations was conducted over a 10-month period and concluded with a meeting held February 19–21, 2016 in Chicago, Illinois.

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DISCUSSION AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Current evidence supports the general recommendations for obtaining an adequate number of hours of sleep per 24 hours on a regular basis to promote optimal health among children aged 4 months to 18 years. Individual variability in sleep need is influenced by genetic, behavioral, medical, and environmental factors. A clearer understanding of the precise biological mechanisms underlying sleep need requires further scientific investigation. These recommendations create a foundation to raise awareness and improve understanding of sleep effects on health. The recommendations provide a basis for:

- Educating children, teenagers, families, school professionals, healthcare providers/trainees, and the general public on the importance of adequate sleep duration for health.

- Encouraging parents and caregivers to help children obtain adequate sleep duration.
- Initiating discussions of social, educational, and economic benefits of adequate sleep duration, thereby informing public policy.
- Promoting research on the role of sleep duration in health and well-being. Research that directly examines the effects of sleep duration on health may lead to revisions of these recommendations in the future.

These recommendations have been endorsed by the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Sleep Research Society and the American Association of Sleep Technologists.

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DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Funding for this project was provided by the American Academy of Sleep Medicine, and supported by the cooperative agreement number 1U50DP004930-03 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the CDC. Dr. Maski has consulted for Medscape Inc. and has received research support from Jazz Pharmaceuticals. Dr. Rosen has consulted as a medical advisor for Jazz Pharmaceuticals. The other Consensus Conference Panel members have indicated no financial conflicts of interest.

Go to:

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The AASM acknowledges the following individuals for their participation and contributions:
 Non-Participating Observers: Michael Twery, PhD, National Health, Lung, Blood Institute, NIH, Bethesda, MD; and Joel Porquez, RST, RPSGT, CCSH, American Association of Sleep Technologists. Attendance by these individuals does not constitute endorsement of this statement by their affiliated institutions or organizations. American Academy of Sleep Medicine Staff: John Noel; Jonathan L. Heald, MA; and Sarah Hashmi, MBBS, MSc, MPH.

Go to:

REFERENCES

1. Fitch K, Bernstein S, Aguilar M, et al. Santa Monica, CA: Rand; 2001. The Rand/UCLA appropriateness method user's manual. [[Google Scholar](#)]
2. OCEBM Levels of Evidence Working Group. The Oxford 2011 Levels of Evidence. [cited March 9 2016]. Available from: <http://www.cebm.net/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/CEBM-Levels-of-Evidence-2.1.pdf>.

HOWARD COUNTY COUNCIL
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2019 SEP 12 AM 7:46

September 10, 2019

The Howard County Council
Cc: Howard County School Board

I moved to Columbia in 1973 because of Rouse's vision of neighboring schools. Now the county Council wants to switch students around schools for apartment dwellers (section 8) not paying low or no rent, most transient from dysfunctional families and NOT thinking about the homeowners PROPERTY owners who PAY property taxes that fund the schools.

Real estate values have already declined since the new proposal was announced and house prices have dropped almost \$200,000. Howard County will become Baltimore City.

Baltimore City tried to force integration and now the City is a crime-infested, school low-function due to demographics.

Columbia in 1996 became a major change because more and more section 8 moved into the apartments which caused an overflow of certain students into the schools that the school board is considering. If this proposal passed, people will move their children.

Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Anne Arundel County, Montgomery County experienced the same migration. If Howard County Schools with all its resources doesn't work, then nothing will. Whites are in the minority. Nonwhites are the largest student population.

Nonwhite students have achieved and White teachers can teach nonwhite students.

Radical black groups that say White teachers can't teach black students is false. Nonwhite students are learning from white teachers. It's the black student that isn't learning and test scores proved they achieved the lowest. Not only in Howard County but MSDE data shows Blacks score lowest and have highest discipline problems in every county in the state (that has a sizeable number of blacks) plus Baltimore City.

There is NO data that shows FARM students mixed with other students do better. In fact, they do worse. As a core group. Individually some may improve but those students would achieve and probably do better at a school close to their home.

Let's get to the truth. BLACKS DESTROY. Look at the Village Centers that have the largest black population (Long Reach and Oakland Mills) Harpers Choice and Wilde Lake recently remodeled. There are police substations at two of the village centers. Look at the crime rate. The Black Community needs to SHUT up and tend to their community so it will be better for ALL of us.

Millie Edwards

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Ellicott City, Md. 21043

21043-430099



HOWARD COUNTY COUNCIL
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2019 SEP 12 AM 7:47

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The Sun
300 Cromwell
Baltimore, Maryland

In regarding to article titled "*Testing a commitment of diversity*" written by Sun staff on Sunday, September 8, 2019, I would like to say that sometimes the media fuels or incites something that may not be there. As a black resident of Howard County since 1972, I have seen the demographics changed especially in the Columbia apartments in the villages of Oakland Mills, Harper's Choice and Long Reach. You should see Villages of Oakland Mills and Long Reach now. Major food chains moved out. Harper's Choice was recently redone but police substation is there.

Rouse who planned the city of Columbia had a vision of people of all incomes and races to live, work, learn, play and worship together. The secret was to have a perfect balance. Rouse did that with his formula of social engineering. There was a balance. But after Rouse died, greed came and with the federal government offering vouchers section 8 for low income, Apartment owners filled the Columbia apartments in the villages mentioned overwhelming with these people from Baltimore City and other urbanized areas many dysfunctional with a different value and customs. Middle- and working-class people paying full rent were not moving in those apartments. They moved out of Columbia. If the board approves this plan, they will move out of the County just like they did Baltimore City and certain sections of Baltimore, Prince Georges, Anne Arundel and Montgomery Counties. And the test scores in the Black area dropped. Just because people moved, test scores do not have to drop. Look at the other nonwhite groups.

Wilde Lake High School which was the top high school in Howard County and State in the 1970s started getting an influx of students from unstable homes. In the late 1990s, a major redistricting took place before the opening of River Hill High School. Students from then number 1 high school Centennial High were moved to Wilde Lake.

This has nothing to do with racism, this is about educating one's child. Parents have ONE chance to educate their child. Howard County is known for its top schools but it is only because of the Parents who provide support to the teachers. Dysfunctional Black parents DO NOT support the teachers. Look at Baltimore City (years ago in the 1950s Baltimore City used to be number 1 school system in the state. What happen to Northern High School? Southern High School? Demographics changed. What happen to Meade High School in Anne Arundel County? Demographics changed. What happen to Milford Mill High School in Baltimore County? Demographics changed. These are just a sample of high schools around the state. Any school that has a majority 65% or more black population there is a change in the school in all areas. I can understand why parents protest. Having Farm students has not worked. As a group, blacks will have a higher discipline and behavior problem which will interfere with the learning progress. More suspensions with radial black groups asking why when they know the answer. Why more black crime and black on black crime? Data doesn't lie.

Blacks, as a core group has had the lowest test scores on any State mandated achievement test for the last 50 years...Maybe longer. Maryland keep changing the tests... Stanford Achievement, California Achievement, MSPAP, Maryland Functional and Now Parc. Changing tests aren't going to have Blacks score any higher. Why do Asians score higher? They are nonwhite. It's the home. Moynihan Report came out over 50 years ago and no one addressed it. Now it's a crisis.

Don't put the blame on these Parents and students protesting. They want the best.

Even Mr. Brown (Brown v. Board of Education) wanted to go to his neighborhood school. He didn't want his child travelling halfway around the city.

Howard County has the resources.

Baltimore City has billion-dollar budget for the last 10 years. Majority Black. Scores still lowest

Prince Georges County has a billion-dollar budget over last 10 years. Mostly Black. Scores still low.

Do you know that if a child screams in elementary school class, the teacher takes the other students out and let the screamer stay in class? How is anyone expected to learn?

That's why parents are protesting.

The Ugly Truth: Blacks (as a group) score the lowest. And have been for the last 50 years. Nothing will change that. Schools with re-segregate because people will move out.

Blacks (as a group) have the highest suspension rate, discipline problems.

Proportionally, have high rate of crime. Just look at the urban cities.

Mildred Reynolds

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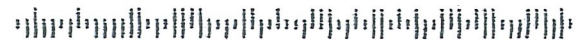
BALTIMORE MD 212

09 SEP 2019 PM 7 L



Howard County Council
3430 Courthouse Drive
Columbia, MD 21043

21043-439299



Sayers, Margery

From: Starling, Melanie H <MStarling@UNUM.COM>
Sent: Friday, September 6, 2019 5:59 PM
To: redistricting@HCPSS.org
Cc: CouncilMail
Subject: Testimony opposing HoCo redistricting proposal
Attachments: Letter to HoCo BOE opposing redistricting proposal - Melanie Starling - polygon 2233.pdf

Importance: High

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

September 6, 2019

Howard County Board of Education members:

I am writing regarding the recent HCPSS redistricting proposal by Dr. Martirano. I am opposed to this plan and am asking for your support in the Board of Education in making sure this proposal does not move forward. The recent feasibility study provided 2 viable options to help relieve overcrowding, yet Dr. Martirano has ignored that study and provided his own proposal that will have many immediate negative impacts for Howard County students and families.

The recent feasibility study indicated that the top 3 concerns of HoCo citizens are as follows:

1. Keeping feeds of students together
2. Maintaining contiguous communities
3. Transportation considerations.

Why has Dr. Martirano chosen to ignore these top 3 concerns with his proposed plan? The feasibility study clearly shows what Howard County families think is the most important, and this plan ignores those wishes. This plan directly and significantly impacts the daily lives of many families. We deserve better from our leaders than to push a plan that clearly does not take our priorities into account!

The plan to bus over 7,000 students outside of the communities in which they live will be a detriment to those communities in many ways, such as:

- Decreased community event participation. If you have to drive 45 minutes in traffic to get to your kids school, how often are parents going to do it? Also, lower income families are at a distinct disadvantage here as transportation to and from the new school will take more hours away from work and will cost more money in gas and car maintenance. How can we build community bonds when we are so spread out from the areas in which we live? As a full time working mother, I already struggle to balance my work needs and my kids needs. Adding a bunch of travel time and having kids spread-out all over the county only makes life harder for the working citizens of Howard County and our children's education and emotional wellbeing will suffer as a result.
- Decreased community legacy / school spirit: I currently live in HoCo Sykesville but as a child attended Jeffers Hill, Owen Brown and OMHS. I went to school with most of the same kids from elementary to high. THAT is

what created a great community when I was in school. Parent knew each other, families knew each other, teachers knew your older siblings.... You feel part of your community. Busing a kid away from their home does NOT help them to feel a sense of community. Also seems like we may be sending a signal that some communities are not as good as others and that's why we have to bus them away. That does NOT help them to feel proud of their home and community. Let's invest in and celebrate these communities instead of breaking them up!

- Transportation costs: Where are we coming up with the money for the extra buses and transportation costs associated with this plan? Has that been studied? You are proposing busing students long distances in rush hour traffic. Has the environmental cost of this been studied as well?
- Transportation concerns: given the longer time the kids will be spending on buses, is there a plan to also increase supervision on buses? As a parent, many of the 'not great things' that my kids pick up from other kids happens on the bus. The bus is also a prime spot for bullying. If kids are going to be spending an hour or more on a bus, additional supervision on the bus should also be provided.
- Weather concerns: When there is bad weather, the students that are being transported much farther than necessary by buses are at increased risk of injury. If children need to be picked up in case of an emergency, it is much harder on parents who will now have to travel longer distances, some to multiple schools.
- Multiple redistricting: Many kids have already been redistricted multiple times which is hard of them emotionally and educationally. They are constantly readjusting to a new normal during an age that is typically a very fragile time in socially. With a new high school coming in 2-3 years, is such a drastic plan really necessary at this time?
- Health Concerns: Students being bused outside of the communities where they live will have to wake up earlier to get to the bus stop. Middle and High schools already start extremely early and it is already a struggle for tween and teens to get enough sleep for their bodies and minds to be healthy. Their time is better spent at home than on a bus!

Again, I do not feel that Dr. Martirano's redistricting plan has the best interests of Howard County students and families at heart. It is a short-sighted plan that seems to only focus on one area of improvement at the expense of all other priorities that the citizens of Howard County have clearly expressed. **I am calling on our elected officials in the Board of Education to support the wishes of Howard County students and families by voting "NO" on this proposal.**

Regards,

Melanie H. Starling

Melanie H. Starling
Howard County Resident and Tax Payer from POLYGON #2233
608 Sideling Court
Sykesville, MD 21784
(410) 707-3136

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Melanie H. Starling

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Sayers, Margery

From: ayesha naseem <ayeshoo7@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 5, 2019 1:09 PM
To: 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; student_member@hcpss.org; redistricting_@hcpss.org; boe@hcpss.org; superintendent@hcpss.org
Cc: Ball, Calvin; Jones, Opel; Jung, Deb; Yungmann, David; Rigby, Christiana; Walsh, Elizabeth; CouncilMail; katiefry.hester@senate.state.md.us; trent.kittleman@house.state.md.us; warren.miller@house.state.md.us; kathleen_hanks@hcpss.org
Subject: Opposing Redistricting Polygon# 176

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

Respected BOE and Representatives,

I am a mom of a River Hill High School sophomore and a 4th grader at Triadelphia Ridge Elementary School. I am writing to oppose this redistricting plan of the superintendent .

We have been a community member of this school district for the past 12 years ,this community is like family to us. Not only our children ,but we have built a lot of friendly ties in the community. With this plan it uproots us as a family affecting our children who have developed strong bonds of friendship since early childhood. I am by no means a psychologist or a psychiatrist to state facts or studies ,but being a mother of three(my oldest graduated from river hill in the year 2019)I can state for a fact it will tear apart any sense of belonging if my child was to be uprooted from river hill high school .He plays on the JV Soccer team and that team is his brotherhood ,one he cannot imagine being taken away from . Getting an option to play on the varsity team might not be available to him .He has a great sense of pride to be a HaWk.

MY 10th grader will be a rising junior and thats a critical year for these kids .A lot of blood and sweat goes into preparing for colleges as you all know ,standardized testings, college recommendations, all will all be affected by being in a new environment and not having the backing of the teachers and counselors that they have known for 3 years.

The extra commute times will wreak havoc for these high schoolers ,going from a short commute to spending all this extra time on bus rides .It will not only take away from their sleep ,which often results in more irritated children with a much lower productivity.It is hazardous to be commuting for that long.

Growing up we were always told if there is a problem that needs to be fixed ,it should be nipped in the bud. I sincerely believe that shaking up 7500 kids is not the solution to fix the FARM issue. I am not against equality ,its ethically the right thing to do ,but these communities need to be uplifted at the root level and not when you have a mature tree. More resources can be pumped into these communities to change them for the better .River hill is below capacity so taking on new kids should be a suggestion rather than busing out kids that already have deep roots in the school.

With due respect ,it seems inhumane to do this to the kids .We sincerely hope the board will reconsider this redistricting and come up with an alternative plan .

sincerely ,
Ayesha Naseem

Sayers, Margery

From: Genevieve McCardell <genevieve.mccardell@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 4, 2019 9:24 AM
To: redistricting@hcpss.org; CouncilMail
Cc: jeffery_fink@hcpss.org
Subject: Input from Polygon #1058: Don't destroy the Oakland Mills HS cOMmunity

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

Dear Board of Education and County Council members:

Thank you for allowing citizen input into the Superintendent's redistricting proposal. I have been a resident of Columbia since 1971, when my parents bought a home on Stevens Forest Road in Oakland Mills. I spent 6th through 12th grades in Howard County schools, attending Hammond MS for 6th grade (because OMMS wasn't built yet), Oakland Mills MS for 7th and 8th, and Oakland Mills HS 9th through 12th (Class of 1978). After college my husband and I bought a home in Oakland Mills. In 1993 my husband and I bought our house in Swan Point, a townhome development right across the street from the Owen Brown Village Center. We are within walking distance to Cradlerock ES and Lake Elkhorn MS, and 2.4 miles from Oakland Mills HS. I have 3 kids: two kids who graduated from OMHS ('08 and '19), and an 8th grader currently attending Lake Elkhorn MS ('24).

My 8th grade son has Autism Spectrum Disorder. He has an IEP and receives accommodations at Lake Elkhorn MS. His disability causes him to have many issues, including anxiety, lack of social skills, sensory overload, difficulty coping with changes in routine, problems dealing with frustration and communicating his feelings.... In other words, he requires a great deal of support and stability to be successful.

The Superintendent's proposal has Owen Brown Polygons #1058, 52, 2054, 54, 1054 and 58 moving to Atholton HS. By looking at the map, you can see how these polygons were gerrymandered out of the Oakland Mills HS district. These polygons contain townhomes and apartments. Some of the townhomes and apartments in these targeted polygons are considered "affordable" housing and contain many students with economically disadvantaged families. You will also notice that these targeted polygons actually contain Cradlerock Elementary and Lake Elkhorn MS. Interestingly enough, our Polygon #1058 would stay at Cradlerock ES and Lake Elkhorn MS (which are the closest schools and located in our community). The proposal takes Polygons #1058, 52, 2054, 54, 1054 and 58 across Rt. 29 to Atholton HS, an area with which Owen Brown Village has no physical or community ties! The town home community which borders us, Elkhorn Landing (on Winter Rose Path), would stay at OMHS, which splits up our community!

The Superintendent's plan fails in the following ways:

- 1) Distance.** Our home is 2.4 miles from OMHS and 4.8 miles from AHS, a school that is twice as far and is separated from our community by a major highway. That's double the fossil fuel being burned up at greater cost, which in turn represents education dollars that could be put to better use.
- 2) Accessibility.** Atholton HS is not on a direct RTA bus route for Owen Brown residents. To get to Atholton HS from Owen Brown you have to take one bus to the mall and transfer to another bus that takes you through Hickory Ridge, to eventually get to AHS. This means two things: kids who need to stay after school will not be able to walk or quickly ride public transportation home, and parents who do not have a vehicle will have a more difficult time getting to AHS to attend meetings, sporting events or activities. Currently there is an RTA bus that goes directly from OMHS to Owen Brown Village Center with no bus transfer. Remember that these polygons that are in the proposal to be sent to Atholton HS contain many disadvantaged families where public transportation is important. Not everyone is Howard

County has a car (or two or three) or even has a driver's license. Oakland Mills and Owen Brown Village are more "connected" than Owen Brown and Hickory Ridge are, and the bus routes verify this fact.

3) Loss of "cOMmunity". Schools are a major part of any community. Dr. Jeffery Fink, the Principal at OMHS says it best: "We Are OM...We Are Strongest Together". I have a longstanding history with OMHS as an alumna, but also as a parent of a recent graduate. People have made assumptions about OMHS because the test scores aren't as high as another school's scores, and the fact that there are so many kids receiving financial assistance. The reality is that OMHS is a fantastic school with a great sense of community. (I want to add that Dr. Fink and his team of administrators and teachers are a big reason for this change in perception.) We embrace the fact that the school is racially and economically diverse. High school is not just about test scores; it's a time for adolescents to start understanding how to get along in the world. The success of a person in life is NOT the result of test scores or even about being wealthy, but rather success comes from one's ability to understand and appreciate others. The Oakland Mills/Owen Brown communities are connected to each other both geographically and socially, as both communities have a wide range of housing choices and various price-points. By sending Owen Brown polygons to Atholton HS, you are taking away the reason that we live where we do. I pay property taxes and a CA assessment to be part of a community! The proposal is using my polygon, and the other polygons I listed, to socially engineer Atholton HS by bringing our "disadvantaged" students to that school. Just think how the kids feel, knowing that they are being moved to change some FARM numbers?! Community matters, and this proposal not only tears apart Owen Brown, but with approximately 45% of Atholton HS students being moved, drastically changes their community as well.

4) Difficulties with articulation, especially for students with IEPs. One of the reasons that a feeder-school system is used is to keep students together as they move through their school years. Another important benefit of the feeder school system, however, are the benefits the system provides to the process of articulation. My son is starting 8th grade at Lake Elkhorn MS. He has always known that he would be going to Oakland Mills like his mother, brother and sister did. The IEP team at Lake Elkhorn MS is familiar with Oakland Mills HS due to the many years of planning for the articulation of students to either Oakland Mills HS. It is always easier to plan when you know the school, know the programming, and know the IEP team where you are sending the student. So, as it is proposed now, on November 19th we find out where our son will attend high school. which is less than a week before the parent/teacher conferences and Thanksgiving break. So, practically speaking, school administrators, teachers AND parents will have from December to May to plan for a new school setting. Planning for a special needs student is complicated enough without the added stress! This plan sends my son to a school that both Lake Elkhorn MS and I are not very familiar with (when compared to the many years that LEMS and OMHS have planned articulation together). In addition, I will be sending my child to a school which is farther away from home, which is a significant factor when you have a child who has behaviors that can result in "come pick him up" calls from school administrators. In addition, I will be sending my child to a school that will have undergone massive student population changes. I pity the administrators and teachers at Atholton HS trying to learn about all the new students that will be transferring into their school all at once! The stress of the new student influx into Atholton HS will impact my son because the staff will be under stress having to adjust to a greater influx of new-to-Atholton students. Instead of just new 9th graders, you will have over 40% of the students being new to the school with no connection to the community. Those students will be at a disadvantage both socially and geographically.

5) Gerrymandering. Did you notice that the current proposal has OMHS receiving students that live WEST of Route 29 and EAST of Route 1, touching Anne Arundel County? What sense of community does that boundary create? Do you notice how parts of communities, such as Owen Brown, are carved up? Why does Allview Estates get to stay at OMHS, when historically they attended Atholton HS before OMHS was built? (My guess is because they are a higher-income area that the Superintendent wants to keep at OMHS.)

The superintendent's plan should consider how these moves are impacting communities, relationships and special education students. Using my neighborhood to move my lower-income neighbors into other schools is like sweeping the dust under the rug. Don't destroy the OMHS community, but rather take the money spent on this expensive busing proposal and instead fund programs that enhance and support families that may face economic challenges. I would further argue that portables are less disruptive to students than busing. Frankly, the superintendent's plan is going to

have ramifications for the stability of neighborhoods. Loss of stability means people move out which could mean loss of tax revenue which means loss of funding for schools.

6) Stop this plan. HS 13 will cause further disruption to families and communities. Wait until the new school is built, then make the moves. If there are parents who wish to move their child out of a crowded school, allow them to do so without penalty. Please don't make my special needs child suffer. Please don't move lower-income families away from their neighborhood schools.

Oakland Mills High School embraces ALL students, ALL families, ALL THE TIME. We do not need a Superintendent who is not part of the history of our community to socially engineer our school and our county.

Ms. Genevieve E. McCardell
7243 Swan Point Way, Polygon #1058
Columbia, MD 21045
443-904-0114 cell

Sayers, Margery

From: kiju <ms.kiju@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 4, 2019 7:01 AM
To: Redistricting@hcpss.org; Boe@hcpss.org; CouncilMail; superintendent@hcpss.org
Cc: cball@howardcountymd.gov; contact@maryland.gov; howardcountydems@gmail.com; HoCoRepublicanClub@gmail.com; Shawna Frazier; Maria J. Gutierrez; yinqi zhang; guorong01@yahoo.com; Christian Cao; claudiam.palmer@gmail.com; Kelly Cao
Subject: Howard County redistricting plan divides a multi-ethnic Clarksville
Attachments: 20190903_134101.jpg; redistricting_letter_Yinqi_Zhang.docx; 08 20 2019 Attendance Area Adjustment BR.pdf; Redistricting letter FINAL_Gutierrez.docx; Redistricting_letter_Julie Kim_final.doc

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

Dear all,

Many of us in Clarksville do not agree with the redistricting plan, as proposed. Please consider letters from 3 concerned parents and a photo of our children. See attached.

Kind regards,
Julie Kim, M.D.

Yinqi Zhang, Ph.D.

6133 Rippling Water Walk

Clarksville, MD 21029

September 3, 2019

Dear Dr. Martirano,

Thank you for reading this letter. It was my pleasure seeing you at RHHS on Aug 27. Thank you for getting out of the car and talking to the crowd.

I am a resident of Riverhill community and our family resides in polygon 188. Although my family is not redistricted under the proposal, I am writing this short letter to second all of Mrs. Julie's points in her letter to you. In addition, I hope you will consider the impact on commute time for those students who are redistricted to a school further away from home (and higher transportation cost) as well as the emotional impact on many young children who are going to be separated from their friends as a result of the current redistricting plan. My son is very sad that nearly all his friends will attend a different middle school under the proposal.

Thank you for your time!

Yinqi

Maria J. Gutierrez, M.D., M.H.S.
5896 Indian Summer Drive
Clarksville, MD, 21029

September 3, 2019

Dear Dr. Martirano,

Thank you for your constant efforts to improve our children's education in Howard County. I am a resident of the River Hill community. Our family would be redistricted under the proposed Attendance Area Adjustment Plan and I share the concerns of other parents in our neighborhood (outlined in Mrs. Yinqi Zhang and Mrs. Julie Kim's letters). I also wanted to mention a few additional points that I hope are considered during upcoming discussions.

First, as families at Clarksville Elementary School (CES) and neighbors of River Hill, we build friendships and community ties due in large part to interactions at our elementary school where we are a diverse and engaged community. As a result, our kids benefit from this environment inside and outside the classroom. Dividing CES graduates between Clarksville and Harper's Choice Middle Schools would disturb our neighborhood dynamics. I invite you to please find solutions that do not disrupt the healthy social dynamics of naturally-established communities.

Second, please consider that uprooting students from their childhood friends and community during pre-adolescence exposes them to adolescent health problems. The middle school years (puberty and early adolescence) are a period of special vulnerability to mental health issues (e.g. depression, suicide), substance abuse and other dysfunctional behaviors. Risk factors for these problems include low neighborhood attachment, **transitions and mobility** and low commitment to school. On the other hand, protective factors include strong attachments to school, community and positive peers. Therefore, is it really necessary to disjoint well-functioning pre-teens at CES from many of their neighbors and childhood friends during this vulnerable time?

Having fun and spending the adolescence years in their community and with childhood friends "vaccinates" our kids against these problems and yields many other positive outcomes. Please take into account the special developmental characteristics of our children's growing minds when redrawing school boundaries.

There is also a risk of decline in parental involvement and community disengagement if our students are forced to attend schools away from their community and friends. In an era of strong advocacy to decrease funding and find alternatives to public education, the fragmentation of parental support and disengagement from our schools may debilitate our public school system for years to come. Please consider this potential unintended outcome of your plan before implementing changes that lack community support.

Finally, while trying to foster integration among our students is commendable, redistributing the demographics of our schools as proposed would disjoint communities like ours where minority children (like my family) and students from very different backgrounds have established friendships and feel that they fit-in. Preserving bounds and community attachment is a very effective way to foster the development of your minority and disadvantaged students. Please do not dislodge them from communities where they have been successfully assimilated.

In summary, unfortunately, I cannot support your plan in its current form as it divides my community and it is unnecessarily burdensome for children in my neighborhood and my family. Nonetheless, I am confident that meaningful alternatives exist. Consider enlisting us, your community, to brainstorm, plan and act in creating innovative, less disruptive solutions to advance our children's education. We want to help!

Thank you very much for your attention.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Maria J. Gutierrez". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "M" and a stylized "G".

Maria J. Gutierrez, M.D., M.H.S.

Sayers, Margery

From: Rajneet Sawhney <dsrajji@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 3, 2019 12:56 PM
To: redistricting@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;
student_member@hcpss.org; boe@hcpss.org; superintendent@hcpss.org; Jones, Opel;
Jung, Deb; Yungmann, David; Rigby, Christiana; Walsh, Elizabeth; CouncilMail;
katiefry.hester@senate.state.md.us; trent.kittleman@house.state.md.us;
warren.miller@house.state.md.us; Kathleen_Hanks@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin
Subject: Oppose Howard County Redistricting Proposal
Attachments: Oppose Redistricting Porposal Aug 20, 2019.pdf

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

Dear Board of Education Members,

We are writing on behalf of residents of Polygon 176 who are concerned about the proposed impact of Dr Martirano's Presentation of the Attendance Area Adjustment Plan, dated August 20, 2019. As noted in the Executive Summary on Page 4, this proposal was developed with three primary goals as excerpted below:

The driving priorities for this process:

- 1. Balance capacity utilization among schools throughout HCPSS, cost effectively.*
- 2. Advance equity by addressing the distribution of students participating in the Free and Reduced price meals program (FARMs) across schools to the extent feasible.*
- 3. Plan ahead for the High School #13 redistricting by minimizing double moves as much as possible.*

We have also studied and respect the published policies which the Board of Education utilizes in making decisions with regard to school attendance areas, specifically Policy 6010 (<https://www.hcpss.org/policies/6000/6010-school-attendance-areas/>):

Unfortunately, the Presentation of Attendance Area Adjustment Plan, dated August 20, 2019 is **not** consistent with the guidelines of Policy 6010 and does **not** achieve the three primary goals as stated in Dr Martirano's letter. Please consider the following facts.

School Attendance Area:

School Attendance area and geographic proximity is a consideration of Policy 6010. The proposed redistricting of Polygon 176 would more than double the distance students travel to get to school.

- Using Google Maps, Walnut Creek / Polygon 176 is 2.1 Miles from River Hill High School (RHHS). Walnut Creek / Polygon 176 is 5.8 miles from Wilde Lake High School (WLHS).
- Using WAZE, the commute time from Polygon 176 to Wilde Lake High School would be 3x as long as the commute to River Hill High School.
- In addition, many of the students from Polygon 176 would have to drive through River Hill High School bus and car traffic, en-route to Wilde Lake High School under the August 20, 2019 proposal.

Capacity Utilization:

Policy 6010 identifies three key aspects to school capacity which are (1) Projections [item P], (2) Target Utilization [item S] which is defined as enrollment between 90% and 110% utilization of program capacity and (3) Utilization [item T].

The 2019 Feasibility Study (<https://www.hcpss.org/f/schoolplanning/2019/2019-feasibility-study.pdf>) notes the following findings:

1. River Hill High School is projected to be at 94% Projected Utilization for 2019/2020 school. This is at the lower end of the Target Utilization range.
2. Page 33 of the Feasibility Study indicates that River Hill is within Target Utilization through the 10 year projection period of the study.

3. Under Dr Martirano's proposal, River Hill would send 478 students to other schools and receive 741 students from other schools. This is extremely disruptive and unnecessary for a school that is currently operating within each of guidelines [P], [S] and [T] of Policy 6010.
4. We believe the board should reject a plan which moves approximately 7,400 total students including 478 students from River Hill High School which is currently operating within Board Policy guidelines with regard to Projections, Target Utilization and Utilization.
5. We believe any re-districting proposal should instead be focused on those five High Schools that are operating above Target Utilization levels (110%).
6. We believe the Board of Education should support a plan that includes less disruption at schools that are operating within the guidelines of [P], [S] and [T]. For instance, since River Hill High School is operating well within the target utilization range, perhaps it should receive students from nearby schools such as Wilde Lake, Atholton or Howard, without sending 478 students out to other schools. Certainly, the Board of Education can request a plan that achieves better capacity utilization with less than 7,396 total students being relocated.

Equity:

The very first sentence of the Policy Statement of HCPSS Policy 6010 is *The Board of Education of Howard County, with the advice of the Superintendent, establishes school attendance areas to provide quality, equitable educational opportunities to all students and to balance the capacity utilization of all schools.*

Furthermore, "equitable" is defined in the policy statement as: *Just or fair access, opportunities, and supports needed to help students, families, and staff reach their full potential by removing barriers to success that individuals face. It does not mean equal or everyone having the same things.*

The Presentation of the Attendance Area Adjustment Plan dated August 20, 2019 **is not** consistent with the Board of Education Policy Statement 6010, nor does it follow the BoE's definition of achieving "equitable" educational opportunities. We hereby request the Board of Education identify ways to provide additional educational resources to the students in need. Transferring students from a school with a low FARM ratio to a school with a high FARM ratio, only results in better "averages" for the schools. **IT DOES NOT PROVIDE ANY INCREMENTAL EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES OR OPPORTUNITES DIRECTLY TO THE STUDENTS.**

In conclusion, we recommend the Board of Education reject the Presentation of Attendance Area Adjustment Plan dated August 20, 2019 due to the numerous and serious inconsistencies with regard to both Policy 6010 and the stated goals of the proposal.

- The proposal would triple the commuting time of students in Polygon 176
- Many affected schools including River Hill High School are operating within the Board of Education projection, utilization and capacity guidelines and would experience a total student transfer of over 1,000 children inclusive of students being sent and received. Boundary adjustments should be focused on schools operating over capacity or projected to be over capacity based on the 2019 Feasibility study.

- The proposal does not provide additional resources directly to students in need, it simply provides more consistent FARM ratios across schools. Children do not need consistent FARM ratios, they need additional education resources provided directly to their schools.

Thank you,

Rajneet Sawhney,

Polygon 176

Sayers, Margery

From: Ruoxia Pan <ruoxia_pan@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 3, 2019 11:42 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: My Concern for the Redistricting

[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 voice my concern for the **involuntary** busing of students away from their communities, against students' and parents' choices, as the mean of closing school-wide achievement gap. While I support the need to address the school-wide achievement gap and I support creating opportunities for children to attend schools that are under-utilized (e.g., through prospective zoning of mixed-income housing and **voluntary** busing), I believe that the **involuntary** busing of students away from their existing schools is based on misguided belief system does not address the deeper underlining problems and can be counterproductive. The proposed plan only reshuffles the students into different schools so that school-wide averages appear more similar but does not improve outcome for **individual** students for the below listed reasons.

The massive **involuntary** busing comes with problems and costs that just can't be ignored. The current plan completely neglects educational and emotional needs of **individual** students who would be **involuntarily** bused away from their communities against their will. I believe that a cohesive community and dedicated parental involvement are critical to children's overall well-being and academic achievement. Massive busing of children against their will is very disruptive and demoralizing for children, parents, and communities. Howard County can take a more thoughtful approach than what is currently being proposed.

Involuntary busing adds commute time, causes students to lose the much-needed sleep for their growing bodies and loose opportunity for after-school activities that they might have participate at their home schools. **Involuntary** busing moves students to schools further away detrimentally impacts traffic (superintendent Mr. Martirano acknowledges a potential 3x-4x worsening in traffic jam) and adds to the transportation cost to our already exploding budget deficit. Retrospective school district reassignment by third parties outside the school district community can lead to housing speculations (ulterior motive), corruption, and thus undermine public trust in our elected official. For all these reasons, I believe we can't afford to support such a measure that is counterproductive in many ways to our goal of creating a more cohesive community with opportunities for upward mobility for everyone.

I believe better options to address our educational crisis have not been fully explored. In terms of our education crisis, if there are too few schools in the area, why not offer vouchers for volunteers to attend public or private schools that better suit their needs until new schools are built? There are research to support the choice approach [insert article]. To help each child reach his/her full potential, I hope Howard County stands to provide—and not take away—educational choices from the students.

Respectfully,

Ruoxia Pan

Polygon 28

Sayers, Margery

From: xin li <xinjoyli@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 3, 2019 11:34 AM
To: redistricting@hcpss.org; CouncilMail
Subject: Redistributing polygon 3176

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

To Dear Board of education,

We lived in Polygon 3176. I am writing this letter to oppose the current school redistricting proposal to move Polygon 3176 from River Hill HS to Wild Lake HS.

The proposed redistricting of Polygon 3176 would increase the distance students would travel longer time to/from school. This will likely result in longer morning commuting times for students to get to school and reduced sleep, which will significantly impact student's psychological development, physical development and safety. Also increase the county budgets for bus transportation.

Our school system should be neighborhood school. The current school students should not be disrupted. I believe the Board of Education should support a plan that includes less disruption at schools that are operating within the guidelines. For instance, since River Hill High School is operating well within the target utilization range, perhaps it should receive students from nearby schools such as Wilde Lake, Atholton or Howard, without sending 478 students out to other schools.

We believe the board should **reject** a plan which moves approximately 7,400 total students including 478 students from River Hill High School which is currently operating within Board Policy guidelines with regard to Projections, Target Utilization and Utilization. Boundary adjustments should be focused on schools operating over capacity or projected to be over capacity based on the 2019 Feasibility study.

The aspect of this proposal intended to create "equity" does not provide additional resources directly to students in need. Artificial consistent FARM ratios will not fundamentally help our children. They need additional education resources provided directly to their schools and classrooms.

Thanks for your consideration.

Xin

Howard county resident polygon 3176

Sayers, Margery

From: srujana ailneni <sailneni@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 3, 2019 11:29 AM
To: 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; student_member@hcpss.org; redistricting@hcpss.org; boe@hcpss.org; superintendent@hcpss.org
Cc: Ball, Calvin; Jones, Opel; Jung, Deb; Yungmann, David; Rigby, Christiana; Walsh, Elizabeth; CouncilMail; katiefry.hester@senate.state.md.us; trent.kittleman@house.state.md.us; warren.miller@house.state.md.us; Kathleen_Hanks@hcpss.or
Subject: Howard county Redistricting 2020-2021: polygon 176

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

Dear Board of Education Members,

I am writing to express my concern with Dr.Maritrano's redistricting proposal. Our family moved to Howard County in 2005 specifically to foster our children's educational opportunities. We moved in to the Walnut Creek community in 2014 so that my children could attend Triadelphia Ridge Elementary School, Folly Quarter Middle School, and River Hill High School. In the proposal, our Polygon 176 is slated to be redistricted to [Wilde Lake](#) High School.

My older daughter will next week be a sophomore at River Hill High and was continued to be accepted into Varsity Team last week. She has received Scholar Athlete award last year based on her **HARDWORK** only.

The current proposal would be disruptive in many ways but foremost the current proposal would increase my daughter's commute of 1.8 miles and approximately 8 minutes with traffic to 4.1 miles which could take well over 25 minutes with traffic. I am the only parent who is working 35 minutes away to my work as compared to my husband who is an hour plus away and in order to pickup my daughter from her after school activities, I will need to take 50 minutes out of my daily work schedule for the round-trip commute, and make up the time in the evening. Additionally, she plays in the Vollyball Travel Team and with the current proposal she cant make it to the practice on weekdays due to the long commute which makes it practically not possible for our family. This is very upsetting and please **STOP** this redistricting proposal.

Furthermore, the benefits of this massive redistribution of **7396** students is incremental, apparently FARM student rates will generally decrease by a small percentage. My family and my community remain very committed to educational opportunities for all Howard County students but this is not the method to achieve equitable goals.

I am also very upset with the lack of transparency in the process of the redistricting proposals. Instead of giving significant lead time, the Superintendent ignored expensive third-party studies and came up with his own proposal. The very short comment period before the final vote in November give community members little lead time to understand the process and voice our opinions. Finally, River Hill is currently under capacity, why would we move our neighborhoods out and bus them away when more students could be brought to River Hill?

The current proposal will be personally devastating to our family, extremely disruptive to our community and will not accomplish the stated goals the Superintendent proposed.

Sincerely,
Srujana Chikyala

Sent from my iPhone

Sayers, Margery

From: Neetu Gupta <neetu_gupta@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 3, 2019 11:26 AM
To: 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; student_member@hcpss.org; redistricting@hcpss.org; boe@hcpss.org; superintendent@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin; Jones, Opel; Jung, Deb; Yungmann, David; Rigby, Christiana; Walsh, Elizabeth; CouncilMail; katiefry.hester@senate.state.md.us; trent.kittleman@house.state.md.us; warren.miller@house.state.md.us
Subject: RedistrictProposal: Doesn't make sense

[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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From: Neetu Gupta <neetu_gupta@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 2, 2019 10:00:02 AM
To: Rajeev Gupta <rajbusi1@yahoo.com>
Subject: Fw: Redistricting Proposal: Doesn't make sense

Dear Dr. Martirano,

I hope you are doing well. This email is with regard to your proposal for the school redistricting in Howard County. I reviewed the materials in detail and I would like to express my concerns that are very grave in nature in my opinion.

I have a rising senior and I have seen over the past three years that high school is no joke. Due to the activities in and out of the school with the high school curriculum, I have seen sleep deprivation in high school kids. And if you slap another 25 minutes to their commute on top of what they have, you will be adding way too much stress. You know how important it is to have a good sleep for the development of the brain. You know that there are so many issues related to the sleep deprivation especially in the teenagers. And it's not that only kids that are going from our area to another is going to face the issue but it's the same from the other areas too.

I have a rising freshman in the high school, as a parent, I want him to experience the same school and play on the same team that he has been working hard to join.

By uprooting him from his immediate community, you are taking away not only the opportunity for him to experience the same environment that his older sibling has experienced but also failing the child to succeed.

I believe that all kids should have an opportunity to grow. The kids are not weeds don't pluck them. Provide them with the best environment with resources and help them blossom. As you know schools are kids driven. That motivation comes from the elders like the teachers and mentors around them who know their environment. If you think that pulling few kids from one area will help the other kids with their grades and

motivation, then it's a wrong thought. The kids going from one setting to another can't relate to that. Instead of understanding there will be misunderstandings and resentment between the groups. You will create more segregation than integration.

Given that your argument with the funds given to schools. All schools PTA raises money and it goes to one PTA pool. Its the county level or state level PTA who can decide how to divide the resources. You need to have a better communication as the school system superintendent.

The working parents can't pick up and drop off the kids for the after school activities. And it goes both ways. Just like the jump start kids couldn't stay back after school for the activities and that harmed their social interactions with the other students.

All in all the proposal is not practical from any stand point. I stand against this proposal.

Thanks,
Neetu Gupta

Sayers, Margery

From: Jennifer Funk <paulandjen2@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 3, 2019 11:22 AM
To: 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; student_member@hcpss.org; redistricting@hcpss.org; boe@hcpss.org; superintendent@hcpss.org
Cc: Ball, Calvin; Jones, Opel; Jung, Deb; Yungmann, David; Rigby, Christiana; Walsh, Elizabeth; CouncilMail; katiefry.hester@senate.state.md.us; trent.kittleman@house.state.md.us; warren.miller@house.state.md.us; Kathleen_Hanks@hcpss.org
Subject: Oppose Redistricting Plan – Polygon 1183

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

Dear HCPSS Board of Education Member,

The Superintendent's redistricting proposal:

1. Puts in place a complex, over-engineered, expensive transportation program.
2. Moves thousands of children irresponsibly. The negative impact on individual family members is many more thousands when considering parents, siblings, etc.
3. Does not fundamentally fix overcrowding with 21 schools still above the 110% capacity.
4. Adds substantially to children's commute times. In many cases, commutes times will triple moving from three miles or less (5-15 minutes) to seven miles or more (30 - 45 minutes).
5. Does not address or incorporate student population management regarding the new HS 13 slated for 2023. Is the county planning to do this all over again in a few years?
6. Introduces a redistribution of FARMS rates. Why? This does not fix overcrowding and is an exercise in spreading out an issue not fixing it. FARM populations can be addressed or redistributed without moving non-FARM children.
7. Leads to a permanent divide between a substantial part of the Community and the Superintendent, the HCPSS, and BoE. This proposal was done "to the community", not "with or for the community".

I implore you to review the facts, implications to all Howard County Public School students and their communities, and reject Dr. Martirano's ill-conceived proposal.

Thank you,
Paul and Jen Funk

Sayers, Margery

From: Sarangi Parikh <sarangi.parikh@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 3, 2019 11:13 AM
To: redistricting@hcpss.org
Subject: HCPSS Redistricting Plan
Attachments: Redistricting Letter.pdf

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

Please see attached message.

Thanks,
Sarangi Parikh
Polygon 3176
Howard County

--

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

Dear Board of Education Member:

9/3/2019

I am writing to you as a concerned parent and citizen of Howard County. I am truly concerned about the school redistricting plan that Superintendent Martirano and the County Council have recently proposed. I have over 10 years of teaching as a college professor and have been on both sides of the classroom my entire life. As an educator myself, I believe that equity in education is extremely important. Also, as a minority and a female who has worked primarily in a white, male-dominated engineering profession, I truly appreciate a racially diverse environment.

Growing up in the US as a child of immigrant parents I had my first job as a newspaper delivery girl when I was in elementary school and rode my bike around the neighborhood to deliver papers. I did not have the privilege of attending before and after care programs. I did not participate in summer camps or many after school activities. This is not because they were not available, rather it was because there wasn't public transportation; there wasn't an after school late drop off bus; my parents were unable to get off work early to pick me up; and honestly, the programs were too expensive for my family to afford. My elementary, middle and high schools were only a couple of miles from my home, however, still too far and not safe for me to walk or bike by myself. My parents worked long hours and most days I only saw my dad at 6am for breakfast and then again in the evening after 7pm. If I did have the opportunity to participate in any activities, I cannot imagine a scenario where he would have been able to attend games, performances, or concerts. While these are just some of the issues I had to deal with growing up, I was lucky enough to attend schools that were closest to my home.

While neither my husband nor I grew up in Howard County, we moved here since we believe in the power of public education. Both my husband and I went to public schools our entire lives, between us, we have attended some of the best and worst in this country. We had no family when we moved to Maryland and could have chosen to live closer to our work. However, we chose Howard County because it has some of the best public schools in the country while also providing a truly racially diverse community.

The superintendent has shared his plan on how to make the county more socioeconomically equitable. However, I do not believe simply shuffling students creates any real equity for any of the students. As someone who did not grow up in a privileged home, I recognize the true struggles these families face on a daily basis. His plan does nothing to alleviate the struggles and in my opinion, creates more stress for all the families that he wishes to redistribute. Instead, money needs to be allocated for the schools and families in need. Zoning laws need to be changed and developers need to be held accountable to help pay for the schools. Moving thousands of children is irresponsible and creates a negative impact on those kids and their families. Additionally, the extra stress does not even fix the overcrowding issue since 21 schools will still be above the 110% capacity. Also, this does not address the new high school 13 which is slated to open in 2023. Will the redistricting happen once again at that time? Moving children multiple times in just a few years is also extremely irresponsible and disruptive to the kids, their families, the schools (sports programs, choir, orchestra, band, etc.), and the community.

As an extra side note, substantially increasing children's commute times and in many cases tripling the time they will spend on the bus will only take away from their sleep and learning. Not to mention the extra traffic in Howard County and adding to greatly to the expense of transportation. Again, this money can be used to actually help support the students and their families rather than giving it to the bus companies.

I recognize that redistricting is necessary to alleviate the stress of overcrowded schools but doing it at the cost of breaking communities apart is absolutely ridiculous. Presently, I live within 2 miles of River Hill High School in Polygon 3176. We can hear the band and the crowds cheering during football games from my home. My children were in elementary and preschool when they first cheered on the River Hill Hawks at a football game. We go to the games not because we know anyone on the team nor do any of my children play football, but rather because it is part of our community. This is what makes communities! It is supporting each other and our neighbor's children, even if we don't know them. Proximity to the school is the only reason we are able to attend the games and support the team. Additionally, because of proximity, my children have participated in sports booster camps at River Hill High School run by the high school coaches. As a family, we have attended the River Hill High School orchestra concerts, attended plays by their theater students and enjoyed the Hawks talent shows. Currently, the superintendent's plan has my children getting on a bus, driving directly past their neighborhood high school to attend a school much further away from home.

I urge you to review the facts, implications to all Howard County Public School students, their families, and the communities, and reject Dr. Martirano's ill-conceived proposal.

Thank you for your time and attention to this extremely important matter.

Sincerely,
Sarangi Parikh
Polygon 3176

Sayers, Margery

From: Rithvik Atluri <ratluri08@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 3, 2019 10:43 AM
To: 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; student_member@hcpss.org; redistricting@hcpss.org; boe@hcpss.org; superintendent@hcpss.org; Jones, Opel; Jung, Deb; Yungmann, David; Rigby, Christiana; Walsh, Elizabeth; CouncilMail; katiefry.hester@senate.state.md.us; trent.kittleman@house.state.md.us; warren.miller@house.state.md.us; Kathleen_Hanks@hcpss.org
Subject: Opposing redistrict plan. Please hear our voice

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

Dear Board of Education Members,

I am writing on behalf of my family resident of Polygon 176 who are concerned about the proposed impact of Dr Martirano's Presentation of the Attendance Area Adjustment Plan, dated August 20, 2019. As noted in the Executive Summary on Page 4, this proposal was developed with three primary goals as excerpted below:

The driving priorities for this process:

1. Balance capacity utilization among schools throughout HCPSS, cost effectively.
2. Advance equity by addressing the distribution of students participating in the Free and Reduced price meals program (FARMs) across schools to the extent feasible.
3. Plan ahead for the High School #13 redistricting by minimizing double moves as much as possible.

We have also studied and respect the published policies which the Board of Education utilizes in making decisions with regard to school attendance areas, specifically Policy 6010 (<https://www.hcpss.org/policies/6000/6010-school-attendance-areas/>):

Unfortunately, the Presentation of Attendance Area Adjustment Plan, dated August 20, 2019 is not consistent with the guidelines of Policy 6010 and does not achieve the three primary goals as stated in Dr Martirano's letter. Please consider the following facts.

School Attendance Area:

School Attendance area and geographic proximity is a consideration of Policy 6010. The proposed redistricting of Polygon 176 would more than double the distance students travel to get to school.

- Using Google Maps, Walnut Creek / Polygon 176 is 2.1 Miles from River Hill High School (RHHS). Walnut Creek / Polygon 176 is 5.8 miles from Wilde Lake High School (WLHS).

- Using WAZE, the commute time from Polygon 176 to Wilde Lake High School would be 3x as long as the commute to River Hill High School.

- In addition, many of the students from Polygon 176 would have to drive through River Hill High School bus and car traffic, en-route to Wilde Lake High School under the August 20, 2019 proposal.

Capacity Utilization:

Policy 6010 identifies three key aspects to school capacity which are (1) Projections [item P], (2) Target Utilization [item S] which is defined as enrollment between 90% and 110% utilization of program capacity and (3) Utilization [item T].

The 2019 Feasibility Study (<https://www.hcpss.org/f/schoolplanning/2019/2019-feasibility-study.pdf>) notes the following findings:

1. River Hill High School is projected to be at 94% Projected Utilization for 2019/2020 school. This is at the lower end of the Target Utilization range.

2. Page 33 of the Feasibility Study indicates that River Hill is within Target Utilization through the 10 year projection period of the study.
3. Under Dr Martirano's proposal, River Hill would send 478 students to other schools and receive 741 students from other schools. This is extremely disruptive and unnecessary for a school that is currently operating within each of guidelines [P], [S] and [T] of Policy 6010.
4. We believe the board should reject a plan which moves approximately 7,400 total students including 478 students from River Hill High School which is currently operating within Board Policy guidelines with regard to Projections, Target Utilization and Utilization.
5. We believe any re-districting proposal should instead be focused on those five High Schools that are operating above Target Utilization levels (110%).
6. We believe the Board of Education should support a plan that includes less disruption at schools that are operating within the guidelines of [P], [S] and [T]. For instance, since River Hill High School is operating well within the target utilization range, perhaps it should receive students from nearby schools such as Wilde Lake, Atholton or Howard, without sending 478 students out to other schools. Certainly, the Board of Education can request a plan that achieves better capacity utilization with less than 7,396 total students being relocated.

Equity:

The very first sentence of the Policy Statement of HCPSS Policy 6010 is The Board of Education of Howard County, with the advice of the Superintendent, establishes school attendance areas to provide quality, equitable educational opportunities to all students and to balance the capacity utilization of all schools.

Furthermore, "equitable" is defined in the policy statement as: Just or fair access, opportunities, and supports needed to help students, families, and staff reach their full potential by removing barriers to success that individuals face. It does not mean equal or everyone having the same things.

The Presentation of the Attendance Area Adjustment Plan dated August 20, 2019 is not consistent with the Board of Education Policy Statement 6010, nor does it follow the BoE's definition of achieving "equitable" educational opportunities. We hereby request the Board of Education identify ways to provide additional educational resources to the students in need. Transferring students from a school with a low FARM ratio to a school with a high FARM ratio, only results in better "averages" for the schools. IT DOES NOT PROVIDE ANY INCREMENTAL EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES OR OPPORTUNITES DIRECTLY TO THE STUDENTS.

In conclusion, we recommend the Board of Education reject the Presentation of Attendance Area Adjustment Plan dated August 20, 2019 due to the numerous and serious inconsistencies with regard to both Policy 6010 and the stated goals of the proposal.

- The proposal would triple the commuting time of students in Polygon 176
- Many affected schools including River Hill High School are operating within the Board of Education projection, utilization and capacity guidelines and would experience a total student transfer of over 1,000 children inclusive of students being sent and received. Boundary adjustments should be focused on schools operating over capacity or projected to be over capacity based on the 2019 Feasibility study.
- The proposal does not provide additional resources directly to students in need, it simply provides more consistent FARM ratios across schools. Children do not need consistent FARM ratios, they need additional education resources provided directly to their schools.

Thanks

Sayers, Margery

From: Sadrashk Kazmi <szkazmi@me.com>
Sent: Monday, September 2, 2019 7:49 PM
To: redistricting@hcpss.org
Cc: 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; student_member@hcpss.org; redistricting@hcpss.org; boe@hcpss.org; superintendent@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin; Jones, Opel; Jung, Deb; Yungmann, David; Rigby, Christiana; Walsh, Elizabeth; CouncilMail; katiefry.hester@senate.state.md.us; trent.kittleman@house.state.md.us; warren.miller@house.state.md.us; Kathleen_Hanks@hcpss.org
Subject: Concerned Letter from Parent of Polygon 3176
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

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

Dear Board of Education Members,

I am writing because my family and I reside in **Polygon 3176** and are deeply disturbed by the recent school-redistricting plan proposed by our superintendent Michael Martirano. Our community resides in Walnut Grove and is 2 miles away from River Hill high school. According to the new redistricting, I was troubled to hear that our kids would be going to a high school that is 9 miles away.

Now of course anyone can read all these opposing emails and think that parents are against it because it changes where they send their kids to high school. But I truly hope someone on your board focuses on the reasons *why* parents are opposing this horrible plan. Education is about placing the needs and priorities of the children first. It is what parents work so hard and make sacrifices for to make sure their children are afforded the right environment and atmosphere to excel in their lives. Despite what people may think, our community is a very much diverse community made up of Hispanic, Asian, African American, Caucasian and Southern Asian families. We take great pride in knowing that our neighborhood embodies the definition of DIVERSE. Many of us have overcome many painful hurdles and sacrifices to reach where we are at in our lives today. I personally am from a family of 7 who lived in a two bedroom apartment in NYC who grew up as a latch key kid and know personally the hardships my family faced growing up. It has led me to the point where I am in my life, and it is the driving force in providing the best atmosphere for my children. So please, first and foremost, please remove any thoughts that we are some privileged people and insensitive to others' needs. In fact, because of our varying backgrounds and stories of struggles, we come together as a community and have worked extremely hard in building not just our neighborhoods, but to continuously give the schools the support it needs to continue offering amazing after school programs. For example, I had volunteered my own free time to be a coordinator last year and run a STEM program (Jr First Lego League) at our elementary school, Triadelphia Ridge. Simultaneously, I was also assistant coach and offering whatever assistance I could to the upper level STEM program for 4th and 5th graders, First Lego League. I want the board to understand that what makes these schools so great is not just the students that attend it, but the parents that offer their endless time and support. If you continue to redistrict, you will

lose these dedicated parents in your communities. I had moved to Howard County eight years ago hearing how the schools were amazing. We decided to settle in Clarksville for the schools and the reputation of River Hill HS. Now, it has become a joke to move to Howard County because everyone knows that wherever you move, your lives can be changed in an instant because of the district's reputation for redistricting. I had one couple tell us that they purposely avoided moving to Howard County because if they are going to spend that kind of money in a community only to lose the schools, they might as well move elsewhere and save that money to send their kids to private schools. That is not the Howard County my family came to love and enjoy living in. But sadly today, I feel that statement is becoming more and more true.

The board's plan for redistricting is not building communities, but tearing them down. It is a loss that will affect everyone, including small business owners who depend on their community for business. We cannot have a community that is fleeing to the next town because their schools were taken away from them.

And if there is no care for the effects on the communities, then please focus on what it will do to our children.

1. This large scale school redistricting will increase commute time and will lead to more stress, less sleep, unhealthy lifestyle, thus negatively impact student's education.

- My children's commute to Wilde Lake will be hours sitting on a bus. Apparently their need for sleep is not a priority. I feel sorry for those kids who because of this longer commute will have to wake up so much earlier in the morning, and having to adjust their medication regimens, thereby feeling much of its adverse effects while sitting in school.

2. Longer commute time could also worsen traffic congestion and increase the risk of car accidents, especially for inexperienced new student drivers.

- It is absurd that our neighborhood's polygon is actually adjacent to our high school yet we will be forced across town. I worry, as should the board, that due to the long distance to Wilde Lake, the increased number of inexperienced high school students that will be driving on the road to get to and from school. Just the stress of getting to school on time can cause horrifying incidences to happen.

3. This large scale school redistricting will reduce parent's engagement in the school programs and against BOE's commitment to promote family and community involvement. It will also reduce student's participation in after school activities.

- I cannot stress enough how important it is to realize that the school will be losing out big time in parents' involvement and participation. Not to mention how the long drive will prevent my children from participating in many of these after school activities which is not only important for college resumes, but most importantly for character building.
- As someone who has volunteered their time to the schools, I know for a fact this change will prevent me from offering my time as I did before because quite frankly the distance is a hindrance. Let's not take for granted the time parents offer to their schools. It is not as if we have nothing else to do and hence are volunteering in school. We juggle family life, work life and even our social life around to make the time for our schools. But that can only happen when the schools are accessible to the communities. With the long distance associated with the proposed HS for Polygon 3176, the BOE is purposely making the school inaccessible for my community. That is truly a disservice to our children.

4. Superintendent Martirano's redistricting proposal does not maintain contiguous communities or neighborhoods (Policy 6010 IV.B2 b.).

- As a community, we already feel we are being torn apart. As I stated earlier in my email, River Hill high school's great reputation is not without the fact of the great communities that have supported it for so many years. Many communities have no relationship with their neighboring schools. But I can say with utmost certainty that Walnut Grove (Polygon 3176), along with other great neighborhoods has a real-time relationship with River Hill. We don't just wait for our kids to reach high school before we start getting involved. We are involved way before that. And that too is a result of River Hill inviting its neighborhoods to be involved with the school, whether or not their child is attending yet. My children see River Hill as the next natural stage of their schooling years.

5. This large scale school redistricting will impose additional operating costs, which violates Policy 6010 IV.B1 c. The additional operating costs could be used to improve education conditions for FARM students instead.

- We realize there is a concern for socioeconomic inequalities among various high schools districts. Instead of manipulating the numbers to falsely decrease FARM utilization, perhaps underlying issues of poverty at the schools that need it the most should be directly addressed. As our superintendent has pointed out, every school in Howard County is an excellent school. Shortcomings at each individual school due to poverty should be addressed on an individual basis.
- Some thoughts include the following:
 - 1) Before/after care should be provided to all schools. Howard County Parks and Recreation should subsidize the costs of before/after care in the schools where there is low enrollment due to poverty.
 - 2) Opportunity for after school programs should not be precluded by lack of affordability. A "buddy" school system should be set up where a school lacking PTA funds should be paired up with a more affluent school in the county to raise and share PTA funds.
 - 3) Utilize busing/transportation budget for subsidizing programs needed at the impoverished schools instead of wasting it on driving our kids across the county.

6. Given the new HS #13 in Jessup and Hammond HS addition for opening in SY 2023-24, there will be another unavoidable school redistricting process in the next two or three years. Several polygons will have to be redistricted twice, which violates Policy 6010 IV.B2 c.

- The current proposal does not address the overcrowding issues and is definitely not a long-term solution. It makes no sense to disrupt communities, families and students twice, when as a strong Howard County community we can and should sit down and discuss these real issues highlighted by the BOE and come up with effective and long lasting solutions for ALL of Howard County communities.

I truly hope the concerns of our children and community resonates with the Board of Education. With its current proposal, all my family sees right now is a BOE that is tearing down communities and shuffling students around like a deck of cards.

Sincerely,

Sadrashk Kazmi, PharmD

(Walnut Grove Resident-Polygon 3176)

Sayers, Margery

From: Raj Tuliani <rstuliani@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 2, 2019 10:35 AM
To: 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; student_member@hcpss.org; redistricting@hcpss.org; boe@hcpss.org; superintendent@hcpss.org
Cc: Ball, Calvin; Jones, Opel; Jung, Deb; Yungmann, David; Rigby, Christiana; Walsh, Elizabeth; CouncilMail; katiefry.hester@senate.state.md.us; trent.kittleman@house.state.md.us; warren.miller@house.state.md.us; Kathleen_Hanks@hcpss.org
Subject: Oppose Dr Martirano's Redistricting Proposal
Attachments: Dear BOE Members - RST 090119.pdf
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

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

Dear all,

Please see attached letter.

Sincerely,

Raj Tuliani
rstuliani@gmail.com
443-896-4470

September 1, 2019

To: Howard County BOE, Dr. Michael J. Martirano, Superintendent, Howard County Public School System

Cc: County Council Members, HoCo County Executive, District 9 State Senator, District 9A State Delegates

Subject: Oppose Dr Martirano's Redistricting Proposal

Dear Board of Education (BOE) Members and Dr. Martirano,

As a longtime resident of Howard County Maryland (residing in Polygon 176) and a parent of two young children, I am writing to express my significant concerns about the impact of Dr Martirano's Attendance Area Adjustment Plan, dated August 20, 2019.

Consider these facts:

1. Neighborhoods in a 1-mile radius from River Hill High school will have students going to 3 different high schools!
2. Atholton sending 610 students out and receiving 471 students for a total turnover of 1081 students!!
3. Atholton and Oakland Mills High school boundaries gets split in multiple sections and separating communities.
1. River Hill is an under-capacity school (projected to be at 94% Projected Utilization for 2019/2020 school. This is at the lower end of the Target Utilization range); the proposal wants to move 478 students out and bring in 741 students in that is a net gain of 229 students. The total turnover of students will be 1229 students!! That is a rate of over 80% of the school total capacity. This is the highest turnover school in the county as proposed!!! This is extremely disruptive and unnecessary for a school.
4. The polygons that they propose to move from River Hill to Wilde Lake live about 1.5-3.5miles away from River Hill.
5. The proposal will TRIPLE the distance to about 6-9 miles away and increase commute times in the morning and for after school activities.
6. The overall FARM rate of River Hill will increase from less than 5% to 5%.
7. The Proposal mentions to move 513 students from Atholton to River Hill.
8. The polygons that they propose to move live farther away to River Hill than communities closer to River Hill High School. Also, the FARM rates of Atholton are less than 10%.

Here's how my children and family will be impacted:

1. My children from Polygon 176 would have to drive through River Hill High School bus and car traffic, en route to Wilde Lake High School.
2. Their commute would triple (as compared to River Hill High School).
3. Such long commute times would affect their sleep (at least 2 hours of sleep deprivation daily), family time reduced, and could lead to higher probability of accidents given that high school students would be new drivers on the road driving longer distances with increased traffic jams.

4. Longer commute also reduces parents' engagement with the schools since they're further away and this would impact the childrens' education.
5. Longer transportation times would lead to higher expenses for the Board of Education with zero return on investment and higher polluting emissions. These are our tax dollars that are being wasted instead of being spent on appropriate educational resources.
6. Given the impact on my schedule, I may not be able to pick up my kids in time after their extracurricular activities so those activities may have to be cut down, affecting their education and all-round development.
7. Our family chose to go to these local schools (like River Hill High) when we moved to our current home. We treat our local schools as part of our community, which is being torn apart. Our friendships affected (since local children will now be sent to 3 different high schools); so, the choice taken away from us and all of us are feeling these impacts. This redistricting plan is disruptive of our community.

Also:

1. Any re-districting proposal should instead be focused on those five High Schools that are operating above Target Utilization levels (110%).
2. Transferring students from a school with a low FARM ratio to a school with a high FARM ratio, only results in better "averages" for the schools. IT DOES NOT PROVIDE ANY INCREMENTAL EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES OR OPPORTUNITES DIRECTLY TO THE STUDENTS.
3. Shuffling students across schools with longer commute times do not improve scores - they increase stress and hardship for families.

Let us discuss some alternative scenarios including:

1. River Hill High School could receive students from nearby schools such as Wilde Lake, Atholton or Howard, without sending 478 students out to other schools. There should be a way to improve capacity utilization and reduce the 7,396 students being disrupted.
2. Postpone redistricting until 2022 (for HS13) by using additional temporary classrooms. Allow time to plan the move in a non-disruptive manner. We owe stability to our kids.
 - a. Consider this article: "Switching Schools: Reconsidering the Relationship Between School Mobility and High School Dropout" published by JHU Dept of Sociology (Joseph Gasper, Stefanie DeLuca, Angela Estacion) – per the abstract– "Youth who switch schools are more likely to demonstrate a wide array of negative behavioral and educational outcomes, including dropping out of high school."
3. Do not redistrict at all. Consider creating a system where underperforming students would be given a choice where to attend school (within a certain radius); motivate such students to attend local schools with the capacity and capability. Add resources (teachers/specialists) and therefore improve scores by directly targeting underperforming students, adding resources and boost test scores. Title 1 schools already offer such resources for economically challenged students. We should focus on underperforming students for true education equity.

Thank you,

Raj Tuliani (Very concerned parent)

Sayers, Margery

From: Adaibe Offurum <ada_ibe@hotmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, September 1, 2019 11:26 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Redistricting Polygon 1185

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

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

I am an African parent of elementary and middle school students. I am writing to voice my concern to the **involuntary** busing of students away from their communities, against students' and parents' choices, as the mean of closing school-wide achievement gap. For more than ten years, my family has lived in Howard County. Living close to the schools gave my wife and I (both working parents) the opportunity to volunteer in my children's schools (e.g., we could volunteer on our way to work or in between work). We served as room parents, such as a member of 5th-grade committee, volunteered for Teacher Appreciation events, community service events, field days, Turkey trot. We chose to live close to our currently assigned schools so that we can best balance work and involvement in my children's lives (our neighborhood is less than one mile away from CES and RHHS and a conversion to walker status has been scheduled to take effect pending a walking path been built). Over the years, we have formed close bonds to our neighborhood and school communities. I believe that a cohesive community and dedicated parental involvement are critical to children's overall well-being and academic achievement.

I support the need to address the school-wide achievement gap and I support creating opportunities for children to attend schools that are under-utilized (e.g., through prospective zoning of mixed-income housing and **voluntary** busing). I take seriously the duty to give back to society. However, I believe that the **involuntary** busing of students away from their existing schools is based on misguided belief system does not address the deeper underlining problems and can be counterproductive. The proposed plan only reshuffles the students into different schools so that school-wide averages **appear** more similar but does not improve outcome for **individual** students.

The current plan completely neglects educational and emotional needs of **individual** students who would be **involuntarily** bused away from their communities. Massive **involuntary** busing of students from our community tears up the community and is very disruptive and demoralizing for children, parents, and communities. **Involuntary** busing adds commute time and causes students to lose the much-needed sleep for physical and mental health. It has been well studied how important adequate sleep is to the well-being growing bodies; lack of sleep can lead to deleterious long-term consequences. Students might also lose opportunity for after-school activities that they might have participate at their home school. **Involuntary** busing moves students to schools further away detrimentally impacts traffic (there has been concern about a three to four-fold worsening in traffic jam from the proposal) and adds to the transportation cost to our already exploding budget deficit. Finally, officials tasked with *retrospective* school district reassignment must be free of the appearance of conflict of interest (as it is currently not), otherwise there will be suspicion of ulterior motive (secondary monetary gain) which will undermine public trust in our democratic system. For all these reasons, I believe we can't afford to support such a measure that is counterproductive in many ways to our goal of creating a more cohesive community with opportunities for upward social mobility for everyone.

I believe better options to address our educational crisis have not been fully explored. If JumpStart is effective, why can't it be expanded? If there are too few schools in the area, why not offer vouchers for volunteers to attend public or private schools that better suit their needs until new schools are built? To help each child reach his/her full potential, I

hope Howard County stands to provide—and not take away—educational choices from the students. I urge Howard County to take a more thoughtful approach than what is currently being proposed.

Respectfully,

Ada Offurum

Polygon 1185

Parent of elementary and middle school students: Zugo, Noya and Dinobi Offurum

Bryce Overlook CT

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HOWARD COUNTY COUNCIL
RECEIVED

All
DIS
MS

To: County Council & School System
Fr: Zelda Smith Andrews, Rhonda Lake Patterson, A 'Lenah Robertson

2019 SEP -9 PM 12: 50

Re: Integration Plan

Date: September 10, 2019

No matter where you put the farm students, students from middle and high income, test results will always be the same.

Asians will score the highest, whites, next, browns and blacks lowest

It's not the schools that is causing low test results and graduation rates. Data shows that Blacks as a group has lowest achievement scores for the last 50 years. It is the culture of the home environment (whether the family is functional or dysfunctional)

Many Black students will be at a disadvantaged because the top student leaders will emerge and may not have leadership positions because they were removed from majority black Wilde Lake (which is basically a good school) in comparison to urban schools in other jurisdictions) to a very highly competitive school (River Hill)

If this proposal is passed watch the radical black groups complained
Same pecking order:

1. White teachers can't teach the Black students
2. Not enough black students in AP courses
3. Too many black students on suspension

If these radical groups would realize that Blacks destroy school systems and schools. They destroyed Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Montgomery County, Anne Arundel County (Meade High School) so Wilde Lake is no difference. Moving students to Wilde Lake(which has many resources) during the last major redistricting 20 years ago didn't change a thing.

Let's how the School Board will re-examine this whole issue and realize that Blacks (as a group) will always be at the bottom (See MSDE and Nationwide Data)

REMEMBER: WE ARE NOT TALKING ABOUT INDIVIDUALS. WE ARE TALKING ABOUT GROUPS... Blacks as a group



21043-433233

County Council
3430 Courthouse Drive
Ellicott City, MD 21043



16 SEP 2019 PM 9:11

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