

Thank you Councilmembers for your concern about this matter. Like many of you, I am deeply concerned about the increasing segregation in our neighborhoods and schools. Also, like many of you, I understand that this issue is one that has defined our communities for decades and will continue to do so well into the future.

I suspect that we also share concerns about the conversation that has surrounded this resolution and the school boundary line adjustment process we're currently engaged in. Passions are high and that is to be expected, but what I had hoped we would avoid is having the emotions of this debate drag us down.

As a society, we have advanced from the days of segregation mandated by law and now we're at a point where it's only enabled by it. And while the blame game has been a focus for many in this debate, I'm less concerned about how we got here than I am about where we are going.

In that stance, we stand at a crossroads with our schools. Accept that segregation is inherent and that concentrated wealth and concentrated poverty will be central facets of our school system.

Or, the alternative, live up to our community's and our nation's values and push back against the otherism and exclusion by fostering communities that are truly diverse, that nurture connections and mutual understanding, and that provide for the growth and benefit of all residents, wherever they are.

The facts of this resolution are undeniable, and any attempt to whitewash these important historical elements must be resisted.

Our schools are more segregated today than they have been in decades, and that is not an accident.

This is the nature of "equity" and the struggle to build a society that rejects the oppression and damage of our past. Which is to say those who benefit from the power structure will do all they can to preserve their benefits. I've said this before and I'll say it again: Every inch gained in the fight for equity is an inch that must be defended, because eventually, power is coming back for that inch, and every other inch it ever gave when times were different.

Integrated schools in the 1970s and 1980s reflected a movement towards a more equitable school system and society, the slow but steady re-segregation of our schools is the manifestation of power taking those gains back.

We settled long ago the notion that segregated schools can be "equal", and so calls to invest in equity programs instead of redistricting ring hollow. The false promise of "improve don't move" is a toxic addition to our local lexicon and devoid of the important historical context of segregated schools.

Where will those calling to "improve not move" be when the budget gets tight, when equity programs are held up first, as usual, for defunding? Where have they been over the last few years as we've sacrificed equity programs? Investments in equity will never gain favor among the wealthy because these programs don't serve them. Ignore this at your peril.

Building an equitable school system requires having equitable schools. When some schools are asked to help such large populations of our most vulnerable schools, they are being asked to do more than is reasonable or even possible. And to ask a handful of schools to do the vast amount of work to help our most vulnerable students while other nearby schools have few or no students facing such significantly challenges is not equitable by any stretch.

If nothing is done, we will continue to become more segregated. The time to act is now. Thank you for your leadership.

Lena Kennedy

Hi My name is Judah Landzberg and I am a Baltimore City Public School teacher. I have been teaching at Mervo High School for 7 years.

I have an understanding of what the barriers are that affect FARMS students academic performance. I have put together a list of factors that affect students:

Parents low education level

High level of parents out of employment or not in workforce

High Divorce rate or high level of parents not getting married

High level of students not living with their parents

Not enough emphasis from parents on study

Students lack of foundational skills from an early age

High rates of students emotional and behavioral issues

A resolution should address these concerns if it is to be effective.

On the contrary, CR-112 doesn't address any of the root causes. Furthermore, they take away families' rights, take people's money and put it into flawed plans that don't address any of the root causes, and forcibly uproot all families.

An effective plan can affect the above issues by:

Encouraging people to take continuing and adult education and improve the quality of continuing education

Improving and expanding vocational and job training programs and career fairs, internships and networking opportunities for people unemployed or not in the workforce

Improving and expanding pre-k and daycare for single parent households

Increasing support staff in schools for divorce, trauma and life counseling

Once all of these barriers to achievement are lifted, the entire county will be ready to achieve at higher standards.

As a resident of Howard County, it is in my interest to have all of the schools be performing at the top of the state and the nation. We should not be limiting our vision to the neighborhood and district level. We should set our sights on the top performing districts in the state, the nation and the international community.

Every time someone asks me where I am from and I say Howard County, they always reply, "Oh, you have a great education system". Education should continue to be a business card for the county, attracting great people and businesses to this area, to call this area home. This becomes a positive reinforcement loop, a prosperous economy, lowers the unemployment rate, increasing the quality of life, increasing the quality of education and attracting more people and business.

Ron Clemmer

AGAINST – Resolution 112-2019

My name is Ron Clemmer, and my children attend Howard County schools. I oppose Resolution 112-2019 because I believe that giving this direction to this superintendent will result in worst educational and well-being conditions for the vast majority of our students. Just look at the superintendent's current redistricting plan which will add significant logistics costs to compete with budget for direct educational resources. How many tens of thousands of students will the superintendent force out of their neighborhood schools in response to this resolution? And how many millions of dollars will be spent on bussing students rather than investing in direct teaching resources? Wouldn't it be a better investment for this money to help maintain excellent teaching for all of our students rather than going towards additional bussing which increases the problems of safety risks, traffic congestion and pollution.

And what about the effects upon the mental health of our students. Forcing students out of their neighborhood schools takes away their opportunity to attend the school which they consider to be *my school*. Forcing students out of their neighborhood schools also creates barriers to good physical and mental health through more time required for commuting to school, more kids having to ride the bus rather than walking or biking, kids having less opportunities for after-school programs, kids having less opportunity for their parents to come to school, and kids being separated from long-time neighborhood friends. In this time when the mental health of students is a growing concern, the ultimate result of movement of students out of their neighborhood schools would be to add negative stresses upon what is already a myriad of attacks upon their mental health.

Also, what will the result be for our communities? Schools are an important part of our communities, and this destruction of our neighborhood schools will damage this important neighborhood institution. Surely a decrease in community support for schools will follow closely behind such a move. We believe that the school district should be striving for the best for all students, rather than moving towards disrupting the lives of all students. We believe that neighborhood schools play an important role in making our school district great. Please do not rob Howard County students of our neighborhood schools. Please vote against this resolution.

Cynthia Vaillancourt
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District 5

443-535-9086

Thank you for providing this extended opportunity to provide citizen input on CR112.

I am very happy to see the County Council make such a public display of its support for the Howard County Public Schools, and acknowledge the importance of meeting the needs of our most vulnerable and challenged students.

I appreciate your declaration of your desire to do something about addressing inequities and achievement gaps in our county.

So my question is, do you really want to do something about it? Or do you just want to look like you are doing something?

If you want to do something, to see results, to make a positive difference in the lives of our most vulnerable students and families, it is going to take more than words, it is going to take substantial financial investments, both through the HCPSS and by the County within the community.

Those who are convinced that “simply” redistricting and redistributing our low income students to spread them around to other schools with fewer lower income students and families will achieve the goals of closing achievement gaps and improving the educational outcomes for the most vulnerable students, are being too simplistic.

Whether the BOE radically adjusts attendance areas in order to achieve economic balance or not, there are at least two things that will remain true.

One is that the HCPSS is currently significantly underfunded, and two is that to make a real difference will require real and substantial investments in the community and the school system.

HCPSS has already cut back on services and programming in our schools. You have heard they will need something in the neighborhood of \$50-60mil next year just to stay at current levels. (\$25mil for negotiated raises for all employees, 12mil that will not be available from previous year savings, 11mil for growth, maybe as much as 7mil in additional health care expenses)

The redistricting scheme that is currently under consideration would add an estimated \$1.1-2.7 mil for transportation alone.

At the same time, the vulnerable students being moved from schools where specialized supports are currently in place (though still inadequate in many ways) would be moved to schools without those supports.

It would not be a simple matter of splitting the staff in the current schools and redistributing them.

The school system would HAVE to add the necessary specialized staff and programs to those receiving schools just to maintain the levels of support the students are already receiving. There have not been estimates made yet for the added cost for critically necessary staffing additions.

Just to maintain where we are today, the proposal on the table is going to cost millions more - over and above the current budget.

This is not to say that is a reason not to reduce the concentrations of poverty within specific schools.

It is a plea to make certain that the HCPSS has the funding to provide the students with at least as much support as they are currently receiving.

If the Council is truly committed to addressing the needs of our most vulnerable communities that impact the educational achievement of the most vulnerable children, there are many more efforts that need to be undertaken outside of the K-12 budget as well as inside.

I wholeheartedly support the comments made at the end of the last hearing and at the county council boe quarterly meeting about you all working together to develop a comprehensive, community wide plan to address the needs of the community so its students can achieve to their fullest potential.

Some of the things that you should consider include:

more intervention programs that begin at birth

high quality preK and child care,

school calendar options that provide regular intervals for remediation and enrichment, subsidized for those who need it,

acquisition of activity buses so high quality field trips can be made affordable for the students and the system,

funding and resources to equalize what is currently being unevenly funded through donations,

development of community learning centers where the programs like Bonnie Bricker's Talk with Me program can meet, and provide things like social workers, laundry facilities and job training for parents --- that could be built in fairly short order on the school sites that have been carried on the system's books for years, using p3 partnerships and taking advantage of the increased funding the governor discussed making available.

I understand why experience has taught so many people that they have to grab whatever is within reach whether it is reasonable and effective or not.

Whether they deserve and should demand more or not.

Redistricting is not a situation where there really will be many little steps.

It is a situation where wrong steps have a way of becoming all there is for big chunks of time.

I fear that after a dramatic redistricting, the folks in a position to really do something about the real, ongoing needs of these students and their families will check this off their list move on to other things.

Thank you,
Cindy Vaillancourt

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Cindy V.", is positioned below the typed name.

Testimony in Support of CR 112-2019

A resolution requesting the Howard County Public School System to draft, approve, and implement a lawful multi-year Integration Plan to ensure that Howard County Public Schools are integrated by socioeconomic factors.

Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced. ~James Baldwin.

Good afternoon esteemed county council members. I vehemently support CR112 and facing head on, the inequities facing OUR children. My name is Maura Dunnigan, I am a D1 resident, former HCPSS teacher, mother of 5 children who are products of that system and spent 14 years teaching students about Jim Rouse's vision for better places, and better people through a community based on equity and inclusion. It is through that lens, along with analyzing the hard truths about our current achievement gaps and increasingly segregated schools that I applaud your decision to boldly and clearly state the need to address these disparities.

My question today is who are we as a community?

- Are we going to say the only children that matter or deserve certain educational opportunities must be able to buy into it?
- Is the diversity and equity mantra that Howard County loves to tout simply hollow PR for the next Great Places to Live rating? Or do we simply embrace diversity as long as you can afford the right house in the right school district?

I don't need to educate you all on the history of our county, the path to fight for civil rights or the overwhelming research that supports the importance of prioritizing racially and socioeconomically diverse schools. Though if you want to review the data and studies, I'm happy to forward them.

I was listening to Nikole Hannah Jones, author of the 1619 project, who suggested a simple look into our history demonstrates that only when pushed through state action, will we find equilibrium. When individuals perceive their indiv. rights trump all else, they pull out every stop to cling to the status quo to maintain these systems. Caught up During the civil rights era, if whites and those with money couldn't control the public spaces: pools, public transportation, hospitals, police/security, and schools- they privatized these systems to exclude and segregate.

Are we going to allow our public schools to become yet another pay to play space? Are public schools zero sum games where you win and I lose? Where one school is good enough for those kids, but not for MY kids? As Jim Rouse used to say this is not only irrational, it is immoral.

Thank you County Council members who sponsored and support this resolution. Thank you for reminding us of the difficult, sometimes politically unpopular stances you as PUBLIC officials must take to remind us that the common good is not only advocating to the loudest voice, those who leverage their power and wealth or wear a matching tshirt, but the advocacy for those who need it the most.

Thurgood Marshall- "unless our children begin to learn together, then there is little hope that our people will ever learn to live together."

Howard County Council:

I believe that CR-112 is flawed legislation that could do more harm than it claims to fix. This legislation assumes that Howard County Schools are segregated by both race and socioeconomic status. However I believe that this assumption is false.

I evaluated the extent of economic segregation by computing a dissimilarity index for the ten counties in Maryland with the highest student populations and for the state overall based on FARMs data (Reference 1). Unlike some other measures of segregation that have been floated around various blogs, the dissimilarity index is a key measure identified in the US Census report in Reference 2. As seen in Figure 1, the economic dissimilarity index of Howard County Public Schools is similar to that of neighboring counties including Montgomery, Frederick and Anne Arundel, and significantly less than Baltimore City. Howard County's dissimilarity index also about the same as the index for all of the state's public schools. Howard County is not the most economically segregated school system in Maryland.

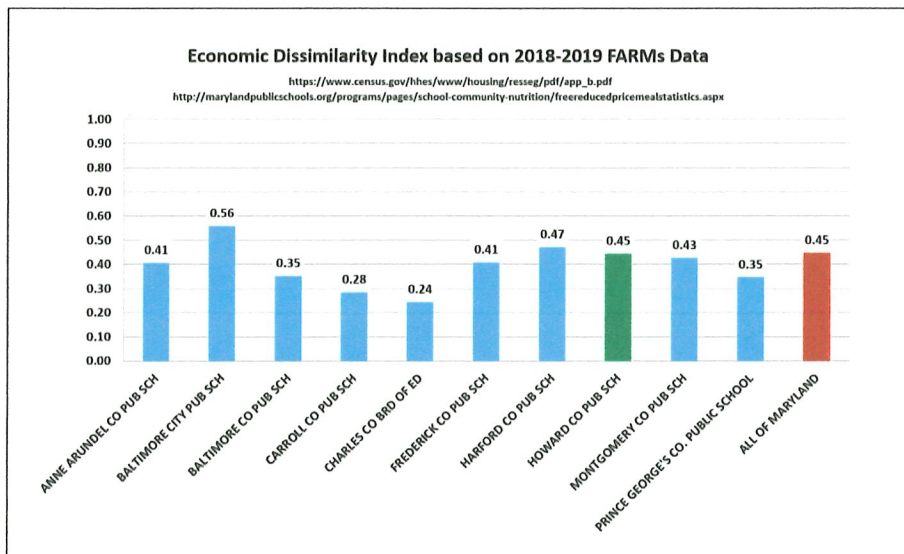



Figure 1: Economic Dissimilarity Index for Maryland public schools

Data from recent Washington Post article (Reference 3) shows that Howard County Schools are more racially integrated than many neighboring counties including Montgomery, Frederick, Anne Arundel, and Baltimore County. The legislation defines a segregated school as one "where less than 40 percent of the student population is white". However, the percentage of white students in the entire system is only 35.8% (Reference 4). It is mathematically impossible to integrate all of the schools in the county based this definition. In fact the only way to reduce the number of "segregated" schools would be to concentrate the white students together.

I therefore urge the board to vote against CR-112.

Sincerely,


Eric Greenberg, Columbia MD.

I want to open with commending Council Members on their noble efforts and for the opportunity to present (and submit) testimony. When voting, I ask Council Members to consider the following:

1. ***Timing is everything.*** The Council is wise to ensure that the timing of CR-112 is not perceived to be supportive of the BOE's current redistricting plan which is lacking in strategic planning, practical logistics, definitive peer-reviewed evidence, financial accountability and government transparency.

2. ***A Master Plan.*** Council Members, I submit to you that if you dislike current overcrowding in schools, then the creation of a master plan that carefully controls all aspects of housing development and school construction is key. The master plan should strategically take into account future overcrowding and school construction.

Further, if there is a perception that racial and socioeconomic segregation is a problem in Howard County, then the Council has *the best tools* to address this "problem," namely the geographic location and planning of affordable housing.

3. ***Lead by Example. Set the Tone for Civility and Unity.*** Council Members are elected officials with a duty to lead all members of the Howard County community. I, like so many others, understand the history of this nation... the hate that has divided cultures and races, not just black and white, but Chinese and Japanese, Native Americans, Jewish, Indian, Italian and even Irish.

CR-112's language is inflammatory and sets a divisive tone. For a large percentage of our community, this divisive language stirs emotions that many of us who have lived in the United States cannot begin to appreciate. Such community members have personal life experience in which they suffered and fought oppression in their first countries. Therefore, the justification that CR-112's language merely calls upon history is to ignore the ***real effect*** it is having outside these doors, in our communities and neighborhoods. Notably, CR-112's references to "slavery" and repeated references to "black" and "white" are unnecessary to support the Council's goal and actually serve to undermine the BOE's redistricting plan's lawfulness on appeal.

Further, CR-112's *current language ignores the actual racial diversity* within our Howard County community. For example, every skin color and nearly every religion is represented on my street. (I know that my street is not an anomaly in Howard County. Rather, it is often the norm.) Howard County is a treasure trove of colors, cultures, and religions, and boasts high education, and, not just civility, but a true community. Howard County IS an integrated community. If there are divisions

Howard County Council Testimony (Resolution 112)

E. Laurita Finch Clarke

(District 5)

September 26, 2019

Good evening Council,

My name is Laurita Finch Clarke. I am an attorney and the mother of nine-year old identical twin boys who attend Triadelphia Ridge Elementary in Ellicott City.

I am here to express my overwhelming support for socio-economic equity, and my disappointment in Resolution 112 and redistricting as the recommended method to accomplish it.

First, the Resolution's reference to the evil history of U.S. race relations, and Howard County's own delayed response to *Brown v. Board*, while true, are unproductive as a starting point, as I have observed them evoke visceral reactions from many of the parents whose support you will need to obtain and retain equity.

Second, alleging that our schools lack racial diversity simply isn't true, and further alienates community members who would otherwise eagerly support a thoughtful approach to bridging the achievement gap.

The achievement gap exists in large part not because certain schools in the county are intrinsically better than others, but because parents with means spend money on THEIR children beyond what our tax money offers through the school system. When my boys were in pre-school, a neighbor told me her first and second graders were tutored twice a week not to catch up, but to advance them. My retired father, a pharmacist, for years now, has gotten my boys off the bus, started them with homework, and taught them advanced math and reading skills while my husband and I finish the work day. He even gets the first bite at the apple of responding with wisdom to their recitation of the day's events, reinforcing the work ethic and integrity my husband and I try to instill.

This type of family involvement and "extra" help is not atypical in the so called "higher achieving" schools. Each year many of these kids score off the charts on the MAP and other standardized tests on material that hasn't even been taught in the classroom. Just last week my father expressed mixed emotions about my sons thanking him for having taught them how to do long division with decimals because that was on a math pre-test where the teachers were trying to get a sense of where the class was at the beginning of the year. Of course, he was proud of his grandsons' achievements, but he also reflected on his own childhood in segregated

schools in Henderson, North Carolina, and the days and weeks he missed picking cotton to help his sharecropping mother earn money to feed he and his seven siblings.

He wonders what happens to kids like him in this day and age. How would you feel to be the child in that class without a private tutor or after school home schooling?

Even if you were the super motivated nine-year-old, without these extra resources, how would you go about learning what you haven't been taught and don't have access to because your parents are working, perhaps don't speak English, and simply trying to survive?

I implore you to use our County's limited financial resources on tangible support systems for children needing this edge rather than on transportation to even out FARM rates which will disrupt all communities by taking our kids farther from the safety net of their communities.

There are better ways of closing the achievement gap. Restore the "Reading Recovery" and "World Language Programs" that were recently lost to the Oakland Mills and Stevens Forest communities. Perhaps start peer on peer tutoring programs where kids with high level math skills tutor kids for whom English is a second language, and those kids in turn teach the math tutor their language. How do I know about these phased out programs? Because I went to an event in Oakland Mills where this was being discussed among their leaders, and guess what? My neighbors of Indian, Chinese and Anglo-Saxon descent had beaten me there looking for ways we together can effectively assist and advocate for students in need. In fact, when I drove up, my Bollywood dance instructor was running through the grass between apartment complexes having just met with a Latino family sitting on their back stoop. And she was prepared too, having earlier sent out a WhatsApp message seeking bilingual neighbors to accompany her.

This sense of community is why I've been a Howard County resident for fourteen years.

Yes, I know the issues many FARM students face are complex. As a former adjunct professor at Howard University my students balanced academics, work schedules, money deficits, and calls about dysfunction back at home. I knew their success wouldn't be contingent on just making sure they got to class, but rather giving them individualized time, and providing them tangible resources that fit their particular needs.

I implore you, not just as a J.D. knowledgeable of what students need in the classroom, but as an empathetic M.O.M. who knows that their hearts and emotions must be tended to as well. In this moment, we have a unique opportunity to tailor resources to needs. Let's not divide and snub, but rather unite and seize upon this community's willingness to help.

Testimony in Opposition to CR 112-2019

Wednesday, September 18, 2019, 7 pm

Howard County Council

3430 Court House Drive, Ellicott City, MD 21043

My name is Meenu Suri and. I am here today to express my strong opposition for CR112 on desegregation of schools through the redistricting process.

I have read this CR 112 many times and the above historical references in 'whereas' clause looks misleading to me, but mainly I want to talk about the 3 things in second last paragraph which says – “the County Council of Howard County, supports the Howard County Board of Education and Howard County Public School System in their lawful efforts to integrate through the redistricting and boundary review process and focus additional efforts and resources on addressing the achievement gaps and racial and socioeconomic disparities in the Howard County Public School System.”

I understand and do NOT oppose the idea and purpose behind CR 112 which is to eliminate the education achievement gap that exists between students from lower income and higher income family but I do very much oppose the resolution telling the Board of Education to achieve this goal through redistricting.

Racial and socioeconomic disparities:

- Racial and socioeconomic disparities are not caused by HCPSS but mainly due to poor zoning and development decisions made in the past. It is not due to inequalities in our education system or lack of access to education.
- So why does anyone expect public-school system or redistricting to solve them? It does not solve the underlining real issues with poverty concentration, nor does it address the fundamental issues in underperforming schools.

Integrate through redistricting process

There is a lot of research showing that socioeconomic integration by redistricting does not help eliminate the educational achievement gap between low income student and higher income students.

I am was here last Wednesday for the first session, I listened the supporting argument about various studies have shown that integrating these schools with children from different income groups , the low performing children will score higher with the high performing children. I wanted to ask you, the students that were part of these studies – where they going to neighboring schools or were forced bus to longer commute? Were kids in these studies had access to after school activities? I have looked at various studies but I am not able to find such scenario.

My son goes to River Hill and due to CR 112 and proposed redistricting plan, he along with 478 kids will be will be forced to sit in a bus daily for over an hour commute each side. And they will lose all their opportunities for after school activities.

And you are telling me by doing this, it will improve kids and schools performances and will decrease achievement gap?

If you don't have the proof, then you have no right to use my kid to be part of this experiment.

Just as with Superintendent Martirano's plan, Resolution 112 essentially designates the students in Howard County as elements in socio-economic experimentation by moving 7,400 kid around the county and further away from where they live. There is no 'equity' in that.

I am a Howard County resident for last 12 years. My family lives in the most racially diverse community with a mix of African, Asian, Latinos and White families and we are very proud of our community.

- In 2017, According to the Maryland Equity Project of the University of Maryland, Howard County is the most integrated school district in the region and a national model for diversity and inclusion.
- I do not understand how within 2 years, CR112 assumes that Howard County Schools are now segregated by both race and socioeconomic status.

Achievement Gaps:

- (Attached) Based on 2017 SAT Test statistics from HCPSS Page 22 Table A9, FARM students do have lower scores comparing to non-FARM students at same school. However, FARM students at Oakland Mill HS and Marriotts Ridge HS have SAT scores of 988 and 986 respectively (See attachment). That means that for school or building doesn't make difference for FARM students' performance.
- Studies have shown that student achievement correlates with lot of different factors - like parental education, parental support & motivation, health factors and community involvement.

If one is to solve a problem, the first step in doing so is to 'do no harm' with the proposed solution. The CR112-2019 proposal failed to disclose the risks and harms that it will do to students, teachers, families, communities, environment, and the entire county. (Please see attached list below)

- Just as with Superintendent Martirano's plan, Resolution 112-2019 essentially designates the students in Howard County as elements in socio-economic experimentation by moving 7,400 kid around the county and further away from where they live. There is no 'equity' in that.
- 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.
- Equity will never be achieved through redistribution.
- Forced Busing children WILL NOT increase individual grade point averages, SAT Scores, nor will it increase a family's social or economic wellbeing. In fact, it may decrease all those objectives.
- I believe children should attend the public schools that are closest to their homes. They should have the ability to walk or be driven a very short distance and share the same common threads of their neighbors.
- By means of redistricting, we shouldn't be spreading these kids out to be lost in the system; we should invested in them and their local school within the community to help them meet with success.
- All children must be treated equally regardless of race, gender, economic status or any other classification. The only classification all of us should be using is "Howard County Public School Student", which is not supported by CR-112.
- There are many meaningful alternatives proposed by many families: 1) expand voluntary participation programs, such as Jumpstart, so that more FARM students will have the opportunity to participate in high-performing schools *at their will*; 2) create or expand magnet programs/charter schools so that all students, regardless of their income or polygons, will be attracted to attend together; 3) Invest in schools that are desperately in need of infrastructure upgrade or special programs to help the students in need; 4) build more affordable housing so that more low-income family students will have access to high-performing schools. With that, I respectfully ask county council to vote against this resolution.
- Thank you
- Meenu Suri (Polygon 176)

Table A9

SAT Section Scores for the HCPSS Class of 2017 by High School and Gender and Special Service Group: **Most Recent Administration**

School	Male			Female			FARMS			Special Education			English Learner		
	Reading	Math	Total	Reading	Math	Total	Reading	Math	Total	Reading	Math	Total	Reading	Math	Total
All Schools	592	607	1198	592	578	1170	511	503	1013	462	460	922	*	*	*
Atholton	596	606	1201	596	587	1183	499	501	1000	464	474	938	-	-	-
Centennial	626	662	1285	638	633	1270	576	589	1166	-	-	-	-	-	-
Glenelg	612	631	1240	604	597	1200	-	-	-	497	457	953	-	-	-
→ Hammond	554	547	1102	564	530	1094	502	483	985	472	448	920	-	-	-
Howard	580	596	1176	589	577	1166	510	516	1025	423	456	879	-	-	-
Long Reach	545	534	1078	544	514	1058	501	483	983	460	418	878	-	-	-
Marriotts Ridge	621	650	1269	625	621	1246	492	494	986	455	445	900	-	-	-
Mt. Hebron	594	616	1208	601	592	1194	549	562	1106	484	483	967	-	-	-
→ Oakland Mills	565	565	1130	544	528	1072	506	482	988	430	580	1010	-	-	-
Reservoir	567	573	1139	573	550	1122	499	487	986	438	435	874	-	-	-
River Hill	630	654	1281	641	638	1278	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
→ Wilde Lake	575	592	1167	556	534	1091	499	493	993	440	460	900	-	-	-

Note. Results are not reported for groups with fewer than ten graduates (-) or with fewer than ten test takers (*) to protect student privacy. Graduates enrolled in Homewood are included with all students but performance not separately reported to protect student privacy. SAT scores are based on the most recent SAT test.
FARMS = Free and Reduced Price Meals Service

This proposal will do a tone of Harms to ALL students, including students from low-income families:

- Increased risk of depression, anxiety, and suicide
- Forced separation from friends, classmates, teachers at current neighborhood schools.
- Lost support from existing friendships and support systems already established with counselors, teachers, coaches, and mentors
- Increased stress to survive in new schools, especially for high school students
- Forced long ride in school bus every school day
- Lost opportunity to play school sports, clubs, bands, and other after school activities due to transportation constraint and switching schools
- Sleep deprivation as students have to get up earlier to catch the school bus due to the forced longer school bus rides
- Increased risk of injury/harm due to prolonged forced school bus rides every school day
- Transportation was reported as a significant contributing factor for 39% of chronically absent high school students. Students from low income and single parent families are particularly at risk of school absence if they miss the school buses.
- Lack of neighborhood schools is another significant contributing factor for school absence and drop outs
- Lack of family and neighborhood support that supports social and emotional well-beings of students is another significant factor
- Very importantly, student mental health significantly contribute to school absence and drop out Increased risk of worsening performance academically
- Students suffer academically due to the prolonged forced bus rides, sleep deprivation, forced separation from existing friends and supporting groups, forced adjusting to new school, new classroom, new schedule, new social environment, injuries, fatigue, depression and anxiety, reduced physical fitness, and increased school absence and drop cuts Increased risk of not being prepared for college application
- Forced separation of students from their counselors and teachers at their current schools who have known the students for years and can provide guidance and write them recommendation letters will make student suffer in their college application and very likely make them lose their opportunity to get into the college that they deserve .

Testimony in Opposition to CR 112-2019
Wednesday, September 14, 2019, 7 pm
Howard County Council
George Howard Building
3430 Court House Drive, Ellicott City, MD 21043

Name: Hemant Sharma, MD MHS
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Council District: 5
Email: Hemant_sharma@rocketmail.com
Phone: 301-529-2523

As a lifelong Howard County resident, HCPSS K-12 graduate, parent of 3 HCPSS students, pediatrician and health disparities researcher, I respectfully request you vote against CR 112-2019 for the reasons stated below.

While I fully embrace our shared intention of addressing educational inequities, as a pediatrician and researcher, I am deeply concerned redistricting as a means to achieve educational equity in Howard County, as suggested by CR-112, is unsupported by research and poses real harm to our children, particularly our most disadvantaged.

1) **The Problem has been Misdiagnosed:**

Howard County Public Schools are a model for integration. Despite being the most integrated school district in the region, worrisome achievement gaps exist by race and socioeconomic status. Therefore, a misguided effort focusing on “integrating” an already integrated school system will completely miss the root causes of the opportunity gap.

- a. **“Howard County is the most integrated school district in the region**, according to the **Maryland Equity Project** of the University of Maryland. Children of different races — especially those who are black and white — are more likely to sit next to each other in Howard than almost anywhere else in the state.”
- b. “The experience of Howard County — consistently ranked among the strongest public school districts in the nation — demonstrates that *bringing students of different backgrounds together in the same schools isn't enough to ensure their success*. Where educators have long spoken of the achievement gap — the differences in academic performance between white students and black, and affluent and poor — some are now focusing on the so-called **opportunity gap**.”
- c. “The district's advanced classes — honors, gifted and talented, and AP — are disproportionately white, while the regular and remedial classes are disproportionately black.”
(Source: *Baltimore Sun*, March 2017, **“Within Integrated Schools, de facto segregation persists”**)

2) **The Research Data is Inconclusive and Study of the Real Root Causes of Inequities in HCPSS is Lacking:**

- a. Despite claims of “decades of research” supporting socioeconomic integration as a mechanism to address the achievement gap, the research is in fact inconclusive.

Testimony in Opposition to CR 112-2019
Wednesday, September 14, 2019, 7 pm
Howard County Council
George Howard Building
3430 Court House Drive, Ellicott City, MD 21043

- b. A recent independent analysis of the key research studies, "A Reality Check on the Benefits of Economic Integration," by Future Ed at Georgetown School of Public Policy concludes: "It's not clear from the research available today that socioeconomic integration alone would produce the hoped-for gains on the academic side of the integration equation. **The research on the effects of socioeconomic integration, including studies frequently cited by the strategy's proponents, is inconclusive.**"
 - c. Furthermore, the research on socioeconomic integration was largely conducted in actually segregated school districts, seeking to bring FARM rates to 40-70% - Howard County is integrated and has FARM rates, at their highest, already in that range. **Will the minimal reductions in FARM rates resulting from redistricting an already integrated school district really have any chance of significantly reducing the achievement gap?**
 - d. There has been **absolutely no study at all in Howard County Public Schools of the root causes of the actual problems of the achievement and opportunity gaps?** From responses to questions posed re: the 2019 HCPSS Equity Report: Question: "Have any tools such as surveys or interviews been used to determine root cause and barriers [of the achievement gap]? Response: **Not at this time.**"
- 3) **Misguided attempts to address the opportunity gap through redistricting poses real harm to our children, particularly our most disadvantaged:**
- a. In a study supported by the Center for Poverty at UC Davis, a Harvard researcher found that redistricting can "hurt already disadvantaged students and communities. Parents whose main mode of transportation was either walking or the bus system expressed concern about their future ability to reach their child's school in the event of an emergency... Many parents felt the increased commute would also prevent them from being actively involved at the school, or from enrolling their children in after-school activities."
 - b. The 2019 HCPSS Equity Report, itself, suggests negative impact of the proposed plan by removing low-income students from their familial and neighborhood supports and increasing geographic and transportation barriers to beyond school opportunities, both of which are correlated in HCPSS data with higher graduation rates.

While the intention of CR-112 is one I admire and share, your call to implement a superficial and ultimately ineffective plan poses real harm to our children. There is a better way. Let's be a national model to address achievement gaps and implement true equity using innovation. For an issue of this magnitude and importance, we owe it to the children we are seeking to help, to rigorously study the problem and its root causes at the school and County levels, inclusively analyze the applicable evidence using expert input, and then and only then embark on a course of informed action.

For the reasons stated above, please vote "no" to CR112-2019 on October 7.

A Reality Check on the Benefits of Economic Integration

Future Ed, Georgetown University McCourt School of Public Policy, September 19, 2019

Sarah A. Cordes

<https://www.future-ed.org/a-reality-check-on-the-benefits-of-economic-integration/>

School districts from New York to San Antonio are turning to a new strategy to improve student outcomes: ensuring that schools have students from a mix of economic backgrounds. Advocates argue that ending the widespread segregation of students by class would increase achievement among low-income students.

It's certainly the case that bringing together students from different backgrounds could promote tolerance, understanding, and a stronger sense of shared identity, commodities in short supply in the nation today. In that spirit, economic integration is a way around judicial prohibitions against assigning students to schools on the basis of race. And as the sociologist James Coleman argued years ago, having access to more advantaged peers could provide lower-income students with valuable insights and networks as they enter higher education and the work world.

But even if district leaders are successful in bringing students from different economic backgrounds together, it's not clear from the research available today that socioeconomic integration alone would produce the hoped-for gains on the academic side of the integration equation.

The research on the effects of socioeconomic integration, including studies frequently cited by the strategy's proponents, is inconclusive. Several studies suggest that students who attend schools with higher socioeconomic status (SES) perform better. A study of the relationship between school SES composition and achievement by Russell Rumberger of University of California-Santa Barbara and Gregory Palardy of the University of Georgia, for example, found that students who attend high SES schools have greater achievement growth in reading and math than students in low SES schools, even accounting for students' background characteristics.

A second, by Roslyn Mickelson and Martha Bottia of the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, reviewed the evidence from five studies that explored the link between school SES and achievement and discovered that students who attend higher poverty schools have worse math outcomes.

But it is hard to conclude from these studies that attending a socioeconomically integrated school *causes* better performance. The results instead could reflect underlying differences in the low-income students who make their way to higher SES schools. They may come from families that place a higher value on education, for example, or are more motivated.

In contrast, a study of a nationally representative sample of 1,100 students by Richard Crosnoe of the University of Texas at Austin found that low-income students who attended higher income schools performed no better academically, had a slower progression through math and science courses, and had worse psychosocial outcomes. But like the

authors of the more encouraging studies, Crosnoe wasn't able to confirm that differences in performance were due to the SES composition of the schools.

Some researchers have done a good job of addressing the fact that it could be students' backgrounds rather than the mixing of students of different backgrounds that is driving the test results—what social scientists call selection bias. But they also find mixed results.

In one, RAND researcher Heather Schwartz compared the outcomes of approximately 850 public housing students in Montgomery County, Md., who were randomly assigned to better and worse neighborhoods and schools. She found that seven years later, students assigned to live in better neighborhoods and attend higher SES schools had significantly higher performance in both reading and math.

In a second study, Robert Bifulco of Syracuse University, Casey D. Cobb at the University of Connecticut, and Courtney Bell of ETS used a lottery analysis, which mimics a randomized controlled trial, to examine the effects of attending inter-district magnet schools in Connecticut. They found that students attending these more racially and economically integrated magnet schools performed better in both reading and math.

But the researchers were unable to distinguish whether these positive effects were due to the higher levels of integration experienced by students who attended these magnet schools or differences in the schools' educational programs.

And in a carefully controlled study of more than 130,000 students in Wake County, N.C., Caroline Hoxby of Stanford and Getchen Weingarth found that the improved academic performance of low-income students who moved to more affluent schools was mostly explained by these students being exposed to higher-achieving peers, and that the socioeconomic status of students' peers and parents' education (often used as an alternative measure of SES) had no independent effect. This suggests that peers' achievement, rather than their economic status, was more important for improving test scores.

While some may argue that socioeconomic integration is a way to expose low-income students to higher achieving peers, high income and high achievement are not necessarily synonymous. What Hoxby's study suggests is that policies that are narrowly focused on socioeconomic integration without consideration for how they will affect the distribution of high-performing students across schools may prove unsuccessful at improving student achievement writ large.

It also may be school factors, such as stronger teachers, that make the difference rather than socioeconomic integration. Indeed, Rumberger and Palardy found in their national representative sample of more than 14,000 students that the relationship between school economic level and student performance was almost entirely explained by differences in teacher expectations, the amount of homework students do, the number of rigorous courses available to students, and students' feelings about safety.

While one way that low-income students might increase their exposure to these practices is by attending schools with students from affluent families with high educational expectations and more resources, there's no evidence that an affluent student population is a prerequisite for effective educational practices.

It's also difficult to *apply* research findings to current school district integration efforts. Most studies have examined the performance of low-income students attending higher-income schools. Yet this is not what most socioeconomic-integration plans propose.

Some seek to attract more middle-class families to the district by creating *new* schools and programs, including Montessori schools and gifted-and-talented and dual-language programs. This is a far different proposition than integrating *existing* schools and could potentially lead to socioeconomically integrated schools with segregated classrooms, particularly without intentional efforts by school and district leaders to limit practices such as tracking.

Other plans aim for schools to mimic surrounding district demographics, but as long as neighborhoods remain segregated by income and class, schools could attain this benchmark and yet continue to have relatively high poverty rates.

And there are other practical issues. Districts with concentrated poverty may simply not have enough middle- and upper-income families to support widespread integration efforts without recruiting families from private schools or other districts. Even then, there is likely to be a delicate balance between middle class families "taking over" the public schools and driving low-income students out and those same families exiting to attend private schools or to live in other school districts if the share of low-income students becomes too high.

The silver lining might be that even if interventions have no short-term impacts on student achievement, they may have positive impacts on other long-term outcomes that society values.

In her study of public-housing students, Schwartz found very little academic impact of attending higher-income schools in the short term, but substantial and significant improvements on state standardized tests after seven years. And economists Raj Chetty, Nathaniel Hendren, and Lawrence Katz found no short-term benefits of living in higher SES neighborhoods, but significant positive effects on college attendance and earnings for the more than 5,000 children who were assigned to live in more advantaged neighborhoods under the federal Moving to Opportunity Demonstration program when they were younger than 13.

Still, the evidence supporting a push to ensure that schools have students from differing economic backgrounds is more complex than the policy's advocates would lead one to believe, as admirable as the goal may be.

Sarah A. Cordes is an assistant professor at Temple University's College of Education in the department of Policy, Organizational, and Leadership Studies.

Why Integration Won't Fix Educational Inequity

Forbes, Sep 25, 2019, 05:17pm,

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/nataliewexler/2019/09/25/why-integration-wont-fix-educational-inequity/#327e0bec3700>

Natalie Wexler Senior Contributor

Education

I write about retooling K-12 education to address social inequality.

Recent research calls for integration, but it won't level the playing field unless we also change our approach to education to align with what scientists have discovered about how kids learn.

A recent study concludes that gaps in student test scores are driven by poverty, not race—but then says the solution must nevertheless be racial integration. More fundamentally, it overlooks current classroom practices that perpetuate income-based gaps even when schools are integrated.

Earlier this week, Stanford University sociologist Sean Reardon and some colleagues released [a report](#) using massive amounts of test-score data to investigate the effects of modern-day racial segregation. After Southern schools were desegregated in the wake of *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954, test-score gaps between black and white students decreased. But with the decline of court-ordered integration, racial segregation in schools returned and has remained at high levels since the 1980s. The question the study set out to investigate is: does racial segregation still matter?

The answer, Reardon and his colleagues say, is yes. School systems that are more segregated have larger achievement gaps, and “their gaps grow faster during elementary and middle schools than in less segregated ones.” But it’s not because of race per se. The real problem, the researchers conclude, is poverty.

How did they figure that out? According to news reports, they zeroed in on three districts: New York City, Atlanta, and Detroit. (Detroit isn’t mentioned in the report itself.) In the first two, race and poverty are highly correlated—that is, poor students are overwhelmingly black and Hispanic, and wealthier students are almost all white. In Detroit, though, students of all races come from low-income families—and, unlike in New York and Atlanta, there was hardly any score gap between whites and students of color. That, perhaps, is the good news. The bad news is that scores in Detroit were low across the board.

The researchers also say it’s not the poverty of individual students that’s the problem—it’s the concentration of poor kids in particular schools. The researchers aren’t sure exactly *why* that’s a problem, because they don’t have good enough data. But, they say, “schools’

poverty rates, not differences in schools' *racial composition*" are somehow linked to inequality.

You might expect this finding to lead to the conclusion that the way to address inequality is through socioeconomic rather than racial integration. But no. Instead the researchers argue that because race and poverty are so closely related, "the only way to close the gap is to racially integrate schools." The reasoning here is hard to follow. It's true that black and Hispanic families are disproportionately low-income in the United States, but why not aim for socioeconomic integration, if that's the real problem? You'd probably end up with more or less the same result: schools that are both racially and socioeconomically integrated. But given that the basic problem is poverty—and that the Supreme Court has decreed that assigning students to schools on the basis of race is constitutionally prohibited—why focus on race?

In any event, the whole question is largely academic. Segregation and busing have been in the news a lot, but a return to mandated integration of any kind—which is what would be required to make it happen on a large scale—is highly unlikely.

That's a pretty bleak picture, if you agree with Reardon that integration is our only hope of improving education for poor kids. "There's a common argument these days that maybe we should stop worrying about segregation and just create high-quality schools everywhere," he told one reporter. "This study shows that it doesn't seem to be possible."

But Reardon, like many other education researchers, is overlooking a fundamental problem: *what* is being taught and *how*, especially in elementary schools. What Reardon's data doesn't capture is the disconnect between the world of education and what scientists have discovered about how children learn. True, some kids do just fine in our education system—mainly those from higher-income families. But that may be *despite* rather than *because* of our prevailing curriculum and pedagogy.

High-poverty schools often face a host of challenges, including high numbers of kids who have experienced trauma that hasn't been treated. Still, it's possible to significantly raise the quality of the education they provide if we bring our teaching practices in line with cognitive science. That's not to say, of course, that we shouldn't try to reduce segregation. It just means we shouldn't pin our hopes on something so difficult to achieve while overlooking other things that can work, right now—and in fact are beginning to produce results in the relative handful of high-poverty schools that are adopting a different approach.

The most egregious, and widespread, example of an educational practice that conflicts with science is the way American schools approach reading instruction. Many teachers haven't received good training in teaching kids to sound out words, despite mountains of evidence on what works best. And nearly all have been trained to believe that the way to teach kids to understand what they read is to spend many hours every week on comprehension "skills and strategies"—things like "finding the main idea" of a text, or "making inferences"—and

then have kids practice the “skills” on books on random topics that are easy enough for them to read on their own. But cognitive scientists have long known that the most important factor in reading comprehension isn’t generally applicable “skills,” it’s how much knowledge the reader has relating to the topic. The subjects that could build kids’ knowledge—history, science, the arts—are the very ones that have been cut to make room for comprehension instruction, especially in schools where test scores are low.

The result is a kind of intra-classroom tracking that begins in kindergarten. Children from less educated families, which also tend to be low-income families, are disproportionately likely to benefit from phonics instruction. They’re also more likely to lack the kind of knowledge and vocabulary needed to understand sophisticated texts. If they don’t get these things at school, they often remain permanently behind—regardless of whether they’re in a classroom with white or affluent peers.

What about the data showing benefits to black students from desegregation? Much of it comes from decades ago, before high-stakes tests and other factors made reading comprehension instruction the centerpiece of the elementary curriculum. Elementary schools may not have been providing a rigorous content-focused curriculum, especially in social studies, but at least students had a chance to acquire *some* academic knowledge and vocabulary. And white schools often had better textbooks and other amenities than black schools under segregation.

There’s some more recent evidence on the benefits of integration, but there’s also data pointing in the opposite direction. A 2017 study found “large differences” in the performance of wealthier and poorer students in the same schools, concluding that socioeconomic segregation is unlikely to reduce the test score gap. Similarly, a 2018 study of elementary schools in New York City found significant gaps in scores between students from different socioeconomic groups at the same schools. More anecdotally, there’s de facto tracking at many integrated high schools. Regular classes are populated by black and brown students, while honors classes are filled with white and Asian ones—a situation that has prompted some high schools to put everyone in honors classes in an attempt to further educational equity.

But if we really want to achieve that goal, we need to start questioning standard classroom practices that reinforce rather than reduce existing inequities, beginning in kindergarten. It’s fine to look at masses of test score data to document inequality, but if researchers want to understand how to address it, they’ll need to look elsewhere.

Natalie Wexler is the author of The Knowledge Gap: The Hidden Cause of America's Broken Education System—and How to Fix It (Avery, 2019). She is also the co-author, with Judith C. Hochman, of The Writing Revolution: A Guide to Advancing Thinking Through Writing in All Subjects and Grades (Jossey-Bass, 2017). Her articles and essays have appeared in The New York Times, The Washington Post, and other publications.

I'm Dr. Sigen Chen, an Ellicott City resident. I signed up to testify because this proposal's implication on school redistricting. My son attended Howard County Schools, now he is a college sophomore. We are thankful to HCPSS for provided education he needed. We went through the relocation, researched what we needed, and made our choice. I would be upset if someone told me my son couldn't go the school we planned for.

As I sat here last Wednesday night (9/19), I heard Council Members said that this Council couldn't tell schools or BOE what to do. However CR112 seems to suggest just that-

-- "integrate Howard County Public Schools through the redistricting and boundary review process and focus additional efforts and resources on addressing the achievement gaps and racial and socioeconomic disparities in the Howard County Public School System".

Therefore what I heard from this room and what I saw on the resolution CR112 appears conflicting at each other.

Back to CR112, the word "segregation" certainly caught my eyes. I was thinking - really? We are at 21st Century, in a Blue County, Blue State? How did that happen? What caused the "Segregation" if exist, "achievement gap" and "racial and socioeconomic disparity"? All those things sounded awful. If such concerns are credible, then they ought to be addressed. Question become how? Is it public schools' fault? When we trying to resolve a complexed issue like such, we ought to do a better and thorough job. Would shuffle students across different areas solve the "segregation", "disparity" problem? Not likely, though we wish it would.

With that I'd simply say "No" to CR112. Finally could I make a couple of the comments?

1. Please leave school districts intact unless there are new schools built, at which time, leave the school redistricting work to BOE and AAC, that's their job. Otherwise let parents and students to choose which area they want to settle in. People know better as to where they want to live.
2. Study the problem thoroughly, find the root cause of the problem, and propose the right solution for the specific problem.

Thank you for your time.

Testimony in Opposition to CR 112-2019
Wednesday, September 18, 2019, 7 pm
Howard County Council
George Howard Building
3430 Court House Drive, Ellicott City, MD 21043

I am Amit Grover and resident of Ellicott City (Polygon 176). Thank you for giving me this opportunity to testify and voice my opinion as it relates to the CR 112 which leads to a massive redistricting of the Howard County Public schools. I strongly oppose the proposed redistricting plan as it splits the communities and does not solve the underlying problem. As a Howard County resident, I respectfully request you vote against CR 112-2019.

CR 112 calls for multi-year Integration Plan to ensure that Howard County Public Schools are integrated by socioeconomic factors. I have read the CR-112 multiple times and also the feasibility Study and the Superintendents Proposed redistricting Plan.

Below are some of my observations that makes me believe that we are not taking right steps to solve the problem and integrate our communities.

1) Socioeconomic Inequality:

I tried looking for low income housing options in Howard County. The number below provides some perspective on why we have this problem at our hands.

Below are some of the results of my search

Columbia – 19 Multi Family Units

Ellicott City – 3

Clarksville -0

Marriottsville – 0

Elkridge -3

The number tell me that the presence of clustered pockets of low-income housing in the county is due to poor zoning and development decisions made in the past. Addressing the concentration of poverty in our county will require a broad solution that includes housing, land use, transportation and other policies, not simply the social engineering of schools and busing of our students.

2) The value of the community in education and general student growth is well recognized. By moving the kids to a school that is away from their neighborhood you are

- a. breaking the communities.
- b. Increasing the commute time for the kids (High School Kid in my case & during the most important years of his life). His commute time is going to increase 3 times.
- c. There is impact on parental involvement, increase in stress on families. With the proposed plan I have to drive 20 miles if I have to go to ES and HS and back to my house.

3) Feasibility Study and Superintendents Plan: There was time, tax-payers money and energy spent on the Feasibility Study that was presented in June. None of the redistricting recommendations from feasibility study were incorporated in the proposed redistricting plan.

Policy 6010 : Factors in the review or development of any school attendance area

adjustment plan.

- 1) Facility Utilization: Our School is under-utilized. There is no reason to move large number of kids to another school
 - 2) Community Stability: promote a sense of community in the geographic place (e.g., neighborhood or place in which a student lives). The CR-112 Moves Kids away from their neighborhood Schools.
 - 3) Demographic Characteristics of Student Population. (Diversity): Howard
 - 4) Board of Education's Deliberations – Seems like it overwrites all other factors.
- 4) The resources available to the county should be used to help the low performing schools, the school system should be treated as a whole unit and teacher or student exchanges should be considered to provide equal opportunity and better environment to all. Programs similar to magnet schools (Montgomery County), special transport for the high performing FARM students should also be considered.

At the end I would like to request, **not** to do an experiment on my kids, their future is our future and we should **not** make them go through this experiment. Whereas our focus should be making our community stronger, take pride in the diversity, work harder on policies that expand housing affordability, diversifying housing types and their distribution throughout the county.

The Proposed plan will do more harm than good.

For the reasons stated above, please vote "no" to CR112-2019 on October 7.

Jenise Dunn, District 5

As a life-long Democrat, I fear that some members of this Council, the Board of Education, the County Executive and other elected officials, have become so singularly focused on a win for this resolution, they have become blind to the harm this will do to the most vulnerable of Howard County. The children of impoverished families.

CR 112 2019 does a huge disservice to children living in poverty, because at the end of the day you haven't changed what truly affects them in their fight for success - their home life.

How do I know this? I was that child. How many of those who support this resolution have actually lived a life a poverty? I don't mean living pay check to pay check. I mean absolute poverty. We were so poor we had to go to the Salvation Army almost every week for a box of food. Any assistance we received went to my step fathers drug habit. Breakfast and lunch at school were just about my only meals.

Do you want to truly make a true difference in the lives of children who live in poverty? Then give them the programs and resources that support their needs. Don't just shuffle them around and act as if this will somehow change their situation.

They worry about where their next meal is coming from. They worry about what's waiting for them when they get home from school. Start there. Start by alleviating the worries a child should not have to bear. When you do that, you begin to level the playing field and give them the ability to focus on success. On achieving something so much more than just making it through the day. It doesn't matter where they go to school, because they will still come home to the same problems, just like I did.

They need guidance, mentors and counselors. They need to know they have someone to talk to about whatever trauma they may be experiencing. They need a safe place to go when their home becomes unbearable. They need access to food and medicine. And they need it in their communities.

They are not problems to be solved. If you think that by shuffling them around and making the school numbers look better, that you will somehow make their lives better, you won't. Because you haven't solved the root problem. You just applied a bandaid to a gushing wound. It's ineffective and useless.

What you will do when you remove them from their community schools, is to prevent them from participating in anything school related. They will no longer be able to walk to their community school. Their parents may no longer be able to participate in school activities. Living a life of poverty is hard. Removing access to their community school, will make it even harder.

We need more resources in schools with a high percentage of low income students. Schools like Wilde Lake offer health centers where kids have access to medicine and vision. They have a childcare program for teen parents. They have full time social workers and

psychologists who are trained to work with children living in poverty. Because there is so much more to living in poverty than where you go to school.

The School budget is already stressed. You are putting the burden of fixing this government's mistakes on the BOE and in turn the children. That is a burden they should never have to bear. The current solution by the BOE does not allocate resources that would actually have an impact on the lives of these children. Instead, it wishes to bus over 7400 students, that is 1 out of every 7, and incur higher transportation costs. Funding was cut to technology teachers, para-educators and other needed staff as well as necessary infrastructure improvements. Yet we can somehow find the funds to double or triple the transportation budget? Shame on you and anyone who thinks that this is a good idea. And double shame on doing it under the guise of social justice. Do not think your ulterior motives and the bed you share with developers has gone unnoticed.

Where is the accountability of our County government? Central Office is currently extremely top heavy. Where we once had 2 top positions, we now have at least 6. Each with a salary large enough to provide the necessary resources in schools with low income students. Remove the duplicity, combine positions and use the funds for a better cause.

If you want to truly help impoverished children and families, do it at the source. Vote NO for this resolution and start again. I challenge you to RESOLVE to do better. Think outside the box for a solution that addresses the whole child of low income families, not just where they go to school and who they go with. We need to be willing to have talks that make people uncomfortable. We need to engage with the communities you claim to want to help. These children need a true voice and that voice is clearly not you.

This is not a game and these children are not your political pawns. If you think getting a WIN on this resolution is all that matters, then the children you claim to want to help will be the ones who lose, and trust me, they've already lost enough.

Thank you.

Jill Christianson, 10715 Autumn Splendor Drive, Columbia MD 21044

**Testimony
County Council of Howard County
September 18, 2019**

Resolution No. 112 – 2019

As a resident of Howard County since 1998, my career has addressed educational equity for three decades. I am honored to have the opportunity to address with you my insights on Howard County Resolution 112 – 2019.

I am in favor of the County Council approving this resolution, which calls on the school district to develop a lawful, multi-year integration plan for Howard County Public Schools, which would have specific focus on socioeconomic factors.

I am a 21-year resident of Howard County. I moved here because the county had a superb reputation as a school district in effective equity practice and multicultural education; at that time my daughter was in second grade. As her education journey went from Clemens Crossing, to Harpers Choice Middle School to Wilde Lake High School, I had many discussions with white parents who were concerned about 'too much' diversity. In other words, there were some parents who were fearful that the presence of students of lower income and students who were not white could be a detriment to their children's success. Fear of the 'other' was the real factor. (Yes, in-school segregation was a real issue then, as it continues to be a challenge now.) The economic and racial diversity in education was part of the reason I chose to move to Howard County. Jim Rouse had a vision, and this part of the county was filled with people committed to making it real.

At that time, Howard County was best positioned to continue to educate students well regardless of family income, race, gender, national origin, or sexual orientation factors. I worked for the Maryland State Department of Education, where I had responsibilities for race equity and multicultural education. This work advancing policy and practice was due to Title IV of the 1964 Civil Rights Act in regards to race.

At the invitation of school boards and community advocates such as clergy, our team from the Maryland State Department of Education would conduct a 360-degree investigation of racism in the school district, with a focus on the intersections of economic, gender, and other forms of discrimination in the public school systems. Following an investigation, and report meetings with the local Board of Education and community groups, there would be recommendations of actions to enhance the practice of educational equity and, thus, avoid law suits and negative rulings from the US Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights.

In that work for Maryland State Department of Education, I recall the echoes of the late Woodrow B. Grant Jr., whose courage and leadership advanced desegregation of Maryland Public Schools. He would talk about the phenomenal progress of Howard County, from a ‘recalcitrant’ school district that stubbornly refused to desegregate in the 1960s (yes, 1960s) to one that was transforming to be an educational equity leader. In fact, Howard County Public Schools has served as a model for other districts in the Maryland and nationally.

Clearly, Howard County has changed since James Rouse had a nurturing hand in growing Columbia. We have witnessed the building of estates in the western part of the county, the emergence of Maple Lawn, the big box stores in Snowden, the trailer parks along Route 1 in Jessup, and growing in poverty several pockets of the county. It is of no surprise that Howard County Public Schools has arrived at a crossroads in reassessing segregation – economic, racial and ethnic. Given all these factors, we shouldn’t be shocked at the great disparities in schools and communities in the need for free and reduced meals. The question now is - how will we address this as we seek to provide the best quality public education for every student in Howard County?

Dr. Gary Orfield, from the Civil Rights Project has stated, “Integration is something that is one of the few things we can do in our public institutions to actually prepare people for the society we will have.”¹

I urge you to read the Civil Rights Project report, “Harming Our Common Future: America’s Segregated Schools 65 Years after Brown.”² The focus in the report on suburban schools is of direct relation to the situation in Howard County Public Schools today. In that, the authors write, “Doing nothing means accepting resegregation” of suburban public schools.

“Housing and school policies have a strong reciprocal effect on patterns of racial and economic segregation...,”³ according to the 2019 study of the Poverty & Race Action Research Council. This policy brief probes “the dynamics of the housing-schools relationship and their effectiveness as advocates in their local communities” and provides examples of communities that are effectively tackling the challenge. In planning for the future, this mutual influence of education and housing patterns must be considered.

¹ Video, Dr. Gary Orfield, Civil Rights Project, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=THoQ3_I8IBQ

² Report, *Harming Our Common Future: America’s Segregated Schools 65 Years after Brown* by the Civil Rights Project, <https://civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/research/k-12-education/integration-and-diversity/harming-our-common-future-americas-segregated-schools-65-years-after-brown>

³ Report, *Housing and Schools: The Importance of Engagement for Educators and Advocates*, prepared by the Poverty & Race Action Research Council, https://prrac.org/pdf/NEA-PRRAC_housing-schools.pdf

With the passage of Resolution 112 – 2019, we lower the risk that students will leave Howard County Public Schools with a mediocre education experience. Importantly, too, we lower the risk that Howard County Public Schools will face legal action based on the segregation of its schools.

What do we want for our future? I want a county school system that continually seeks to address equity and provide the best education for ALL of its students, not just those who live in wealthier housing and school catchment areas. Resolution 112-2019 is important to our future.

Thank you.

Testimony in Opposition to CR 112-2019

Good Evening County Councils,

I am Dr. Jianning Zeng. I moved to Maryland in 2001 and I have been living in Howard County for almost 15 years. I work as a system engineer in NASA, my loving and hardworking husband works as a meteorologist in NOAA, and we have two wonderful boys. I am a registered voter, I am here to oppose CR112.

For the record, Asian Americans as a minority group have endured racial discrimination throughout the history of the nation. We strongly condemn any racist act.

We immigrated to this country and choose to live in Howard County for its excellent schools, and its diverse and inclusive environment. Howard County is our home, and people are making tremendous contributions to the county.

As one of the best counties to live, we had the best school education system, teachers teach students in accordance with their aptitude and performance. We have equally education opportunity for all kids. Qualified students have no problem to apply for free and reduced meals in Howard County. High FARM school get more funding. If the FARM rates make somebody feel uncomfortable, then let ALL kids have free meals. The cost of the discussion the FARM rate, the cost of increasing the commuting school bus, the cost of the traffic, the cost of curing kids physically and mentally health issues because of this, etc., might cover free meals for all kids.

Kids are not polygons, kids are not guinea pigs in the lab. They should not just be simply shuffled for any integration experiment. The real solution is that the county council should resolve the concentration of poverty in our county, and provide the real help to our most vulnerable county families so they can improve their lives, instead of sacrificing our kids.

CR112 polarizes, divides and breaks our county residents down by factors such as race, income and community then politicians say our county is segregated. CR112 causes division and resentment in the community. A disturbing racial incident just occurred on Tuesday September 24th in HOCO. It is a sad moment for HOCO.

Equity and integration can only occur naturally when we make efforts to overcome our root problems by establishing values, beliefs, culture, and by improving K-12 education in school and after school, and raising kids with responsibilities, perseverance and devotion. Our schools should be away from those social economic and social political movement.

Love your neighbor and make sure no one to suffer. Looking at the people sit next to you, we have different colors, we have different clothes, that's natural, can you say that's not equal? The history of the Cultural Revolution in 1970s in China taught us that Socialism will only make everybody equally poor and equally dumb. Socialists end as dictators.

This social economic integration is “controlled choice”. Chester Finn, former United States Assistant Secretary of Education, has written that controlled choice – isn’t all that different from the “forced busing” of yesteryear. It restricts families’ education options and imposes a top-down, government-run, social engineering scheme based on somebody’s view of the value of racial and social economic integration. This forced bussing will cause our children to have less sleeping time, long way to schools, less afterschool events and less community involvements, be more stressful. If you don’t care, what do you care about, the money in other people’s pockets. CR112 should be stopped, cancelled, or tabled.

I am extremely disappointed in County councils Mr. Opel Jones and Ms. Christiana Mercer Rigby after the last Thursday’s testimony, when a gentleman testified and expressed his fear of the consequences of CR112, he was scoffed at instead of respected.

County Council Ms. Deb Jung touched me in the budget meeting of BOE and County Council. She really concerned the research that high school students need more sleeping time, which had been the hottest topic since 2017.

I very much appreciate County Council, Ms. Liz Walsh for your willing to listen.
I stand with County Council Mr. David Youngman for your strong opposition to the CR 112.

With Love and Righteousness, Howard County deserves better. Our county Councils please vote NO to CR112.

Jianning Zeng

Oppose CR112

Lili Shippe

Good afternoon. I am here today to testify again CR 112. I strongly oppose CR112 - because the assumptions and ideas in CR112 and the approach to achieve the purpose of equity are wrong.

What made you come to the assumption that CR112 would give the FARM students a boost when they are sent to other schools of less color? It is simply wrong and outrageous to bus students in and out, make them passing so many closer schools and attend schools that are far away from their homes and communities. It is the fact that FARM students' standard test scores are about the same whether in FARM concentrated schools or not. How can CR112 possibly address and take care of FARM students' unique needs & situation when they are scattered all over the places? Their individual needs will be neglected and they will become more isolated and vulnerable. The FARM students will do much worse academically, emotionally and socially. In summary, CR112 will do more harm than good to FARM students.

CR112 will bring disruption and inconvenience to non-farm societies as well. It tears down the communities. It already sparked anger and chaos in Howard County. We feel betrayed! CR112 is not just costly; it simply doesn't work to solve the "problem" of equity because it failed to recognize the root causes of the problem & struggle of the FARM families.

I am sure by now you have heard from many voices for the opposition of CR112. I would like to end my testimony with this question -

Do you think it is a good idea the fire departments will be redistricted such that fire stations don't respond to the closest fire location, but rather to the most socio-economically diversified location when a fire occurs?

In summary, I strongly urge you all to reconsider and completely withdraw CR 112. Thank you.



HCCA

Howard County Citizens Association

Since 1961...

The Voice Of The People of Howard County

Date: 18 September 2019

Subject: HCCA Testimony for CR112-2019

Good evening. I am JD Smith representing the Howard County Citizens Association, HCCA as a member of the Board.

It is true: the school system is segregated by socio-economic factors. It is also true that the country's long history of racism and "separate but equal" keeps many poor people, especially people of color, away from the greatest equalizer and source of prosperity, which is a good public education. While many jurisdictions can attribute their primary source of segregation to this long history, Howard County can look to the long history of developer influence.

For decades, developer influence of Howard County's zoning and land-use laws have led to the concentration of poverty in certain regions of the county. These zoning regulations and agreements reached with developers have resulted in net lower number of affordable housing through alternative compliance to reduce the percentage of affordable homes, by charging so-called fees-in-lieu that have no market-basis, or by simply exempting large regions of the county from requiring any affordable housing- New Town, Turf Valley, Maple Lawn, Village Centers, Downtown Columbia, River Hill, either have received exemptions or do not require any affordable housing.

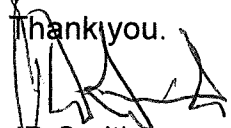
The county has a long history of passing favorable zoning and land-use laws to developers at the expense of the taxpayer. Free taxpayer dollars in the form of tax increment financing, below market school surcharge fees, density swaps in exchange for affordable housing, with no requirement to provide the affordable housing just like the downtown Columbia plan, numerous affordable housing exemptions and below market fees-in-lieu . . . the list goes on.

The cumulative effect of these actions has led to the status quo- the concentration of lower income households in some areas and the disparate statistics of poverty in certain schools. The Superintendent has released his proposal and we are confident the school system will develop a plan that will faithfully execute Policy 6010.

While the BoE and Superintendent are trying to do their job, we also ask the County Council and County Executive to try and do yours. Only you can address the root cause or in the next few years, we will face the same issues unless immediate action is taken to update development regulations.

This is why we ask you to pass CB17 immediately to increase development wait times to seven years when schools are overcrowded. We also ask you to address the issue of affordable housing by removing all exemptions and require a minimum of 10 to 15% affordable housing in all zoning districts of the county. Increase the MIHU fees to market fees and allow them only in circumstances where the 15% threshold is met. Pass CB42 to increase the school surcharge fees to \$8 per square foot with no exemptions or grandfathering of projects.

Thank you.



JD Smith

HCCA Board of Directors

Good evening. My name is Lisa Schlossnagle, I live in Fulton, and I support CR-112.

First, let's talk about the intention of and rationale for this resolution, which is to effect improved demographic integration of our public schools. We know it to be true that diverse communities benefit all learners. Personally, I feel that my education in three racially, religiously, and economically diverse schools here in Howard County was deeply formative to both my intellect and my character, which is why my husband and I returned here to raise our three children and locate our businesses.

It is clear that creating and maintaining integrated schools is key to providing an excellent education to all students. Since you are the main funding source of our public schools, you should know that it's also better economically. When Montgomery County randomly assigned students living in public housing to either high-poverty neighborhoods and schools or lower-poverty neighborhoods and schools, the students attending the integrated lower-poverty schools academically outperformed those in higher-poverty conditions - and here's the economic part - even though the higher-poverty schools received extra per-pupil funding.

Furthermore, school integration has generational effects. Adults who attended integrated schools as children had higher earnings, improved health outcomes, and lower likelihood of incarceration. They and their children benefit from living in a household with greater opportunity and fewer systemic challenges, thus affecting the types of services the county government will want and need to provide for its residents.

Now, on to the language of resolution. The first part of the resolution is great, offering support to the school system in its efforts to provide equitable education to all students. The last clause, however, places all the work of integration on the desk of the Board of Education and HCPSS.

The effort to create an integration plan must be collaborative between county government and the school system. Of course, HCPSS can and must adjust attendance areas, as well as implement programming, staffing, and curricula so that students have equitable opportunities for achievement. But if they do that work in isolation of housing and transportation policies - and crucially, fiscal realities - then their effectiveness will be limited at best and completely undermined at worst.

So, I ask that the perspectives and expertise of the council, the school board, the county executive's office, the budget office, the office of school planning, the department of planning and zoning, and even the county delegation to the General Assembly to combine collaboratively to create an informed plan that creates the best learning environments for all kids. This is big work, with generational effects. Please revise the language of the resolution to include the participation of all of these entities in developing an integration plan, thus affirming your commitment to collaboration in the service of our county.

Thank you for your consideration.

Nancy Shih
Ellicott City

I oppose CR112 because I don't agree the prescription of busing students around can cure the problem of ever-increased achievement gap.

CR112 targets "white" students in comparing FARM students' graduation rate as if no other races are doing well in graduating high schools.

CR112 assumes that FARM students' graduation rate will increase if they are transferred to wealthier "white" schools by means of school redistricting.

Such assumption is a myth and unsupported.

CR112 points out "middle-class WHITE students" in describing what diverse classroom will benefit.

CR112 singles out "WHITE" students as the only middle-class and the only color in the classrooms that are successful as if no other races exist in middle-class and in the classrooms that are doing well. Such racial-biased view is disturbing. The fact is that middle-class and successful students, spreading out the entire county, are composed of races of all kinds.

Yet CR112 tells us that HoCo and HCPSS are segregated! CR112 intentionally ignores the existence of such vibrant and dynamic racial diversity in our community and in our schools.

CR112 cites HCPSS' affirmation that there are concerns about access and equity in the school system based on the Equity Report.

The fallacy is, Equity report only measures the performance "outcome" and says since the outcome is not equal, something is wrong in the system.

The truth is, opportunities and resources are equally provided. Public libraries and schools are open to everyone without any bias or discrimination. Some say FARM families lack "boosters" such as computers or vehicles to access to those resources.

If the lack of boosters is indeed the cause of performance gap, then you should use the \$3M busing budget under the plan to purchase more books and computers for these families.

CR112 emphasizes the desirable characteristics of diversity and inclusion and demands the school system to enforce them. However, CR112 penalizes and oppresses the desirable characters like diligence, perseverance and dedication demonstrated by middle-class families. It's dangerous to place one single value above all other values. It's reckless to pursue one goal or ideology without considering the cost, the price and the sacrifice of other valuables.

CR112 penalizes the hard-working middle-class. You'd better realize that when these "rich" people flee out of HoCo, nothing is left for you to abuse.

Good evening.

My name is Adam Sharp. My three boys attend Manor Woods Elementary.

As my family moved to Howard County, just prior to the last election, I observed my fellow residents organizing against the redistricting caused by fast private development. They viewed APFO and development surcharges as ways to mitigate it, and made their will known through the Yellow Shirt Movement protests and by voting this council in.

The superintendent's recent Area Adjustment Plan captured in it a poll of the top three concerns of Howard County. They were:

- 1) Keeping feeds of students together from one school to the next, at over 65%
- 2) Maintaining contiguous communities or neighborhoods, at over 59%
- 3) And transportation considerations, at over 42%¹

"Stop redistricting" was not an option in the poll. Yet these three concerns are the options most closely aligned with expressing that exact desire.

Demographic factors, which this resolution asks the Board of Education to emphasize, was rated at a mere 19.12%.²

Our votes, our protests, and our polls all express that we want to slow or stop redistricting. To its credit, this Council has taken some action on APFO and surcharges to mitigate it.

But this resolution, as written, reverses that course of mitigation, and will provoke a new, possibly unprecedented level of redistricting. It doesn't just ignore the will of the people, as the last administration was sometimes accused of, but is downright hostile to the clearly expressed will of the people. Instead of mitigating redistricting, you are adding a new cause of it: yourselves. If that is not your intent, you should pull this resolution back, and work toward a better, more creative solution.

Instead of asking the BOE to exercise even more power in deciding where our kids will go to school, you should empower the people.

Parents at schools such as those that you brought up in your proposed legislation (such as high FARM rate or over-crowded schools) should be given the opportunity to opt-in to a different school (such as low FARM or under-utilized schools). Students that opt-in could be bussed directly to a different school. This approach has significant advantages:

- 1) It gives parents and guardians, who know better than the Council or the Board what their child needs, an opportunity to prioritize what is best for their child;

¹ Area Adjustment Plan, page 7. A study based on 1,480 respondents.

² Area Adjustment Plan, page 7.

- 2) it lets parents and guardians choose whether they value stability or something else;
and
- 3) it does not further frustrate those of us who are sick of the redistricting.

Such a system is responsive to the majority of us that favor stability but also empowers the minority of us that chose Demographics as their top concern.

I believe my fellow residents in the receiving schools would welcome the children of any family that opted-in to this system. But we reject the further destabilization of our communities and children's education by those with power, whether it's the powerful in the private sector or the powerful in our own government.

Thank you for your time,

Adam Sharp
Howard County Resident

Amy Halder-Sueh
District 1

As an engaged county resident, I take my civic responsibility here in Howard County quite seriously.

Howard County has a complicated history when it comes to desegregation. Indeed, the United States has a complicated history when it comes to desegregation.

What is not complicated, however, is being in favor of a resolution that supports desegregation in our county in the year 2019.

Prejudice is still alive and well in the county, and I hesitate to point this out but when people who look like me decide it's ok to step on the backs of those whose ancestors have fought through centuries of injustice for equality, I am disappointed.

When I see people who have struggled financially decide that others don't need the help they could and probably would have used, I am disappointed.

When I see children of immigrants being used as pawns by their parents to propagate prejudice, I am disappointed.

I predict that those children will look back on these days with shame. They will read the history books in their AP classes and understand how hateful this entire episode has been.

My religion teaches me that all people are equal, rich and poor, and no matter your ethnic background. My religion also teaches me to learn. One thing I would ask is for people who are against this resolution to learn more about segregation. Learn about redlining. Learn about the complicated history before you start saying hurtful things.

As you know, public education is the greatest of equalizers. I am a firm believer in the importance of public education, especially in a healthy democracy, partly because we can't have valuable discourse without the knowledge of our complicated history.

When elected officials are afraid of taking the bold actions necessary for the welfare of our students, all of our communities suffer as a result. This has been borne out time and time again.

And so, I am thankful to Councilpersons Mercer Rigby, Jones, and Jung for introducing this resolution because sadly, it was clearly needed. All the testimony against it proves that point.

Testimony on CR112-2019

Dawn Popp

District 1, Elkridge, MD

Good afternoon, my name is Dawn Popp and I live in District 1, in Elkridge. I am here today to express my support for CR112.

I do not envy our Board of Education members, who have an incredibly difficult job ahead of them as they try to balance competing priorities and make tough choices regarding specific schools, grades, and polygons. As you have noted, that is not the job before you. Instead, though it may not feel like it, your job here is an easy one. You don't need to concern yourself with specific schools, polygons, or neighborhoods. Instead, your vote on this non-binding Resolution simply needs to be an expression of your personal values and what you believe (or hope) to be the values of your constituents.

The bottom line question you must answer is simply, "Do we, as a county, believe that it's important to ensure that the schools in our school system reflect the racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic diversity that exist in our county as a whole?" Regardless of how we feel about the specific proposal being considered by the Board, I hope that we can all agree that equitable and diverse schools are something we need to work toward. And that's really all this Resolution says.

I have read and heard many objections to the Resolution which cite some of the Whereas clauses as too provocative or inflammatory. Some have questioned whether this language was intended to make them feel "ashamed." I would suggest that the historical and present context is necessary to explain why this Resolution is needed at all. If we lived in a utopia where all of our schools were perfectly diverse and provided the best education and opportunities for ALL of our students, we wouldn't need to be having this conversation. But acknowledging a shameful history does not mean that we, as individuals who may have had no part in it should feel personally ashamed. As for the present, we need only feel ashamed if, once we become aware of the pervasive and persistent inequity, we choose to do nothing about it.

Another frequent objection to the Resolution seems to be that much of the socioeconomic and racial segregation the Resolution targets can be traced back to housing and zoning policies that are more directly within the Council's purview. To that, I would say that these are complex issues with multiple causes, and thus we need multiple solutions, some of which are within the control of the Council and some of which must be addressed by the Board of Ed. I am glad to see some of the Whereas clauses in the Resolution acknowledge the role of development patterns and housing policy in contributing to the segregation in our schools, and I would love to see an

amendment that adds some corresponding “Be it Resolved” language to more explicitly commit the Council to working together with the Board of Education to address these multi-faceted issues. I look forward to seeing many of the community members who oppose this Resolution or the Superintendent’s proposal because they think this is more of a housing issue on the front lines fighting for more affordable housing in ALL parts of this County.

Thank you for your time. I hope that you can manage to cut through all of the noise and simply vote your values when it comes time to vote on this Resolution.

Eric Bonewitz
Clarksville, MD

- As a citizen of this county, along with many others, I found the CR 112 to be incredibly divisive. If you will review the available face book pages of those opposing it you will find they are routinely being labeled as racist by those supporting the resolution. This has nothing to do with race.
- As council members, your job should be to bring us together, not drive us apart. You should be above this. You should be appealing to peoples' better angels. No one wants any children in this county to be deprived. None!
- When one views the Superintendent's proposed plan many of its flaws are clear. For example, he proposes moving some 400 students from Wilde Lake High to River Hill and some 300 students from River Hill to Wilde Lake when some 300 Wilde Lake students could be transferred to River Hill without disruption to River Hill. While this would result in 100 fewer Wilde Lake Students being transferred to River Hill, it would be much more fiscally responsible.
- Additionally the Super's plan moves pockets of kids that number in the teens to new schools while totally disrupting their lives and adding extra expense. When viewed from 30,000 feet it clear the Superintendent and his backers are just rearranging the deck chairs on the Titanic.
- The plan reminds me of the guy who was told to put his head in the oven and his feet in the refrigerator because, on balance, he'd feel just fine. Few people feel just fine about this, because... with all due respect... it's presumptuous and stupid.
- Add to this that neither the school board nor the Superintendent can provide the Council a budget for this thing. They totally dodged budget questions asked during the Council's meeting with them Monday last. Why? Likely because they have no idea. Authorizing the school board to move ahead with the Superintendent's plan without a real good understanding of the numbers is a train wreck in the making. Given the Howard County School System's fiscal problems right now authorizing the BOE to embark on this... or any... social experiment, especially without a fundable budget, would border on malfeasance in

my mind.

- Finally, let's talk about numbers. In 1996 when Wilde Lake High was renovated, the citizens of Dorsey Hall were redistricted to there from their historic school. The result? According to several real estate agents who were here at the time, property values in Dorsey dropped by roughly 20% overnight. There is a strong body of statistically valid evidence that redistrictings like this significantly reduce property values. Today, there are purchasers of homes who are backing out of contracts because of this mess.
- So, what does a 20% market value reduction mean? If you are a homeowner with a VA 0% down mortgage or a more conventional 10% down mortgage, you would immediately be upside down on that mortgage. If it's time for your mortgage to roll over and renew the lending institution is going to require you to come up with a sizable amount of money to make this right. Dodd-Frank and good business sense precludes banks from lending amounts on properties in excess of their value. If one is moving for a job and must sell their house, same problem. This is a serious unintended consequence, not only for the individual, but for the County.
- If this plan goes through and property values should drop in affected neighborhoods, the county should staff up its assessor's office. There will be lines out the door... all carrying well prepared DIV (Diminution in Value) appraisals... demanding a reduction in their property values for tax purposes. A national appraisal firm that performs DIV's as a specialty has already been consulted. So, as a result of an action, if the County is forced to reduce property values in affected areas en masse what can they do? Basically, their only option is to raise taxes on everyone... rich and poor alike to make up resulting shortfalls. No one wins at this, but the poor are more negatively affected. This would be highly regressive.
- Finally, if the Board of Education really wants to help children they should invest in Pre-K. Short of more parental involvement in the home, Pre-K has been shown to be the only way to provide meaningful advancement for under privileged children. It's been very successful. While the data is mixed, it is generally agreed that advancements provided under busing plans are marginal at best. Equivalent marginal improvements can be achieved by increasing resources to underperforming students. Perhaps the BOE should use what will certainly be the higher costs

of the Super's plan to provide greater funding to the schools they're concerned with.

- Please vote to prohibit the BOE with going ahead with the Superintendent's plan without a formal budget that can support that plan and insure that it does not jeopardize County revenues because of lower property values. Please encourage them to include Pre-K in anything they do.

Testimony Against CR112-2019 from Xin Yi (District 1 Resident)

Dear Council Members:

Thank you for your time. I want to start by sharing a short story of mine:

I grew up in one of the poorest provinces in China called Guizhou. I did not go to fancy schools that have great resources. My school sits among the mountains surrounded by villages with poor transportation from the small cities nearby. My family did not own cars when I grew up. And they did not try to bus me to a better school in the city. They did not go to college when they grew up due to the notorious Culture Revolution in the 70s. But they have always made time to help me with my homework in their best abilities by setting good examples and teaching me to earn the things I want in life through hard work and perseverance. Because of them, I made it to the best university in China.

I appreciated my parents very much for teaching me valuable life lessons even though they were not highly educated themselves. Without their encouraging words and efforts to set good examples for me, I would not have been who I am today.

I believe most of us would agree that besides the teachers at school, parents can play a very important role in our kids' education.

So instead of wasting more time and money on busing our kids around, just let the parents to spend a little more time each day with our kids. The county can offer more resources for the families to help the FARM students. Howard County CAPA association has a program that organizes high school students to provide free tutoring for FARM students. Perhaps the county can help to expand the program. I am sure you will see much better outcome for them this way than CR112.

I have heard many speeches here that are more emotional than factual. It is an honorable gesture for the council to want to balance the students from different social-economic backgrounds. But shouldn't the council also be responsible for this county's fiscal spending? From what I heard, the latest superintendent's draft for redistricting will increase the transportation cost by \$2.76 million. But BOE just encounter a fiscal deficit earlier this year, which ended up cutting and trimming many of the educational programs that we treasure. What about the need to build new schools? From what I can tell by reading this resolution, I only see a good gesture, but not really good solutions.

I am hereby urging the council to please abandon CR112. Thank you!

My name is Tina Horn and I live in Wilde Lake in Columbia and I am here to testify in support of CR112, the Council's resolution urging the school district to redistrict our attendance areas in support of both alleviating overcrowding and improving the socio-economic diversity of our student populations. I recognize that the Council cannot force the school district to make the right decision to redistrict, but I do regard this resolution as an important statement from County leadership.

Part of the school district's mandate is to prepare students who are career and college ready. With businesses in the United States spending millions of dollars every year to diversify their workforces and their boardrooms, HCPSS must follow suit if it is to maintain any kind of leadership position within the wider community. McKinsey and Company reported¹ that companies in the top quartile for racial and ethnic diversity are 35 percent more likely to have financial returns above their national industry medians. Companies in the bottom quartile for both gender and ethnic and racial diversity are statistically less likely to achieve above-average financial returns. In the USA, there is a direct linear relationship between diversity and better financial performance. Given the significant benefits for business of a diverse workplace: a variety of perspectives, increased creativity and productivity, reduced fear and improved performance, and boosting of the brand's reputation, it's only logical for companies to intentionally seek diversity. HCPSS is smart to prepare students to work in a diverse world by creating one in the classroom. These diverse classrooms give our students a leg up in college and job applications, and I seek every advantage I can to help my son succeed. Higher education is ahead of HCPSS in recognizing the benefits of diversity and seeking to create them. The American Council on Education² published a list of the benefits of diversity back in 2012 including enhancing the educational experience, promoting growth and a healthy society, strengthening communities and enhancing the US's economic competitiveness. Failing to seek as many benefits for our students as possible is irresponsible. Our students must have the benefits heading into college and career that diversity offers. Working and learning with people who are different from us makes us better, more empathetic people.

Many of the objections you're hearing tonight include personal inconvenience and a fear of change. With regret, I must suggest that these are not the objections of courageous and fearless leaders. These objections demonstrate only short-term, limited concerns, not any kind of long-term vision or broader perspective. I commend the Council on encouraging the school district in seeking a long-term vision for both the students in our schools and our community as a whole. Thank you.

¹ <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/organization/our-insights/why-diversity-matters>

² <https://www.acenet.edu/Documents/BoardDiversityStatement-June2012.pdf>

Deeba Jafri, Elkridge MD. District 2.

I very strongly support CR112 and all the whereas clauses written.

You did not have to do this.

Not at all.

But You Did.

And it shows to me an importance you put on matters of equity and dismantling the structural racism that persists to this day in all walks of American life, and in our beloved county.

And wow, the testimony submitted certainly shows to me that the full spectrum of racism is alive and well in Howard County.

I've been thinking and thinking about what I could say on this. What could I possibly say that would be different from all my friends and allies who are supporting this resolution.

What needs to be said, what needs to be spoken out loud to be part of the public record with this resolution are the very great words of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Our county needs to hear them and act upon them. Two passages from "Letter from a Birmingham Jail."

We know through painful experience that freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed. Frankly, I have yet to engage in a direct action campaign that was "well timed" in the view of those who have not suffered unduly from the disease of segregation.

For years now I have heard the word "Wait!" It rings in the ear of every Negro with piercing familiarity. This "Wait" has almost always meant "Never."

We must come to see, with one of our distinguished jurists, that "justice too long delayed is justice denied."

And more famously

First, I must confess that over the past few years I have been gravely disappointed with the white moderate. I have almost reached the regrettable conclusion that the Negro's great stumbling block in his stride toward freedom is not the White Citizen's Council-er or the Ku Klux Klanner, but the white moderate, who is more devoted to "order" than to justice; who prefers a negative peace which is the absence of tension to a positive peace which is the presence of justice; who constantly says: "I agree with you in the goal you seek, but I cannot agree with your methods of direct action"; who paternalistically believes he can set the timetable for another man's freedom; who lives by a mythical concept of time and who constantly advises the Negro to wait for a "more convenient season."

Shallow understanding from people of good will is more frustrating than absolute misunderstanding from people of ill will.

Lukewarm acceptance is much more bewildering than outright rejection.

Dear County Council Members and County Executive:

My name is Shuliang Li, I live in Columbia, I am a registered voter in District 4. I am here to testify that I oppose CR-112.

I am opposing this proposal because it puts politics before our kids' education and full of ideology.

I would like to express three points here.

Number One: I was shocked to see that CR-112 claims that Howard county schools are racially segregated. I am a working mom and have two children go to elementary school in Howard County. When I look at the school year book, I see colors of white, black, brown, and yellow. I see diversity. When I go to parents night, I see families with different ethnic backgrounds and heritage. I see parents speak other language as their native tongue. Just like me. CR-112 is telling me that because my kids go to certain school in my neighborhood, then our kids must be categorized as white. I would also like to point out that Howard County has 18.5% Asian, 18% Black and African American Alone, and 51.6% white (<https://datausa.io/profile/geo/howard-county-md>). Our Asian must have been conveniently categorized as white or ignored because CR112 doesn't count Asian as diversity.

Number 2: CR-112 resolution calls out using redistricting and boundary review process to integrate schools by socioeconomic factors. As an immigrant coming from communist country, this is just all too familiar. In the previous session, I heard councilmen Dr. Jones said "No matter which school you attend in Howard County, 3+5 always equal to 8." I want to remind everyone in George Orwell's "1984", where Big Brother controls everything from school to your thoughts, where it tells you "two plus two equals five", of course 3+5 not equals to 8. This is 2019, not George Orwell's 1984. This is a country that many of the immigrants come here to pursue freedom and higher educations. This is a country where we can choose which neighborhood we want to live, and which schools they would like their kids to go to. We don't need Big Brother telling us our kids need to go to certain schools based on our socioeconomic factors.

Number three: Can we just focus on education itself and stop bringing politics into our children' education? If you genuinely want to improve the academic performance or graduation rate of the schools, you should focus on raising the quality of education and providing more resources to these schools. Redistricting means that our kids have to travel to further schools and create emotional stress to them. Reshuffling students to different schools only makes your numbers look better on paper but does not improve educational outcomes for individual students. Redistricting means increased transportation cost. We could have better use of the money by providing more resources to the low-performing school. In Howard County, we only have 180 school days. More than half of the time, kids are not spending their time in school. Children who struggle at school often don't have family support for their school work or other enrichment activities. For students who need extra support to be successful academically, what happens before and after school can be as important as what happens during the school day. Therefore, what you should consider is to provide these students with expanding access to afterschool program and other enrichment activities which can help their school work, explore their interests, and develop their talents.

In short, please discard CR-112. Please consider alternative proposals. We can and must do better for all our children.

Thank you.

Shuliang Li

September 26, 2019

Good afternoon. I am a registered voter in District 4. I am here to provide my testimony against the CR112. CR112 was proposed to eliminate the so called "achievement gaps" in Howard county public Schools. In particular, you compared the graduation rates between FARM and non FARM student as supportive evidence. However, I want to point out there are fatal flaws in your data analysis. Your proposal to simply mix these students to eliminate the graduation rate difference is just a math game, and will cause unnecessary stress to the kids.

If you are a parent, you should understand that it is the students who ultimately determine if they can graduate or not. For example, my daughter doesn't like sports, but I want her to be a soccer player. So I try my best to hire the best coach to train her. However, she still cannot be selected to the travel team as other kids. Should you blame me or the coach for not providing the best service to her? Of course not! You should understand there are a lot of factors weighing in why she can not get selected to the team. It is the same principle when you look at the graduation data. Every kid is different. A kid cannot graduate does not mean the school they attend does not provide quality service to them! In fact, all Howard county schools already provided equal opportunity to every kid! Learning is a personal thing. The different graduation rates between students is more like a reflection of the different values holding by each kid and their family, and can be greatly affected by factors like the kids' background, and personal interest. It is **wrong** to over interpreted it as an indicator to the school service they received.

Citing from data in state department of education, the FARM student number has increased 6.7% in recent three years. Does the 5% graduation rate dropped down related to the FARM student increasing? If you really care about them, you should look into this and provide better solution. Of course by mixing high grade and low grade students together will make number looks similar for every school. But you do not actually help the bottom kids by solving their problems. On the contrary, you force more kids facing long commute on the road, separation of their community and friends. Getting up extra early because of long commute can be painful especially in cold winter!

Year	Paid	Free	Reduced	FARM (F+R)	Total	Farm/Total%
2018-2019	44725	10342	2645	12987	57712	22.50
2017-2018	43947	10213	2340	12553	56500	22.22
2016-2017	43218	10039	2138	12177	55395	21.98

In summary, I am strongly against the CR112. It is more for the politic reasons instead of for the students' best interest. It will not help FARM students but only cause unnecessary stress to the kids. Thank you for your time!



Yun Wang

Dear Council Members:

I would like to begin by stating that I support the intentions of this resolution of achieving equity, narrowing achievement gaps, and help every student in the county. However, I am against this resolution because it is calling for the wrong approach.

While there is some evidence on the benefits of integration, there are also studies showing the opposite. For example, a 2017 study¹ published by the Brookings Institute found that differences in student's socioeconomic background is weakly correlated with the achievement gaps observed at the individual schools. Individual school's accountability policy and the quality of the pre-k programs may be more important in narrowing achievement gaps. The study suggests socioeconomic integration policy at the district level alone will not resolve the achievement gaps at the individual school levels. Similarly, a 2018 study² found significant achievement gaps between students from different socioeconomic groups even at the same schools. So the whole premise of this resolution that once the schools are integrated, the achievement gaps will narrow is questionable.

Instead of focusing on redistricting, which there is no clear evidence that it even works, let's focus on programs that we know would work in achieving equity. We should invest more resources on assistance programs, such as after school care, pre-k programs, mentoring programs for the needed students and families. Instead of wasting our money on busing kids far away from home, we need to improve our facilities to resolve the overcrowding issue. Recently, the Superintendent proposed to defer some facility renovation and expansion out of concerns of budget constraints. It is not hard to see why this would happen. The current proposed redistricting plan is in-line with what this resolution calls for, which is busing kids out of their neighborhood to achieve integration. Such a plan would put pressure on the school's budget, which is already having a funding gap this year. I would like to ask this council, especially Councilmember Jones, who has publicly expressed objection to the proposed delays, would you spend this money on busing the kids, or would you spend it on renovating and expanding our schools to resolve the urgent problem of overcrowding?

¹ <https://www.brookings.edu/research/some-schools-much-better-than-others-at-closing-achievement-gaps-between-their-advantaged-and-disadvantaged-students/>

² <https://www.forbes.com/sites/nataliewexler/2019/09/25/why-integration-wont-fix-educational-inequity/>

I would like to conclude by citing what President Obama said in his book the Audacity of Hope³ about the differences between ideology and values. "Values are faithfully applied to the facts before us, while ideology overrides whatever facts call theory into question." He said, our politicians these days on both sides of the aisle are blinded by their self-perceived righteousness while pushing for a certain cause without understanding the reality and the facts. I hope our elected council members can heed Obama's warning by not focused on ideology but having realistic values. This resolution may not do anything for our schools and kids, but it is ripping our community apart. We should do better for equity, and I believe we can if we work at together as a community. Redistricting and swapping kids are not the answer.

Sincerely,

Eric Pang

Resident of District 4

³ The Audacity of Hope, Barack Obama, 2006, Page 57

Why Integration Won't Fix Educational Inequity



Natalie Wexler Senior Contributor ⓘ

Education

I write about retooling K-12 education to address social inequality.



Recent research calls for integration, but it won't level the playing field unless we also change our approach to education to align with what scientists have discovered about how kids learn. GETTY

A recent study concludes that gaps in student test scores are driven by poverty, not race—but then says the solution must nevertheless be racial integration. **More fundamentally, it overlooks current classroom practices that perpetuate income-based gaps even when schools are integrated.**

Earlier this week, Stanford University sociologist Sean Reardon and some colleagues released a report using massive amounts of test-score data to investigate the effects of modern-day racial segregation. After Southern schools were desegregated in the wake of *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954, test-score gaps between black and white students decreased. But with the decline of court-ordered integration, racial segregation in schools

returned and has remained at high levels since the 1980s. The question the study set out to investigate is: does racial segregation still matter?

The answer, Reardon and his colleagues say, is yes. School systems that are more segregated have larger achievement gaps, and “their gaps grow faster during elementary and middle schools than in less segregated ones.” But it’s not because of race per se. The real problem, the researchers conclude, is poverty.

Today In: Leadership

How did they figure that out? According to news reports, they zeroed in on three districts: New York City, Atlanta, and Detroit. (Detroit isn’t mentioned in the report itself.) In the first two, race and poverty are highly correlated—that is, poor students are overwhelmingly black and Hispanic, and wealthier students are almost all white. In Detroit, though, students of all races come from low-income families—and, unlike in New York and Atlanta, there was hardly any score gap between whites and students of color. That, perhaps, is the good news. The bad news is that scores in Detroit were low across the board.

The researchers also say it’s not the poverty of individual students that’s the problem—it’s the concentration of poor kids in particular schools. The researchers aren’t sure exactly *why* that’s a problem, because they don’t have good enough data. But, they say, “schools’ *poverty rates*, not differences in schools’ *racial composition*” are somehow linked to inequality.

You might expect this finding to lead to the conclusion that the way to address inequality is through socioeconomic rather than racial integration. But no. Instead the researchers argue that because race and poverty are so closely related, “the only way to close the gap is to racially integrate schools.” The reasoning here is hard to follow. It’s true that black and Hispanic families are disproportionately low-income in the United States, but why not aim for socioeconomic integration, if that’s the real problem? You’d probably end up with more or less the same result: schools that are both racially and socioeconomically integrated. But given that the basic problem is poverty—and that the Supreme Court has decreed that assigning students to schools on the basis of race is constitutionally prohibited—why focus on race?

In any event, the whole question is largely academic. Segregation and busing have been in the news a lot, but a return to mandated integration of any kind—which is what would be required to make it happen on a large scale—is highly unlikely.

That's a pretty bleak picture, if you agree with Reardon that integration is our only hope of improving education for poor kids. "There's a common argument these days that maybe we should stop worrying about segregation and just create high-quality schools everywhere," he told one reporter. "This study shows that it doesn't seem to be possible."

But Reardon, like many other education researchers, is overlooking a fundamental problem: *what* is being taught and *how*, especially in elementary schools. What Reardon's data doesn't capture is the disconnect between the world of education and what scientists have discovered about how children learn. True, some kids do just fine in our education system—mainly those from higher-income families. But that may be *despite* rather than *because* of our prevailing curriculum and pedagogy.

High-poverty schools often face a host of challenges, including high numbers of kids who have experienced trauma that hasn't been treated. Still, it's possible to significantly raise the quality of the education they provide if we bring our teaching practices in line with cognitive science. That's not to say, of course, that we shouldn't try to reduce segregation. It just means we shouldn't pin our hopes on something so difficult to achieve while overlooking other things that can work, right now—and in fact are beginning to produce results in the relative handful of high-poverty schools that are adopting a different approach.

The most egregious, and widespread, example of an educational practice that conflicts with science is the way American schools approach reading instruction. Many teachers haven't received good training in teaching kids to sound out words, despite mountains of evidence on what works best. And nearly all have been trained to believe that the way to teach kids to understand what they read is to spend many hours every week on comprehension "skills and strategies"—things like "finding the main idea" of a text, or "making inferences"—and then have kids practice the "skills" on books on random topics that are easy enough for them to read on their own. But cognitive scientists have long known that the most important factor in reading comprehension isn't generally applicable "skills," it's how much knowledge the reader has relating to the topic. The subjects that could build kids' knowledge—history, science, the arts—are the very ones that have been cut to make room for comprehension instruction, especially in schools where test scores are low.

The result is a kind of intra-classroom tracking that begins in kindergarten. Children from less educated families, which also tend to be low-income families, are disproportionately likely to benefit from phonics instruction. They're also more likely to lack the kind of knowledge and vocabulary needed to understand sophisticated texts. If they don't get

these things at school, they often remain permanently behind—regardless of whether they're in a classroom with white or affluent peers.

What about the data showing benefits to black students from desegregation? Much of it comes from decades ago, before high-stakes tests and other factors made reading comprehension instruction the centerpiece of the elementary curriculum. Elementary schools may not have been providing a rigorous content-focused curriculum, especially in social studies, but at least students had a chance to acquire *some* academic knowledge and vocabulary. And white schools often had better textbooks and other amenities than black schools under segregation.

There's some more recent evidence on the benefits of integration, but there's also data pointing in the opposite direction. A 2017 study found “large differences” in the performance of wealthier and poorer students in the same schools, concluding that socioeconomic segregation is unlikely to reduce the test score gap. Similarly, a 2018 study of elementary schools in New York City found significant gaps in scores between students from different socioeconomic groups at the same schools. More anecdotally, there's de facto tracking at many integrated high schools. Regular classes are populated by black and brown students, while honors classes are filled with white and Asian ones—a situation that has prompted some high schools to put everyone in honors classes in an attempt to further educational equity.

But if we really want to achieve that goal, we need to start questioning standard classroom practices that reinforce rather than reduce existing inequities, beginning in kindergarten. It's fine to look at masses of test score data to document inequality, but if researchers want to understand how to address it, they'll need to look elsewhere.

Follow me on Twitter.



Natalie Wexler

Natalie Wexler is the author of *The Knowledge Gap: The Hidden Cause of America's Broken Education System—and How to Fix It* (Avery, 2019). She is also the co-author, with Judith C. Hochman, of *The Writing Revolution: A Guide to Advancing Thinking Through Writing in All Subjects and Grades* (Jossey-Bass, 2017). Her articles and essays have appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and other publications. **Read Less**

Xuewu Cai

Riverhill, howard county, district 4

My name is Xuewu Cai and I have been a Howard County resident for almost 20 years. I am here to express my deep concerns regarding CR112 introduced by Christina, Opel Jones , and Deb Jung.

First, I believe this council has overstepped into the educational system. As we all know, any redistricting decision should come from elected BOE members following guideline of policy 6010. The county chamber has no jurisdiction over educational system. Therefore, I urge the council to withdraw the resolution.

Second, the entire content of this resolution is full of radical languages. I was like living in a time capsule and sent back to 1960s. On line 11,15 and 19 I see multiple occurrences of using words segregation/segregated. Dear fellow council members, we are now living in 21st century in this beautiful Howard County , this county is ranked as one of the most diverse county in this country. Why keep using the sensitive and irritating words in your document? The only reason I can think about is to create image of intimidation for those who oppose it because then they can be easily labeled as racist. Therefore, I urge the council to withdraw this resolution.

Third, this resolution is attempting to address educational inequity by deep integration based on race and socioeconomic condition. However, in 2007 Supreme Court has ruled that assigning (busing) students to schools on the basis of race is unconstitutional; after that ruling, integration based on socioeconomic status becomes popular to bypass the constitutional ruling including Howard County. Although one study cited by this resolution seems to prove its efficacy. Many more researches and studies have revealed that it is the perpetual concentration of poverty rather than the social economic disparity that leads to students' achievement gap. Therefore, "deep integration" (busing students out of community), will not solve concentrated poverty issues, and will help to close students' achievement gap.

Overall this resolution is solving nothing. If anything, it will only further disrupt communities, creating division and hatred, painting an ugly face on our beautiful county with extremely radical languages. The being said, with the acknowledgement of students' achievement gap, please let our elected BOE to work through their course and I feel confident that BOE is working hard and coming up with a workable plan. In the meantime, I think this council can put your time (paid by my tax money) to a better use. Rather than wasting time on this useless resolution, please focus on bills that would truly help the most needed, provide assistance to solve the concentrated poverty. With that, I would strongly urge council to withdraw the resolution.

Thank you

Testimony Against CR112

Date Sep 18, 2019

Dear Council Members,

Thank you for the time, public service is not easy and I'm glad that you do it.

When I came across CR112, I was not just dismayed but shocked! And shocked, multiple times. In the interest of time, I will only describe five shocks. Later if you are interested, we can have an in-depth discussion over a beverage of our choice.

One: This resolution does not belong in Howard county that I live in. I work in downtown DC and could have lived anywhere. I live here because it feels home, it gives me space to be myself, it is civil, and because we love the school system. No wonder, it is rated among the top 10 places to live. But reading your resolution it feels I live in one of the worst places. The resolution cites segregation and lack of diversity, diversity in our county is not the issue. The current situation is of income disparity which is not unique to Howard County but is an issue everywhere in the globe, your resolution somehow makes it unique to our county.

Two: The tone of the resolution is full of anger and shame. As I started reading this resolution which talks about the sad and shameful history of slavery, my first thought was that you are building me up for reparations. While you may not think, the resolution reads to the community that you are ashamed and are asking the community to pay reparations. Transporting kids away from neighborhood school seems to me that we must disrupt our kids' lives as a down payment in the name of reparations.

Three: There is not enough research to back the resolution: USDA advises not to use the FARM number for measuring achievements or to assign schools citing the inaccuracies with data. Yet, your resolution has FARM number as the measure. A nationally representative sample of 1,100 students by the University of Texas at Austin found that low-income students who attended higher-income schools performed no better academically, had a slower progression through math and science courses, and had worse psychosocial outcomes.

Four: The resolution 'Calls' on Board of Education": BOE is an independent elected body. Dr. Jones has gone on record to say that he will not ask another elected body to do anything; well Dr. Jones calling upon somebody is asking them to do something officially; it is not suggesting. So, either you are right, Dr. Jones or this resolution is because if you both are right, I will be asking my English teacher for a refund.

Five: It does not define what it professes. You are resolving to integrate schools on a socio-economic basis, but have you defined how much of equity you would like to see in Howard County? Because the ultimate equity will be when we all have equal income and wealth. "From each according to his ability to each according to his needs", those words by Karl Marx seduced half the world and killed development for centuries. Is this our direction!

Our constitution prizes the idea that anyone should be able to build a better life through education and hard work. I understand we all sometimes get married; married to our ideas, ideology, or

political parties but that should not be at the cost of listening to our constituents who elected us to serve. Please listen to your constituents, they are overwhelmingly against this resolution. Your marriage, by the way, is your problem. The resolution as it stands risks flight of many families that call Howard County home, jeopardizing the very tax base of the County. I would urge you to toss this angry resolution away, start afresh with positive intent, I can give you the start. Start with the most powerful three words, 'I have a dream', and build something with freedom, choice and a plan in which no one must suffer because that's who we are! And that is what the United States is about; Life, Liberty, and Pursuit of Happiness. Thank you! God bless you, and God bless The United States of America.

Vipin Sahijwani
5006 Crape Myrtle Ct.
Ellicott City, MD 21042

Dear Howard County Council,

We are here to oppose CR-112 for the following three reasons.

First, our schools are already integrated and diversified. In 2017, the Baltimore Sun reported that 'Howard County is the most integrated school district in the region'. We have achieved great success for public school system in Howard County. CR-112 mentioned that there are four high schools with FARM rate as high as 40 percent. However, even the highest FARM rate in Howard County is just comparable to the average FARM rate in Maryland at ~43% (data source: Maryland Department of Education). CR-112 also mentioned lower graduation rates of African American students. However, African American students in Howard county has 9% higher graduation rate than the average African American students in the nation (89% & 78%) (data source U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics).

Second, as immigrant and minority, we live in very harmonically neighborhoods of all colors. We do not feel any segregation. We moved from Pennsylvania to Maryland in the beginning of this year. We picked Howard county because of the great school system and the neighborhood because of the proximity to the school. We were deeply disappointed about the Integration Plan. People with similar education goals tend to gather around certain school. CR-112 is telling dedicated parents that diverse classroom is a more important factor than commuting distance and stable school environment. Researches have showed that kids benefit academically, socially, and mentally from the consistency of attending the same schools, not being shuffled around constantly like playing cards. Being forced to transfer schools is detrimental to students' mental health by removing their safety net and introducing unnecessary change and stress.

Third, the concept of making schools integrated by socioeconomic factors has been tested by many school districts across the country. Almost all the results and experience indicated that any integration initiative is ultimately a balancing act between meaningful diversity and navigating the politics of this issue. In many cases, if the students are involuntarily reassigned, the political blowback is immense. Experience from other public-school systems illustrate just how dangerous this balancing act can be. Even a district with a storied history of diversity efforts ultimately fell victim to the political realities surrounding integration. Other people's experience also show that political realities often result in broad-based policies bestowing educational benefits on advantaged student populations while doing little to change the schooling contexts of their less advantaged peers. All these results make me wonder whether this is a wise initiative to take, at the current time, for our own public-school system.

While we have no problem with achieving social justice, We however has a strong impression that such kind of initiatives have now become so politically charged that it is not really focusing on addressing the real needs. Let's focus on improving our schools, helping all our kids to be both academically, socially and mentally successful, not moving them. Please, do not use our kids as guinea pigs.

Respectfully,

Judy Ji and Ke Ren

Opposition to CR112. It urges the County's school system to implement a plan to ensure that all schools are "integrated by socioeconomic factors and remain integrated in future years." In other words— the very words used in Council member Rigby's press release—our Council has resolved to "desegregate" Howard County's Schools... again.

The Council has no authority to control the redistricting process. Its attempt to influence the process might seem an empty gesture; but it's also a red flag that the supporters of income-based and race-based redistricting are attempting to bypass the democratic process, making decisions based on what they, as self-appointed experts, "know" to be good for all of us.

The Attendance Area Committee (AAC) is responsible for making redistricting recommendations. Superintendent has stacked the AAC with people who will craft the plan that Council Democrats and County Executive Ball want to see. These people include the pastor of the Executive's church, who was a member of the Executive's transition team when he took office, as well as four other members of that same transition team. They have been part of a plan which ignores prior feasibility studies. It also puts a social justice political agenda first and the students, families & communities of Howard County last.

With this resolution, the Council is advocating to pull the rug out from under County residents who made significant investments in real estate based on school district, in a County known world-wide as a place parents come to find a great school, and in which school district largely dictates property values.

Every Howard County school has committed teachers. The difference between high and low performing schools is parents who are committed to education and have the resources of time and money to back up that commitment in the home. We do not need number game by exchanging students to make one school average look better while the other worse.

We, as a community, need to help those parents and children who do not have those resources, and show to those who lack commitment the benefits of education. We do not need to insult them by telling them that their children would be better served by going to a school that's less brown.

We call on the County Council, the County Executive and the Board of Education to demonstrate that they believe in a representative government, where our elected officials take into account the desires and interests of their constituents, instead of lecturing us on what's moral and governing us on a whim.

Howard County deserves better. CR112 should not exist.

Mostly copied from the letter written by Republican Party.

Lily Zhu
Howard County residents

Opposition to CR112-2019

Dear County Council Members,

I am a registered voter in Howard County resident for 15 years. I am a single mom for 8 years with two children living in the so called "rich" community by River Hill. However, I am not rich. In fact, I struggle every month to make my ends meet. But I am determined to stay in the same house for two reasons:

1. To provide stability to my children so that their worlds, which consist of their friends, teachers, and schools, won't collapse when the family broke
2. I cannot afford the closing cost if I sell my house

Over the years, I see the tremendous benefits of having my children staying at the same schools being supported by their friends and teachers. I heavily rely on the help from friends in the community to juggle through our challenging life. We are grateful to have a supportive and stable community that we can rely on.

Currently, my older child attend football practices every day after school until 5:30pm and my little one stays in the aftercare until 6pm. As a fulltime employee, so far, I have managed to pick up both kids without significant delays most times largely because they are in the neighborhood schools and the schools are close by. If they are redistricted to farther schools, my older child will have to drop his afterschool activities which will be a tremendous loss to his education.

I am very disappointed, sad, and scared that CR112 will take away all the efforts that I have tried to keep my children safe and stable at their current schools and uproot them from their existing support system that we built up over the past eight years. This will be the last rock to break my children and me.

I strongly oppose CR112 because it is harmful, outrageous, baseless, and infeasible.

- It is baseless to state that "even in Howard County, Maryland, where diversity and inclusion are touted by many, there is growing evidence that these desirable characteristics have declined in individual schools in the Howard County Public School System".
 - The truth is that all HCPSS public school students are representative of the diverse community and neighborhood we live around the school;
 - No students have been rejected from attending in HCPSS schools based on his/her race, gender, or socioeconomic status;
 - In contrary to the false statement in the CR112-2019, students in HCPSS schools are growing in diversity and their embracement, inclusion, and contribution to the diversity. There is no decline in desirable characteristics in individual schools in the HCPSS.
- It is baseless to state that "the Howard County public school system affirms that there are concerns about access and equity in the school system by declaring in their equity report's "strategic all to action" a charge to "... ensure(s) academic success and social-emotional well-being for each student in an inclusive and nurturing environment that close opportunity gaps"

- Based on publicly available data, ALL HCPSS schools have equal access to the education programs set up by HCPSS. The superintendent and BOE members said multiple times at public settings that ALL HCPSS schools are excellent. So were are the so called concerns about access and equity in the school system?
- From the non-existing and baseless concerns, CR112 wrongfully concluded that: “Now, Therefore, be it resolved that the county council of Howard County, Maryland, ,... supports the Howard County Board of Education and Howard County Public School System in their lawful efforts to integrate Howard County public Schools through the redistricting and boundary review process and focus additional efforts and resources on addressing the achievement gaps and racial and socioeconomic disparities in the Howard County Public School System” “And be it further resolved that the County Council of Howard County,, Maryland, calls on the Board of Education and the Howard County Public School system to draft, approve, and implement a lawful multi-year integration Plan to ensure that Howard County Public Schools are integrated by socioeconomic factors and remain integrated in future years”
 - Integrating students by socioeconomic factors will not improve individual student’s socioeconomic status, nor improve individual student’s academic performance. It only hides the failure of certain leaders in the county, BOE, and the superintendent.
 - While CR112 will not address the achievement gaps within our county, it will drag our county down and larger achievement gaps will be formed between Howard county and counties and countries where academic excellence is valued and promoted. Shouldn’t you care about this type of achievement gaps?
 - This fatally flawed resolution should be discarded immediately because the following reasons:
 - Forced social engineering failed before and it will fail again! Never social Engineering with children!
 - **Integration schools through redistricting and boundary reviews can NOT solve any racial or socioeconomic disparities or address the achievement gaps!**
 - **Racial and socioeconomic disparities are not caused by HCPSS. So why does anyone expect HCPSS to solve them?!**
 - **CR112 will cause students and Families to suffer emotionally, mentally, socially, physically, and financially!**
 - **No County Council or BOE should dictate or force any students out of their neighborhood schools! It is NOT lawful but awful!**
 - The three council members who proposed CR112-2019 failed to disclose any risks and harms that CR112-2019 will do to students, teachers, families, communities, environment, and the entire county
 - Failed to provide any evidence to show any potential benefits to anyone. The only one publication cited is flawed and the conclusions are biased. The confounding effects are not controlled or examined. Therefore, it cannot serve as the evidence to support CR112 which will lead to forced shuffling children around!

- Not only CR112 will not solve any problems, but also it will create significant problems to all students and families and they will suffer emotionally, mentally, socially, physically, and financially. Our county will be damaged.

It could not be stressed enough that **ALL children should be protected from any harm and No children should suffer!** Here is a good example of protecting children. In the US, for any new drug to be approved for use in human, the sponsor of the new drug development must provide evidence to support that the drug is safe and effective. In other words, the drug will do no harm to human and on top of that requirement, the drug is required to do something good to patients. In the US, we require safety data first. Only drugs showed no harm to people will be allowed to proceed to the next stage of drug development program to test its effectiveness. If a drug causes significant harms to human regardless whether it will help to relieve some symptoms or not, it will be discarded and stopped from any further development. Please note that the requirements for developing drugs for pediatric use are extremely strict. Children are usually excluded from clinical trials to protect them from any known, unknown, or potential risks. I believe that this is a great model for Howard County. Children are very precious and particularly vulnerable. **Please do NOT put our precious children in the harmful social experiments and political games that suggested in CR112-2019.**

Additionally, in clinical trials, the sponsor is required to fully disclose any risks and harms and requires **both children and parents consent** in the case of pediatric trial. Otherwise, **the sponsor will be liable for any harms that the experiment has done to the participants.** However, in CR112, none of the risks and harms are disclosed to our children and families. **I ask you, our County Council Members, to use the same principal and standard to protect our precious Howard County children from any risks and harms entailed from the social engineering experiment as currently proposed in the CR112-2019.**

CR112-2019 must be discarded because it will cause so much harm to students, families, communities, all taxpayers, environment, and county. As we know the number one cause of death for those ages 15 to 19 in Howard County is suicide due to mental health issues. **Who will be liable for the harms done to our children, particularly their mental health, by this harmful CR112-2019? One suicide is too many!!!**

The followings are lists of good and harm that CR112-2019 will do:

Good: None! There is no evidence to support any benefits to individual students, families, and communities, from CR112-2019!

Harm: A ton! The harmful and disruptive effects of this proposed CR112-2019 include, but not limited to the following:

Harms specific to students from low-income families:

- Lost access to current supporting resources for FARM students, such as the special meal/food program, that have been set up within their current schools that receiving Title 1 funding

- Lost access to special education programs that have been set up in their current schools
- Lost chance to participate in after school programs due to lack of transportation or lack of family support
- Lost support from existing support from their current school, neighborhood, and local programs
- Increased risk of school absence and school drop outs

Harms to ALL students, including students from low-income families:

- **Increased risk of depression, anxiety, and suicide**
 - Forced separation from friends, classmates, teachers at current neighborhood schools
 - Lost support from existing friendships and support systems already established with counselors, teachers, coaches, and mentors
 - Increased stress to survive in new schools, especially for high school students
 - Forced long ride in school bus every school day
 - Lost opportunity to play school sports, clubs, bands, and other after school activities due to transportation constraint and switching schools
 - Sleep deprivation as students have to get up earlier to catch the school bus due to the forced longer school bus rides
- **Increased risk of injury/harm due to prolonged forced school bus rides every school day**
 - Injury/death from car accidents
 - Sleep deprivation
 - Back injury
 - Fatigue and inability to perform at school
 - Increased blood pressure
 - Increased cardiovascular risks
 - Reduced physical activities and fitness
 - Reduced time with family
 - Increased risk of depression and anxiety
- **Increased risks of school absence and school drop outs**
 - Transportation was reported as a significant contributing factor for 39% of chronically absent high school students. Students from low income and single parent families are particularly at risk of school absence if they miss the school buses.
 - Lack of neighborhood schools is another significant contributing factor for school absence and drop outs
 - Lack of family and neighborhood support that supports social and emotional well-beings of students is another significant factor
 - Very importantly, student mental health significantly contribute to school absence and drop out
- **Increased risk of worsening performance academically**
 - Students suffer academically due to the prolonged forced bus rides, sleep deprivation, forced separation from existing friends and supporting groups, forced adjusting to new school, new classroom, new schedule, new social environment, injuries, fatigue,

depression and anxiety, reduced physical fitness, and increased school absence and drop outs

- **Increased risk of not being prepared for college application**
 - Forced separation of students from their counselors and teachers at their current schools who have known the students for years and can provide guidance and write them recommendation letters will make student suffer in their college application and very likely make them lose their opportunity to get into the college that they deserve

Harms to Teachers:

- Increased burden to develop teaching materials, paces, and approaches to meet different needs for all students in the class. It is very challenging if not impossible when the student levels are very different
- Increased stress and anxiety from not able to give full attention to any one group since the skill level are very different
- Increased stress and anxiety seeing all students suffer when students are forced together in attempt to flatten test scores
- Increased burden with less support due to the budget cuts that reduce the number of educators who would be required to support the more complex classrooms

Harms to Families:

- Increased stress and anxiety due to frequent disruptive school redistricting that CR112-2019 entails
- Increased child care costs
- Increased transportation costs due to prolonged commute time to schools
- Increased driving time which will increase their risk of injury, blood pressure, depression, anxiety, fatigue, cardiovascular risks, and physical unfitness
- Increased stress and anxiety to send or pick up students to or from schools for a long distance
- Increased risks of injury from car accidents in the forced commute to drop off or pick up students at schools at distance
- Reduced family time with students
- Increased anxiety and stress worrying about the challenges and sufferings the children have encounter at new schools
- Increased depression and anxiety being forced to separate from community
- Increase burden due to forced separation from current support system in the neighborhood, such as car pooling

Harms to Environment:

- Increased traffic due to additional and longer school bus rides every school day
- Increase road maintenance costs
- Increased air pollution

Harms to the County:

- The increase in several million dollars in the transportation costs alone is harmful to Howard County
- Additional costs, such as administrative transition costs, additional resources costs, opportunity costs due to the redistricting will be too huge to bear for all taxpayers in the county
- The performance of all affected schools will be reduced because of the forced redistricting. As a result, Howard County will lose its leading place in Education in the country
- Other programs will suffer from the over-costly HCPSS budget
- Families will choose to leave Howard County to avoid constant and significant disruptions and serious harms that will be done to their children and increased burden if CR112-2019 is passed.

As in the medical field and any other public services, one would promise that “**first, do no harm**”. I urge you, our County Council members, to apply the same principle to **discard, withdraw, or vote Against** the CR112-2019 to avoid doing harm to thousands of children, teachers, families, environment, and our county.

There are **better ways** to improve the education and “... ensure(s) academic success and social-emotional well-being for each student in an inclusive and nurturing environment that close opportunity gaps”:

- Build and expand high schools and set this as high priority over other developments
- **Provide choices to students and families, such as the magnet schools, charter schools, and school vouchers to go to private schools**
- Conduct root-cause analysis to identify the causes of socioeconomic disparities, identify the needs and preferences of students and families, and provide resources to meet their needs where they are without swapping any students
- Provide needed resources and programs to schools that have higher percentage of FARM students, such as special educational programs after school or summer school, more teachers and supporting staff, vocational training programs, etc.
- Keep all students in under-capacity schools together!
- Keeping feeds of students together from one school to the next!
- Maintain contiguous communities and neighborhood and NO forced redistricting or integration!

Lastly, I want to say that multiple factors affecting students’ school performance. We do not expect County Council or BOE or HCPSS to solve racial and socioeconomic disparities in Howard County through BOE and HCPSS because a lot of these factors are out of the scope of BOE and HCPSS. As county council, **it is your responsibilities to keep our schools and communities stable so that each and every student can grow and reach to their full potential.** Please focus on providing better education to all students and **keep our diverse and peaceful Howard County the best place to go to school and live!**

- **The right and appropriate resolution should be:**
 - **Provide choices to students and families, such as the magnet schools, charter schools, and school vouchers**
 - **The county councils should focus on improving the job opportunities for families to improve their socioeconomic status.**
 - **Improving educational programs that meet EACH student's educational needs is the only way to improve education and promote academic excellence**

Let BOE be Board of Education and Not Board of Social Experiment!!!

Build up! Don't divide or tear down our neighborhoods and communities!

Discard or Withdraw CR112-2019 immediately!

Sincerely,

Julia Ju

CR112 Testimony (Against)

Thank you for the opportunity to speak here today. My name is Lin Zhou. I am a mother of two children, and we live in District 4. I am here to testify against CR112.

I am an Asian American, who moved to this country more than a decade ago. I fully understand the importance of diversity from my own experience, but I don't believe integration based on social economic status is the correct plan for all Howard county students.

First of all, the research available on socioeconomic integration as a solution to address academic achievement gap is inconclusive. Quoting an article published by Dr. Sarah Cordes¹ in August 2019, "It's not clear from the research available today that socioeconomic integration alone would produce the hoped-for gains on the academic side of the integration equation. The research on the effects of socioeconomic integration, including studies frequently cited by the strategy's proponents, is inconclusive".

Second, low-social economic status is not bound to low academic performance, just like high-social economic status doesn't guarantee academic achievement. Samuel Carter, the author of book² *No Excuses: Lessons from 21 High-Performing, High-Poverty Schools*, investigated 21 high-performing high-poverty schools across 11 states. The principals, staffs and students refuse to make poverty an excuse for academic failure. These schools achieve more than 65% or even 80% on national academic achievement tests, while 75% of their students qualify for federal lunch program. His findings are consistent with other independent researchers, e.g. Reyn Van Ewijk³ etc. and Russel Rumberger⁴ etc. All these studies reveal key characteristics for the successful achievement, such as **use measurable goals to establish a culture of achievement, and foster parental accountability extending the mission of the school to the home.**

Last but not least, academic performance is more generally shaped by a group of factors other than schools. These factors, including children's families, their home environments, their neighborhood contexts, their childcare and pre-school experiences, afterschool experiences, work together with their schools to promote learning of all students.

Education is the most complicated job and there is no easy button in education. I urge county council to reject CR112 and take additional time to fully analyze evidence-based solutions that directly address closing the achievement gap.

Lin Zhou, Ph.D.

Resident of Polygon 1028

¹A Reality Check on the Benefits of Economic Integration, FutureEd, Georgetown University McCourt School of Public Policy Sarah A. Cordes PhD, August 26, 2019

²Samuel Casey Carter, *No Excuses: Lessons from 21 High-Performing, High-Poverty Schools*, ISBN 0-89195-090-7

³Reyn Van Ewijk, Peer Ethnicity and Achievement: a Meta-analysis Into the Compositional Effect School Effectiveness and School Improvement Vol. 21, No. 3, September 2010, 237–265

⁴Rumberger, Russell, Palardy, Gregory. Does Segregation Still Matter: The Impact of Student Composition on Academic Achievement in High School. Teachers College Record. 2005; 107(9): 1999–2045

Dear County Council Members:

I am here to testify against CR112. Although well-intentioned, the resolution is rushed and ill-conceived.

The language used in CR112, "slavery, racial segregation and integration", has set up anyone who is against it as a racist. As first generation chinese american, an immigrant and minority, I found its racial implications insulting. Is this really happening today in Howard County, one of the top 3 richest counties in the nation and one of the best places to live?

In CR112, a school is considered segregated if it has less than 40% of White students. In 2019, Centennial High School has 39.5% of White students and 40% of Asian students. Is Centennial high school racially segregated, or Asian students are considered as White?

I understand that clusters of low income housing does exist in Howard County. But it is due to poor zoning and development decisions made by our past leadership. It has nothing to do with inequalities in our education system. CR112 does not fix the root issue. Instead, it simply puts a bandaid over a broken bone.

I understand that there is an achievement gap for low income students. But there is no conclusive evidence supports socioeconomic integration could address the gap (Cordes, 2019). Brookings 2017 study and a NYC 2018 study found large differences in test scores between wealthier and poorer students in the same schools (Brookings, 2017; NY Times, 2018). Studies from UT Austin, UC Davis and the 2019 HCPSS Equity Report, itself, suggest a negative impact of redistricting by removing low-income students from their neighborhood supports and ~~and~~ increasing geographic and transportation barriers to beyond school opportunities (Crosnoe, 2010; Penn 2013). It has been suggested that implement programs and policies for low-income students would help. For example, community schools, tutoring, summer and after-school programs, and equip teachers from those schools with additional training and support (Maier, Daniel, Oakes, & Lam, 2017; Knopf et al., 2015; Vandell, Reisner, & Pierce, 2007; USDE, 2014).

As parents, we all want our children to be happy, make friends, and be joyful in their learning. However, this multi-year redistricting plan will bring uncertainty to our schools and communities. The stress, anxiety, reduced sleep (due to long commutes) brought by this plan will do harm to children's well-being. Studies showed that while students who change schools can suffer psychologically, socially and academically, the academic achievement of the "stable core" - the 30 percent of students who stay - is also negatively affected by the school's mobility rate (Bradley, 2009).

Therefore, I urge you to reject CR112. Please realign your funds and focus on offering REAL support to low-income students!

Respectively,

Linglei Ma

Testimony Against CR112-2019

Dear County Council Members and County Executive Calvin Ball:

My name is Ninghai Sun. I am living at Chapel Woods neighborhood of Clarksville. I am also a registered voter for election district #5. Today, I am here to express my objection to CR112-2019.

I am the first generation immigrant and a father of three kids. I moved to Howard County immediately after my graduation in 2002. As a citizen of Howard County in the last 17 years, I take pride in our county's economic prosperity, cultural diversity, citizen's civility, and the opportunities it offers to all of its residents. Baltimore Sun also reported Howard County was the most integrated county in the state in 2017. However, suddenly after the new county administration took the office in 2018, segregation and socioeconomics crises are full of county according to CR112-2019. I have lived in Columbia, Laurel, and Clarksville areas at least 4 years, respectively, and never faced so called segregation in either of these areas. My neighbors include African American, White, Hispanic, and, of course, Asian, which is not even mentioned in CR112-2019 at all. BTW, it is hard to believe that this ignorance of 18.8% county population, intentionally or unintentionally, is not discrimination. Kids of different colors, including mine, take the same bus to the same school, study in the same classroom, play games in the same playground. I am confused where the segregation emphasized in CR112-2019 is coming from overnight. On the contrary, it's a marvelous achievement that there is no evidence of increase of segregated school in Howard County while national rate is doubled in the last a few years according to CR112-2019.

I am glad to see that CR112-2019 also mentioned the FARM rates are relatively high in some of county public schools. As a long-term Howard County resident and voter, I voted for the current county administration last year and hope you can find a solution to reduce the poverty rate and develop a better harmonious county. However, sending FARM students around county, but not improving their family incomes through practical economic development plan, doesn't solve the poverty issue at all. CR112-2019 offers no explanation on how to reduce whole county FARM rate through this multi-year Integration Plan. I hope this is not a political trick that our county administration try to fool county residents in order to make their political resume shine.

CR112-2019 has already created unnecessary animosity and warfare among county communities in the last a few weeks. There are many better options to address poverty and the achievement gaps issues in our county. However, CR112-2019 is absolutely not among them. That is why I strongly urge the County Council Members and County Executive to vote against CR112-2019.

Regards,



Ninghai Sun, Ph.D.

TESTIMONY FOR COUNTY COUNCIL

I have a confession to make - I've lived in Howard County 40 years and never knew who was on the County Council or the Board of Education -- well, I was working long hours and also -- no one did anything stupid! I now know all your names and campaign statements and terms of office and so forth. I woke up because of Martirano's plan to bus over 7,000 children out of their communities to other schools -- such a bad plan for children, families, and communities.

Resolution 112 gives political cover for this busing plan - almost as if it were scripted in coordination with supporters on the school board and other county officials. It may not explicitly endorse the plan but it certainly supports it. I urge you to table 112 until the Board of Education has had the opportunity to hear the massive amount of testimony being prepared, has seen the research we are providing, and has a chance to consider better options such as VOLUNTARY transfers.

I am a clinical child psychologist, 39 years on the faculty of the University of Maryland School of Medicine. I qualify as an expert witness in Court on child and adolescent mental health. But you don't have to be an expert to understand that children will feel more secure and supported in their own community rather than being surrounded by strangers. Also, many bused children won't be able to participate in after school activities - sports, music, dance, clubs - because they won't have transport home. Being in your own community and engaging in a variety of school activities fosters SCHOOL CONNECTEDNESS - an important determinant of academic achievement and social adjustment (I've attached some publications). Reducing school connectedness will disadvantage over 7,000 children.

Resolution 112 is premature. It gives the Board the message that they can do anything they want with our children regardless of the consequences. I believe that very few families of bused children will be happy with the results. Don't pass this resolution - table it.

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The Reciprocal Links between School Engagement, Youth Problem Behaviors, and School Dropout during Adolescence

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University of Pittsburgh

Jennifer Fredricks
Connecticut College

Abstract

Drawing on the self-system model, this study conceptualized school engagement as a multidimensional construct, including behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagement, and examined whether changes in the three types of school engagement related to changes in problem behaviors from 7th through 11th grade. In addition, a transactional model of reciprocal relations between school engagement and problem behaviors was tested to predict school dropout. Data were collected on 1,272 youth from an ethnically and economically diverse county (58% African American, 36% European American; 51% females). Results indicated that adolescents who had declines in behavioral and emotional engagement with school tended to engage in increased delinquency and substance use over time. There were bidirectional associations between behavioral and emotional engagement in school and youth problem behaviors over time. Finally, lower behavioral and emotional engagement and greater problem behaviors predicted greater likelihood of dropping out of school.

Keywords

school engagement; problem behavior; transactional model; dropout; reciprocal association; multidimensional construct

Adolescence is a critical developmental period in which youth experience the opportunity to self-construct an identity as academically capable, socially integrated, and committed to learning (Skinner, Kindermann, & Furrer, 2009). It is also a period during which adolescents are more prone to declines in academic motivation and achievement and to increases in substance use and delinquency (Schulenberg, 2006). Active engagement in secondary school promotes the skills, competencies, and values that allow adolescents to successfully transition into adulthood (Wang & Eccles, 2012; Wang & Holcombe, 2010). Unfortunately, evidence suggests that students become increasingly disengaged as they progress through secondary school, with some studies estimating that 40% to 60% of youth show signs of disengagement (e.g., uninvolved, apathetic, not trying very hard, and not paying attention) (Steinberg, Brown, & Dornbusch, 1996; Yazzie-Mintz, 2007). Youth who are disengaged from school are more likely to experience academic failure, school dropout, and a host of negative psychosocial outcomes (Li & Lerner, 2011).



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Effect of School Belonging Trajectories in Grades 6–8 on Achievement: Gender and Ethnic Differences

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Abstract

This study investigated the association between trajectories of school belonging across grades 6–8 and academic achievement in grade 8 in an ethnically diverse sample of 527 academically at-risk adolescents. Students reported annually on school belonging. Reading and math achievement were assessed at grade 5 (baseline) and grade 8. Interactive effects of gender and ethnicity were found in the conditional growth models for school belonging. Girls of all ethnicities had identical growth trajectories and reported higher initial school belonging than Euro-American or Latino boys. Latino and Euro-American males had lower initial level of school belonging than African American males, and Latino males had lower growth in school belonging than Euro-American males. In structural equation modeling (SEM) analyses, initial level of school belonging predicted grade 8 reading for girls and grade 8 math for boys and girls, above prior achievement and school and child covariates, but growth in school belonging predicted grade 8 achievement only for African American students. Implications for strategies to improve school belonging among academically at-risk youth are discussed.

A sense of belonging to school can be defined as the extent to which students feel personally accepted, respected, included, and supported by others in the school social environment (Goodenow, 1993). Considered a component of affective or emotional engagement in school (Fredericks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004), researchers use different terms to refer to constructs that are closely akin to school belonging, including liking for school, identification with or attachment to school, school bonding, and school connectedness. Although some researchers consider these terms interchangeable, Benner and Graham (2007) suggest a sense of belonging to school, more so than liking for school, reflects one's social adaptation, or "fitting in" at school. In the review of school belonging literature that follows, we include studies that use terms that reflect this sense of "fitting in" at school,

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Teacher and Peer Support for Young Adolescents' Motivation, Engagement, and School Belonging

Sarah M. Kiefer, Kathleen M. Alley & Cheryl R. Ellerbrock

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Associations of School Connectedness With Adolescent Suicidality: Gender Differences and the Role of Risk of Depression

Donald B Langille, MD, MHSc¹; Mark Asbridge, PhD²; Amber Cragg, MSc³; Daniel Rasic, MD, MSc, FRCPC⁴

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Key Words: adolescent, depression, school connectedness, suicide, gender differences

Received May 2014, revised, and accepted September 2014.

Celebrating 60 years
Nous célébrons 60 ans

Objective: Previous studies have not examined associations of school connectedness with adolescent suicidal behaviours stratified by gender, while including a measure of depression. We analyzed survey data to determine whether there are independent protective associations of higher school connectedness with suicidal behaviours in Canadian adolescents, while controlling for potential confounders, including risk of depression; and whether such associations differ by gender.

Method: Using data from a stratified cluster sample of randomly selected classes of students in schools in 3 of Canada's Atlantic provinces, we used multiple logistic regression to examine whether associations of risk of depression, measured using the 12-item Center for Epidemiologic Studies–Depression scale, lessened protective associations of higher school connectedness with suicidal behaviours in grades 10 and 12 students, while stratifying by gender.

Results: After adjusting for risk of depression, higher school connectedness was independently associated with decreased suicidal ideation in both genders and with suicidal attempt in females. In males, higher connectedness was no longer protective for suicide attempt when risk of depression was included in the model.

Conclusions: School connectedness, which is felt to have positive influences on many types of adolescent behaviour, appears to also be both directly and indirectly protective for suicidality. These effects may occur through different pathways in females and males. Given the protection it offers both genders, including those at risk and not at risk of depression, increasing school connectedness should be considered as a universal adolescent mental health strategy. Studies that examine school connectedness should include analyses that examine potential differences between males and females.

Associations du sentiment d'appartenance à l'école avec la suicidaité des adolescents : les différences selon le sexe et le rôle du risque de dépression

Objectif : Les études antérieures n'ont pas examiné les associations du sentiment d'appartenance à l'école avec les comportements suicidaires des adolescents stratifiés selon le sexe, tout en incluant une mesure de la dépression. Nous avons analysé les données des enquêtes pour déterminer s'il y a des associations indépendantes protectrices d'un plus grand sentiment d'appartenance à l'école avec les comportements suicidaires des adolescents canadiens, tout en contrôlant les facteurs confusionnels potentiels, dont le risque de dépression; et si ces associations diffèrent selon le sexe.

Méthode : En nous servant des données d'un échantillon en grappes stratifié d'élèves de classes sélectionnées au hasard dans des écoles de 3 provinces atlantiques du Canada, nous avons utilisé la régression logistique multiple pour examiner si les associations avec le risque de dépression, mesuré par l'échelle de dépression en 12 items du centre d'études épidémiologiques, amoindrieraient les associations protectrices d'un plus grand sentiment d'appartenance à l'école avec les comportements suicidaires des élèves de 10^e et de 12^e année, tout en stratifiant selon le sexe.



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The Impact of School Connectedness and Teacher Support on Depressive Symptoms in Adolescents: A Multilevel Analysis

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Abstract

Using data from Waves I and II of the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health), this study examined the association between school connectedness and teacher support and depressive symptoms in a weighted sample of 11,852 adolescents from 132 schools. To account for the nested data, multilevel regression was utilized. The results indicated higher school connectedness and getting along with teachers were significantly associated with fewer depressive symptoms. Findings offer implications for school social work practice and future research. Suggestions for future research are described and strategies to enhance school connectedness and teacher support are discussed.

Keywords

school connectedness; teacher support; depressive symptoms; adolescents

Introduction

Depression is a debilitating condition that is increasingly recognized among youth, with nearly a third of adolescents experiencing a depressive episode by age 19 (Lewinsohn, Rohde, & Seeley, 1998). Adolescent depression may be prevented or ameliorated by strong relationships (i.e., warmth, communication, support) with significant others (e.g., family, peers, school) (Hall-Lande, Eisenberg, Christenson, & Neumark-Sztainer, 2007). Indeed, depression may be prevented by strong connections to schools and relationships with teachers (Murray & Pianta, 2007).

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County Council of Howard County, Maryland

CR112 resolution

September 18,2019

Polygon : 176

Speaker : Kamaljit Barring

Good evening.

My name is Kamaljit K Barring and I, am resident of Howard County (Maryland) since 2003 almost 16 year. I am here today to express my strong opposition for CR112 resolution on desegregation of schools through the redistricting process.

1. I believe children should attend the public schools that are closest to their homes. They should have the ability to walk or be driven a very short distance and share the same common threads of their neighbors.
2. Secondly, CR112 is recklessness and wishful thinking. It attempts to close academic achievement gap with a multi-year integration by socioeconomic factors. There are numerous research studies that demonstrate the uncertainty between integration of socioeconomic status at school and academic achievement of low-income students. Professor Sean F. Reardonat Stanford University indicated "It is not clear, however, how much of the association is due to differences in the quality of schooling, or in the opportunities children have to learn and develop outside of school, in their homes and neighborhoods," and "Again, it is not clear whether this results from
3. Sleep deprivation as students have to get up earlier to catch the school bus due to the forced longer school bus rides.
4. Increased driving time which will increase their risk of injury, blood pressure, depression, anxiety, fatigue, cardiovascular risks, and physical unfitness .
5. Forced separation of students from their counselors and teachers at their current schools who have known the students for years and can provide guidance and write them recommendation letters will make student suffer in their college application and very likely make them lose their opportunity to get into the college that they deserve .
6. Lost opportunity to play school sports, clubs, bands, and other after school activities due to transportation constraint and switching schools

With that,, I respectfully ask county council to vote against this resolution.

Thanks