

Sayers, Margery

From: Melinda Collins <vp1@northfieldpta.org>
Sent: Sunday, May 22, 2022 2:59 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Howard County Budget Proposal

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

Dear Howard County Councilmembers:

I am one of the VP's of Northfield Elementary School's PTA in Howard County. I grew up in the education system, my mother was a teacher and worked her way up to an administrative role before retiring. Over the years, I have seen the increased strain that our teachers (and schools in general) have experienced - many of which are induced by budget cuts. It pains me to see that once again, Howard County is placed in a position of not offering their teachers, staff, students, community and FUTURE all they deserve and need to excel. It has been a very stressful few years for our young ones and they need our full support, now is NOT the time to be cutting back. Please consider fully funding and restoring the proposed 2023 fiscal year operating and capital budgets provided by the Howard County Public School System Board of Education.

Thank you,

Melinda Collins
VP1 Northfield PTA
[Check out our Website](#) and [Like us On Facebook](#)

[Northfield Elementary School](#)
9125 Northfield Road
Ellicott City, MD 21042

Sayers, Margery

From: Saera Brooks <saerabrooks@hotmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 20, 2022 3:38 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Funding for proposed fiscal year 2023 budget provided by HCPSS Board of Education

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

Dear Howard County Councilmembers:

My name is Saera Brooks, a Howard County PTA member/resident from Reservoir High School. I value the Howard County educational system. I am in support of full funding the proposed fiscal year 2023 operating and capital budgets provided by the Howard County Public School System Board of Education. Please make every effort to restore the difference from the proposed executive budget.

Sincerely,

Saera Brooks

Sayers, Margery

From: Linfeng Chen <chen4boe@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 20, 2022 1:06 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Full funding the proposed fiscal year 2023 HCPSS operating and capital budgets

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

Dear Howard County Councilmembers:

My name is Linfeng Chen, a Howard County PTA member/resident from North Laurel. I am a candidate for the school board this year. I value the Howard County educational system. I am in support of full funding the proposed fiscal year 2023 operating and capital budgets provided by the Howard County Public School System Board of Education. Please make every effort to restore the difference from the proposed executive budget considering the record revenue of Howard County. Education should be the No.1 Priority of Howard County.

Thank you for your support of our schools and students!

Linfeng Chen, PhD SE PE

chen4boe@gmail.com

Better Education for All, Vote for Chen! (chen4boe.org)

Sayers, Margery

From: Yael Harris <yharrisaug25@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 20, 2022 12:50 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: HCPSS BoE budget for 2023

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

My name is Yael Harris-Goldwater a Howard County PTA member/resident from Hammond Middle School. I value the Howard County educational system. I am in support of full funding the proposed fiscal year 2023 operating and capital budgets provided by the Howard County Public School System Board of Education. Please make every effort to restore the difference from the proposed executive budget.

Sayers, Margery

From: Jahantab Siddiqui <Jahantab_Siddiqui@hcpss.org>
Sent: Friday, May 20, 2022 12:22 PM
To: CouncilMail; Ball, Calvin
Cc: Sun, Holly; Darin Conforti; BoE Email; Michael Martirano; Sidh, Sameer; Glendenning, Craig; April Harrison
Subject: FY2023 Operating Budget Changes
Attachments: BOE Memo May 19 2022 work session FY2023 Operating Budget.pdf

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

Good afternoon County Executive Ball and Council members,

I spoke with Mr. Sidh earlier and he asked if I would recap the BOE's budget action during our budget work session so that you are aware of the changes that were made to align with the \$5 million proposed earlier this week. On Tuesday, May 17, we presented to the Board a new scenario – Scenario 3 (attached)– which increased the reliance on the HCPSS fund balance but also left open the possibility of additional county revenues to help reduce the reliance on fund balance. Thanks to your announcement on May 18, we were able to amend this new scenario to reduce the reliance on fund balance, utilize the additional \$5 million in much needed revenues, and align the budget priorities with those specified in your May 18 press release. Specifically, as noted in the press release:

- *“over 150 new positions in special education;*
- *nearly 80 positions for pre-kindergarten (which include over 35 pre-kindergarten positions for special education);*
- *26 positions for college and career readiness (which include 23 positions to target loss of learning in reading and math);*
- *19 positions for behavioral health and student well-being (including an LGBTQIA+ specialist and Hispanic Achievement Liaisons);*
- *and 14 positions to support the opening of new high school 13, which when opened will be the County's first new high school since 2005.”*

The Board motions to amend expenditures, as well as the use of additional fund balance are being reviewed by staff today in order to develop the exact categorical allocation for inclusion in the budget legislation scheduled for action on Wednesday, May 25, 2022. The budget will support:

- All negotiated bargaining agreements and financial obligations
- Full funding of Special Education (151 new positions, \$8.2 million)
- Core foundation costs for the Blueprint for Maryland's Future (\$25.3m of \$36.0m requested) including:
 - 80 new positions for PreK expansion (inclusive of 35.8 special education positions)
 - 26 new positions for College and Career Readiness
- 1 new LGBTQIA+ Liaison Position
- 15 new liaison positions: 5.0 BSAP Liaisons, 4.0 Hispanic Liaison and 2.0 International Liaisons positions plus an additional four added by the Board on May 19, 2022
- 10 new Student Health Services Staff: 2.0 Nurses, 7.0 Health Assistants and 1.0 Health Specialist
- 12 new Student Well-Being & Support Positions*: 5.0 Counselors, 6.0 Psychologists, 1.0 Pupil Personnel Worker

*additional counselors, psychologists and student well-being positions are captured in the positions related to the Blueprint

In addition, the budget will move several additional priorities forward including:

- School Start Times Initiative
- Decrease of Class Size by 1.0 at the Elementary School level

- Training on Alternatives for Seclusion and Restraint
- High School 13 administration and custodial positions
- Custodial and HVAC Maintenance positions

We received the invitation to attend the County Council's work session on Monday and look forward to discussing how the budget moves these priorities forward. Thank you for your collaboration and support during this budget process.

Sincerely,

Jahantab

Jahantab Siddiqui
Chief Administrative Officer
Howard County Public School System
Office: 410-313-6680
Cell: 443-355-7562



May 17, 2022

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Board of Education

From: Michael J. Martirano, Ed.D.
Superintendent

Subject: FY 2023 Operating Budget May 19, 2022 BOE work session

The purpose of this memorandum is to update the Board on the status of advancing the FY 2023 Budget to the Board approval stage. The next scheduled step in the budget process is a May 19, 2022, Board budget work session to discuss budget scenarios and get Board direction. This memo is being provided to the Board at least 48 hours ahead of the work session to give Board members time to review and prepare for next steps. Please note that the County Council's amendment deadline is May 18th, the day before the Board's work session which may trigger further information being shared with the Board at the work session. The Council will approve the county budget on May 25th, and the Board will adopt the FY 2023 Approved Operating Budget on May 26th.

Recap of Budget Development since County Executive Proposed

The County Executive's Proposed Operating Budget for FY 2023 was introduced on Monday April 18, 2022. The Board received a memo analyzing the proposed budget compared to the BOE Requested Budget on Friday, April 22nd. On April 28, 2022, the Board held a budget work session and staff presented an overview of the County Executive's Proposed budget and possible scenarios for the Board to consider and discuss with the County Council given the proposed funding. The funding gap between the BOE Requested Budget and the County Executive Proposed budget is \$(71.2) million. At the work session, staff presented two possible budget balancing scenarios. Scenario 1 would apply an additional \$10.75 million of unassigned fund balance to lower the budget gap \$(60.5) million. The remainder of the budget gap would be closed by reducing the BOE's requested increases. Scenario 2 applies the same amount of additional unassigned fund balance plus a request for an additional \$14.5 million in recurring funding from the County. This additional county funding would lower the budget gap to \$45.9 million, which would be closed by reducing the BOE's requested budget increases. On April 29th, staff provided the Board more detailed information on the specific reductions included in both scenarios.

On May 2, 2022, the County Council held its budget work session on the HCPSS budget. At that work session, the Council was provided the information of the budget balancing scenarios and requested additional information from staff on the categorical breakdown of the budget reduction scenarios. On May 3, 2022, as noted in a May 9, 2022 memo to the Board, HCPSS staff met with

staff from the County Executive’s office to continue budget discussions. On May 6th, the Board received a memo detailing the budget reductions for scenario 1 by state category and program. This same information was shared with the County Council staff and County Executive staff.

Non-Recurring Cost Items Update

On May 6th, the Board was provided a memo about MSDE’s determination on allowing the \$17.9 million in non-recurring costs requested by the County. MSDE has given conditional approval that \$2.3 million of the \$17.9 million would be approved as non-recurring funding. Since that time, we have been in ongoing discussions with County staff about how the County intends to treat the non-recurring funding considering the MSDE’s conditional approval of \$2.3 million. We are working collaboratively with the County Executive’s office to submit an appeal to MSDE’s original decision. The County Executive’s staff have communicated their intent to introduce budget amendments that would place the unapproved \$15.6 million in one-time expenses into a contingency fund pending MSDE review. Based on this information, no changes are recommended to the non-recurring funding amounts and the respective expenditures tied to this funding included in the County Executive’s proposed operating budget.

Development of Scenario 3

Last week, I requested that staff prepare a third scenario for consideration in the event that no additional recurring funding is provided to the school system. Scenario 3 has been developed as a contingency in the event that the County does not increase the recurring funding currently proposed. Scenario 3 removes the assumption of the County providing an additional \$14.5 million in recurring funding and increases the use of unassigned fund balance by another \$10.0 million to a total use of unassigned fund balance of \$32.3 million. With this change in revenue assumptions, the remaining budget gap to be closed is \$(50.7) million. This gap will be closed by reducing the BOE’s requested budget, as done for scenarios 1 and 2. The major difference for Scenario 3 from Scenario 2 is the elimination of all funding for a Digital Education Center in FY 2023. Attached to this memo is a detailed summary of Scenario 3 reductions. Should additional revenue become a possibility from the County during the time this memo is communicated and when the Board meets on May 19, 2022, my recommendation will be to reduce the reliance on fund balance, the reasoning for which is explained further below.

Use of Unassigned Fund Balance and Policy 4070 Standards

All proposed scenarios would balance the budget with the use of unassigned fund balance. The amount of unassigned fund balance used increases in each scenario.

Use of Unassigned Fund Balance FY 2023 Budget Planning			
	BOE Requested*	Scenarios 1 and 2	Scenario 3
Fund Balance Amount Used	\$ 11,597,220	\$ 22,347,220	\$ 32,299,608
Projected Amount Remaining	\$ 10,712,483	\$ 10,502,748	\$ 444,907
Remaining Fund Balance as Percent of Expenditures	1.00%	1.01%	0.04%

*BOE Requested Budget was before costs to complete updated the projected ending fund balance for FY 2022.

In each scenario, unassigned fund balance is being used to support recurring expenditures. Any one-time expenditures in the budget scenarios are being funded by the County's non-recurring funding and there are no remaining one-time expenditures that could be supported by the use of fund balance.

The Board's recently approved fund balance policy (Policy 4070) takes effect on July 1, 2022 and applies to the FY 2023 budget planning. There are specific standards in the policy that will factor into the Board's budget decisions. These standards and the plan for how to address are outlined in the table below.

<i>Policy 4070 Standards</i>	<i>Applicability to FY 2023 Budget and Action Plan</i>
<p>C. a.ii - Use of unassigned fund balance in subsequent year's budgets should be limited to non-recurring expenditures to the extent possible. However, the Board may approve use of unassigned fund balance to support recurring expenditures when the unassigned fund balance exceeds the level the 1 percent threshold</p>	<p>➤ The projected FY 2022 ending unassigned fund balance is \$32.7 million, which is 3.5 percent of total expenditures. This makes unassigned fund balance available for the Board to appropriate for FY 2023. It is the Board's discretion to use the fund balance for recurring expenditures.</p>
<p>C. c.- The Board may, at its discretion and only under certain circumstances, authorize spending the unassigned fund balance below the minimum level. Circumstances include, but are not limited to, emergencies such as, natural disasters, health and safety needs, loss of infrastructure, significant unanticipated expenditures of a nonrecurring nature, and governmental revenue shortfalls. Any amount of unassigned fund balance used that goes below the minimum threshold (1 percent), can only be used for non-recurring expenses, such as maintenance projects, equipment replacement, or other critical one-time needs, unless otherwise approved by the Board</p>	<p>➤ The only scenario that takes the projected unassigned fund balance below the 1 percent threshold is Scenario 3, which increases the use to \$32.3 million, leaving an estimated unassigned fund balance of about \$445,000, or 0.04 percent. The additional use of unassigned fund balance, which reduces remaining balance below the established threshold, supports recurring expenditures. The additional amount being used is \$10.0 million. It is the Board's discretion to approve this use.</p>
<p>C. d.- If the use of unassigned fund balance causes the remaining amount of unassigned fund balance to be less than 1 percent, the Board will approve a plan to replenish the unassigned fund balance in the future. The replenishment plan should address a combination of factors including but not limited to the timing and amount of additional revenues that would need to be requested from the County. The plan may be incorporated into the annual budget book or provided separately.</p>	<p>➤ The use of unassigned fund balance in Scenario 3 will require a replenishment plan. The plan to replenish fund balance will be to request additional recurring funds from the County in FY 2024. The precise amount will be determined through the FY 2024 budget process and be based on the audited actual FY 2022 ending fund balance as of June 30, 2022.</p>
<p>C. e.- Before approval of the use of unassigned fund balance to support recurring expenditures, the Board must be provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The amount of unassigned fund balance being used to support recurring expenditures. ○ The justification for using fund balance for recurring expenditures. ○ A description of alternative budgetary actions that could be taken to limit the use of unassigned fund balance for recurring expenditures. ○ The intended budgetary actions to be taken in subsequent budgets to support the amount of recurring expenditures being afforded with unassigned fund balance. 	<p>➤ Unassigned fund balance is being used for recurring expenditures in each scenario. The table on the prior page delineates the amounts. For Scenarios 1 and 2, the large amount of estimated unassigned fund balance \$32.7 million (3.5 percent), justifies use of a portion to be applied to balance the FY 2023 budget to provide some relief on pressures to increase recurring revenues. In Scenario 3, the additional use of unassigned fund balance, plus \$10.0 million use, is justified to offset deeper reductions to Board's requested budget, which has already been reduced by more than \$50 million. This is a decision point for the Board. Not using additional fund balance will require either increased revenues from the county or further reductions to the Board' Requested</p>

Policy 4070 Standards

- A plan which will be made readily available to the public consistent with public notice requirements in advance of Board action to allow opportunity for public input.
- If the use of unassigned fund balance for recurring expenditures is done during the annual budgetary process, the plan may be included in the budget book or a report to the Board.

Applicability to FY 2023 Budget and Action Plan

Budget. The plan to replenish fund balance is discussed above. This Board memo will be made publicly available and discussed at the May 19, 2022 budget work session.

The use of unassigned fund balance in Scenarios 1 and 2 meets the threshold requirements of policy 4070. However, as discussed above, Scenario 3 uses an amount of unassigned fund balance that pushes below the 1 percent retainer threshold established in policy. If the County Executive or County Council propose any additional revenues through their budget amendments on May 18, 2022, it is my recommendation that the Board reduces the dependence on fund balance, and not add or restore any expenditures beyond the total of what is presented in Scenario 3.

Potential Risks of Fund Balance Use

Using nearly all projected unassigned fund balance carries certain risks. Staff have done their due diligence to project the amount of available fund balance that can be used for the FY 2023 budget, applying a cautious approach. However, it is a projection and actual expenditures for the remainder of fiscal year 2022 could result in a lesser amount being available. Depending on the difference, this could require mid-year budget management actions to restrain expenditures or to seek a supplemental appropriation from the County.

A second risk relates to the actual amount of fund balance that could be used in FY 2023. Without a 1 percent cushion, there is some risk that the General Fund could deplete its unassigned fund balance and potentially run into a deficit by June 30, 2023. The Budget Office would closely monitor monthly budget to actuals and provide as early a warning as possible were it look like this could occur and recommend a course of budget actions that could be taken to prevent a deficit, such as reservations on certain expenditures. General Fund deficits are explicitly disallowed in Maryland law, Education Article §5-114, and would result in HCPSS being put under a plan of corrective action. It is important the Board be advised of these risks as well as the strategies staff will be prepared to execute if these risks become reality during the fiscal year. The recommendation to use such a significant amount of fund balance required significant due diligence while keeping in mind the significant challenges in our schools that we must address in the next school year.

New Information that Could Impact the Board’s Action on May 19

Earlier today, May 17, 2022, the County Executive’s Chief of Staff, Sameer Sidh and HCPSS Chief Administrative Officer Jahantab Siddiqui corresponded further regarding possible recurring revenue increases. Mr. Sidh noted that additional recurring revenues for the school system is a possibility but that amendments are not final. It is unknown whether any County Council members plan to introduce amendments to increase revenues. Amendments are due at 2:00pm on Wednesday, May 18 but often take longer to get posted online. I have directed staff to be prepared to review any amendments filed on May 18, 2022 and provide the Board as much information as possible prior to or during the May 19, 2022 work session. This will necessitate

that the Board receives information just prior to or during the work session and not 48 hours prior to the work session.

Depending on the nature of this information, staff may not have time to modify or develop additional budget balancing scenarios before the work session, which is why the Board is receiving this comprehensive memo detailing multiple scenarios, and providing recommendations should additional funding from the County, up to the \$14.5 million requested in Scenario 2 is received. If the County provides any amount less than the \$14.5 million requested under Scenario 2, my recommendation is that the Board approve Scenario 3 with an amendment to reduce the proposed reliance of fund balance in Scenario 3.

Requested Board Actions on May 19

All budget scenarios include the use of additional unassigned fund balance beyond what was included in the Board Requested Budget submitted. For this additional use of fund balance to be included in the budget, the Board will need to take formal action to amend its requested budget in order for the County to appropriate this funding to the HCPSS budget. We are requesting that during the May 19, 2022 work session, the Board make a motion regarding the use of fund balance. In addition, the goal is to have the Council's budget bill that is adopted on May 25, 2022 contain any categorical reallocations to align with the Board's budget priorities.

Therefore, in order to meet the Council approval timeline, we are requesting that the Board approve reductions to the FY 2023 Board Requested Operating Budget so that these changes can be presented to the County.

The following direction will be needed for staff to begin adjusting the details in the budget and to develop the final categorical score sheets for the Board's adoption of the budget:

1. Board motion to use a designated amount of fund balance, using Scenario 1, Scenario 2, Scenario 3 or the difference between additional recurring revenue proposed by the County and the assumption of use of fund balance in Scenario 3.
2. Board motion to make reductions to the Board Requested operating budget, using Scenario 1, Scenario 2, or Scenario 3.

As the Board will note from the materials you have received, there are substantial details backing the summary information for each scenario. As budget assumptions change there are considerable calculations that change such as budgeted turnover savings, health insurance assumptions for new positions, and other fixed charge costs. As of today, the Board has not voted to provide any alternative budget balancing scenarios. Should the Board want to make any modifications (additions or reductions) beyond the scenarios presented, the Board may need to have an additional work session prior to May 25, 2022. This is because the Budget Office will need additional time to work with division staff and recalculate the revenue and expenditure changes for any modifications the Board votes to make to the proposed scenarios and corresponding score sheets.

Conclusion

The Board's Requested FY 2023 Operating Budget included board member priorities and articulated the school system's needs to support the Blueprint implementation, maintaining and

sustaining service levels, and opening high school 13. However, we must now reconcile our expenditure priorities with the funding available.

The Scenario 3 recommendation will ensure that the budget:

- Funds the special education costs to maintain services levels and meet critical needs, including the positions the Board added to the Superintendent's proposed budget for a total of 151 positions
- Funds the core foundational costs to advance the schools systems implementation of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future
- Funds 11.0 of 17.0 Psychologists and Counselor positions
- Funds 12.0 of 20.0 pupil personnel worker and liaison positions, as well as the LGBTQIA+ liaison position
- Funds critical positions needed to address understaffing in custodial services, HVAC maintenance, as well as organizational support positions in the offices of Human Resources and Purchasing
- Provides funding to advance the school start times adjustment initiative for student transportation bus contract costs
- Fully funds financial obligations and commitments including pension cost increase and actuarially projected health insurance costs

Additional details related to the expenditures supported by Scenario 3 are included in the attached detail document. This level of detail was previously provided to the Board on May 6, 2022 and has been adjusted to reflect Scenario 3, which eliminates funding for the Digital Education Center but maintains all other priorities presented in Scenario 2.

To restate, my recommendation is that the Board adopt Scenario 3 and make any reductions to the use of fund balance based on any additional county funding proposed through the amendments filed on May 18, 2022. Should additional proposed county funding be sufficient to adopt Scenario 2 (\$14.5 million), my recommendation would change and I would recommend that the Board adopt Scenario 2 as presented and maintain 1% of fund balance in the General Fund.

Copy to: Executive Staff
Board of Education Office

Sayers, Margery

From: William Stone <williamchandlerstone@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 19, 2022 5:40 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Written Testimony In Support of HCEDA FY2023 Budget Requests
Attachments: 2022 0524 Testimony In Support of HCEDA FY2023 Budget Requests WCS.pdf

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

Good Evening, Members of the Howard County Council,

Please see attached Written Testimony In Support of HCEDA FY2023 Budget Requests.

Thank you,
Bill

Willam C. Stone
Clarksville, MD 21029
301.957.8642

May 19, 2020

HOWARD COUNTY COUNCIL
Opel Jones, Chair, District 2
Christiana Rigby, Vice Chair, District 3
Deb Jung, District 4
Liz Walsh, District 1
David Yungmann, District 5

IN SUPPORT OF - Howard County Economic Development Authority FY2023 Budget Request

Members of the Howard County Council:

My name is William Stone, President of Mobern Lighting, and I serve on the Board of Directors for the Howard County Economic Development Authority. I am pleased to provide written testimony in of support of HCEDA's FY2023 budget request. As a member of the community, I believe this year's proposed budget includes specific requests for efforts that will help HCEDA better support the changing needs of the business and entrepreneurial communities within Howard County.

Please support the following requests for funds for the following efforts:

- Marketing - HCEDA is requesting \$200K to enhance its marketing efforts to reach deeper into the minority communities within the county to connect them to the services provided by HCEDA and the Maryland Innovation Center. In addition, these funds will enhance efforts for promoting the county to attract businesses, because it is now more critical than ever to position Howard County to out-of-market firms seeking to relocate.
- Small and Minority Business Outreach Staff Position - HCEDA is also requesting funds to add a business development position to support small and minority business outreach. Because of work accomplished during the pandemic and the focus on providing grant support to the most impacted businesses, HCEDA was able to connect to a large portion of its business community that needs ongoing support. A business development specialist dedicated to the small and minority business owners would be beneficial to this sector to deliver programs and technical assistance in a way that meets the

needs of these businesses. This business development specialist would also help solidify and provide continued support to the businesses that have benefited from our efforts during the during the pandemic.

Additional funding for Ag Innovation Grants – In order to support the farming community and help farms move into new markets or enhance the viability and capabilities of the business, Ag Innovation grants have proven to be a successful tool in supporting this important industry while creating full and part-time jobs.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of HCEDA’s budget requests.

Sincerely,

William C. Stone - electronic signature

William C. Stone

President – Mobern Lighting (ret.)



8200 Stayton Drive ~ Suite 500, Jessup, Maryland 20794 ~ Tel (301) 953-2960 ~ Fax (301) 953-9310

May 19, 2020

HOWARD COUNTY COUNCIL

Opel Jones, Chair, District 2

Christiana Rigby, Vice Chair, District 3

Deb Jung, District 4

Liz Walsh, District 1

David Yungmann, District 5

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- Additional funding for Ag Innovation Grants – In order to support the farming community and help farms move into new markets or enhance the viability and capabilities of the business, Ag Innovation grants have proven to be a successful tool in supporting this important industry while creating full and part-time jobs.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of HCEDA's budget requests.

Sincerely,

William C. Stone - electronic signature

William C. Stone

President – Mobern Lighting (ret.)



Sayers, Margery

From: Ellen Sowry <ellenbsowry@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 18, 2022 10:25 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: HPCSS Budget

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

Dear Howard County Councilmembers:

My name is Ellen Sowry, and I am a Howard County resident, parent of three HCPSS students, and a Howard County PTA member from Dayton Oaks Elementary School, Folly Quarter Middle School, and Glenelg High School. I value the Howard County educational system, and it was one of the main reasons my husband and I decided to move to Howard County thirteen years ago. I support full funding of the proposed fiscal year 2023 operating and capital budgets provided by the Howard County Public School System Board of Education. I recognize that the budget process is difficult, with many competing factors. Please make every effort to restore the difference from the proposed executive budget. Our children and our educators have been through so much in the last few years. They deserve to have the resources necessary to do their jobs effectively and allow students to learn, recover, and thrive.

Thank you for your time and consideration-

Ellen Sowry
5008 Green Bridge Rd, Dayton, MD 21036

Sayers, Margery

From: Heather Dalwadi <heather.dalwadi@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 18, 2022 6:56 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Funding HCPSS

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

Dear Howard County Councilmembers:

My name is Heather Dalwadi, and I am a Howard County PTA member from Manor Woods Elementary and from Burleigh Manor Middle School. I value the Howard County educational system and therefore urge support of full funding the proposed fiscal year 2023 operating and capital budgets provided by the Howard County Public School System Board of Education. Please make every effort to restore the difference from the proposed executive budget.

Sincerely,
Heather Dalwadi

Sayers, Margery

From: Ash Baker <ash.baker@hclibrary.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 18, 2022 5:01 PM
To: CouncilMail; boe@hcpss.org
Cc: Michael_Martirano@hcpss.org
Subject: Funding for LGBTQIA+ Specialist (HCPSS) and Downtown Columbia Library (HCLS)

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

Dear County Council and BOE,

I am writing to encourage you to prioritize funding the FY23 budgets of HCPSS and HCLS. Public education is a cornerstone of Howard County, and dedicating resources to the improvement of our public school system and public library are an incredibly important investment in the wellbeing of current and future Howard County residents.

There are two items that are particularly important to me that I want to advocate funding for.

One is the introduction of an LGBTQIA+ Specialist in HCPSS in order to meet the needs of LGBTQIA+ students, staff, and families in the county. Progress is gradually being made in regards to LGBTQ inclusion due to the hard work of dedicated individuals in our community; however, the needs of LGBTQIA+ youth - who are particularly at-risk for bullying, mental health challenges, homelessness, and suicide - cannot be fully realized without specific supports built into the structure of the school administration. A specialist to address this community is needed especially as we continue to see a rise in homophobia and transphobia across the nation. The funding of this position is a relatively low financial investment but a HUGE investment in the youth of Howard County. This isn't about checking a diversity checkbox; this is about supporting vulnerable youth and potentially saving lives.

Second is the development and construction of a new Downtown Columbia Branch of the Howard County Library System. A current employee at the Central Branch in Columbia, I spend every day yearning and hoping for a new building that can better support the needs of everyone who walks into our library. While we deliver exceptional customer service, offer high quality materials, and do the best we can with our current space, the reality is the population of Columbia, and Howard County as a whole, has grown far more than this building can fully accommodate. Every day we have individuals and groups of all ages and backgrounds inquiring about private and group study spaces, meeting spaces, spaces for engaging in Zoom calls, etc. With no actual group study rooms and only (outdated) two conference rooms, what we have to offer is limited in this regard. We are also lacking in sufficient shelving space for our collections, especially with the addition of the Equity Resource Center. A well-funded, thoughtfully-designed larger branch will allow us to serve current library customers better and bring in new ones as well, improving the Howard County community.

Many thanks,
Ash

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