
From: Arlene Kerber <agkerber@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 17, 2024 11:36 AM
To: boe@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail
Subject: Funding for Environmental Education position

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Hello,

It has come to my attention that the Environmental Education position at the HC Conservancy is proposed to be cut.

I find this unreasonable at many levels. First, climate change is upfront, center, and everywhere. We have a tremendous need to education our students on the issues involved. I am also stunned that our County, one of the richest in the country is not doing more and is behind other counties that have more robust programs.

In addition this is important for state-mandated environmental literacy graduation requirements. We need to be expanding this program not eliminating it. I consider this a very short-sighted move.

I hope this proposal is reconsidered and that Environmental Education is provided more funding to do more in educating future generations on protecting our Earth.

Regards,

Arlene Kerber, 5376 Mad River Lane, Columbia

Sent from my iPad

From: Cliff Strawitch <strawitch@verizon.net>
Sent: Wednesday, January 17, 2024 12:34 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Proposed elimination of sole environmental educator by the Board of Education

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

Dear County Council members:

I learned recently that the sole Environmental Educator at the Howard County Conservancy in Howard County, held for the past 18 years by Ann Strozyk, is on the chopping block for elimination. Howard County has made excellent progress toward addressing climate change under Calvin Ball, but what could be more important than creating the next generation of climate stewards by educating our kids about climate change and the environment? In addition, this position is essential to HCPSS's ability to meet the state mandated environmental literacy graduation requirements. Programs like the countywide Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWLEDge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for ALL county students. It is essential that we support our next generation of environmental stewards across the Howard County Public School System and position Howard County as a leader.

How is it that many other counties in Maryland, most with far less tax resources than Howard County, have dedicated environmental education teachers, para educators and facility staff? Most school systems spend millions of dollars every year to operate their own environmental centers. The cost-effective partnership with the Howard County Conservancy (a private non-profit) not only provides 20,000 county students with hands-on environmental and outdoor education each year, but also has led to the development of award winning and groundbreaking programs that are now being adopted by other states.

I and my wife have volunteered for this program for the past three years and can attest to the effectiveness of this program, and have witnessed the enthusiasm the students display when learning under this program.

I hope you will discuss with the school board restoring funding this critically important program for our county students.

Sincerely,
Dr. Clifford Strawitch and Krista Strawitch
3927 White Rose Way
Ellicott City, MD.

From: James Hollywood <jamesearlhollywood@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 17, 2024 12:00 PM
To: Ball, Calvin; boe@hcpss.org; CouncilMail
Subject: Urgent Appeal: Preserve Funding for Environmental Educator Position

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

Dear County Executive Calvin Ball, Howard County School Board of Education, and the Howard County Council,

I hope this message finds you well. I am deeply concerned about the potential cut in funding for the **Environmental Educator position at the Howard County Conservancy**.

It is disheartening to learn that this vital position, held by Ann Strozyk, is facing the possibility of **elimination**. The Environmental Educator plays a **pivotal role** in enabling HCPSS to meet the **state-mandated environmental literacy graduation requirements**. The impact of this position extends far and wide, supporting essential programs such as the countywide Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWledge, and the Youth Climate Institute.

These programs rely on the **expertise** and dedication of the Environmental Educator to provide hands-on STEM learning experiences for **ALL county students**. By doing so, they contribute significantly to shaping the next generation of environmental stewards within the Howard County Public School System.

As Howard County continues to **strive for excellence**, maintaining and fostering such educational initiatives is crucial to positioning our community as a leader in environmental education. I implore you to reconsider any plans to cut funding for this critically important program. Preserving the Environmental Educator position is not just an investment in education but also a commitment to the future sustainability of our county.

Your support in this matter will undoubtedly have a lasting impact on the educational landscape of Howard County. I trust that you will give careful consideration to the importance of this program and take the necessary steps to ensure its continued success.

Thank you for your time and attention to this pressing issue. I look forward to hearing about positive developments that will safeguard the future of environmental education in our community.

Sincerely,
James Earl Hollywood III
443-535-5335
Howard County Citizen Climate Lobby

James Hollywood III

CONFIDENTIALITY:

*Please excuse any typos, this was sent from my phone

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From: Jeffrey Turner <jetcolumbia@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 17, 2024 11:30 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Environmental Educator

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I am a retired Marketing Executive and a resident of Howard County. I am writing to express my disappointment that funding for the Environmental Educator position at the Howard County Conservancy is proposed to be cut.

This position is essential to HCPSS's ability to meet the state mandated environmental literacy graduation requirements. Programs like the countywide Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWledge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for ALL county students. It is essential that we support our next generation of environmental stewards across the Howard County Public School System and position Howard County as a leader. I hope you will reconsider funding this critically important program for our county students.

Sincerely, Jeffrey E. Turner

From: [Amy Hooper](#)
To: BOE@hcpss.org; [Ball, Calvin](#); [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: HCPSS Environmental Educator position - do not cut!!
Date: Thursday, January 18, 2024 12:37:17 PM

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

I am writing to express my disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWLEDge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can do better! Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students.

Amy H.

From: Ariel <aczane@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 7:14 PM
To: CouncilMail; boe@hcpss.org
Subject: Proposal to cut environmental programs for HCPSS

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

I am writing to express my disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut, at a time when climate and nature conservation news are perpetually front and center. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWledge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Also, many people are inspired by citizen science (saving backyard birds, planting native trees) as children and become conscientious, involved citizens who contribute in a multitude of ways all because of an interest fostered outdoors in their youth.

Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can do better! Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students.

Sincerely,
Ariel Zane
Columbia, MD

From: Cheryl Arney <cherylarney@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 3:44 PM
To: boe@hcpss.org; Cheryl Arney; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail
Subject: Fwd: Massive cuts proposed to environmental education, yet again

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

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

I'm a constituent and a voter in Council District 1. I am URGING YOU to reject the cut to the position of THE ONLY ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATOR in the Howard County Public School System. It would be unconscionable to do this. When the entire planet is in a climate crisis that threatens to make the planet unlivable, the last thing we should do is eliminate environmental education for all of our students. I just can't believe that I'm reading that this is what the school system is proposing.

I suggest you read the forwarded email from the Howard County Conservancy below. If you disagree with the information presented, let me hear your response. But assuming it is factual, I won't restate the arguments for why the School Board should reject the idea of eliminating our ONLY Environmental Educator and ending the environmental education programs offered to our HCPSS students at the Howard County Conservancy. I will simply give you my opinion: DON'T DO IT !!! DON'T DO IT !!! DON'T DO IT !!!

Can you not see the bargain the HCPSS is getting by paying one environmental educator to lead these environmental programs at Howard County Conservancy? Imagine the cost of acquiring appropriate land, building an environmental education building, and then staffing it. Compare that with the cost of funding one environmental educator at Howard County Conservancy. The comparison is obvious. Unless the HCPSS wants to incur the expense involved in setting up a new program, which it has not mentioned doing, RETAIN OUR ONE ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATOR !!!

Environmental education has never been more important for our students. And the programs offered at the Howard County Conservancy are extraordinary !!! I have a personal friend who volunteers there to help deliver these programs. Have you not seen the pictures of what our students are doing there? Have you not taken the time to visit and see what's being offered to our children? IF YOU HAVEN'T, YOU SHOULD !!!

My request can be stated concisely: DON'T CUT THE ONE ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATOR THIS COUNTY HAS !

I will be extremely disappointed if our County, ONE OF THE WEALTHIEST COUNTIES IN THE COUNTRY, cuts this position and the cuts to our environmental education program for our children that will ensue. And I will surely not vote to re-elect the Member(s) of the School Board who vote to cut this position. I will make it my business to learn how the Members of the School Board vote on this.

And Members of the County Council and County Executive Ball: Learn what's being proposed by the Board of Education and do all in your power to prevent the position of Environmental Educator (our ONE Environmental Educator) from being eliminated. THIS IS REALLY IMPORTANT !!!

Sincerely,

Cheryl Arney
410-480-9609
cherylarney@gmail.com
4361 Wild Filly Ct.
Ellicott City MD 21042

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Howard County Conservancy** <news@howardnature.org>
Date: Thu, Jan 18, 2024 at 11:56 AM
Subject: Massive cuts proposed to environmental education, yet again
To: <cherylarney@gmail.com>



County schools to cut environmental education programs

The Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) has proposed cutting the last remaining environmental educator in the school system after 18 years of groundbreaking programs. Ann Strozyk, the award-winning educator in this role, delivers hands-on programs to 15,000 students every year through a cost-effective partnership with the Howard County Conservancy.

What will happen if this position is cut?

Without school system support of environmental education, the Conservancy will be unable to offer schools hands-on field experiences for students. At an absolutely *critical time for our environment*, these incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated.

Hands-on learning is critical. While students can learn about the environment in textbooks, getting outside to identify stream life, discover biodiversity and collect and analyze data is priceless. Research is clear that when students spend time outside, depression and anxiety decrease and academic performance improves.

The Conservancy has leveraged the existing HCPSS partnership to secure an additional \$1.2 million+ in grants to support Howard County students over the last five years. This includes money for science equipment, teacher training and bus transportation. With no environmental education program at HCPSS, this funding will cease.

Howard County - we can do better than this proposal to gut environmental education in our county.

How does Howard compare to other counties?

The HCPSS investment in environmental education is currently one teacher, dramatically less than other counties, despite being one of the most well-resourced counties in the state and country. This proposed cut is for one teacher, *the only school system environmental educator*, so an entire – critically important – program area will be cut.

Nearly all nearby school systems own and operate (**see map**) environmental education centers – fully staffed with school system funding for dedicated environmental education teachers, paraeducators and facility staff. In fact, Prince George’s County Public Schools just provided \$15 million to EXPAND their environmental education center, on top of the \$2.6 million school system dollars they already spend each year on environmental education.



What can you do?

The first budget hearing is January 25th at the Board of Education meeting. Board members want to hear from the community about budget priorities.

We need you to act quickly: Show up wearing green, testify and reach out to the Howard County Board of Education, your networks and elected officials:

- The Howard County Board of Education (boe@hcpss.org)
- Howard County Executive Calvin Ball (cball@howardcountymd.gov)
- The Howard County Council (councilmail@howardcountymd.gov)

Click [here](#) for an email template, ways to get involved and to receive updates



Mt. Pleasant
10520 Old Frederick Road
Woodstock, MD 21163
410.465.8877



STAY CONNECTED WITH US



Belmont
6553 Belmont Woods Road
Elkridge, MD 21075
410.465.8337

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Howard County Conservancy | 10520 Old Frederick Road, Woodstock, MD 21163

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From: Cynthia Williams <cawilliams66@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 4:37 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: HCPSS Environmental Educator position

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

I am writing to express my disappointment that the is proposed to be cut. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWLEDge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can do better! Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students.

Cynthia Williams
Woodbine, MD

From: D S <dmssooy@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 12:10 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Environmental Educator position

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Council Members,

I am writing to express my disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWLEDge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can do better! Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students.

Sincerely,

Diane Sooy

From: Elizabeth Fixsen <efixsen@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 3:35 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Cuts to environmental education

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Members of Howard County Council:

I am writing to express my disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut from the Howard County Schools budget. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWLEDge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These vital programs provide science education, inspire future stewards, and build green careers. Losing them will mean that Howard County schools will lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can do better! I urge you to use your influence to maintain funding of this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students.

Respectfully,

Elizabeth Fixsen
Savage, MD

From: [Janine Grossman](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: HCPSS Environmental Educator
Date: Thursday, January 18, 2024 5:07:50 PM

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I am writing to express my disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWLEDge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can do better! Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students.

Sincerely,
Janine Grossman
Ellicott City

From: Jayme Levy Duva <gotpublichealth@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 12:57 PM
To: boe@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail
Subject: Please, no!

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

Dear Howard County representatives,

Please do NOT cut the environmental education position at Howard County Conservancy! Ann is such an important figure in the lives of my children, she has worked for so many years on programs to keep kids interested and engaged with the natural environment and we need that now more than ever. She also helps with the MD master naturalist program helping to train naturalists in the county. The Conservancy is a special place and losing Ann (and her position) would be such a devastation to so many of us.

Sincerely,

Jayme Duva
16400 Old Frederick Rd.
Mt Airy, MD 21771
Howard County Resident

From: Jean Buckhout <jean.buckhout@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 2:40 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Fund the environmental educator position

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

This is pitiful! How can we be leaders in conservation in the state of Maryland and the nation if we don't support these education goals. Please fund the environmental educator position.

Jean E. Buckhout
Mark D. Nucker

From: Jean Rosenberg <rosenberg3@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 1:25 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Environmental and Climate Education in Howard County

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Dear Howard County Council,

I am writing to express my disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWLEDge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can do better! Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students.

Sincerely,
Jean and Robert Rosenberg

P.S. This has been a wonderful program and should be expanded countywide. I volunteer with this program and have seen first hand how much it motivates even the least motivated students.

Jean

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From: Kurt Schwarz <krschwa1@verizon.net>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 1:09 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Proposed BOE Cuts of Environmental Education

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Dear Members of Howard County Council<

As a Howard County Taxpayer, I wish to vehemently oppose the proposed cutting of the county's sole environmental educator from the School budget. As you assuredly know, all Maryland counties maintain Environmental Education Centers, except Howard and Baltimore Counties. The state of Maryland has Environmental Literacy Standards, which these centers help the counties meet. Howard sole teacher provides environmental education at the Howard County Conservancy, which saves the School system from having to maintain an environmental education center, a great savings to the county's taxpayers. For the cost of one teacher, the standards are met. These cuts are short-sighted and unwarranted. I urge the BOE to reconsider, and that you seek to influence the BOE to do so.

Kurt Schwarz
7329 Wildwood Court
Columbia, MD 21046
410-461-1643
krschwa1@verizon.net

From: Marianne Beauchamp <beauchamp_marianne@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 2:59 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Howard County Environmental Program

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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Dear Howard County Council

I am writing to express my disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWLEDge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can do better! Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students.

Sincerely, Marianne Beauchamp

Sent from my iPhone

From: maryplaysindirt@aol.com
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 3:34 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Environmental Educator position

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I am writing to express my disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWLEDge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can do better! Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students.

Sincerely,

Mary Lewis, Howard County Master Gardener

[Sent from AOL on Android](#)

From: Michael Wade <mwaderun@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 8:47 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Please consider keeping the HCPSS Environmental Educator position

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

To Whom it May Concern at the Howard County Council,
I am writing to express profound disappointment in the proposed cancellation of the HCPSS Environmental Educator position. I approach you from a unique perspective, living less than a mile from the Howard County Conservancy. Throughout my senior year of high school at Marriotts Ridge, I was an intern under Mrs. Ann Strozyk. Her passion and knowledge of the position were evident each and every day, and the work I did for her kickstarted my love for the environmental field. Thanks to her guidance and inspiration, I am an environmental studies major at St. Mary's College of Maryland, where I have held a plethora of environmental-related positions. I have seen firsthand what such positions provide for the community, and I know Mrs. Strozyk's work was like that but infinitely more impactful. Cancelling the position is cancelling core experiences for an entire generation of students. I have visited the Conservancy countless times, and I know firsthand the wonder, impact, and curiosity it provides. The lessons and curriculums under Ms. Strozyk's guidance help students toward thinking about how they can be better stewards of the environment, and never forgetting to smell the roses and appreciate nature along the way. Sincerely, thank you for your consideration.

Best,
Michael Wade

--

Michael W. Wade
Environmental Studies, Educational Studies, and Special Education
St. Mary's College of Maryland, Class of 2025
Resident Assistant, Lewis Quadrangle
Captain, Varsity Cross Country and Track
Management Co-op, Kate Chandler Campus Community Farm

From: Michelle Lee <mhong3@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 1:40 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Environmental Educator

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

I am writing to express my disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWLEDge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can do better! Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students.

From: Nancy Gebhart <nlgcbhart@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 19, 2024 8:40 AM
To: boe@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail
Subject: Please Continue to FUND the HCPSS Environmental Educator Position

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Good morning,

I write to express my disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWLEDge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can do better! Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students.

The above text was provided to many of us by the County Nature Clubs in which many of us participate. Now in my own words.

The youth of the 21st century have a very different experience from mine as a child raised in 1960s in central Ohio. We spent most of our time outside, we walked to school, we took our soft drink bottles back to the store for refilling, etc. These are the stories of many of the baby boomer generation.

The fact is we evolved into abusing this planet without thought. There are a few who work to enlighten our youth about the wonders of planet earth...namely Ann Strozyk. I was drawn to the Howard County Conservancy because of its beauty and the dedication of the paid and volunteer staff. On the records, I am a volunteer but am not active because I continue to work and most of my skills relate to administrative functions. I have gone on several hikes led by Ann who imparts so much love and knowledge of nature. I hesitate to lead a group of youth out of fear I will give inaccurate information. I need more training.

It can be debated as to whether the change in weather patterns is due to human activities or a natural cycle of the planet. The fact is, we abuse our earth. Simply walk around Columbia and see the trash. I pick up what I can whether here or down in Florida when I visit. We pour chemicals into fresh water systems and the ocean believing it won't hurt. IT DOES!

We not only need to teach our youth; we need to provide hands-on experiences. You and I both know that sitting in a classroom has limited stimulation.

When I visit our national parks, I sign onto tours led by naturalists because I, at 68, want to learn more. I worked through college studying business and how to survive at a well-paying job; now I want to learn about our earth and how I can slow down our abuse. Our youth need to be exposed to the great outdoors and how our interaction with nature is impactful. Ann Strozyk and her team can do this.

Please continue to fund the HCPSS Environmental Educator position; it is in the best interest of our future.

With respect for our planet,

Nancy L. Gebhart
8674 Hayshed Lane
Columbia, MD

--

Nancy L. Gebhart

From: Nancy McAllister <nancymcallister@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 5:06 PM
To: boe@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail
Subject: Support for HCPSS Environmental Educator position

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

Dear HCPSS BOE, County Executive Ball, and Howard County Council,

I am writing to express my disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate.

Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWledge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can do better! Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students.

Sincerely,

Nancy & Paul McAllister

12234 Etchison Rd, Ellicott City, MD 21042

From: Nate McBean <nmcbean@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 1:54 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Council- Env Educator

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

I am writing to express my disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWLEDge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can do better! Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students.

- Nate McBean
Ellicott City Resident

From: D N Fatherly <nfatherly@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 8:13 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: HCPSS has proposed cutting the last remaining environmental educator

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Council,

I am writing to express my disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWLEDge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can do better! Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students.

Sincerely,

Nicki Fatherly

From: Nina Cardin <nina.cardin@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 2:32 PM
To: boe@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail
Subject: Keep the HCPSS Environmental Educator position

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Leaders,

I am writing to urge you to continue to fund the HCPSS Environmental Educator position.

For several years, I led the Maryland Campaign for Environmental Human Rights and saw first hand the passion and hunger that students had for learning about and protecting the environment. This is not just an academic interest of theirs. It is an expression of their devotion to - and fear for -their future.

I also have the privilege this year of mentoring two high school seniors in the Youth Climate Initiative. This program attracts a most impressive cadre of students who are being taught, and practicing the essential skills, of advocacy. Our youth want and need such a program. And more.

Without school system support for environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time in their lives and for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWledge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can do better!

I urge you to reconsider funding this critically important program. Keep the HCPSS environmental educator.

Nina Beth Cardin

From: PATRICK PANNELLA <pannellas@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 12:38 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Opposition to massive cuts proposed to environmental education

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council Members:

We are writing to express our opposition to the HCPSS Environmental Educator position being proposed to be cut.

Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWLEDge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can do better!

Please reconsider funding this critically important program by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator — one position! — for our county students. Thank you for your consideration of the same.
Sincerely,

Patrick and Bianca Pannella

3217 Hearthstone Road
Ellicott City, Maryland 21042

From: [Patty Buffington](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: HCPSS Environmental Educator position
Date: Thursday, January 18, 2024 12:59:21 PM

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

Dear Mr Yungman & the Howard County Council,

I am writing to express my disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWLEDge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can do better! Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students.

Sincerely,
Patty Buffington

Patty's iPhone

From: Paul Baicich <paul.baicich@verizon.net>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 12:21 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Cutting environmental education is foolish

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Council Members -

I see that the Howard County Public School System has proposed cutting the last remaining environmental educator in the school system after 18 years of meaningful programs. Ann Strozyk, the award-winning educator in this particular role, delivers hands-on programs to 15,000 students every year through a cost-effective partnership with the Howard County Conservancy.

The HCPSS investment in environmental education is currently one teacher, dramatically less than other counties, despite being one of the most well-resourced counties in the state and the country. Nearly all our nearby school systems own and operate their own environmental education centers – fully staffed with school system funding.

We don't here in Howard County.

The current funding-cut proposal is foolish.

Sincerely,
Paul

Paul J. Baicich
7237 Swan Point Way
Columbia, MD 21045



From: Jo & Bob Solem <odenata@msn.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 3:26 PM
To: boe@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail
Subject: Support environmental education, DON'T cut the one position HCPSS has

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

For a county and an administration that is supposedly environmentally aware and attuned to the needs of ALL generations, this is a short-sighted proposal! (You will recognize the text below as the one endorsed and recommended by the Howard County Bird Club and the Howard County Conservancy, where we have been members for decades.)

We are writing to express our disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWledge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can do better! Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students.

Sincerely,

Robert and Joanne Solem
10617 Graeloch Road
Laurel, MD 20723

From: Smrithi Raman <s2raman@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 3:05 PM
To: boe@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail
Subject: Environmental Educator position

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWLEDge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can do better! Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students.

Sincerely,

Sim Raman

734-623-3734

Columbia, MD 21044

From: Suzanne Probst <msprobst2@verizon.net>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 3:34 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Please continue to support the HCPSS Environmental Educator Position!

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I am writing to express my disappointment — as well as shock — that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut! The citizens of Howard County have long demonstrated a desire to be good stewards of our environment. But we need to continue to educate the next generation to carry on this important work!

Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWledge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education.

We can do better! Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students.

Sincerely,

M. Suzanne Probst,
Maryland Master Naturalist and Howard County Legacy Leadership Institute for the Environment (HoLLIE)

From: avwit@aol.com
Sent: Friday, January 19, 2024 4:37 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Environmental Education

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear members,

I am shocked and disappointed to read that the Howard County position of Environmental Educator may be cut. As a county resident for 60 years, I have always been proud of this county as a good place to live and educate my children.

I am a retired science teacher and well aware that science education is more than book learning, especially in environmental issues which are important in our children's future.

I was a volunteer at the Howard County Conservancy and experienced the effect of the program offered there. I loved seeing the excitement in the eyes of the children as they arrived on the buses. Spending time in the outdoors was new to many, such as the boy who looked in amazement and said "are we in the forest"?

These are the kids that must be stewards of our green world facing the effects of climate change.

It all depends on educators like Ann Strozyk and programs like the Conservancy's.

Please do not eliminate such a valuable program.

Ann Witten

From: Audrey Suhr <asuhr@comcast.net>
Sent: Friday, January 19, 2024 10:24 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Budget request - do not eliminate HCPSS Environmental Educator position

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

To the Howard County Council,

I am truly upset with the proposed budget cut eliminating the HCPSS Environmental Educator position.

Please reconsider, and decide to fund this critically important program. Keep the HCPSS environmental educator for our county students.

At this time of undisputed climate change, it is critical that our County's youth understand environmental principles. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences and programs, such as

- The Watershed Report Card,
- Climate kNOWledge
- The Youth Climate Institute.

These programs inspire future stewards and build green careers. I am proud that students completing the 3-year, high school Youth Climate Institute are awarded Honor Cords at their graduation!

Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can do better!

Do not eliminate this position - please!

Sincerely,

Audrey Suhr and Roland Anders

6021 Old Lawyers Hill Road

Elkridge, MD 21075

From: [Dave Lyon](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: Funding for the Environmental Educator
Date: Friday, January 19, 2024 4:30:27 PM

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

Dear Members of the Howard County Council:

I am writing to express my disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences which both round out the classroom programs and introduce the students to real world science.

When I retired in 2015 from 40 years of practicing law, I was looking for an opportunity to do something intellectual and meaningful. Well, I found that at the Howard County Conservancy, especially in the programs created and led by Ann Strozyk, the sole environmental educator in Howard County's school system. Although there are other educational programs provided by HCC, I have personally volunteered in both the Watershed Report Card program for high school students and the Climate Change program for middle schoolers. Both of these excellent programs actively involved students, engaging them to participate not only in the science but also in discussions of how and why these matters are relevant to their world. Equally important, these incredibly important programs provide a hands-on science experience that has and will inspire the future stewards of our environment as we meet the uncertain future of our climate.

Howard County schools are generally viewed as providing an excellent education, but they do lag far behind other counties in the funding for environmental education. We can do better! Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students.

David M Lyon
Ellicott City

From: D B <djboogaard444@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 19, 2024 2:25 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Environmental Education

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Hello, how can this be possible, in one of the wealthiest counties in the nation? More to the point, why isn't there proposals for MORE environmental education in our school system? I'm hoping that this is a mistake you are going to help correct.

Dina Boogaard
Ellicott City

The Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) has proposed cutting the last remaining environmental educator in the school system after 18 years of groundbreaking programs. Ann Strozyk, the award-winning educator in this role, delivers hands-on programs to 15,000 students every year through a cost-effective partnership with the Howard County Conservancy.

From: Ellen Joy <ereardonj@verizon.net>
Sent: Friday, January 19, 2024 1:53 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Howard County Funding Cuts

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Our children, the future of our country and planet, need connections and learning situations about the natural world more than ever. The over-use of cell phones and other screen-time activities contribute so much to stress, isolation, and disconnection, that I am really distressed to hear that this important program is being discontinued.

Please reconsider this funding cut, keep the partnership with the Howard County Conservancy, and give children a coping mechanism to counteract stress and that can bring them joy, wonder, and connection to the natural world that surrounds us.

Thank you,

Ellen Joy

From: Heather Stiltner <rainhe01@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, January 19, 2024 12:16 PM
To: boe@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail; Bill_Barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: HCPSS Environmental Educator Position

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear County Executive Dr. Calvin Ball, Howard County Council members and Board of Education members and Interim Superintendent Barnes,

I am writing to express my disappointment that funding for the Environmental Educator position at the Howard County Conservancy is proposed to be cut.

This position, held by **award-winning teacher Ann Strozyk**, is essential to HCPSS's ability to meet the **state-mandated environmental literacy graduation requirements**. Programs like the countywide Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWledge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for ALL county students.

Nearly all nearby school systems own and operate environmental education centers – fully staffed with school system funding for dedicated environmental education. **HCPSS has only ONE environmental educator left**, despite being one of the most well-resourced counties in the state and country.

Our County and State are striving to be national leaders in environmental protection. **We must prepare our students to thrive in a rapidly changing climate and a greening economy.**

It is essential that we support our next generation of environmental stewards across HCPSS and position Howard County as a leader. I hope you will reconsider funding this critically important position for our students.

Sincerely,

Heather Stiltner, HCPSS parent

From: James Smith <james.a.smith@icloud.com>
Sent: Friday, January 19, 2024 3:35 PM
To: Ball, Calvin
Cc: James Smith; CouncilMail; boe@hcpss.org
Subject: Educational Programs at Howard County Conservancy

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Dr. Ball,

I appreciate your work in Howard County and was happy to meet you one time at a tree planting ceremony at the Howard County Conservancy. The Conservancy is a gem for Howard County. From our conversation, I know you support conservation efforts and environmental education. The HCC educational program is an exemplar for encouraging students from all backgrounds to bind with nature and consider STEM fields. It offers hands-on experiences, so important to young people. At a minimum, it is an investment to grow future, knowledgeable voters and advocates.

I so much enjoy seeing the young folks at the HCC and the smiles on their faces with the educational programs HCC offers. Ann Stroyzk is a key person guiding these efforts at HCC, and is well-regarded. We have a garden plot there and can observe the effectiveness of these programs.

The HCPSS has proposed cutting their support of this program. I am disappointed and discouraged by this proposal. Our children benefited from all that Howard County offers. Wonderful teachers and principals — all before the onslaught of omnipresent text messaging. Now, especially we need the hands-on, direct contact with nature and mentors such as Ms. Stroyzk that the HCC educational programs offer.

Please add your advocacy for continuing or increasing support for the HCC program.

Best Regards,

James Smith

From: Jeanne Garland <jeannegarland@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 19, 2024 11:58 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Keep Environmental Education in HoCo

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Council members,

I am writing to express my disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut from the Howard County Schools budget. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at a critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWLEDge, and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students.

These vital programs provide science education, inspire future stewards, and build green careers. Losing them will mean that Howard County schools will lag far behind other counties in funding environmental education. We can do better! I urge you to use your influence to maintain funding for this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students--for the future of our county and our planet.

It is only one position, but it will have huge reverberations if lost.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this important and far-reaching issue.

Jeanne Garland

7636 Oldfield Lane

Ellicott City, MD 21043

From: Joan Casey <yayatennis@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 19, 2024 8:00 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Cuts to Environmental Education

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Please reconsider!

If we can allow a casino at Arundel Mills Mall, with some of the proceeds going to public school education, how can this even be a possibility to suggest we reduce educational opportunities for our children.

With drug use, violence, teenage drinking, pregnancy, etc., why not increase appropriate interests, hobbies and activities for our kids.....just a thought.

Joan Casey
703-229-3708

Sent from my iPad

From: Joan Casey <yayatennis@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 19, 2024 8:00 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Cuts to Environmental Education

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Please reconsider!

If we can allow a casino at Arundel Mills Mall, with some of the proceeds going to public school education, how can this even be a possibility to suggest we reduce educational opportunities for our children.

With drug use, violence, teenage drinking, pregnancy, etc., why not increase appropriate interests, hobbies and activities for our kids.....just a thought.

Joan Casey
703-229-3708

Sent from my iPad

From: kwcolston@aol.com
Sent: Friday, January 19, 2024 1:16 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Environmental Educator to be cut

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Council person,

I am writing to express my disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWledge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can do better! Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students.

Sincerely,
Kathy Colston

From: [Kathy Tillman](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: Please don't cut funding for the Environmental Educator position!
Date: Friday, January 19, 2024 8:50:03 PM

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

To members of the County Council,

I am writing to express my disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWLEDge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can do better! Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students.

Sincerely,

Kathy Tillman
9467 Hickory Limb
Columbia, MD 21045

From: [Katie White](#)
To: [Budget Feedback](#); [Ball, Calvin](#); [BoE Email](#); [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: Feedback | Proposed Cut of Howard County Environmental Educator
Date: Friday, January 19, 2024 12:07:51 PM

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

Dear Mr. Ball, Howard County Council, and Howard County Board of Education,

My name is Katie White; I am a 6th grade science teacher at Elkridge Landing Middle School. I am writing to advocate the continued funding of HCPSS's Environmental Educator, as this position serves a critically important role for our students and community.

I joined HCPSS two years ago after teaching science for ten years in New York State. When searching for positions in Maryland, your district stood out to me because of its support for an embedded educator who serves as a liaison between the Howard County Conservancy and the district. Through this fruitful partnership, our students have benefitted from robust environmental education programs that have garnered state and national attention, such as the Watershed Report Card and Climate Knowledge Curriculum.

As a 6th grade science teacher, I have worked extensively with our Environmental Educator, Ann Strozyk, on the district's Climate Knowledge curriculum. This curriculum is the first of its kind in the region and one of the few cohesive middle school climate change curricula in our country. Frankly, this effort would not have been possible without Ms. Strozyk. She has been instrumental in providing ongoing teacher professional development, forging partnerships with community stakeholders, and organizing the herculean logistics of student trips and schoolyard field experiences. This curriculum is in the process of scaling up to be taught by all 6th grade science teachers in the district this year; at a time when we would need the most support, you are proposing to remove it by cutting this position.

Additionally, Ms. Strozyk manages our district's Watershed Report Card program, an authentic field science experience for 9th and 10th grade students. Celebrating its 10-year anniversary last year, this program has coordinated the efforts of thousands of students across the county in their collection of data about the health of our watershed. This information has been used to shape policy decisions and has empowered our students to be change agents in their communities.

By continuing to fund the Environmental Educator position, you would demonstrate your commitment to fulfilling Maryland's Environmental Literacy Instructional Standards, which call for meaningful environmental literacy education for all our state's students. You would also demonstrate your commitment to leading the way in cultivating the next generation of environmental stewards. Perhaps most importantly, you would be aligning us with the vast majority of Maryland school districts in their

commitment to environmental education. All but two Maryland districts (Howard and Baltimore County) fund their own environmental education centers with yearly budgets of \$1 million or more; we are merely asking for you to extend your funding of a single educator *position*.

In a time when our collective inaction has led us into uncharted climate disaster and environmental degradation, would you truly propose removing the supports that would help our community secure a better future? I implore you to reconsider.

Sincerely,

Katie White

Katie White
6th Grade Science
Elkridge Landing Middle School
410-313-5040

From: Kimberly Davis <kimdavis4157@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 19, 2024 12:26 PM
To: Ball, Calvin; Bill_Barnes@hcpss.org; boe@hcpss.org; CouncilMail
Subject: Environmental Educator

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear County Executive Dr. Calvin Ball, Howard County Council members and Board of Education members and Interim Superintendent Barnes,

I am writing to express my disappointment that funding for the Environmental Educator position at the Howard County Conservancy is proposed to be cut. This position is essential to HCPSS's ability to meet the state mandated environmental literacy graduation requirements. Programs like the countywide Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWledge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for ALL county students. It is essential that we support our next generation of environmental stewards across the Howard County Public School System and position Howard County as a leader. I hope you will reconsider funding this critically important program for our county students.

Sincerely,

Kimberly Davis

From: Megan Rolenc <merolenc@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, January 19, 2024 5:36 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: keep the HCPSS Environmental Educator position

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council members,

We are writing to express our disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWLEDge, and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards, and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education.

Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students.

Sincerely,
Megan Rolenc & Chris Bruning
Elkridge, MD

From: Ned Tillman <ned@sustainable.us>
Sent: Friday, January 19, 2024 2:25 PM
To: boe@hcpss.org
Cc: Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail
Subject: Environmental Educator Position should be funded

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Members of the Howard County Board of Education:

Thank you for what you do.

Background: have been honored to be a volunteer with the school system, the county, the state, the college and the business community over the past several decades in the areas of sustainability, science, and environmental challenges. I have also served on the following boards: Horizon Foundation, Maryland Science Center, Howard County Conservancy, Howard County Sustainability Board, Sustainable Business Alliance, the Middle Patuxent Environmental Area and have served on the transition teams for the past three County Executives.

Comments in support of HCPSS Position held by Ann Strozyk: There are a lot of people in this county who have worked tirelessly over the years to bring good environmental and outdoor education to our children. As you know, reaching and inspiring children is not always easy, and when you have programs that work, we should all be supporting them. I have seen first-hand the excitement and passion in our students when they experience an epiphany while out in nature that opens their eyes and can drive them for a lifetime of learning and discovery.

Proposal: If you have a better approach, I would love to hear about it. But until we do, please consider all the benefits that accrue to our children and our communities.

Benefits: Time spent with our children in outdoor programs:

1. incorporates physics, chemistry, math, biology, geology, behavioral psychology, and other subject matters in a hand's on, tangible and totally engaging format.
2. results in greater immunity to many illnesses, greater productivity, greater creativity, better mental health, and better team building skills.
3. will help our children be better prepared for meeting many of the major challenges facing their generation no matter what field of work they enter over the next few decades.

Summary: I strongly encourage the Board to maintain or increase funding for the Environmental Educator Position and continue to support Ann Strozyk who works so hard and whose programs have been so successful.

Ned Tillman

9467 Hickory Limb
Columbia, MD 21045

443-472-3681

ned@sustainable.us

www.SavingThePlaces.com

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

Author of:

The Chesapeake Watershed,

Saving The Places We Love,

The Big Melt,

A Brand New Novel – Good Endeavour

All available at Amazon.com

From: Phil Stackhouse <philstack04@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, January 19, 2024 8:29 PM
To: boe@hcpss.org
Cc: Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail; meg.boyd@howardnature.org
Subject: Environmental Education

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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I just read this and it's shocking. Restore this position and include the additional environmental funding in the budget. And we need more than just ONE LONE staff member. Come on people, this is insane. FUND meaningful environmental education

"The Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) has proposed cutting the last remaining environmental educator in the school system after 18 years of groundbreaking programs. Ann Strozyk, the award-winning educator in this role, delivers hands-on programs to 15,000 students every year through a cost-effective partnership with the Howard County Conservancy."

Philip Stackhouse
10228 Cabery Rd
Ellicott City, MD 21042

From: [Russell Schumann](#)
To: boe@hcpss.org; [Ball, Calvin](#); [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: WHY CUT FUNDING FOR SUCH IMPORTANT EDUCATION PROGRAMS FOR OUR FUTURE ? PLEASE DON'T !!!
Date: Friday, January 19, 2024 6:51:43 AM

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

Dear **HoCo Executive Calvin Ball, HoCo BOE members and HoCo Council Members;**

I'm a Maryland Master Naturalist & a Volunteer for the Howard County Conservancy and I'm writing to express my disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to **hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate.** Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. **We can do better! Please DO THE RIGHT THING AND MAINTAIN THE FUNDING for this critically important program – and keep the HCPSS environmental educator for our county students and for our future ... hands-on educated students are our future !**

Regards ... **Russ Schumann**

From: Sharon Smith <olympie@icloud.com>
Sent: Friday, January 19, 2024 5:39 PM
To: boe@hcpss.org
Cc: Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail
Subject: Proposed environmental educational program cuts

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Board of Education members,

I'm dismayed to learn of the proposed cut of the HCPSS Environmental Educator position held by Ann Strozyk for many years. As the award-winning sole school system environmental educator, Ann has partnered with Howard County Conservancy to provide hands-on programs that have had a profound impact on the environmental perspective of thousands of county students over the past 18 years. She has leveraged support from various enthusiastic volunteers such as Howard County Master Gardeners to provide cost-effective outdoor environmental experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate.

Howard County schools currently lag far behind other counties in funding environmental education. With the county's commitment to climate and environmental concerns it seems shortsighted to cut this program while other less-resourced Maryland counties are able to expand their environmental education efforts at this critical time for our climate.

Please reconsider funding this environmentally critical program by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator for our county students. Our future and our environment depend on inspiring future environmental stewards through hands-on STEM learning experiences in the outdoor classroom.

Sincerely,
Sharon Smith

Sent from my iPad

From: DIANNE FIELDS <ennaid123@aol.com>
Sent: Friday, January 19, 2024 10:12 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Howard County Environmental Program

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

I am shocked that you would cut the environmental program and the position of Ann Strozyk!! It is of such great benefit to Howard County students. Please reconsider this senseless decision!!
Susan Fields

From: [Susan LeviGoerlich](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: cuts to environmental education
Date: Friday, January 19, 2024 3:06:42 PM

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

Dear Members of the Howard County Council-

I am writing to express my disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWLEDge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can do better! Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students.

Sincerely,
Susan Levi-Goerlich
6440 River Run
Columbia, MD 21044

From: Val Swan <valnjeff55@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 19, 2024 9:56 AM
To: boe@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail
Subject: Potential Elimination of Environmental Educator Position

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Good morning Howard County leaders,

I have always prided our county in its efforts to be a greener county. Calvin Ball has recently mentioned , "the peace that comes from connecting with the earth," in his most recent newsletter. I do understand the need to meet budget restraints and the tough decisions that go along with that, but please let's evaluate the benefit ratio here! The lives that are touched by this award-winning teacher, Ann Strozyk ,with the fostering of caring for our planet, or the excitement of a career in Environmental sciences, far, far outweigh the salary of a single teacher. Surely this position must be seen as critical, especially at this time of climate change. Please allow Ann to use her proven gift to educate our children! I strongly recommend keeping this job position.

Thank you, Valerie Swan
13735 Barberry Way

From: Ben Daniels <bdaniels177@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 20, 2024 1:52 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Please keep the HCPSS environmental educator!

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I am writing to express my disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWLEDge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can do better! Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students.

Sincerely,
Ben Daniels

From: Ellen Frishberg <elfrishberg@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 20, 2024 8:39 AM
To: Ball, Calvin B; CouncilMail; BOE@hcpss.org
Subject: Environmental educator

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County leadership team,

We are writing to express our disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut, once again. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWLEDge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can do better! Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students.

This is Howard County. We can do better.

Thank you,

Dr. Ellen Frishberg and Bob Gladding
30 year residents and retired HCPSS teacher

From: Ellen Frishberg <elfrishberg@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 20, 2024 8:39 AM
To: Ball, Calvin B; CouncilMail; BOE@hcpss.org
Subject: Environmental educator

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County leadership team,

We are writing to express our disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut, once again. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWLEDge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can do better! Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students.

This is Howard County. We can do better.

Thank you,

Dr. Ellen Frishberg and Bob Gladding
30 year residents and retired HCPSS teacher

From: Jules Richa <rjasnr@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 20, 2024 2:39 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: HCPSS proposed cuts to environmental education position

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

Dear Members,

As a volunteer naturalist at the Conservancy for almost 10 years, I watched Howard County students, including my granddaughter, participate in several hands-on programs and field experiences. Such as :

- Learning and doing biological assessment of macroinvertebrates by wading in the streams using sampling techniques to identify minuscule aquatic bugs.
- Conduct physical stream corridor and habitat assessment.
- Nature hikes, where students identify invasive species and the harm they can do to the environment, climate knowledge, CO2 impact.
- Other activities include assessing the level of nitrate, nitrite, pH level and oxygen found in stream waters.

These are just samples of the type of activities the students are exposed to and challenged with when they come to the Conservancy and spend half a day with the Conservancy teachers, staff, and volunteers. From first hand knowledge, I can tell you, the students love and enjoy these activities, and many students expressed the desire to stay longer in the field and do more of these types of environmental education exercises outside the classroom.

I know for a fact that classroom learning in our county is one of the best in the State, However, when you augment it with outdoor learning and hands-on experiences and skills, these activities will resonate with the students well beyond the classrooms.

Howard County is one of the best resourced counties in Maryland. If certain budget cuts are needed, I have the utmost confidence that you will do the right thing by preserving the only Environmental Educator position for the students' sake.

Thank you
Jules Richa
Volunteer Naturalist.

From: Kim Pezza <kimpezzaclimate@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 20, 2024 11:54 AM
To: boe@hcpss.org; bill_barnes@hcpss.org; yun_lu@hcpss.org; linfeng_chen@hcpss.org; antonia_watts@hcpss.org; jolene_mosley@hcpss.org; Jacquelin_McCoy@hcpss.org; Robyn_Scates@hcpss.org; student_member@hcpss.org
Cc: Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail
Subject: Environmental Education Position

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Board of Education members and Interim Superintendent Barnes,

I am writing to express my disappointment that funding for the Environmental Educator position at the Howard County Conservancy is proposed to be cut. This position is essential to HCPSS's ability to meet the state mandated environmental literacy graduation requirements. Programs like the countywide Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWLEDge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for ALL county students. It is essential that we support our next generation of environmental stewards across the Howard County Public School System and position Howard County as a leader.

2023 was the hottest year on Earth. The future these children face is one of potential suffering if we don't do everything it takes to prevent that future. This includes education on climate change, sustainability and environmental stewardship. This position is the only one that can provide all of those things. It is a unique and special position and if cut, there is No One to support HCPSS with this type of education and hands-on learning.

I hope you will reconsider funding this critically important program for our county students.

Sincerely,

Kim Pezza

Chair, Howard County Environmental Sustainability Board

Chair, Columbia Association Climate Change & Sustainability Advisory Council

Board member, Howard County Sierra Club

Climate Resilience Director, Office of the Comptroller

From: Katherine Hersey <herseykatherine@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 20, 2024 4:35 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Concerns from new residents

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

I am writing to express my disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate.

My husband and I moved to Columbia a year ago from out of state specifically for what we believed was a well-managed community with a quality of life and concern for the environment. We expected to see thoughtful urban planning and initiatives to protect the natural environment and mitigate the impact of climate change. But we have witnessed what seems to be out-of-control growth. The elimination of the environmental educator would just be more evidence of a community where may want to think twice about putting down roots.

Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWledge and Youth Climate Institute rely on the position under proposal for elimination to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated.

Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students and to ensure the quality of life of our community.

Sincerely, Linda K. Nebel and Roger Nebel

From: Pearl Seidman <pearleco@seidmanfamily.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 20, 2024 11:29 PM
To: boe@hcpss.org
Cc: CouncilMail
Subject: \$103 Million Shortfall and Support of Student Ecosystem Learning

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

HCPSS Board of Education Members,

It's certainly an unenviable process when budget shortfalls require difficult choices to include staffing reductions. While the school board and the county have insight into specifics, I write to express concern about the possible elimination of the only environmental education position. In fact, I was surprised to learn that HCPSS only has only one such position. As a Robinson Nature Center volunteer and a former Capitol Hill staffer who met with environmental education advocates, [clear research](#) shows the efficacy and importance environmental education. I expect school board members already know this, as well as the disparities in nature-centric exposure across racial and socio-economic groups.

Elimination of this position seems counter to Howard County's environmental and equity goals. Field hands-on experience brings learning to life. I am part of a Watershed Steward Academy project that intends to offer students a chance to learn immediately downstream from their high school about the utility of riparian forest buffers in improving stream quality. Student involvement is sparked by an environmental education coordinator.

Pearl Seidman
Kings Contrivance

From: Pearl Seidman <pearleco@seidmanfamily.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 20, 2024 11:33 PM
To: boe@hcpss.org
Cc: CouncilMail
Subject: \$103 Million Shortfall and Support of Student Ecosystem Learning

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

HCPSS Board of Education Members,

It's certainly an unenviable process when budget shortfalls require difficult choices to include staffing reductions. While the school board and the county have insight into specifics, I write to express concern about the possible elimination of the only environmental education position. In fact, I was surprised to learn that HCPSS has only one such position. As a Robinson Nature Center volunteer and a former Capitol Hill staffer who met with environmental education advocates, [clear research](#) shows the efficacy and importance of environmental education. I expect school board members already know this, as well as the disparities in nature-centric exposure across racial and socio-economic groups.

Elimination of this position seems counter to Howard County's environmental and equity goals. Field hands-on experience brings learning to life. I am part of a Watershed Steward Academy project that intends to offer students a chance to learn immediately downstream from their high school about the utility of riparian forest buffers in improving stream quality. Student involvement is sparked by an environmental education coordinator.

Pearl Seidman
Kings Contrivance

From: Pey Lian Lim <klangjaya@hotmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 20, 2024 3:01 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Keep the HCPSS Environmental Educator position

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I am writing to express my disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWLEDge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can do better! Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students.

Sincerely,
Pey Lian Lim

From: Robert Gladding <rwgladding@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 20, 2024 3:25 PM
To: CouncilMail; BOE@hcpss.org
Subject: Elimination of environmental educator HCPSS - Upcoming Budget Cuts

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

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

Once again I find myself questioning another senseless move by the HCPSS/BOE

For the last 8 eight years since my retirement from HCPSS - I have volunteered with the Howard County Conservancy and Ann Strozyk, creating environmental education programs which raise the awareness and promote advocacy of global and local issues. I have run workshops, led laboratories, written grants, lectured in high schools, and had the privilege of ushering thousands of students (many for their first time) into our local woods and streams. None of this would be possible without Ann's tireless commitment to environmental education and issues. Our programs are nationally recognized. Our watershed report card program has been folded in the 9th grade curriculum. Our Climate Change workshop is part of the 6th grade science instruction.

Our Spring Summit for the WRC gives students the opportunity to interact with state and local stakeholdersdecision makers. Imagine how Howard County will look this April at our 10th annual summit when the Governor, Wes Moore, shows up to speak for a program about to be cancelled. Our Youth Climate Ambassadors will be cast adrift. Our budding middle school program will wither. We will be the only county in central Maryland without any environmental education leadership. We like to tout how great our school system is. Obviously we are not quite so forward thinking.

Simply, let's put our children's education first. Let's stop paying lip service to STEM and Climate Change when we have little to show for it in our curriculum. Environmental Education is not a nice to - it's a half to. Putting the burden on one person for all these years and then cutting the position when we are successful is idiocy.

I am angry and embarrassed at the short sightedness of our school system. If you care at all about our children and future on this planet - **FIND THE MONEY**. And while you are at it, don't even think of cutting more teaching positions. In case you haven't noticed, we are all aging out or leaving for better careers.

This is serious folks,

Robert Gladding
8122 Calla Lilly Dr.
Ellicott City
443-414-6037

From: Ruth Frost <ruthsfrost@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 20, 2024 9:47 AM
To: boe@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail
Subject: HCPSS Environmental Educator

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

To all,

I am writing to express my disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWLEDge, and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can do better! Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students.

Sincerely,
Ruth S. Frost
Mom of a HCPSS high school student
240 499 5702

From: Cassie Felch <cassiefelch@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 21, 2024 7:44 PM
To: boe@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail
Subject: In Support of Environmental Education

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County leaders,

I am so disappointed and concerned to learn about Howard County Public School System's proposal to eliminate the only environmental employee position in the school system. Although I am aware that budgeting decisions are always difficult to make, I feel that this particular move is short-sighted. In a time when environmental awareness is of utmost importance to our well-being, we must provide each new generation with the tools necessary to alleviate a worldwide crisis. These topics must be experienced through hands-on learning opportunities, as well as classroom studies.

Our county prides itself on its proactiveness in environmental matters, its world-class school system, and its responsiveness to the needs of the community. How can we possibly take a step backward during a time when climate issues are at the forefront of so many government and academic agendas?

As HCPSS debates where to make budget cuts, perhaps it would be best to focus on the ultimate end goal: producing well-rounded, employable adults who are equipped to address the needs of a changing world. In that vein, now is the time to provide more learning opportunities about the environment and our place in it, not fewer. Howard County already lags behind neighboring counties in environmental education, and we can't afford to handicap our students any further.

Thank you for considering my concerns.

Sincerely,

Cassie Felch

From: Diane Cockrell <cockrell8854@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 21, 2024 2:52 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Support of the HCPSS Environmental Educator Position

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I am writing to express my disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWLEDge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for Howard County students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding environmental education. We can do better!

I know firsthand the impact the environmental educator has had on middle and high students. As a volunteer educator for the past 12 years, I have seen and helped develop a variety of programs. I have witnessed the impact these programs have had on students and state governments. For example, due to the data collected by the HCPSS Students, Maryland's Department of Natural Resources re-evaluated and made changes to their macroinvertebrate rating system determining the health of Maryland streams! Furthermore, students have suggested ways to improve the Chesapeake Bay Watershed at their individual schools and implemented these action plans. They've planted native rain gardens and native trees, and they've held community meetings to suggest ways to become better stewards of the Earth.

Please reconsider funding this critically important program - by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator - for our county students.

Sincerely,
Diane Cockrell
Howard County Conservancy Volunteer Naturalist

From: Dominic Tiburzi <dmtiburzi@verizon.net>
Sent: Sunday, January 21, 2024 12:24 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Environmental Educator Position

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

I am writing to express my strong disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWLEDge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can do better! Howard County's recent ECO Letter touted all of its progress regarding fighting climate change. This one position is a critical link toward that end. Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students.

Sincerely,
Dominic Tiburzi
Howard County Conservancy Volunteer
Board Member of the Middle Patuxent Environmental Foundation

Written Testimony for the Superintendent's Proposed FY 2025 Operating Budget Public Hearing, Thursday, January 25, 2024 – 7 p.m.

Honorable Chair and Members of the Board,

I write in opposition to the proposed elimination of the Environmental Educator position. For the last 18 years, the County's investment in this single FTE in combination with resources from the Howard County Conservancy has produced a program in environmental education that is recognized as "cutting edge" not only in Maryland but across the Nation. Over one million dollars of grant support have been garnered to support the many projects that our County's Environmental Educator, Ms. Ann Strozyk, has nurtured. I am a retired researcher who has written, reviewed, and administered grants and can attest to the importance of this FTE to obtain outside funding. This commitment highlights the local support of any new proposal and boosts the reviewers' assessment in turn.

Ms. Strozyk has spear-headed hands-on and field-based opportunities for more than 15,000 students in Howard County. I volunteer for both the Watershed Report Card and the Climate kNOWLEDge programs and can't begin to outline all of their positives, so I will describe only two here: 1) When I lead hikes of sixth graders, not only are the students enthusiastic but the parents who chaperone are impressed with how much they learn; and 2) Ms. Strozyk has recruited and ably trained so many outstanding volunteers that each of us can work with a small group of about ten students for most exercises. Each volunteer has a unique background to offer, and many have supplemented their knowledge with Master Naturalist and other advanced training. Thus, the County's small investment supporting Ms. Strozyk's effort provides unique small-group experiences that would be otherwise unavailable in the HCPSS curriculum.

In my view, the question is not whether this position should be cut, but why is our commitment so small? Throughout Central Maryland, only Howard and Baltimore counties lack an Environmental Education Center. In our County, there is only one Environmental Educator per 57,000 students compared to a more robust ratio of 1:11,432 throughout the region. HCPSS is getting a lot of "bang for the buck", and I strongly support the retention of this critical position.

Respectfully submitted, Drew Carlson

From: DREW CARLSON <sueanddrew@verizon.net>
Sent: Sunday, January 21, 2024 8:13 AM
To: boe@hcpss.org
Cc: Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail
Subject: Written Testimony for the budget hearing on January 25 is attached
Attachments: DEC_EnvEducatorTestimony.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Please enter the attached pdf document as written testimony for the upcoming public hearing on Thursday, January 25, at 7:00 p.m.

Best Regards,

Drew E. Carlson
3706 Chateau Ridge Drive
Ellicott City, MD 21042

Written Testimony for the Superintendent's Proposed FY 2025 Operating Budget Public Hearing, Thursday, January 25, 2024 – 7 p.m.

Honorable Chair and Members of the Board,

I write in opposition to the proposed elimination of the Environmental Educator position. For the last 18 years, the County's investment in this single FTE in combination with resources from the Howard County Conservancy has produced a program in environmental education that is recognized as "cutting edge" not only in Maryland but across the Nation. Over one million dollars of grant support have been garnered to support the many projects that our County's Environmental Educator, Ms. Ann Strozyk, has nurtured. I am a retired researcher who has written, reviewed, and administered grants and can attest to the importance of this FTE to obtain outside funding. This commitment highlights the local support of any new proposal and boosts the reviewers' assessment in turn.

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Respectfully submitted, Drew Carlson

From: Lisa and Lou COLANGELO <lcolangelo@verizon.net>
Sent: Sunday, January 21, 2024 10:15 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Elimination of Environmental Educator Position?

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Members of the Howard County Council: I am writing to express my disappointment that the HCPSS environmental educator position is proposed to be cut. It is a critical time for our climate and our youth need to be educated and engaged in this area. There are very important programs that provide science education and inspire future stewards of our earth. It would be extremely short sighted to eliminate this position as the urgent need is certainly there!

Lisa Colangelo
West Friendship, Md

From: Lisa A Wilde <lawilde@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 21, 2024 2:45 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Environmental education

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Please continue to support environmental education in our beautiful and progressive county as other counties have.

Dr.Lisa Wilde

Sent from my iPhone

From: ralove100@gmail.com
To: boe@hcpss.org
Cc: [Ball, Calvin](#); [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: Please do not Cut Environmental Education in HCPSS
Date: Sunday, January 21, 2024 12:29:25 PM

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

Dear Board of Education,

I am writing to express concerns about the HCPSS across-the-board cuts in education programs especially those in environmental education. I am currently retired since 2016 and the number one reason I choose to stay in Columbia in retirement is because of our many environmental outreach programs including the Columbia CARES groups, Watershed Stewards, Weed Warriors, and the Howard County Conservancy programs. All these programs foster strong relationships with Howard County schools to encourage student environmental awareness. Without strong leadership from Ann Strozyk and the many other HC elementary, middle, and high school teachers and mentors who connect our community to environmental concerns, Howard County's standing as a leader in environmental awareness will be substantially diminished. This is the worst timing ever to make cuts in environmental education with the current crush of climate change. Our community needs our students to understand why our climate crisis is occurring to be ready for action when they graduate.

Richard Love
7525 Yellow Bonnet Place
Columbia, MD 21046
E: ralove100@gmail.com
H: 410-381-3621
C: 443-538-1571

From: Connie McRill <ecmcrill@msn.com>
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 10:13 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Support for HCPSS Environmental Educator position

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

From: Connie McRill <ecmcrill@msn.com>
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 10:08 PM

Dear Howard County Council officials,

I am writing to express my disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWledge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can do better! Please reconsider funding this critically important program - by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator - for our county students. Thank you for your serious consideration of this issue.

Sincerely,
Connie McRill M.D.

From: Gail Holm <gailholm@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 9:36 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Proposed elimination of HCPSS environmental educator

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

100081 Fair Beauty
Columbia, MD 21046
January 22, 2024

Dear Council Member,

I was shocked and dismayed to learn that the Howard County Public School System is proposing to cut the position of the only environmental educator in the school system. I believe a strong in background in environmental knowledge for all our students is critical for their future and the future of our planet. We can't afford to turn our backs on the existential challenge facing us. I'm ashamed that our county, which has eliminated so many environmental educators already, is considering this, while other, less affluent, jurisdictions have more teachers and dedicated facilities.

Moreover, I'm baffled as to why the school system would want to lose a world-class educator like Ann Strozyk, who has developed programs and gathered personnel and resources to bring meaningful, hands-on environmental experiences to thousands of Howard County students each year. Ann has attracted and trained dozens of volunteers like myself, to help facilitate her programs. It's always a joy to interact with our students outside on a trail or in a stream as they make observations, collect and analyze data, and draw conclusions about the health of the land and water, things that can't really be replicated in the classroom. The student groups are inclusive--these are not just the science nerds-- and there's always a high level of engagement. For some, just getting outside in a natural setting opens the way for the realization that "this is it." "This is what we have to save."

I have hope when I'm with our students. They won't all become environmental scientists, but with their experiences in the programs developed and instituted by Ann Strozyk, I have hope that many of them will become informed, responsible citizens, who will make decisions that will help reverse the environmental disaster that threatens us and future generations.

For these reasons, I urge you to support the retention of the HCPSS environmental educator position in the HCPSS budget.

Sincerely,
Gail P. Holm

Howard County Master Naturalist
Howard County Watershed Steward

--

Gail P. Holm
(she, her)

From: Heather Johannes <heatherjohannes@comcast.net>
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 10:58 AM
Subject: Position Elimination

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Good morning,

I am writing to express my disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWledge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can do better! Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students.

Sincerely,
Heather Johannes

From: Gray Cole <john.gray.cole@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 7:16 AM
To: Bill_Barnes@hcpss.org; boe@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail
Subject: HCPSS Environmental Educator

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear County Executive Dr. Calvin Ball, Howard County Council members and Board of Education members and Interim Superintendent Barnes,

My name is John Cole, and my wife and I have 3 kids at Thunder Hill Elementary. I am writing to express my disappointment that funding for the Environmental Educator position at the Howard County Conservancy is proposed to be cut. This position is essential to HCPSS's ability to meet the state mandated environmental literacy graduation requirements. Programs like the countywide Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWLEDge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for ALL county students. It is essential that we support our next generation of environmental stewards across the Howard County Public School System and position Howard County as a leader. I hope you will reconsider funding this critically important program for our county students.

Sincerely,

John Cole

9266 Grape Wine Ct

From: [Meghan Cole](#)
To: boe@hcpss.org; [Ball, Calvin](#); [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: HCPSS Environmental Educator Position
Date: Monday, January 22, 2024 7:09:46 AM

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

To whom it may concern,

I have 3 kids in HCPSS and I am writing to express my disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate.

Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWLEDge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated.

Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can do better! Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students.

Sincerely,
Meghan Cole
9266 Grape Wine Ct
THES

From: beckynic4@gmail.com
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 9:12 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Please do NOT ELIMINATE ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATOR POSITION!!!

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

DEAR INFLUENTIAL LOCAL INDIVIDUALS,

I am writing to express my disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWLEDge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can do better! Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Nicodemus

A VERY. ENVIRONMENTALLY CONCERNED INDIVIDUAL

Our Young students are the key to creating solutions & dealing with these looming threats to our EARTH 🌍!!!

Sent from my iPhone

From: Sara Via <svia@umd.edu>
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 12:35 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Please support environmental education in HCPSS!

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

To the members of the County Council:

I'm writing to strongly urge you to retain Ann Strozyk's position as the only full-time environmental educator in HCPSS.

Today's students spend hours each day on screens of one sort or another and most spend little time outdoors. We all know that this is bad for both their mental and physical health.

But what's the solution? Just sending students outside isn't enough. The key is to teach them more about the natural world and get them interested. When students know more about nature and the environment, they see more when they are outdoors. This progressively reinforces their interest and understanding.

Engaging teachers like Ann Strozyk get students interested in what goes on in watersheds and what key problems like climate change are all about. Through her instruction, students learn about critical environmental issues and begin to see themselves as people who can contribute to the solutions.

I find it shocking that in one of the wealthiest counties in the US, HCPSS has only one teacher dedicated to teaching our students about the environment. Ann Strozyk has developed programs that teach 15,000 students each year about key environmental issues. She takes students outside to teach them about watershed health and she has pioneered an excellent program for high-school students about climate change impacts and solutions. Ann Strozyk is an exemplary teacher and a tremendous resource for the County. How can you even consider letting her go?

I have worked with Ann for four years as a lecturer in the Youth Climate Institute (YCI). I could not be more impressed by her leadership.

Ann has built YCI from the ground up into an experience that prepares students to deal with the impacts that climate change will have on their lives. First, students in the program learn the key science behind climate change and what it will take to turn this crisis around. Then they take on a specific aspect of the problem in an action project with a local expert as a mentor. These experiences build their confidence and help them to see themselves as people who can make a difference. I'm very proud to be associated with this excellent program.

Ecoanxiety in young people is rampant, and many are seriously depressed about their future as the impacts of climate change grow each year. Programs like the Youth Climate Institute are essential to countering this debilitating ecoanxiety because they teach students tangible, science-based ways to take meaningful action. YCI gives students the confidence that solutions to climate change can be found and provides the tools they need to make a difference. The fact that high schools all over Maryland (and beyond) are starting YCI chapters is a testament to the importance and appeal of this program. Cancelling YCI by firing Ann Strozyk would be a huge step backward for HCPSS and a tragedy for our students.

I cannot recommend more highly that you retain Ann Strozyk as a valued teacher in HCPSS. We need her enthusiasm and compassion as she engages our young people in environmental issues and helps them to become effective stewards of the natural world as adults.

With best regards,
Sara Via

--

Dr. Sara Via
Professor and Climate Extension Specialist
Dept. of Entomology &
University of Maryland Extension
UMD, College Park
svia@umd.edu
www.climatecorner.org

Descriptions & videos of my 2020-23 Climate Action webinars at www.climatecorner.org.
Sign up for my [newsletter](#) and visit [my YouTube channel](#).
You CAN make a difference!

Interested in Natural Climate Solutions? Read my [report](#) (2021):
"Increasing Soil Health and Sequestering Carbon in Agricultural Soils."

From: Shelley Von Hagen-Jamar <shelleyvhj@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 1:30 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Environmental educator position

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear HC Council members,

I am very unhappy to hear that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWLEDge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can do better! Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students.

Sincerely,
Shelley Von Hagen-Jamar

From: Albert Holm <holm_albert@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 3:51 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: HCPSS's Environmental Educator position

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Council Member,

I am writing to express my disappointment in the proposed cuts to the Howard County School teaching staff, especially the HCPSS Environmental Educator position.

Climate change is the defining crisis of our time. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWLEDge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can do better! Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students. Howard County is the 7th wealthiest in the nation, and we can't afford to educate our children? Shame!

Sincerely,
Albert Holm
10081 Fair Beauty
Columbia, MD 21046

From: Colin Wang <colinwang05@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 3:49 PM
Subject: Proposed Environmental Educator Cut

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Hi,

My name is Colin Wang. I am a freshman undergraduate at the College of William & Mary in Virginia. And I know that I would not be the student I am today without the experiences and teachings given to me by Ms. Ann Strozyk, Howard County's Environmental Educator.

I understand budget restrictions are tight, and there is no way to please all, but Ms. Strozyk's work is of vital importance to both the students and residents of this county for instilling a love of nature and conservation. As a high school student, I was a member of the Howard County Conservancy's Youth Climate Institute (YCI). I completed action projects and hosted outreach events, like many other high schoolers currently in the program, but I had the honor of being in YCI's first graduating class. **I have personally watched this program grow and thrive from Ms. Strozyk's dedication and tiring efforts, and I have learned so much because of her.** Cutting this investment would both hurt all the progress that the Conservancy and YCI have made over the past years and disallow future students from engaging in this amazing program.

I have much to credit to Ms. Ann Strozyk. I ask that you reconsider this budget cut in light of my experience and for the sake of so many others.

Thank you,
Colin Wang

From: Maloney, Daniel Christopher <dan.maloney@verizonwireless.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 3:17 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Save the environmental education programs

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

I am writing to express my disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWLEDge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can do better!

Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students.

Best wishes,
Dan



Dan Maloney
Client Partner
Verizon Business Group
10170 Junction Drive
Annapolis Junction, MD 20701

M: 240-994-1444
E: Dan.Maloney@VerizonWireless.com

From: Debra Ricigliano <Dericig78@outlook.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 3:20 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Proposed cutting of the Environmental Educator Position

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Esteemed Howard County Council members,

I am writing to express my disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. We owe it to the youth of our county to be educated about the serious impacts of climate change, to nurture respect for the environment, and to become involved with plans on how to remediate related issues in the future. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWLEDge, and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These critical programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards, and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding environmental education. We can do better! Please reconsider funding this critically important program for our county students by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Debra Ricigliano
9740 Knowledge Drive
Laurel, MD 20723

From: Greta Swanson <gretaeswanson@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 9:44 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Please fund the Howard County Environmental Educator position!

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear members of the Howard County Council,

I am writing to express my disappointment that the one remaining HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut. This position, serving 15,000 students, is essential to HCPSS's ability to meet the state mandated environmental literacy graduation requirements. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWLEDge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can do better! Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students and for the future environmental literacy of our community.

Sincerely,

Greta Swanson

4277 Red Bandana
Way
City, MD 21042

Ellicott



Virus-free. www.avg.com

From: Howard Quinn <hrquinn13@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 10:53 AM
To: boe@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail
Subject: HCPSS Environmental Educator position

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am writing to express my disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate KNOWLEDGE and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide extended science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated should you cut this position.

I am a retired HCPSS teacher. I am proud to say that I worked in this community for thirty years. My late wife and I volunteered with the Maryland State Parks Systems for at least 20 of those years. We worked very hard to bring our students even just a little more natural science experience given the host of demands placed on public school educators. I have continued our commitment as a volunteer for the past five years with the Howard County Conservancy. The connections with nature that HCPSS students and teachers make through the HCC Environmental Educator are the best I've seen in 40 years of working with students as a teacher, counselor and coach.

I've come to learn that, surprisingly, Howard County schools lag behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can and should do better! Please reconsider funding this critically important program - by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator- for our county students.

Sincerely yours,
Howard R. Quinn

From: Louise McLaughlin <lmclaugh15@comcast.net>
Sent: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 8:02 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Education Budget

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

To my neighbors, the decisions makes,

As a past Howard County Public School Educator and concerned citizen about our fragile environment, I implore you to:

keep the HCPSS environmental educator from being cut from the budget.

Very Concerned,
Louise McLaughlin
10614 Hickory Crest Lane

From: [Melissa Maloney](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: Continue Funding for Environmental Education
Date: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 8:31:08 AM

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

Dear Howard County Council Members,

I am writing to express my disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWLEDge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can do better! Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students.

Sincerely,

Melissa Maloney
5289 Five Fingers Way
Columbia, MD 21045

From: Natalie Yee <nmyee11@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 9:32 PM
To: boe@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail; Bill_Barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Concern for the Environmental Educator Position

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear all,

I implore you to reconsider cutting the funding for the Environmental Educator position at the Howard County Conservancy. This position has brought many valuable environmental programs to the students of Howard County in a way that is both informative and interactive. Activities such as the Watershed Report Card and the Youth Climate Institute have given students a way to explore and critically analyze their local area through the lens of environmental awareness. Seeing the impact changes in the environment particularly on a local level is fundamental in educating a generation who will inherit and tackle environmental issues. Cutting this position will be a tremendous loss of education and worldly preparedness in the long run.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Natalie Yee

From: Richard Safeer <richardsafeer@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 6:32 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Increase funding for environmental education

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

As a physician at Johns Hopkins Medicine, I understand the importance of our environment to our health and well-being. I also recognize that we face an unprecedented existential threat with depleting ozone.

We need to increase funding to educate the future generation so that they help solve the problems we created.

Thank you,
Richard Safeer, MD

From: Eileen Clegg <eileensclegg@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 24, 2024 10:59 PM
To: Ball, Calvin
Cc: boe@howardcounty.org
Subject: HCPSS Environment Education position

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

The current partnership with the HCPSS Environment Education position and the Howard County Conservancy is CRITICAL to the development of educating our student population to becoming future stewards of our increasingly imperiled Natural World.

This sole position, held by Anne Strozyk, is invaluable to maintaining important programs such as : Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWLEDge and Youth Climate Institute, incorporating STEM learning. These experiences can lead to careers helping to solve the climate crisis and building “Green infrastructure”, thus insuring a sustainable environment.

As a former educator in the HCPSS, grandmother of two HCPSS students, and as a member of the Howard County Bird Club for 48 years, I feel it is IMPERATIVE to continue this valuable partnership position. It seems like a well spent, cost effective, dividend to the benefit of our students and a positive reflection on how the HCPSS values Environmental Education.

Respectfully,
Eileen S. Clegg

From: E Kato <euk369@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 24, 2024 9:08 PM
To: boe@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail
Subject: Please continue environmental education in HCPSS

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

I recently learned that the BOE is proposing to cut hands on environmental education for Howard County students. I feel this would be a shortsighted and misguided step. Both of my children went through the HCPSS (Talbot Springs/Lake Elkhorn/Oakland Mills), and the top notch environmental activities were a core part of the education they received. Environmental classes and trips sparked my daughter's interest in science, laying the groundwork for her current premed/computer science studies at UMD. Perhaps more importantly, we are now seeing the impact of environmental ignorance through the rising toll of climate change. How can we expect our children to understand that they need to take the environment seriously if we do not invest in teaching them when they are young?

Sincerely,
Elisabeth Kato
7335 Carved Stone
Columbia, MD 21045

--
*Are you registered to vote?
Check out www.vote411.org for all your voting questions!*

From: Jana Borahay <jborah9359@inst.hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, January 24, 2024 7:43 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Proposed Budget Cut to Environmental Educator Position

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear the Howard County Council,

I am writing to express my disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWLEDge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can do better! Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students.

Sincerely, Jana Borahay

From: DREW CARLSON <sueanddrew@verizon.net>
Sent: Wednesday, January 24, 2024 4:04 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Environmental Educator at the Conservancy

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

During my 23 years with HCPSS as a science paraeducator at Centennial High School, I witnessed the initiation of the Environmental Educator at the Conservancy. I saw the high school Watershed Report Card begin, grow and flourish; and the Monarch Project make young naturalists of elementary students.

I was proud that our school system provided hands-on, cutting-edge environmental field experiences, and did so on a shoe string budget.

In retirement I have chosen, along with a veritable army of highly trained, knowledgeable volunteers, to donate my time for the ambitious, world renown 6th Grade Climate **Knowledge** Initiative & the Climate Ambassadors network. This army of volunteers is “commanded” by the **Environmental Educator**; conducting 14 simultaneous, 10 student climate hikes and 6 exciting, hands-on sessions discussing climate justice in our communities and the origins and travels of the food we eat.

Enthusiasm, interest and passion for environmental science has never been greater or more critical. Highly successful programs will be cut off at the knees.

At a recent Conservancy Lecture, a Carroll County Watershed Restoration Engineer tasked attendees to encourage students & younger family members to pursue a career in environmental science as those positions are in great demand. He receives calls weekly for job offers. Statistics show that students and young adults consider combating climate change one of the most important issues they face. In my view, the retention of the Environmental Educator at the Conservancy is critical for HCPSS to fulfil, rather than fail, its mission goal of “making students College and Career Ready.”

One person DOES make a difference. Please fund the Environmental Educator at the Conservancy.

Regards,
Susan R. Carlson
3706 Chateau Ridge Drive
Ellicott City, MD

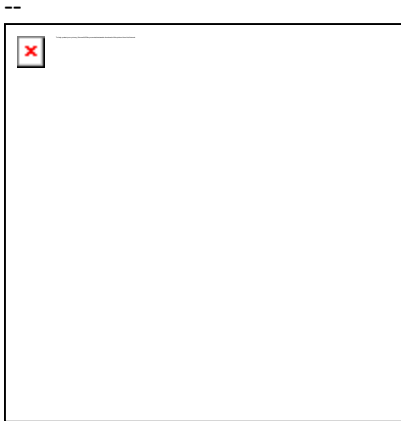
From: Taya Byrd <clientservices@tayabyrd.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 24, 2024 10:12 AM
To: boe@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail; CouncilDistrict3@howardcountymd.gov
Subject: Environmental Education

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Community Leaders,
I am writing to express my disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWLEDge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can do better! Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students.
Sincerely,

Taya Byrd



Certified Pricing Strategy Advisor
Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices PFR
Columbia, MD
443.741.2928 cell
443.627.2900 office

[What's My Home Worth?](#)

From: Berkheimers <tgtberk@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 24, 2024 9:01 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Environmental Education Program

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I realize how challenging budget season can be. However, I was greatly disappointed to learn that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut.

A strong environmental program is a must at this time. Students need to appreciate our natural environment and understand the impact humans have on it. Additionally in recent years it has come to light the role that the environment has on our physical and mental health. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWledge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education.

Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students.

Sincerely,
Terri Berkheimer
(North Laurel)

From: [Adreon Hubbard](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: Fund Environmental Ed in HCPSS
Date: Thursday, January 25, 2024 11:37:13 AM

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

Dear Howard County Council,

As a retired teacher and environmental advocate, I am writing to express my disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWledge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can do better! Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students.

Adreon Hubbard
Retired teacher, Baltimore City Public Schools
Maryland Master Naturalist volunteer

From: Alan Pflugrad <pflugal@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 25, 2024 1:06 PM
To: Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail
Cc: Kathleen Reilly; Terry R. Matthews M. S.
Subject: Keep HCPSS Environmental position

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Please don't cut the HCPSS Environmental Educator position.

Currently that position is filled by an outstanding educator (Ann Strozyk) who has expertly leveraged Howard County's many environmental programs directly into the school system.

Undoubtably, this transfer of knowledge has enabled HCPSS teachers to more effectively (saving \$) educate our students.

I have witnessed the successful impact, personally watching students learn, and display, critical environmental science.

The position integrates other state, county and non profit resources such as the Md DNR, Howard County Conservancy, Robinson Nature Center, etc. Every component is better because of the youth engaged in this manner. Teachers inside the system cannot do this.

Now, with the imminent challenge of global warming and the critical need for sustainable solutions, is NOT the time to negatively impact our children's focus on this science.

Alan Pflugrad
Howard County Master Watershed Steward

Alan Pflugrad

From: AParks <aparks5@comcast.net>
Sent: Thursday, January 25, 2024 4:14 PM
To: boe@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail
Subject: HCPSS Environmental Education Position

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Ladies and gentlemen,

I am writing to express my concern and disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be eliminated. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at a critical time for our climate! Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWLEDge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide direct hands-on STEM learning for our county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding for environmental education. We can and must do better! Please consider funding this critically important program, including the HCPSS Environmental Educator, for our county students.

Sincerely,

Alice E. Parks
2731 Wynfield Road
West Friendship, MD 21794

Sent from my iPad

From: Amrutha Alibilli <amrutha.alibilli@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 25, 2024 4:21 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: 1/25/24 BoE HCPSS Environmental Educator Testimony

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Hello Howard County Council,

I hope you are doing well!

My name is Amrutha Alibilli, and I am currently a first-year student at the University of Maryland, College Park. As a former Youth Climate Institute Ambassador and a student who has known Mrs. Ann Strozyk for the past 4 years, I have experienced the direct impact of her relentless and perpetual efforts to cultivate a rising generation of empowered youth climate activists.

By founding the Howard County Youth Climate Institute (YCI), Mrs. Strozyk has become an invaluable mentor for countless students, sparking our journey into engaging in continual sustainability activism. She has dedicated countless hours to the development and growth of YCI, and we are all sincerely grateful for inspiring us to make our environmental ideas a reality. Under her instruction, we were able to organize a myriad of diverse sustainability community activities, such as youth action summits, LED light bulb exchanges, clothing swaps, legal environmental testimonies, stream restoration projects, and gardening initiatives.

YCI began in 2020 with only 30 students from 10 high schools eager to make an environmental impact. Under Mrs. Strozyk's vision, it has blossomed into a powerful sustainable movement with hundreds of students in 25 different chapters in various locations not only in Howard County but across Maryland and even in Alabama. The program allows students of diverse backgrounds to unite under a common goal of combating the global climate crisis and sparking environmental action. Under Mrs. Strozyk's charismatic leadership, YCI students were driven to develop ingenious novel solutions to local environmental issues, including building a stream rover to aid in stream restoration and water quality analysis. Such interdisciplinary applications of STEM and the environment demonstrate the academic potential for students to integrate their classroom knowledge and skills through experiential environmental opportunities.

Personally, her guidance and support have allowed me to transform from a soft-spoken environmental enthusiast to an outspoken advocate initiating local environmental change. Inspired by her unmatched passion for the environment, I am eager to expand my environmental journey on campus and beyond, exploring the intersectionality between healthcare and the environment.

Ultimately, Mrs. Strozyk is truly an irreplaceable asset to the HCPSS community, and we implore you to consider preserving her position as HCPSS Environmental Educator, so future generation students will continue to receive crucial environmental education and prioritize leading sustainable lifestyles. Considering that climate change is an urgent, threatening issue that impacts us all, it is essential that we all collaborate to expand environmental education programs, initiate advocacy campaigns, and take sustainable action to ensure a brighter, greener future.

Mrs. Strozyk has helped sow the integral seeds to build a flourishing environmental movement in our community, and we hope we can continue to work under her mentorship to further lead environmental initiatives and preserve our planet for future generations.

Thank you very much for your invaluable time and consideration, and I sincerely hope you will consider the integral role of Mrs. Strozyk as the HCPSS Environmental Educator!

Please feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions or need any additional information.

Sincerely,
Amrutha Alibilli

*YCI Certified Ambassador with Honors
Freshman Honors Student at UMD, College Park*

From: Beth Iseminger <beth.iseminger@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 25, 2024 6:27 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Save environmental education!

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear County Council,

I am writing to express my disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWledge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can do better! Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students.

Sincerely,
Elizabeth Iseminger
Highland, MD

From: Evelyn Mogren <calibercarvings@verizon.net>
Sent: Thursday, January 25, 2024 1:19 PM
To: boe@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail
Subject: HCPSS funding

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Board of Education members, Calvin Ball and Howard County Board members,

My evenings are not free for meetings but, I am taking the time to email you of an issue dear to my heart: youth and the environment.

I vehemently oppose the funding cut on the HCPSS Environmental Educator position. Howard County and the schools are concerned about the environment? Then put the money where your mouth is on Howard County Environmental issues at school (one native or vegetable garden at a school is not enough). I go camping with SOME of these kids. I teach the environmental science MB (with hands-on experiments!) and spend time telling SOME of them how important the outdoor environment is to humans but, MORE youth need to experience this. Do the schools, culture and County know these youth are the key to our future environment? The Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can do better. Strongly, urgently, thoughtfully reconsider funding this critically important program. Keep our HCPSS environmental educator!

Sincerely,
Evelyn Mogren
Scoutmaster
Oakland Mills Resident

P.S. As a Scoutmaster I know that hands-on learning is superior to the sit and learn model. The STEM learning of: Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWledge and Youth Climate Institute, that these kids are exposed to, not only provide science education, but inspire students to be future stewards and can propel them into green careers which are sorely needed in MD and our country!

Heidi Huett
3232 Old Fence Ct.
Ellicott City, MD 21042

January 25, 2024

Dear HCPSS Board of Education, Howard County Executive, and Howard County Council,

I advocate for saving the environmental education teaching position.

I am a former HCPSS teacher who left the system because I couldn't keep up with the time demands of the position. It makes my head spin to think that teachers will be forced to "do even more with less" if these budget cuts occur.

My children are long graduated from HCPSS. And as already mentioned, I don't currently work for the school system. But I will be directly affected by what happens as a result of these hearings—as will all of you.

We live in an increasingly artificial world—one where it is common for our young people to spend much of their free time indoors scanning social media or watching screens in other ways. Spending time outdoors might only mean participating in a sport. Our society is also increasingly urban. Prime real estate is gobbled up by developers to become shopping centers, parking lots, and new housing.

I was lucky growing up. I came from a small town and my dad immersed me in the natural world. We dug our own worms in our backyard garden for fishing bait. We camped often and spent time in the woods learning to identify trees and played in streams. I cared about the environment because it was my playground. I wear a "tree of life" pendant and my email address is "gardenheidi" and I still go camping and fishing.

Last spring, I volunteered at the school where I used to teach. The fourth and fifth grade students were building a pollinator garden. I know that not every kid is comfortable cuddling up to worms, but I was shocked at just how foreign the concept of "dirt" was for most of the kids. I spent much of my time calming down shrieking kids and explaining that the bugs and worms actually belonged in the dirt.

It was clear these kids hadn't enjoyed the same upbringing that I had. They were certainly benefiting through the exposure of this garden project, but in my opinion, they needed a lot more dirt in their lives.

Unless our young people learn about the environment—how to see it, how to feel comfortable in it, how to understand it, how to enjoy it, how can we expect them to care about it?

And for ALL our sakes, we need them to care! We need them to care and become involved--now more than ever!

Climate Change is real. Just turn on the TV and on any given day you'll see super storms, rising sea level flooding, or other extreme weather. Environmentally-irresponsible development is also real. I live in Ellicott City. I invite you--today--to take a stroll down Main Street and watch workmen dismantling our historic buildings and begin digging the giant mega-million dollar tunnel to mitigate future flooding and loss of life.

The impacts of climate change will affect every one of us. We may not experience a wildfire in Howard County, but we will experience rising costs for food and housing. Insurance costs will skyrocket. Scarcity of resources and increased pollution will also occur to levels that will impact our world—maybe not today. Maybe not in our lifetimes. But our children and grandchildren will certainly bear the brunt of life-changing climate change if individuals aren't concerned and involved in seeking solutions.

The environmental education position provides students exposure, and teaches students how to interpret our environment--how we can make a positive impact. It is a program building understanding of our surroundings and teaching students to care.

And we need our students to care. We need our students to CARE!

Our students are our future. I don't know about you, but I want to know they care about the environment and know that we are providing opportunities that can ignite sparks revealing a path toward finding solutions.

I propose that of all school positions, the environmental education position is the MOST important. Through the environmental education program, 15,000 students annually experience the outdoors in a meaningful way—in a way that can't be captured on a YouTube video or in a book.

Math scores, reading scores, the arts, programs, etc., are all important. But none of that matters if we don't have an environment and planet where we have the luxury to prioritize such things. If we don't teach our children to care about our environment, nothing else will matter.

All of us, but especially our children and grandchildren, deserve a future in a healthy environment. It won't happen by accident. Please help our young people of today learn to care about the environment, to protect it, to preserve it, and to learn to do their part.

Please continue the environmental education position in the HCPSS.

People don't learn to care in a vacuum. People care and get involved because they understand.

I hope you understand.

Sincerely,

Heidi Huett

gardenheidi@verizon.net

From: [Jane Hershey](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: Elimination of HCPSS Environmental Educator position
Date: Thursday, January 25, 2024 10:47:18 AM

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

Dear Howard County Council

I am writing to express my disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWLEDge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can do better! Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students.

Sincerely,

Jane Hershey, MD

Concerned parent
Maryland Master Naturalist

[Sent from the all new AOL app for iOS](#)

From: Joanne Winters <jwinters6347@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 25, 2024 4:48 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Fwd:

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

FYI

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Joanne Winters** <jwinters6347@gmail.com>
Date: Thu, Jan 25, 2024, 2:44 PM
Subject:
To: <boe@hcpss.org>

Hi.

My name is Joanne Winters. I am a retired teacher/administrator from the Howard County Public School System. After 39 1/2 years of service I retired, became a Master Gardener, a Master Naturalist, and began volunteering at the Howard County Conservancy. I felt this was a great way to give back to a county I love and help students learn about and appreciate their environment. I am writing to ask you to please continue supporting and funding Ann Strozyk 's position as HCPSS Environmental Educator. She has done an outstanding job of educating students and getting them involved in caring for our environment.

Example 1

While volunteering with a high school stream studies group I came across a student who said she was not going to go into the stream because she had on a brand new pair of shoes and she was not going to get them messed up by taking them off and putting on boots. I told her that was fine. She did not have to go into the stream. She could sit on the bench right beside the stream and watch what was going on. A few minutes later I saw a boy in the stream stand up holding a rock and say, "Wow! You should see this!" A lot of the students in the stream went over to him. In less than a minute, the girl on the bench kicked off her shoes, put on the boots and was in the stream going toward the boy holding the rock.

Example 2

Another day as I was putting some equipment from the stream studies field trip into a tote bag a student came up to me and said, "I'll help you with that." I smiled and thanked her. She said, "You know, I grew up in Howard County and I want you to know this is the best field trip I have ever been on." I replied " I'm happy to hear that, but why did you think it was the best?" She thought about it then said, "I guess it's because on other field trips we go and watch people do stuff, but on this one we did it ourselves, and that was cool!"

Our students need hands-on experiences like these. Please vote to fund Ann Strozyk 's position as HCPSS Environmental Educator so that she may continue the excellent work she done.

From: [Joseph MacKrell](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: HCPSS Environmental Educator position
Date: Thursday, January 25, 2024 12:02:56 PM

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

Dear Council,

I am writing to express my disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWLEDge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can do better! Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students.

Sincerely,

Joe MacKrell

From: Marti Ellerbrock <marti.ellerbrock@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 25, 2024 7:07 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Environmental Education position

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Good morning,

I am writing to express my disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWLEDge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can do better! Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students.

Sincerely,
Marti Ellerbrock

From: M. J. Loll and E. M. Salmon <wbnuhatch@verizon.net>
Sent: Thursday, January 25, 2024 8:42 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: County schools to cut environmental education programs

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Good Morning Howard County Council Members,

I was shocked and disappointed to hear that the Howard County Board of Education was planning to cut the position of Ann Strozyk, the county's sole environmental educator. I think this subject is absolutely vital in this time of climate crisis. I understand that climate change and environmental science will continue to be taught in our schools - Howard County has not succumbed to climate denialism - the loss of a dedicated program will shortchange our students in the long run. This type of education needs to be expanded, not shrunk.

In addition, elimination of Ms. Strozyk's position will eliminate the environmental education program HCPSS conducts with the Howard County Conservancy. The partnership between HCPSS and the Conservancy has generated over \$1.2 million in grants over the past 5 years to support Howard County students, funding science equipment, teacher training and bus transportation. This funding would end with cessation of the environmental ed program.

I urge you to confer with the Howard County Board of Elections and ask them to keep Ms. Strozyk's position, the partnership with the Conservancy, and all of the good things for our students she and the conservancy provide.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Michael Loll
6642 Allview Drive
Columbia, MD 21046

From: Rachel DiGrazia <digraziamama@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 25, 2024 4:36 PM
To: boe@hcpss.org; CouncilMail; Ball, Calvin
Subject: Environmental Education Program

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Good afternoon all,

I am writing to express my disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWLEDge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students.

These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education - neighboring counties like Prince George's and Montgomery have entire environmental education centers run by the school district and multiple educators on staff for environmental education. Even Baltimore County has more environmental education to offer than we currently have; certainly cutting out this position would put us far behind surrounding counties.

We can do better! Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students. This is the ONLY environmental educator position in the county, and through grants awarded to the Howard County Conservancy, this one educator provides hands on environmental education opportunities to over 15,000 kids.

Best wishes,
Rachel DiGrazia
410-698-2793

From: ralove100@gmail.com
To: boe@hcpss.org
Cc: [Ball, Calvin](#); [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: Please do not Cut Environmental Education in HCPSS
Date: Thursday, January 25, 2024 9:42:44 AM

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

Dear Board of Education,

I am writing again to express my concerns about HCPSS cuts in environmental education. Early childhood environmental education continuing through middle and high school is a primary path for our younger generation to understand basic science driven by curiosity. Understanding how the environment works is a synthesis of all areas of education involving biology, chemistry, physics, math and, of course, literature. Scrapping environmental education programs will adversely impact HCPSS's ability to support STEM and diversity programs aimed at training our youth in coping with a world now severely compromised by climate change. Cutting these programs is cutting our ability to anything about it.

Richard Love
7525 Yellow Bonnet Place
Columbia, MD 21046
E: ralove100@gmail.com
H: 410-381-3621
C: 443-538-1571

From: Ross Tierney <rftierney@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 25, 2024 12:18 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: In support of HCPSS Environmental Educator

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

[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 writing to voice my dissent against the proposal to eliminate the last remaining educator specifically tasked with bringing our children outdoors and teaching them about their environment. Environmental education is crucial for young people to build a strong and wholesome relationship with nature, some of whom may go on to commit to studying and advocating for environmental issues in their futures. Frankly, one educator is not enough, but given the proposal, I am wholly against eliminating this position. From Aristotle to Newton and into the present, the natural world is a foundational education upon which future scientists, mathematicians, artists, advocates and enthusiasts build their devotion. Let's invest in our children by retaining this program.

Regards,
Ross Tierney

From: merkfam2@verizon.net
Sent: Thursday, January 25, 2024 11:33 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: BOE budget cut to Environmental Educator

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Council Members and your staff,

I am writing to express my extreme disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is AGAIN proposed to be cut in the coming year's BOE budget. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our environment. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWLEDge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that enhance science education, inspire future stewards and build environmental careers will be eliminated. Their loss will place the County in non-compliance with State law that requires completion of Environmental Literacy programs for graduation.

Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. Meg Boyd, Executive Director of the Howard County Conservancy, will be providing detailed information on this point at the upcoming budget BOE hearings as well as the return on investment the BOE receives from their funding of this one position.

We MUST do better! Please join me in urging the BOE to restore funding to this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students.

Woody Merkle

Volunteer Master Naturalist and Watershed Steward – Howard County Conservancy

From: [Jem Tacadena](#)
To: bill_barnes@hcpss.org; [CouncilMail](#); boe@hcpss.org; [Ball, Calvin](#)
Subject: HCC Environmental Educator Funding Appeal
Date: Friday, January 26, 2024 5:17:27 PM

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

Dear Dr. Ball, members of the Howard County Council, members of the Howard County Board of Education, and Acting-Superintendent Barnes,

I am writing to express my disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWLEDge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can do better! Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students.

Sincerely,

Jem Tacadena

HCC Board Director

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone
Get [Outlook for Android](#)

From: Lori Levine <lorishelle@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 26, 2024 8:01 PM
To: boe@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail
Subject: Environmental Education Programs

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Dr. Ball, members of the Howard County Council, members of the Howard County Board of Education, and
Acting-Superintendent Barnes:

I am writing to express my disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWledge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. We can do better! With climate change being an existential threat that is only getting worse, it is imperative to educate our children on the importance of environmental stewardship. Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students.

Sincerely,
Lori Levine

From: Megan O'Hanlon <meganohanlon@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 26, 2024 10:08 AM
To: boe@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail
Subject: Save HCPSS environmental educator position!

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Good morning,

I am writing to express my disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWledge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. Why would we take this away from our students? We can do better! Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students.

Sincerely,
Megan O'Hanlon Solis, mom to 2 HCPSS elementary students

From: Megan O'Hanlon <meganohanlon@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 26, 2024 10:08 AM
To: boe@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail
Subject: Save HCPSS environmental educator position!

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Good morning,

I am writing to express my disappointment that the HCPSS Environmental Educator position is proposed to be cut. Without school system support of environmental education, students will not have access to hands-on outdoor science experiences at an absolutely critical time for our climate. Programs like the Watershed Report Card, Climate kNOWledge and Youth Climate Institute rely on this position to provide hands-on STEM learning for county students. These incredibly important programs that provide science education, inspire future stewards and build green careers will be decimated. Howard County schools lag far behind other counties in funding of environmental education. Why would we take this away from our students? We can do better! Please reconsider funding this critically important program – by keeping the HCPSS environmental educator – for our county students.

Sincerely,
Megan O'Hanlon Solis, mom to 2 HCPSS elementary students

From: allison korn <allisonkorn@comcast.net>
Sent: Saturday, January 27, 2024 2:36 PM
To: CouncilMail; Ball, Calvin
Subject: My opinion on the proposed cut too the HCPSS Environmental Educator position

Follow Up Flag: Flag for follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council,

I am writing to urge a reversal on the proposal to cut the environmental educator position from the school system budget. I realize budgets are tight but now is the time to enhance environmental education not cut it. With the crazy weather we've been experiencing it seems obvious that we need to motivate and engage the younger generation to care about the problems confronting the earth. Certainly more exposure to tailored environmental education will help us cope with the environmental/climate change challenges we face. Please find the funds to keep the environmental educator in place.

Sincerely,

Allison Korn, 6550 Carlinda Ave, Columbia 21046

From: jack@cleancuts.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 13, 2024 9:32 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Do Not Cut Ann Strozyk and the Environmental Program

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council:

While I understand that the county faces budget problems, I urge you to keep the County School's Environmental Program by finding ways to cut in other areas.

This program uses many volunteers, so the cost to the county is truly minimal.

This program is vital to the current generation in schools, who will have to live with and solve the problems created by previous generations.

Information students learn in the program is vital to our planet's future.

Howard County ranks in the Top 10 on the list of highest per capita income counties in the entire country.

Howard County students have an excellent potential to be leaders in our society.

I urge you to retain this vital program and its outstanding environmental educator, Ms. Ann Strozyk.

Howard County cannot afford to abandon the environmental education.

It would be an historic tragedy in these crucial times.

Respectfully,

Jack Heyrman

Jack Heyrman
Chairman

Clean Cuts & Cerebral Lounge

2901 Chestnut Avenue

Baltimore, MD 21211

410.467.4231

4100 Wisconsin Avenue, 1st Floor

Washington, DC 20016

202.237.8999

www.cerebral.tv

www.cleancuts.com

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From: [Kurt Schwarz](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: Keep the Environmental Educator on the Payroll
Date: Thursday, February 29, 2024 10:32:40 PM

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We have but one. It is a state requirement to carry out environmental education. We cannot afford to lose this treasure.

Kurt Schwarz
7329 Wildwood Court
Columbia, MD 21046
krschwal@verizon.net
443-538-2370

From: [Drew Carlson](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#); [Ball, Calvin](#)
Subject: Re: Restoration of the Environmental Educator Position by the Howard County Board of Education
Date: Saturday, March 2, 2024 9:27:35 AM
Attachments: [DEC_EnvEducatorTestimony.pdf](#)

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

Dear County Executive Ball and Council Members,

This is just a quick note to express my unqualified and total support of the decision of the Howard County Board of Education to restore the Environmental Educator Position eliminated in the FY2025 budget proposed by the superintendent.

Personally, I see this Position as a key element for Howard County to fulfill the **Maryland State requirements for Environmental Literacy Instructional Programs for Grades Prekindergarten - 12** (mandated by the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMMAR) 13A.04.17.01). The Environmental Educator who works at the Howard County Conservancy as an employee of the our county has developed, maintains, and continues to improve the many volunteer programs that are available to thousands of Howard County students which fulfill these requirements. Thus, the position serves an essential public interest that must be maintained.

In January, I submitted written testimony for the Superintendent's Proposed FY2025 Operating Budget Public Hearing. The attached testimony describes additional benefits of the Environmental Educator Position that bolster my enthusiasm, and I urge your continued support to fund the Position.

Sincerely,

Drew E. Carlson
3706 Chateau Ridge Drive
Ellicott City, MD 21042

Written Testimony for the Superintendent's Proposed FY 2025 Operating Budget Public Hearing, Thursday, January 25, 2024 – 7 p.m.

Honorable Chair and Members of the Board,

I write in opposition to the proposed elimination of the Environmental Educator position. For the last 18 years, the County's investment in this single FTE in combination with resources from the Howard County Conservancy has produced a program in environmental education that is recognized as "cutting edge" not only in Maryland but across the Nation. Over one million dollars of grant support have been garnered to support the many projects that our County's Environmental Educator, Ms. Ann Strozyk, has nurtured. I am a retired researcher who has written, reviewed, and administered grants and can attest to the importance of this FTE to obtain outside funding. This commitment highlights the local support of any new proposal and boosts the reviewers' assessment in turn.

Ms. Strozyk has spear-headed hands-on and field-based opportunities for more than 15,000 students in Howard County. I volunteer for both the Watershed Report Card and the Climate kNOWLEDge programs and can't begin to outline all of their positives, so I will describe only two here: 1) When I lead hikes of sixth graders, not only are the students enthusiastic but the parents who chaperone are impressed with how much they learn; and 2) Ms. Strozyk has recruited and ably trained so many outstanding volunteers that each of us can work with a small group of about ten students for most exercises. Each volunteer has a unique background to offer, and many have supplemented their knowledge with Master Naturalist and other advanced training. Thus, the County's small investment supporting Ms. Strozyk's effort provides unique small-group experiences that would be otherwise unavailable in the HCPSS curriculum.

In my view, the question is not whether this position should be cut, but why is our commitment so small? Throughout Central Maryland, only Howard and Baltimore counties lack an Environmental Education Center. In our County, there is only one Environmental Educator per 57,000 students compared to a more robust ratio of 1:11,432 throughout the region. HCPSS is getting a lot of "bang for the buck", and I strongly support the retention of this critical position.

Respectfully submitted, Drew Carlson

From: [Joanne](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: County environmental educators
Date: Saturday, March 2, 2024 9:55:16 AM

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Dear Council members,

Please keep funding the Howard County Environmental Educators positions. It is an important program for our students.

I am a former Howard County teacher, resident of Columbia for 49 years, mother and grandmother of Howard County students and a nature lover.

Sincerely,

JoAnne Miller

Sent from my iPhone

From: Jeff & Sharon Gustin <sjgustin113@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 3, 2024 7:38 PM
To: Ball, Calvin
Cc: CouncilMail
Subject: Environmental Educator position

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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Dear Mr. Ball,

I am in my 11th year working as a volunteer naturalist at the Howard County Conservancy with Ann Strozyk and Howard County secondary students.

I can't begin to tell you how much I personally have learned from participating in the various programs that Ann has piloted and developed. Ann is in a unique position to bring her knowledge as a science teacher of many years into the field to engage literally thousands of young students in the study of our environment. The programs that Ann has developed have drawn attention & subsequent grants from NOAA and DNR. Her high school students participate in a Watershed Summit each April to present their findings and recommendations. They also present their findings and recommendations to our legislators in Annapolis. Ann's influence & ingenuity has reached beyond Howard County. Many of Ann's environmental programs have been adopted state wide and some have even gone beyond MD borders. I'm sure you personally have attended some of Ann's environmental programs.

These students are our hope for the future to help control climate change. Having them work in the field has a much bigger impact on them than just classroom learning. Ann is a joy to work with. Her experience, knowledge, passion, energy, patience, along with her appreciation for her volunteers, are priceless.

You would be doing a great disservice to Ann and to our children if you eliminate the Environmental Educator position. I sincerely hope that you will take the advice of the Howard County Board of Education who allowed for the budget to retain this very important position.

Sincerely,
Sharon Gustin
113 Oakdale Ave.
Catonsville, MD 21228

From: [AParks](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: Please Keep the Environmental Educator Position
Date: Tuesday, March 5, 2024 9:33:35 PM

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

Dear Council Members,

I am contacting you to ask you to please keep the Environmental Educator Position in the budget. Without this position, the County schools will not be meeting their educational criteria, the students will be shortchanged in their education and the citizens will not be able to have the future leaders of our world educated in a critical area for our survival in this planet. Please do the right thing!

Thank you,

Alice Parks
443 722 3526
2731 Wynfield Rd
West Friendship Elementary

Sent from my iPad