
From: joby jacob <joby538@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 26, 2024 11:54 PM
To: Ball, Calvin; boe@hcpss.org; CouncilMail; bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Urgent Appeal for 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.]

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

I hope this letter finds you well. As a proud parent of a music-loving student, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

I also want to remind our elected officials that music education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals and fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My child's involvement in music in Howard County schools has not only enriched their academic experience but has also contributed to their overall personal development.

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I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that music programs make to our student's lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

Please work together to solve any proposed cuts to music funding and continue supporting all programs considered well-managed and *essential* in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jobbymole

From: Jem Tacadena <jtacade1@jhu.edu>
Sent: Friday, January 26, 2024 5:24 PM
To: bill_barnes@hcpss.org; CouncilMail; boe@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS funding

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Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jem Tacadena
Mom of 3rd Grade Cellist

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

From: [Rachel Cowperthwaite](#)
To: [BoE Email](#); [Ball, Calvin](#); [CouncilMail](#); [Bill Barnes](#)
Subject: [SUSPECTED SPAM] Urgent Appeal for HCPSS funding
Date: Friday, January 26, 2024 6:03:39 AM

[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 Country Board of Education, and Acting-Superintendent Barnes,

I hope this email finds you well. My name is Rachel Cowperthwaite, and I'm a ninth grader at Atholton High School. I am writing to express my concern over budget and program cuts, specifically for the music department. I have participated in orchestra since the third grade, and I'd like to advocate for future third graders to also have this experience. Music has been an essential part of my education, teaching me creativity, discipline, and concentration. I truly believe that music education deserves funding and support, as it supports a student's whole education and personal development.

This year I was given an English assignment to write a 6-page speculative fiction story about an issue currently facing our society, and as a dedicated student involved in music, I chose fine arts in schools. I conducted my research on the impact of fine arts on education and how they are being threatened. I concluded from my research that an aesthetic education is needed for the complete education of the student, and that it also stimulates the brain, teaches responsibility, and aids students in achieving in other academics. [If you're interested in reading the story, this is the link.](#)

Again, I'd like to request that you work to find a way around cutting funding and support to a vital part of what makes our school system such an exceptional one.

Sincerely,
Rachel Cowperthwaite

From: Amanda Salamon <esch.amanda@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 27, 2024 4:11 PM
To: Ball, Calvin; boe@hcpss.org; CouncilMail; bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS funding

Follow Up Flag: Flag for follow up
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Dear Dr. Ball, members of the Howard County Council, members of the Howard County Board of Education, and
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It is shocking to see the report regarding so many cuts to positions in HCPSS. Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

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I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that music programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to music funding and continue to support **all programs** that are considered well-managed and *essential* in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Amanda Salamon
301-385-9444

From: Susan Kim <myfavoritegnome@hotmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 27, 2024 9:14 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Save the music program!

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Susan Kim
myfavoritegnome@hotmail.com

From: Carlos Castrillon <castrillon77@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 28, 2024 8:02 AM
To: Ball, Calvin; boe@hcpss.org; CouncilMail; bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS Music Funding

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Carlos Castrillon

From: Christen Rintamaki <christen@spiffycake.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 28, 2024 4:20 PM
To: Ball, Calvin; boe@hcpss.org; CouncilMail; bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: 2025 education budget cuts

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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Good afternoon,

I am reaching out because I'm honestly just so incredibly sad that you guys have decided to cut 3rd grade orchestra from the budget starting next year. I get it, other schools don't offer 3rd grade orchestra, hard decisions had to be made, etc. Well, my 8 year old 3rd grader just had his first orchestra concert this past week. Y'all should have seen how PROUD he was. He wanted to wear a tie but I told him it wasn't part of the outfit. He was a little nervous, practiced a ton extra over the winter holidays, and told me he was so excited for me to see him play with his friends. He's not going to be a professional cellist by any means, but this gives him something to be excited about and proud of. We are facing a mental health crisis amongst our children in this nation. I get it, you have to cut somewhere. Perhaps 3rd grade orchestra is not the best choice though. I would also argue you are doing harm to future revenues. Why? Because folks move to HoCo for the AMAZING schools. You will tarnish your crazy awesome school branding if you start cutting things that matter to folks and set HoCo apart. This message brought to you by a former very happy Linthicum resident that had to escape that school system for the sake of my 3 children's quality education.

So what can you do? Address the revenue problem would be my advice. Who is setting the HCPSS budget in comparison to other county expenditures? I ask because good golly does Parks and Rec have a ridiculous budget. Don't get me wrong I love the parks, but I can walk to 2 massive playgrounds from my front door. I can drive to a dozen more. I am constantly seeing those HoCo parks and rec folks driving around on their little 4 wheelers around Centennial Lake and I dont know what they're doing but I'd venture to guess too much. Or maybe increase revenue other ways. The HoCo summer camps are sold out/filled in milliseconds every summer. My husband sets an alarm and is at his laptop ready to go and still only gets my kids into about half the camps we were after. Open those boogies up to more capacity and charge more!! Charge residents per trash bag of trash! That will get them recycling and composting more besides. Increase county taxes on luxury purchases!

Forward my message up to your bosses in charge of HoCo higher level budget please if you are able.

Please save 3rd grade orchestra for my 6 and 3 year old boys.

--

Christen Rintamaki
www.spiffycake.com
770-330-2348

From: Stephanie Saylor <stephaniebsaylor@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 28, 2024 3:19 PM
To: Ball, Calvin; boe@hcpss.org; CouncilMail; bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Save Howard County's music program: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS funding

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

It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

Frankly, my family moved to this county for the schools. We want the best for our three boys. We sacrificed to live here to give them what we felt was the best education in the region. As I'm sure you know, early exposure to music and the arts creates a foundation to excel in overall education. Our music programs are an example of opportunities that set us apart from some surrounding school districts. My oldest son is in all GT classes at FQMS. Since third grade, orchestra has been his favorite class. His elementary orchestra instruction was his favorite teacher. Practicing viola was one of his favorite things to do during the COVID lockdowns. It helped him with the anxiety that plagued so many children. I will be forever thankful for Mrs. Pak and the elementary orchestra programs in the county for helping him grow as an individual.

Please stop chipping away at what makes HCPSS special. My boys and all the children in Howard County deserve better.

Thank you for your time.
Sincerely,
Stephanie Saylor

From: Bethany Burleson <blb0425@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 29, 2024 5:24 PM
To: Ball, Calvin; boe@hcpss.org; CouncilMail; bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Re: Appeal for HCPSS Funding

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

I hope this letter finds you well. As a proud parent of a third-grader who just started learning the viola this year, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

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I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to music funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Bethany Burleson
Columbia, MD

From: Christy Keller <clong717@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 29, 2024 7:44 PM
To: Ball, Calvin; boe@hcpss.org; CouncilMail; bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS funding for student programs

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

It is very important to my family that our elementary school keep the 3rd grade strings program and the GT enrichment curriculum. My eldest child is in 5th grade. She has played the bass since 3rd grade and has participated in every CEU offered to her. Both programs have helped her develop new skills and a better understanding of the world around her. They also help give her the extra challenge she needs while making learning enjoyable. She started excelling in math a year after starting strings and is now in GT math. The third grade strings program helps prepare young minds for GT math in 4th grade. My youngest child is in 2nd grade now and has just started the GT CEUs. It would be absolutely devastating if you took them away now. He deserves to have the same opportunities his sister did. He is looking forward to playing the bass next year, just like his big sister.

Thank you for your time,
Christy Keller
Deep Run Elementary Parent

From: Kathy Dideum <kbdideum@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 29, 2024 12:58 PM
To: Ball, Calvin; boe@hcpss.org; CouncilMail; bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS funding

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I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to music funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Dideum

Email: kbdideum@gmail.com

Cell: 510-735-7935

From: Meghan Kay <meghanecarter@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 29, 2024 8:34 PM
To: Ball, Calvin; boe@hcpss.org; CouncilMail; bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS funding

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Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Meghan Kay

From: Andy Sabaka <arsabaka@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 30, 2024 11:07 AM
To: Ball, Calvin; boe@hcpss.org; CouncilMail; bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS funding

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

As a parent of multiple children currently in our schools, I was informed of the potential substantial budget cuts to the music programs. Since my children have been in music programs starting in elementary school, all we've heard as parents is how the school system budget does not supply sufficient support to maintain the music programs. It is infuriating to then learn that the school system plans to remove even more funding from an existing major deficit.

Research consistently highlights the positive impact of music education on academic performance. Students engaged in music often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the music room and positively influence their academic achievements.

If you continue the current trajectory of cutting funds to fine arts programs in order to bolster math, science, and technology programs, the net gain for the school system's achievements will be zero and the net result will be a loss of access to important programs for a significant portion of the enrolled students. Not all students excel at math, science, and technology, just as not all students excel at fine arts. However all children need the opportunity to succeed.

Although I strongly urge the county and state to provide the revenue needed to maintain and support the existing music and fine arts programs, if they are unwilling to support the "best schools in the country" that reside in the "highest taxed county in the state", then **please find the cuts elsewhere**.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Andrew Sabaka

From: Karen DeWitt <karenndewitt@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 30, 2024 3:28 PM
To: Ball, Calvin; boe@hcpss.org; CouncilMail; bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS funding

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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Sent from my iPhone

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

I hope this letter finds you well. As a proud grandparent of a music-loving student, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

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I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to music funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Karen DeWitt
(Grandmother of Ali Megreedy - 3rd grader)

From: Lehigh Mearns <lehigh.mearns@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 30, 2024 1:21 PM
To: Ball, Calvin; boe@hcpss.org; CouncilMail; bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS funding

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that music programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to music funding and continue to support **all programs** that are considered well-managed and *essential* in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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

I hope this letter finds you well. As a proud parent of a music-loving student, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

I also want to email to remind our elected officials that music education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My child's involvement in music in Howard County schools has not only enriched their academic experience but has also contributed to their overall personal development.

Research consistently highlights the positive impact of music education on academic performance. Students engaged in music often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the music room and positively influence their academic achievements.

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I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to music funding and continue to support ***all programs*** that are considered well-managed and *essential* in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Lehigh Mearns
Proud TRES parent

--
Lehigh Mearns

From: Caleb Park <caleb13cello@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 1, 2024 11:06 PM
To: Ball, Calvin; boe@hcpss.org; CouncilMail; bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Urgent Appeal for 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.]

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

As a Howard County alumnus who went through the whole Howard County Public School education system (Jeffers Hill, Mayfield, and Long Reach), I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

Specifically, I wanted to stress the importance of retaining 3rd grade strings. I want to remind our elected officials that music education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals. My involvement in music in Howard County schools has not only enriched my academic experience but has also contributed to my overall personal development.

Research consistently highlights the positive impact of music education on academic performance. Students engaged in music often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the music room and positively influence their academic achievements. Additionally, playing music at a younger age allows for rapid growth in their playing ability. Being involved in music also opens up opportunities to meet and engage with students from diverse backgrounds. I have met so many unique and wonderful people through music, deeply enriching my student experience.

Over the past few years, I have had the opportunity to assist Mrs. Jacquelyn DeBella with her concerts at Deep Run. I have to say it brought me a lot of happiness and joy to see how excited the 3rd graders were before playing their first concert in front of their parents. When I asked them about how they were feeling, they all expressed genuine excitement. I had never been in a room so full of positive and bubbly energy. I was very impressed to see that no one was unhappy to be there. It would be a big shame if future 3rd graders were unable to have this memorable experience. I remember how excited I was everytime I had music class, and I am confident that all the students feel the same.

Furthermore, our Gold Standard music programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. The collaborative nature of musical ensembles teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that music programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to music funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you so much for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Caleb Park
NIH Postbac Researcher
B.A. in Chemistry & Music Performance
Emory University '23

From: Fernando Dominguez <fdomin@icloud.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 1, 2024 10:49 AM
To: Ball, Calvin; boe@hcpss.org; CouncilMail; bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: School budget 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.]

Good morning all,

My name is Fernando Dominguez, I am a parent at Longfellow Elementary; my wife and I moved to Columbia in 2022 from Miami, Florida because we learned amazing things about the public schools here (especially compared to what Florida's have turned into). So far, we have been blissfully impressed with our experience in the Howard County Public School System!

I am writing you today because we understand that due to budget cuts our school is facing the possibility of losing our orchestra teacher as a full-time employee. I completely respect that people with much more information than me have deemed it necessary to make these cuts, but I would like reconsideration of where the cuts are being made.

Firstly, it saddens me that the first place cuts seem to usually target is the arts, we all agree that core skills like math, science, reading, etc. are of utmost important, but art programs are also critical for a person's development at any age (See: [Study backs link between music and cognitive ability](#) and [Playing a musical instrument good for brain health in later life - study](#)). Speaking from our own personal experience, the feeling of seeing our 3rd grade daughter on stage for the first time at Wilde Lake Highschool, playing her cello with her school orchestra, was an unforgettable moment in our lives. It gave her an unrivaled confidence boost, and it motivated her to continue playing the cello instead of quitting and moving on like she's done before with other instruments.

The thought of our younger daughter (Kindergarten) not having this same opportunity due to these budget cuts and the risk of losing Mrs. Williams, genuinely breaks my heart. Even if we got her private lessons, she wouldn't have the opportunity to play with her classmates on a big, beautiful venue; or simply the chance of sharing the experience with her school friends.

Lastly, on that last point, not everyone is fortunate enough to be able to afford private lessons. Longfellow's population skews all over the socioeconomic spectrum, our demographics are mostly black and Hispanic; I have been serving as the Hispanic liaison for the PTA for about a year now and gotten to know the Hispanic families at our school. Unfortunately, they are not wealthy, far from it, it's mostly working-class families for whom a private music tutor is a stretch if not completely out of the question. What I mean is, Mrs. Williams' orchestra class (and the benefit of renting an instrument for very little money through it) are in all likelihood the only opportunity a lot of our kids will have to touch an instrument at this important early stage in their lives.

In closing, please, I implore you all to reconsider these budget cuts and really think about the effect they have on our children. Cutting the music budget is not just dismissing an employee, it's disrupting the cognitive development of our children, it's potentially removing the chance to learn an instrument from someone's life altogether.

Thank you for your time, and my apologies for this very long email.

- Fernando Dominguez

From: [Kathleen Carullo](#)
To: bill_barnes@hcpss.org; boe@hcpss.org; [Ball, Calvin](#); [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: Music program in schools
Date: Thursday, February 1, 2024 2:52:36 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 and members of the Board of Education,

I am writing regarding the proposed FY 21 HCPSS budget. I support keeping the budget funded at Dr. Martirano's requested level.

Dr. Martirano's budget proposal requests that staffing reflect the growth in our student population. Cuts in para-educators and teacher supports have put significant pressure on our teachers and administration. Teachers have been already over working to meet the demands of the students. Due to lack of para-educators, students who need extra help are not being attended.

Furthermore, during the work sessions, the Board has floated plans to trim essential programs such as music. This is unacceptable to parents! Enough cuts!!! Music is a vital program for our students' health and well-being, as well as, their academic success.

As a tax-payer of Howard County, I request the Board of Education and the County Executive go well past maintenance of effort to fund the HCPSS budget at this level. Howard County should be dedicated to providing a robust educational foundation for our children by addressing the revenue issue.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

From: Raj Tuliani <rstuliani@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 1, 2024 8:07 AM
To: Ball, Calvin; BoE Email; CouncilMail; bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Urgent Appeal for 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.]

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

I hope this letter finds you well. As a proud parent of a music-loving student, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

I also want to email to remind our elected officials that music education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My child's involvement in music in Howard County schools has not only enriched their academic experience but has also contributed to their overall personal development.

Research consistently highlights the positive impact of music education on academic performance. Students engaged in music often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the music room and positively influence their academic achievements.

Furthermore, our Gold Standard music programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. The collaborative nature of musical ensembles teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that music programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to music funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Raj Tuliani

From: Sara Johnson <sarajohnson44@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 1, 2024 1:09 PM
To: bill_barnes@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail
Subject: Save Orchestra/Strings for our children!

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 Mr. Ball, Howard County Council, Howard County Board of Education, and Acting-Superintendent Barnes,

We are parents of two 3rd grade students who LOVE orchestra! We are writing to express sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). We were unable to attend the last budget meeting regarding these cuts because that same evening we were attending their winter STRINGS CONCERT!! The winter concert last week was PACKED with a diverse group of families there to cheer for their 3rd grade students. It was beautiful and special. Of the 25 students in our girls 3rd grade class there are **only 2 students not taking strings!** Orchestra is a HUGELY popular and valued part of the 3rd grade at CLES and leads to more student involvement and a stronger school/community family.

We are concerned about the cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

PLEASE DO NOT CUT MUSIC EDUCATION or 3rd Grade Strings!

I also want to email to remind our elected officials that music education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My child's involvement in music in Howard County schools has not only enriched their academic experience but has also contributed to their overall personal development.

Research consistently highlights the positive impact of music education on academic performance. Students engaged in music often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the music room and positively influence their academic achievements.

Furthermore, our Gold Standard music programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. ***The collaborative nature of musical ensembles teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers.*** I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that music programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community. I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to music funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Sara Johnson

410-707-9738

Sarajohnson44@gmail.com

From: Thasia Palmieri <thasia.palmieri@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, February 2, 2024 9:43 AM
To: Ball, Calvin; boe@hcpss.org; CouncilMail; bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Urgent appeal for 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.]

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

I hope this letter finds you well. As a proud parent of a music-loving student, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

I also want to email to remind our elected officials that music education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My child's involvement in music in Howard County schools has not only enriched their academic experience but has also contributed to their overall personal development.

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I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that music programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to music funding and continue to support **all programs** that are considered well-managed and **essential** in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Thasia Palmieri, mom of Lorielle Palmieri (4th grade HSES), Graeme Palmieri (1st grade HSES), Ainsley Palmieri (rising Kindergartener HSES)
2700 Rocky Glen Way, Ellicott City, MD 21043
(732) 991-7264

Sent from my iPhone

From: Terri Wytko <twytko@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 4, 2024 12:14 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Proposed budget and impacts to music and GT 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.]

>> To Whom It May Concern:

>>

>> I am concerned about the proposed budget, and the impact it may have on the school programs that are near and dear to my heart. For context, my three children, ages 12, 10, and 6 attend Lake Elkhorn Middle School and Jeffers Hill Elementary School.

>>

>> First, the music program and music teachers have had a great impact on all of my children and their love of music. I am grateful that my two older sons have had the opportunity to learn how to read music, play an instrument, and perform with their peers, which has built their self-confidence. The school music class has also encouraged my daughter to “raise her voice” and speak up for what she believes in, and I believe that is an incredibly important lesson. The life-lessons that my children are learning from this program go far beyond music notes and rhythms, and this program should be protected and preserved.

>>

>> Second, the gifted/talented (GT) program has been essential to the growth and development of my two sons. They both constantly strive to expand their knowledge and challenge themselves, and honestly I don't believe that the standard school classes would have met their needs. The GT teachers at Jeffers Hill Elementary are also, in my opinion, the kindest, most caring, and supportive people. They have done an amazing job at challenging their students, but also being their biggest cheerleaders. I feel that it is very important that this program continues into the future.

>>

>> I appreciate your consideration on these matters.

>>

>> Thank you,

>>

>> -Terri Wytko

From: Laura Darby <laura@lauradarby.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2024 11:55 AM
To: Ball, Calvin; boe@hcpss.org; CouncilMail; bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Cc: Adam Darby Singh; Laura Grant
Subject: Save Our School Music 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.]

Subject: Urgent Plea to Preserve School Budgets and Music Programs for Our Children's Future

Dear Calvin Ball and other members of Howard County government,

I hope this letter finds you in good health and high spirits. I am writing to you as a concerned parent, residing in our vibrant community, and I must express my deep concern regarding the proposed budget cuts to our elementary school, particularly the potential elimination of the music program.

As a parent of children attending elementary school, I have witnessed firsthand the positive impact of music education on their mental development and overall well-being. Numerous studies have shown that exposure to music from an early age enhances cognitive abilities, improves concentration, and fosters creativity. Music education is not merely an extracurricular activity; it is a crucial component in shaping well-rounded individuals who can navigate the challenges of the future.

The mental health benefits of music education cannot be overstated. Research indicates that students engaged in music programs exhibit lower stress levels, increased emotional resilience, and improved social skills. In a time where mental health is of paramount importance, cutting the very programs that contribute to our children's psychological well-being seems counterintuitive.

Moreover, the proposed budget cuts pose a grave injustice to our dedicated teachers and hardworking students. Our educators already face the daunting task of guiding students toward success with limited resources. Further reducing staff members will only exacerbate the strain on our already overburdened educational system.

Teachers are the backbone of our community, and they deserve the necessary support to nurture the minds of the next generation. The importance of building a solid educational foundation cannot be overstated. Our community's success hinges on the investment we make in our children's education, ensuring they have the tools and resources to become future leaders, innovators, and contributors to society.

Mr Ball, I implore you to consider the long-term consequences of these proposed budget cuts. Our children deserve the best possible education, and stripping away vital programs like music education hinders their potential for growth and success. I urge you to champion the cause of education, advocate for our teachers, and safeguard the future of our community by rejecting the proposed cuts to school budgets.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I trust that you will make the right decision to preserve the quality of education for our children and uphold the values that make our community strong.

Sincerely,

Laura Darby
6282 Hidden Clearing
Columbia, MD 21045
Jeffers Hill Elementary

--

Laura Darby
+1 646 875 8872
She/Her
Skype: amalthya
www.lauradarby.com

From: Stephanie Beben <stougas@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 7, 2024 9:58 AM
To: Ball, Calvin; boe@hcpss.org; CouncilMail; bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Urgent Appeal for 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.]

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

I hope this letter finds you well. As a proud parent of a 2nd grader who is excited to start orchestra next year and a 5th grader who has benefited from 3 years of viola instruction at Longfellow Elementary School, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

I want to remind our elected officials that music education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My child's involvement in music in Howard County schools has not only enriched their academic experience but has also contributed to their overall personal development.

Research consistently highlights the positive impact of music education on academic performance. Students engaged in music often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the music room and positively influence their academic achievements.

Furthermore, our Gold Standard music programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. The collaborative nature of musical ensembles teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that music programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to music funding and continue to support **all programs** that are considered well-managed and *essential* in our county.

Sincerely,
Stephanie Beben
203-417-5343

From: Elana Fertig <elana.fertig@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 8, 2024 12:07 PM
To: Ball, Calvin; budgetfeedback@hcpss.org; boe@hcpss.org; CouncilMail; bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Urgent Appeal for 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.]

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

I hope this letter finds you well. As a proud parent of a music-loving student, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

I also want to email to remind our elected officials that music education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My child's involvement in music in Howard County schools has not only enriched their academic experience but has also contributed to their overall personal development. The music program has also played a critical means in helping my 2E child to thrive in school, benefitting from a multidisciplinary approach to special ed that makes our school system truly unique and the county a magnet for families in the region.

Research consistently highlights the positive impact of music education on academic performance. Students engaged in music often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the music room and positively influence their academic achievements.

Furthermore, our Gold Standard music programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. The collaborative nature of musical ensembles teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that music programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to music funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Elana Fertig

From: Kevin Solomowitz <ksolomowitz@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 8, 2024 11:45 AM
To: Bill Barnes; BoE Email; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS music 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.]

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

I hope this letter finds you well. As a Howard county resident, taxpayer, and voter, I am gravely concerned with the proposed budget cuts affecting our school system. It is absolutely shocking to see how many programs are due to be cut in a county that seemingly prioritizes the wonderful public school system here.

I urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every single year.

In a school system that has such high music participation with it's students that produce fantastic concerts, I am very disappointed that the very foundational class of 3rd grade orchestra is set to be cut. Instrumental music is a fundamental course that thousands of students across the county (usually the majority of third graders in each school) enroll in.

I also want to email to remind our elected officials that music education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. Our community's involvement in music in Howard County schools has not only enriched the students' academic experience but has also contributed to their overall personal development.

Research consistently highlights the positive impact of music education on academic performance. Students engaged in music often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the music room and positively influence their academic achievements.

Furthermore, our Gold Standard music programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. The collaborative nature of musical ensembles teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that music programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

Music seems like it is always one of the first programs to be negatively affected when it comes to budget discussions- it shouldn't be that way.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to music funding and continue to support ***all programs*** that are considered well-managed and *essential* in our county.

All the best,
Kevin Solomowitz

From: Z Li <liztseng.li@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 8, 2024 2:21 PM
To: bill_barnes@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin; boe@hcpss.org; CouncilMail
Subject: Urgent Appeal to Preserve Elementary Orchestra Teachers and GT 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,

Happy New Year! I hope this message finds you well. I am writing to you as a concerned parent and taxpayer from Howard County since 2016. Recently, I received news that has left me deeply troubled - the potential impact on Orchestra teachers and the county GT programs.

As a mother of two elementary students currently attending Manor Woods, I feel compelled to express my strong opinions on the matter. Specifically, I firmly believe that cutting elementary orchestra teachers would be a grave mistake. My children have been active participants in the county GT program since two years ago, and this has been a crucial part of their educational journey. One of my son is looking forward to joining the band for trombone next school year.

The thought of their dedicated teachers facing potential cuts is not only disheartening but also raises concerns about the quality of education they will receive moving forward. Music education, encompassing programs such as orchestra, band, and chorus, plays a vital role in a child's development. It instills a sense of artistry, discipline, and teamwork - qualities that extend far beyond the realm of music. GT programs from early years of their education are also a great source of inspiration, especially in a county without magnetic schools like Howard county.

I urge you to seriously reconsider any budget cuts that may impact our music teachers and GT programs. The repercussions of such decisions extend beyond mere budgetary concerns and directly affect the educational and emotional well-being of our children.

Your thoughtful reconsideration of this matter is crucial in ensuring the continuity of a comprehensive and enriching education for the students in our community. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Zoe Li
PhD alumnus of the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine
Current federal employee of the US Food and Drug Administration

From: Ali Dougherty <alexandra.n.martin@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 12, 2024 7:20 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Budget - Change is Needed - Northfield Elementary, Dunloggin Middle

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.]

County Council,

I am a parent of a Northfield Elementary School student who is currently in Kindergarten. It has come to my attention that budget cuts coming down may completely cut Northfield's beloved 3rd grade strings program and bring significant cuts to its amazing G/T and Special Ed departments. This is unacceptable. Please continue to fund ALL of these programs.

What is also unacceptable is the defunding of Dunloggin Middle School replacement school. Have you personally visited that school in the last 6 months? Can you even imagine what it will look/function like when my Kindergartener gets there in 5 years? A new school is needed and the budget needs to reflect that.

Thank you,
Ali Dougherty

From: Brian Sherman <brianjsherman@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 12, 2024 8:36 AM
To: Ball, Calvin; boe@hcpss.org; CouncilMail; bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Urgent Appeal for 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.]

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

I hope this letter finds you well. As a proud parent of a music-loving student, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

I also want to email to remind our elected officials that music education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My child's involvement in music in Howard County schools has not only enriched their academic experience but has also contributed to their overall personal development.

Research consistently highlights the positive impact of music education on academic performance. Students engaged in music often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the music room and positively influence their academic achievements.

Furthermore, our Gold Standard music programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. The collaborative nature of musical ensembles teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that music programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to music funding and continue to support **all programs** that are considered well-managed and *essential* in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Brian Sherman
brianjsherman@gmail.com

From: Christina Shields <christina.k.shields@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 12, 2024 4:00 PM
Subject: Urgent Appeal for 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.]

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

I hope this letter finds you well. As a proud parent of a music-loving student, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

I also want to email to remind our elected officials that music education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My child's involvement in music in Howard County schools has not only enriched their academic experience but has also contributed to their overall personal development.

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I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that music programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to music funding and continue to support ***all programs*** that are considered well-managed and *essential* in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Christina Shields

301-405-5562

christina.k.shields@gmail.com

From: Josh Fink <jfinky@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 12, 2024 12:32 PM
To: Ball, Calvin; BOE@hcpss.org; CouncilMail; bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Budget Cuts - impact to music 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.]

Hello to all,

I'd like to start by saying I appreciate the time and effort you put into your roles. It does not go unnoticed by me.

I'm reaching out regarding my concern for how the budget cuts will impact our Elementary School kids' education. As a parent of a 3rd and 1st grader at Northfield Elementary, I feel strongly that the 3rd Grade Strings and 4th/5th grade orchestra/band options are fantastic learning tools for our students. I'm hearing that they may be cut or severely reduced.

Dr. Nabesh (strings teacher) is an AMAZING teacher that inspires my 3rd grade daughter like few other teachers have to date. Not only teaching the basics of violin and sheet music, but much bigger things like: the importance of practice frequency vs. practice length; care for your tools, organizational skills, and overcoming challenges/struggles.

I request that you consider the importance of programs like these and find ways to keep them available in our schools. This type of enrichment cannot be easily replaced for many families.

Thank you,

Josh Fink
Northfield ES parent

From: Elizabeth Loz <elizam.71.em@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 12, 2024 3:59 PM
To: CouncilMail

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 good afternoon. My name is Reyna López. And I want to help my son feel useful and one of the ways he is less shy is by playing the violin. He is going to third grade and he is happy and excited learning more every day. The last concert he was very nervous, scared and excited, the concert was beautiful, more than beautiful, it was fantastic, the music helped him with his shyness, after the concert my son watches tutorials and wants to learn more, please I ask you on behalf of my son and each one of those children, who are many, do not take away their hope of playing the violin, support them, it is better to see a child playing the violin and not hurting another, music helps to have healthy children and to feel more confident in themselves, it raises their self-esteem. In schools they need a lot of that self-esteem with so much bullying that exists. I am a mother of one of those children who is happily playing a violin. I am very proud of what she has achieved until today. Give them the opportunity to continue that dream. It would be another achievement for them, ms. Yeoh is an excellent teacher. Please help us continue with this music program and may our children continue to increase their value and joy every day.

Atte. Reyna Lopez

From: Doreen Medio <doreenamgao@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 13, 2024 3:08 PM
To: bill_barnes@hcpss.org; boe@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS funding

[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 hope all is well. As a proud parent of music-loving students, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in Howard County. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that music programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

My children involvement in music in Howard County schools has not only enriched their academic experience but has also contributed to their overall personal development. Research consistently highlights the positive impact of music education on academic performance. Students engaged in music often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the music room and positively influence their academic achievements.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to music funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Doreen A Medio
Parent of a 6th Grade MS, 3rd Grade ES and Pre-k.

From: Shiowei Cheng <shio.the.way@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 13, 2024 5:29 PM
To: Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail; bill_barnes@hcpss.org

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 City Council, Councilman, and Superintendent,

The proposed budget cuts for the upcoming school year will greatly affect my children. Both of my sons attend Northfield Elementary school, where they have been given excellent opportunities to participate in GT programs and the elementary strings program. I have seen my older son, in 3rd grade this year, grow in confidence in himself as he learned how to play multiple songs on the viola in just a few short months. As a former elementary music teacher myself, I know the vital role the elementary strings program plays in giving children the chance to develop critical skills such as discipline, self-determination, working towards common goals with others, and fostering a sense of wonder and joy in learning. Starting in 3rd grade gives these children the leg up on all of these benefits and more. Multiple studies show how much music programs greatly enhance the education of young children. It is a great shame that cutting the 3rd grade strings program is even being considered, given that Howard County Schools prides itself on being one of the first in the state.

Both of my sons are extremely bright and quick learners. Earlier this year, my kindergartener showed great resistance to going to school because he felt it was "too boring," and after several talks with his teachers to provide him with more challenging work appropriate to his skill level, he has shown more readiness to participate in school activities. I know that both my sons would be much less happy to go to school without the extra mental stimulation that the GT programs provide.

If you want to be a school system that fosters creativity and excellence in learning, DO NOT cut 3rd grade strings and the elementary GT programs.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Shiowei Cheng

From: Michelle Morgan <librarygrl619@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 15, 2024 10:30 AM
To: Ball, Calvin; boe@hcpss.org; CouncilMail; bill_barnes@hcpss.org; BudgetFeedback@hcpss.org
Subject: School Funding
Attachments: Screenshot_20240215-100455.png; Screenshot_20240215-100437.png; Screenshot_20240215-100311.png; Screenshot_20240215-100256.png; Screenshot_20240215-095419.png; Screenshot_20240215-095323.png; PXL_20240215_145212280.jpg; PXL_20240215_145115829.jpg

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'm emailing about the potential program and staff cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS), especially the GT and Strings programs. I have a student in third grade and a student in first grade at a Howard county public school. My son has benefited from the GT and Strings programs. I want my daughter and her friends and fellow Howard County students to have these same benefits.

My son is in the third grade strings program and he also attends every GT seminar that is offered to third graders and was looking forward to the GT programs for 4th grade as he has been on the principals honor roll for 3rd grade and always tests high. His favorite experiences at school are the GT seminars and third grade strings. He will miss lunch with friends, going to recess, even going to lunch with me to attend those seminars. He has learned so much from them and is always so proud to come home and share what he learned. He also joined the school's Safe Racer GT program which means he is meeting after school several times to work together with classmates to build a car that can save an egg while learning hands on physics and engineering skills.

Just this morning, my son woke up early and created signs and tickets announcing to our family that he was having a viola concert after breakfast. He has progressed so much with learning the viola and loves playing for us. We love seeing his confidence grow this past year as he has learned to play his viola while working also on his work ethic, perseverance, and patience.

I can't understand so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). These programs that have been deemed unnecessary are helping to build the county's future leaders, innovators, creators, and scientists. These programs foster a love of learning and school. They help to make school enjoyable and fun to attend so there are less behavior issues.

Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

I also want to email to remind our elected officials that music education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My child's involvement in music in Howard County schools has not only enriched their academic experience but has also contributed to their overall personal development.

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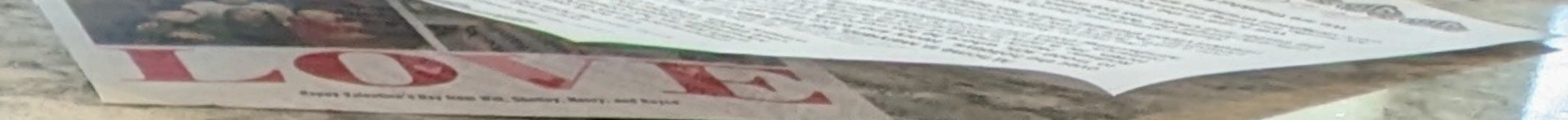
Furthermore, our Gold Standard music programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. The collaborative nature of musical ensembles teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that these programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to GT and music funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Michelle Weinstein



VIOLA CONCERT!!!

TIME

After breakfast

WHERE

In the living room →

BY WHO

Finley just
Finley

WHERE

**ARE THE
TICKETS**

In the kitchen ↗



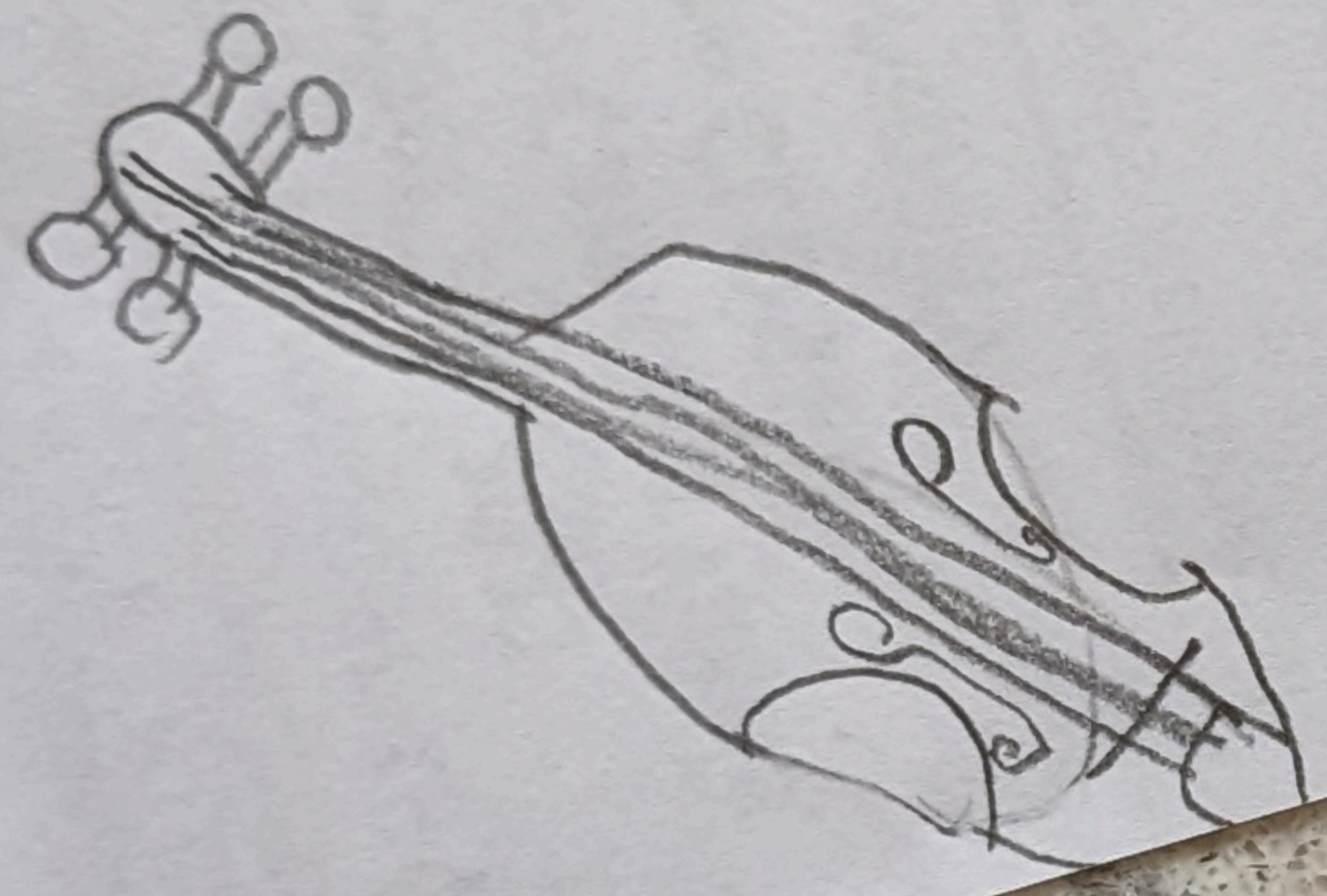
VIOLA CONCERT

TIME
After
break fast

WHERE
In the
living room

BY WHO
Finley
Finley just

WHERE ARE
THE TICKETS
In the kitchen



1 ticket

1 ticket

1 ticket
reserved

reserved

reserved

1 ticket











From: [Mary Z](#)
To: [Ball, Calvin](#); boe@hcpss.org; [CouncilMail](#); bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS funding
Date: Thursday, February 22, 2024 6:32:23 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 hope this letter finds you well. As a proud parent of a music-loving student, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). I have always been proud that my kids' school, Worthington Elementary, offered orchestra in third grade. My oldest, who is now in 5th grade, started playing viola in third grade. Now her younger sister is following in her footsteps, and decided to start viola through private lessons in 2nd grade. She looks forward to joining the school orchestra next year. Being able to start orchestra in 3rd grade is something that really sets HCPSS apart, and I'm thrilled to watch my kids reap the benefits of early exposure to reading and playing music with a group.

It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

I also want to email to remind our elected officials that music education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My child's involvement in music in Howard County

schools has not only enriched their academic experience but has also contributed to their overall personal development.

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Furthermore, our Gold Standard music programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. The collaborative nature of musical ensembles teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that music programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to music funding and continue to support ***all programs*** that are considered well-managed and *essential* in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Mary Zeng
Worthington Elementary School parent
mary.zeng@gmail.com

From: [Judi](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: Music budget
Date: Monday, February 26, 2024 1:38:47 PM

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

I am not a resident of Howard County, but I have had a visceral reaction to the possible budget cuts which may affect your music program. Our daughter and both granddaughters gained so much from their music education. They learned to read music, begin to master an instrument, follow direction, and work with others. These early elementary beginnings led them to opportunities to play in orchestras, to challenge themselves, to be evaluated individually, to play in other venues. These shy young girls gained poise and confidence thanks to strong beginnings. One of these young women is now teaching music in Howard County. From concerts, we can see the joy and enthusiasm she brings to young music students. I hope you can find a way to fund your entire music program. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Judith Dunn

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Rachel McGrain](#)
To: [Ball, Calvin](#); boe@hcpss.org; [CouncilMail](#); Bill_Barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: HCPSS funding- Music is Essential
Date: Monday, February 26, 2024 3:28:07 PM

[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 County Council, members of the Board of Education and Acting Superintendent Barnes,

Thank you for your hard work and transparency crafting this year's county and school system budget. I am a proud Howard County graduate, new parent considering moving back to Howard County, former educator, and current Executive Director of Arts Education in Maryland Schools (AEMS). I am writing to implore you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System budget, and for the school system budget to include the continuation of the popular third grade strings program.

As you have already heard from numerous residents including students, both in this budget cycle and many prior budget cycles, music education is a critical component of our children's development. Music education, especially early on in a child's schooling, provides myriad benefits including strengthened critical thinking skills, social and emotional development, and sense of belonging. Instrumental music education boosts neuroplasticity, synchronizes the brain's cerebral hemispheres, and strengthens neural pathways; all of which produce long-lasting impacts on the brain ("[Music for Every Child.](#)" [San Francisco Conservatory of Music](#)- see link below).

As a long-time champion of students' right to a robust arts education, I often point to Howard County as the gold standard for opportunities that all children should have access to in their public schools. It is a mark of pride for Howard County residents, current and former, that our schools offer a third grade strings program. Parents and community members continually stand up for this program that is clearly desired and appreciated.

Maintaining Howard County's standard of excellence and opportunity requires not just the support of the community, but also your active and continued support and protection of the programs that make our school system exceptional. The evidence is clear. The arts are incredibly important for student engagement and development. Taking away this significant part of the Howard County school experience is unwanted and detrimental to our students and community.

Participating in instrumental music from a young age in Howard County Public Schools had an outsized positive impact on my own development, and it has the potential to continue positively impacting children for decades to come. I implore you to continue setting a high bar of opportunity so children can continue to learn and develop with strong instrumental music programs.

Thank you for your service.

With Gratitude,

Rachel McGrain

Reference link: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_QRi1mp_eerEXx2SwS1GQN_PBqdZwXdc/view?usp=sharing

Rachel McGrain (*she/her*)

Arts Education in Maryland Schools (AEMS) | Executive Director

www.aems-edu.org | [Like Us](#) | [#Instagram](#) | [Shop AEMS](#) | [Donate](#)

From: [Christine Piatko](#)
To: boe@hcpss.org; superintendent@hcpss.org; [CouncilMail](#); [Jennifer Mallo](#); yun_lu@hcpss.org; linfeng_chen@hcpss.org; robyn_scates@hcpss.org; jacquelin_mccoy@hcpss.org; jolene_mosley@hcpss.org; antonia_watts@hcpss.org; student_member@hcpss.org; [Ball, Calvin](#); [Jones, Opel](#); [Rigby, Christiana](#); [Walsh, Elizabeth](#); [Jung, Debra](#); [Yungmann, David](#)
Cc: [Christine Piatko](#)
Subject: Please do not make these steep proposed cuts to education in HCPSS
Date: Wednesday, February 28, 2024 12:13:57 AM

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

I am in the unenviable position of having to resend (and only slightly update) the same message I sent in 2019.

To the HCPSS Superintendent and BOE - instead of cutting the budget this way up front, please ask for what the school program needs first. Also look twice and consider instead cutting a few highly paid administrators to save the early music program.

To the County Council and County Executive - please look harder at how we can stop propping up growth in the county when you can't serve its existing citizens. Where there is future growth, please stop giving developers handouts, like Tax Increment Financing. We need those taxes to fund the citizens who are already living here.

Focusing below on one narrow topic - since I'd written to you about it already in 2019, unfortunately it seems it needs repeating.

Please also reconsider the many other cuts you are proposing.

Especially - increasing class sizes will be devastating for all the learners of this county.

Please do not let these disastrous cuts be the legacy associated with each of your names.

=====

To the HCPSS Board of Ed and Superintendent, Howard County Council and Executive:

Please do not make cuts to music education in HCPSS.

I am writing as a parent whose children have now graduated out of the HCPSS school system. My son has graduated college, my daughter is in graduate school, pursuing her PhD.

However, I am still a taxpayer and voter who has lived in Columbia since 1992.

I implore you not to start gutting the excellent music programs of Howard County.

I write this even as a STEM researcher, who believes a broad education, including opportunities for all Howard County children to learn music and arts - and not just those privileged to afford supplementing with music and arts separately - is key to providing a well-rounded education for all of our county's children.

My children both benefited from the strings and band music education offered starting in elementary school.

While my son did not necessarily feel “forever” love for viola, he learned many things during his elementary exposure to strings. Among other things, he was very proud to read that strange viola clef that no one else in the family can read! The discipline of making time for practice at home and also making time to learn in focused sectionals has stood both children in good stead.

My daughter started cello in 3rd grade. This provided her with a foundation for reading music and playing in a group. She switched to flute in band in 4th. She played through HS, including wind ensemble and marching band, and then continued through college, in marching band and small flute choirs.

My daughter now has a lifelong love of music and flute which started from learning cello in HCPSS elementary (Swansfield). Importantly, this included being inspired by older students in the same elementary schools, who played well because they had started learning to play in younger elementary grades.

Note the inspiring quality of the county’s later middle and high school programs depends heavily on developing the students through a broadly accessible music program in the elementary grades.

Downsizing the music program will have a lasting and permanent detrimental impact on the quality of HCPSSs music programs, and on the young students in our county.

Please do not put the positions of Howard County's music educators and the music education of our students in jeopardy.

Please do not let that be the legacy associated with each of your names.

Sincerely,
Proud mom of former Wilde Lake HS students,
now Cornell University Engineering student and graduate,
Christine Piatko, PhD
Research Computer Scientist

Copying over the past 2019 email header for the record:

> From: **Christine Piatko** <christine.piatko@gmail.com>
> Date: Sun, Jun 2, 2019 at 12:34 AM
> Subject: Please do not make cuts to music education in HCPSS
> To: <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>, <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>,
> <ewalsh@howardcountymd.gov>, <djung@howardcountymd.gov>,
> <dyungmann@howardcountymd.gov>, <mavis_ellis@hcpss.org>,
> <kristen_coombs@hcpss.org>, <vicky_cutroneo@hcpss.org>,
> <christina_delmont-small@hcpss.org>, <jennifer_mallo@hcpss.org>,
> <sabina_taj@hcpss.org>, <chao_wu@hcpss.org>,
> <superintendent@hcpss.org>, <boe@hcpss.org>

From: [Julie Whittaker](#)
To: ball@howardcountymd.gov; boe@hcpss.org; [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: Funding Cuts for HCPSS
Date: Wednesday, February 28, 2024 9:34:32 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 BOE, and member of the County Council,
I am writing to express my disbelief that the only way to fund the state requirements for HCPSS is to eliminate over 300 positions. Please stop this from occurring.

These are all terrible proposals. I have had a child in HCPSS since 2012, currently one is at WLHS and the other is in a nonpublic special education placement. Our students and teachers deserve better than what this draconian budget offers. The kids deserve smaller classes, more enrichment, and our teachers deserve higher pay and less stress. The current proposed cuts accomplish none of these goals.

I am going directly to address the proposal to cut third grade strings: For both of my children, but **especially for my child with additional challenges**, third grade strings was **foundational** in developing a true love for learning. The night of their first performance, they were kings who had conquered so many tasks, vibrating with justifiable pride. They had learned perseverance and discipline through practice, they learned to read music and translate it to physical actions, learned to understand rhythm and made connections to mathematics and science. They learned how to work together, listen intently and bend with a group to play as one unit. **And in the case of our son who has additional special education needs, it has especially helped foster his confidence in himself.** He could keep up, he could perform and contribute to the wonderful sound of an orchestra playing together.

Please stop shifting funds away from our children, short changing all of us. Please invest more in all our children- the grade schoolers, the high schoolers and all in between. Fund third grade strings, keep the teachers, Let's have more parents moved to tears after their third grader somehow produces music with their hard work for six month and direction from incredible teachers.

Sincerely,
Julie Whittaker
(District 1)

From: [A.Massaquoi](#)
To: bill_barnes@hcpss.org; boe@hcpss.org; [Ball, Calvin](#); [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS funding
Date: Friday, March 1, 2024 8:54:17 AM

[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 hope this letter finds you well. As a proud parent of a music-loving student, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year. I also want to email to remind our elected officials that music education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My child's involvement in music in Howard County schools has not only enriched their academic experience but has also contributed to their overall personal development. Research consistently highlights the positive impact of music education on academic performance. Students engaged in music often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the music room and positively influence their academic achievements. Furthermore, our Gold Standard music programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. The collaborative nature of musical ensembles teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers. I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that music programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community. I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to music funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Amber Massaquoi
10566 Jason Lane
Columbia, MD 21044
Tel: 443-655-5239
amber.s.massaquoi@gmail.com

From: [Hilary F](#)
To: [Ball, Calvin](#); boe@hcpss.org; [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS Funding
Date: Friday, March 1, 2024 9:26:50 AM

[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 hope this letter finds you well. As a proud parent of a music-loving preschooler, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

I also want to email to remind our elected officials that music education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My child's involvement in music has not only enriched their academic experience but has also contributed to their overall personal development.

Research consistently highlights the positive impact of music education on academic performance. Students engaged in music often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the music room and positively influence their academic achievements.

Furthermore, our Gold Standard music programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. The collaborative nature of musical ensembles teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that music programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to music funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Hilary Fong
hilaryteresasmith@gmail.com

732-642-1186

From: [Janet Hunt](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: Keep 3rd Grade Strings in schools!!!
Date: Friday, March 1, 2024 12:03:11 PM

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

Hello,

I am writing to request your support for keeping 3rd grade strings in Howard County Schools. It is essential to maintaining our level of excellence in music education.

The excellence of the music program is time proven and supports all aspects of our students' education.

Please do not destroy this wonderful program

which is a hallmark of the excellent educational system, here in Howard County

Sincerely,

Janet K.Hunt

Sent from

From: [Joy Jennifer](#)
To: boe@hcpss.org; [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: 3rd Grade Strings
Date: Friday, March 1, 2024 4:37:07 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 Executive Calvin Ball & Howard County Board Members,

I grew up in Howard County for my first 18 years of life and I am writing a brief email to express my concern about the recent decision to cut third grad strings.

I am requesting that more pause is taken in this decision because we know that music is a powerful outlet in children's lives. This decision could have poor ramifications in their lives as well as the teachers who worked hard on the program. It will be disheartening for the rest of the staff to know their work could be slashed in half at any moment regardless of their performance.

One of my oldest friends who I met, coincidentally in third grade at Stevens Forest is a music teacher in Howard County. Third grade is a very formative time for students - cutting this program could affect the children for the rest of their lives. If she had not had the care in attention in her field back then, she may not be where she is today. The strings department could be the same anchor for other students.

To this day- my friend pours so much care and dedication into her work and this decision is disheartening for her and her colleagues.

Please reconsider and keep the full time staff of the strings department. Howard County is better than this.

In good health,

Joy (concerned former Howard County resident)

From: [Linfeng Chen](#)
To: [Vicki Embrey](#); [BoE Email](#); [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: RE: [External] Music program cuts
Date: Friday, March 1, 2024 9:58:46 AM

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

Thank you Vicki! I share the same sadness.

From: Vicki Embrey <vembrey@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 1, 2024 9:55 AM
To: BoE Email <boe@hcpss.org>; councilmail@howardcountymd.gov
Subject: [External] Music program cuts

Some people who received this message don't often get email from vembrey@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

! CAUTION: This email originated from outside of HCPSS. Do not click links or open attachments, unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

I'm so incredibly disappointed to read about the cuts made to the third grade strings program. Howard County Public Schools' music programs were one of the determining factors for our choosing to move here years ago. What an incredible loss to our students. As a career music educator in Montgomery County, I know first hand that these music programs do a lot for student achievement and giving many students a reason for being.

This is an incredible disappointment. You can and should do better.

Please reconsider this action. It always seems that cuts like this become permanent.

Vicki Embrey
Savage, Maryland

--

Whatever you choose, however many roads you travel, I hope that you choose not to be a lady. I hope that you will find some way to break the rules and make a little trouble out there. I also hope that you will choose to make some of that trouble on behalf of women. -- Nora Ephron

From: [Mary Babilon](#)
To: bill_barnes@hcpss.org; boe@hcpss.org; [Ball, Calvin](#); [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS funding
Date: Friday, March 1, 2024 5:39:32 AM

[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 hope this letter finds you well.

As a proud parent of a music-loving student, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year. I also want to email to remind our elected officials that music education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My child's involvement in music in Howard County schools has not only enriched their academic experience but has also contributed to their overall personal development. Research consistently highlights the positive impact of music education on academic performance. Students engaged in music often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the music room and positively influence their academic achievements. Furthermore, our Gold Standard music programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. The collaborative nature of musical ensembles teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers. I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that music programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community. I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to music funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county. Thank you for your time and consideration. Sincerely,

Mary Babilon
HCPSS Staff Member and parent of 2nd and 3rd grade students

From: [Samantha Sotolongo](#)
To: [Ball, Calvin](#); boe@hcpss.org; [CouncilMail](#); bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS funding
Date: Friday, March 1, 2024 6:49:37 AM

[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 hope this letter finds you well. As a proud parent of a music-loving student, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

I also want to email to remind our elected officials that music education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My child's involvement in music in Howard County schools has not only enriched their academic experience but has also contributed to their overall personal development.

Research consistently highlights the positive impact of music education on academic performance. Students engaged in music often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the music room and

positively influence their academic achievements.

Furthermore, our Gold Standard music programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. The collaborative nature of musical ensembles teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that music programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to music funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Samantha Sotolongo
Columbia, MD

From: [Taylor Dietrich](#)
To: bill_barnes@hcpss.org; boe@hcpss.org; [Ball, Calvin](#); [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS Funding
Date: Friday, March 1, 2024 5:50:54 AM

[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 hope this letter finds you well. As a proud parent of a music-loving student, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year. I also want to email to remind our elected officials that music education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. Research consistently highlights the positive impact of music education on academic performance. Students engaged in music often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the music room and positively influence their academic achievements. Furthermore, our Gold Standard music programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. The collaborative nature of musical ensembles teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that music programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community. I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to music funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Taylor Dietrich

From: [Teresa Favero](#)
To: [Ball, Calvin](#); boe@hcpss.org; [CouncilMail](#); bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS Funding
Date: Friday, March 1, 2024 6:03:31 AM

[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 hope this letter finds you well. As a proud parent of a music-loving student, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county.

We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

I also want to email to remind our elected officials that music education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My child's involvement in music in Howard County schools has not only enriched their academic experience but has also contributed to their overall personal development.

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Furthermore, our Gold Standard music programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. The collaborative nature of musical ensembles teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that music programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to music funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Teresa Favero
Parent at CRES

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

From: [Vicki Embrey](#)
To: boe@hcpss.org; [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: Music program cuts
Date: Friday, March 1, 2024 9:54:54 AM

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

I'm so incredibly disappointed to read about the cuts made to the third grade strings program. Howard County Public Schools' music programs were one of the determining factors for our choosing to move here years ago. What an incredible loss to our students. As a career music educator in Montgomery County, I know first hand that these music programs do a lot for student achievement and giving many students a reason for being.

This is an incredible disappointment. You can and should do better.

Please reconsider this action. It always seems that cuts like this become permanent.

Vicki Embrey
Savage, Maryland

--

Whatever you choose, however many roads you travel, I hope that you choose not to be a lady. I hope that you will find some way to break the rules and make a little trouble out there. I also hope that you will choose to make some of that trouble on behalf of women. -- Nora Ephron

From: [Yoshiaki Horiguchi](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: Reinstate 3rd grade strings in Howard County
Date: Friday, March 1, 2024 7:14:50 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,

My name is Yoshi Horiguchi. I am the upright bass professor at Towson University. I'd like to tell you a story about a phenomenal woman:

When Nina Decesare was in 3rd grade, she started playing upright bass in Dayton Oaks ES with Tamatha Sutton, a world class teacher. Nina practiced hard and eventually made it into MD all-state orchestra where she and I played together back in 2008. She then went on to music school and won a job playing the bass for the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, a world-class ensemble. She now coaches and works with Howard County bassists on a regular basis, giving back to her roots.

This would not have happened without the world-class music education that happens in Howard County. Had she not started in 3rd grade, she would not be where she is today. By cutting 3rd grade strings, Howard County ceases to produce musicians of this caliber.

People come from all over the world to have their children take part in these music classrooms. Please reconsider this move to shrink the cultural aspect of growing up in Howard County.

--

Yoshiaki Horiguchi (he/him)

Double Bassist

Faculty: Towson University

Faculty: Peabody Conservatory at the Johns Hopkins University

Faculty: Bass Works

Bassist for National Chamber Winds

443-529-3118

basshoriguchi@gmail.com

www.basshoriguchi.com

From: [Benjamin D. Denne](#)
To: [Ball, Calvin](#); [BoE Email](#); [CouncilMail](#); [Bill Barnes](#)
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS funding
Date: Saturday, March 2, 2024 11:17:20 AM

[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 hope this letter finds you well. As a proud parent of a music-loving student, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

As elected officials, it is important that you hear that music education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My daughter is a child that thrives on community. When she joined the third grade orchestra, she found that community. Her map test scores in reading went from the 71st percentile at the end of 2nd grade to the 92nd percentile at the beginning of 4th grade. Her math test scores have also rose from the 55th percentile to the 70th percentile.

There are many factors that led to that improvement, but her involvement in the orchestra program surrounded her with a group of high-achieving students that lifted her as they worked to make music together. And because anecdotal evidence is never enough, it is important to note that research consistently highlights the positive impact of music education on academic performance. Students engaged in music often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the music room and positively influence their academic achievements.

I started my career with HCPSS as an orchestra teacher in 1998, so I have seen the county grow and change over the past quarter century. Most of the changes have been positive as I have seen huge improvements to the quality of education that the county has provided our community. But I would like to share a historical comparison. For the first few years of my career, I was split between 3 schools yet I was able to offer my students a daily class as well as 1 small group lesson per week. With the current number of students I am assigned to teach, providing that level of instruction would require 45 class periods per week, 20 classes larger than the 25 classes that I should be teaching with my contract. I currently teach 32 classes a week (5 during my assigned planning time and 2 before school). Because these students are incredible, my time has become the single greatest limiting factor to their improvement. My students consume knowledge faster than the rate that I am able to provide instruction.

Limiting staffing limits student achievement. It is that simple.

Slower growth in our community and inflation provide enormous challenges to public funding, but limiting education funding will exacerbate problems in our community. Keeping class sizes as low as possible is incredibly important. Keeping programs like 3rd grade strings is extremely important. We decided to start instruction for our strings programs in 3rd grade because of the issue of equity. Wealthier families are able to seek out music instruction from private sources and commonly start providing violin and cello lessons at age 5. By providing string instruction in 3rd grade instead of 4th grade, we have worked to reduce the gap between families with disparate incomes. Our music programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. The collaborative nature of musical ensembles teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that music programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to music funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Ben Denne
Teacher and HCPSS Parent
bdenne@hcpss.org

From: [Bill Harvey](#)
To: [Ball, Calvin](#); boe@hcpss.org; [CouncilMail](#); bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS funding
Date: Saturday, March 2, 2024 4:58:34 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 hope this letter finds you well. As a proud parent of a music-loving student, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

It was shocking to see a recent report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

I also want to email to remind our elected officials that music education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My daughter's involvement in music in Howard County schools has not only enriched their academic experience but has also contributed to their overall personal development.

Research consistently highlights the positive impact of music education on academic performance. Students engaged in music often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. The collaborative nature of musical ensembles teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These benefits extend beyond the music room and positively influence their academic achievements.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that music programs make to our students' lives. The current budget for music programs is already less than it needs to be to support music education. My daughter has class for 3rd grade cello only 1 to 2 times per week. If anything, the budget for Howard County music programs should be increased to hire more music instructors to provide students more time for classroom instruction.

I kindly request that you work together to eliminate any proposed cuts to music funding. If necessary, programs and services should be re-evaluated, and cuts should be made to those which are non-essential. Music is fundamental component of a sound curriculum and is *essential* to the academic, emotional and social development of the children in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Bill Harvey, 267-979-5525

From: [Brian Aldrich](#)
To: [Ball, Calvin](#); [CouncilMail](#); bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS funding
Date: Saturday, March 2, 2024 7:08:45 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 hope this letter finds you well. As a proud parent of a music-loving student, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

I also want to email to remind our elected officials that music education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My child's involvement in music in Howard County schools has not only enriched their academic experience but has also contributed to their overall personal development.

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Furthermore, our Gold Standard music programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. The collaborative nature of musical ensembles teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that music programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to music funding and continue to support **all programs** that are considered well-managed and *essential* in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

--

Brian Aldrich

443-956-2370

brian.a.aldrich@gmail.com

From: [Bridget Powell](#)
To: [Ball, Calvin](#); boe@hcpss.org; [CouncilMail](#); bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS Funding
Date: Saturday, March 2, 2024 9:38:42 AM

[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 hope this letter finds you well. As a proud parent of a gifted and talented, music-loving student, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

As Howard County is the highest taxed county in Maryland, it is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

The importance of the gifted and talented program cannot be overstated. My child is challenged in this program and thrives as he is engaged and excited to learn new topics that are not in a typical class of his grade. This program allows high achieving students to maintain their interest in school and prevent boredom - which can lead to disruptive behavior and, over time, a complete disengagement from school due to the lack of stimulation for our exceptional students.

I also want to email to remind our elected officials that music education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My child's involvement in music in Howard County schools has not only enriched their academic experience but has also contributed to their overall personal development.

Research consistently highlights the positive impact of music education on academic performance. Students engaged in music often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the music room and positively influence their academic achievements.

Furthermore, our Gold Standard music programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. The collaborative nature of musical ensembles teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that music programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to music funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Bridget Powell
Cell: (240) 593-8608

From: [Dana La Rosa](#)
To: [Ball, Calvin](#); boe@hcpss.org; [CouncilMail](#); bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS Music Funding
Date: Saturday, March 2, 2024 1:53:31 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 hope this letter finds you well. As a proud music teacher in Howard County, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

I also want to email to remind our elected officials that music education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My students' involvement in music in Howard County schools has not only enriched their academic experience but has also contributed to their overall personal development.

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Furthermore, our Gold Standard music programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. The collaborative nature of musical ensembles teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that music programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to music funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Dana La Rosa

Dana.m.larosa@gmail.com

908-489-0754

From: [DianaFay Williams](#)
To: [Ball, Calvin](#); [BoE Email](#); [CouncilMail](#); [Bill Barnes](#)
Subject: URGENT: Appeal for HCPSS Funding
Date: Saturday, March 2, 2024 11:58:51 AM

[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 hope this letter finds you well. As a proud Title I educator of 3rd-5th grade musicians, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

I also want to email to remind our elected officials that music education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My students' involvement in music in Howard County schools has not only enriched their academic experience but has also contributed to their overall personal development.

Research consistently highlights the positive impact of music education on academic performance. Students engaged in music often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the music room and positively influence their academic achievements.

Furthermore, our Gold Standard music programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. The collaborative nature of musical ensembles teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that music programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to music funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Diana Fay Williams
DianaFay_Williams@hcpss.org

From: [Elizabeth Pak](#)
To: [Ball, Calvin](#); boe@hcpss.org; [CouncilMail](#); bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS funding!!
Date: Saturday, March 2, 2024 9:21:15 AM

[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 hope this letter finds you well. As a proud parent of a music-loving student, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

I also want to email to remind our elected officials that music education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My child's involvement in music in Howard County schools has not only enriched their academic experience but has also contributed to their overall personal development.

Research consistently highlights the positive impact of music education on academic performance. Students engaged in music often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the music room and positively influence their academic achievements.

Furthermore, our Gold Standard music programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. The collaborative nature of musical ensembles teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that music programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to music funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Liz Pak

From: [Elizabeth Pak](#)
To: [Ball, Calvin](#); boe@hcpss.org; [CouncilMail](#); bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: URGENT APPEAL FOR HCPSS FUNDING
Date: Saturday, March 2, 2024 9:22:37 AM

[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 hope this letter finds you well. As a proud parent of a music-loving student, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

I also want to email to remind our elected officials that music education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My child's involvement in music in Howard County schools has not only enriched their academic experience but has also contributed to their overall personal development.

Research consistently highlights the positive impact of music education on academic performance. Students engaged in music often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the music room and positively influence their academic achievements.

Furthermore, our Gold Standard music programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. The collaborative nature of musical ensembles teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that music programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to music funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

--

Elizabeth Pak

"If Music is the Food of Love, then play on.." - Shakespeare

From: [James Pak](#)
To: bill_barnes@hcpss.org; boe@hcpss.org; [Ball, Calvin](#); [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS funding
Date: Saturday, March 2, 2024 9:28:14 AM

[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 hope this letter finds you well. As a proud parent of a music-loving student, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

I also want to email to remind our elected officials that music education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My child's involvement in music in Howard County schools has not only enriched their academic experience but has also contributed to their overall personal development.

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Furthermore, our Gold Standard music programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. The collaborative nature of musical ensembles teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that music programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to music funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

James Pak
240-888-8494

From: [Jeff Schneider](#)
To: [Ball, Calvin](#); boe@hcpss.org; [CouncilMail](#); bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS funding
Date: Saturday, March 2, 2024 7:49:51 AM

[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 hope this letter finds you well. As a proud parent of a music-loving student, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

I also want to email to remind our elected officials that music education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My child's involvement in music in Howard County schools has not only enriched their academic experience but has also contributed to their overall personal development.

Research consistently highlights the positive impact of music education on academic performance. Students engaged in music often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the music room and positively influence their academic achievements.

Furthermore, our Gold Standard music programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. The collaborative nature of musical ensembles teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that music programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to music funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Jeff & Melissa Schneider
240-456-0788

From: katie.megredy
To: bill_barnes@hcpss.org; boe@hcpss.org; [Ball, Calvin](#); [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS funding
Date: Saturday, March 2, 2024 9:15:40 AM

[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 hope this letter finds you well. As a proud parent of music-loving students, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

I also want to email to remind our elected officials that music education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My children's involvement in music in Howard County schools has not only enriched their academic experience but has also contributed to their overall personal development.

Our school is also a Title one school. I personally cannot afford lessons for my four children and the opportunity and experience that my children have gained by starting strings in 3rd grade has helped them in other subjects. They can look at problems differently and learn to concentrate better. One of my children has autism, anxiety, and ADHD. He has benefited from learning how to play the violin and enjoys it. He jumps at every opportunity to play and has played in the Spring Ensemble event ever since he started learning how to play the violin. My other son plays the cello and enjoys learning how to play. He looks forward to learning and playing more complex pieces. We often have Alexa play my favorite cellist, Yo-yo Ma, during dinner time and talk about his beautiful gift and the pieces that we hear as we eat. My daughter, who is now in 3rd grade, has started playing the viola and she is enjoying it. She is playing in the Spring Ensemble with her older brother and a friend. My youngest son, who is in 1st grade, may not be given the opportunity to play starting in 3rd grade. It is important to foster love for music as early as possible and encourage our young people to learn the love of music. It is so disheartening to me that this opportunity that his siblings have had might not be available to him.

Research consistently highlights the positive impact of music education on academic performance. Students engaged in music often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the music room and positively influence their academic achievements.

Furthermore, our Gold Standard music programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. The collaborative nature of musical ensembles teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that music programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

Music can be an expression of your soul and when you have been through incredible obstacles sometimes the pain, joy, and wonder of what you have been through can be expressed through music. It is important to allow our children an outlet to express themselves and music is a wonderful way to encourage that expression.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to music funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Katie Megredy
443.848.8704
Katmegredy@gmail.com

From: [Lauratu Bah](#)
To: [Ball, Calvin](#); boe@hcpss.org; [CouncilMail](#); bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS funding- MUSIC
Date: Saturday, March 2, 2024 9:35:05 AM

[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 hope this letter finds you well. As a teacher of over 100 music-loving students, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

I teach at a Title 1 school where outside of school, students would have no other way to access free instrumental music instruction and instruments. It breaks my heart that those opportunities are potentially being taken away. I am a product of school music instruction as the only way I was introduced to playing the saxophone. The only reason why I am here today as a proud music teacher is because of the instruction I got in attending public school and I would like to pay this forward by giving back to communities like mine.

I also want to email to remind our elected officials that music education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. Student's involvement in music in Howard County schools has not only enriched their academic experience but has also contributed to their overall personal development.

Research consistently highlights the positive impact of music education on academic performance. Students engaged in music often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the music room and positively influence their academic achievements.

Furthermore, our Gold Standard music programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. The collaborative nature of musical ensembles teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. Students make lifelong friends in our music programs. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that music programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to music funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Lauratu Bah

From: [Missy Hapner](#)
To: [Ball, Calvin](#); boe@hcpss.org; [CouncilMail](#); bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: URGENT appeal for HCPSS Funding
Date: Saturday, March 2, 2024 3:04:10 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 hope this letter finds you well. As a proud parent of a music-loving student, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

I also want to email to remind our elected officials that music education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My child's involvement in music in Howard County schools has not only enriched their academic experience but has also contributed to their overall personal development.

Research consistently highlights the positive impact of music education on academic performance. Students engaged in music often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the music room and positively influence their academic achievements.

Furthermore, our Gold Standard music programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. The collaborative nature of musical ensembles teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that music programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to music funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

From: [Rachel Hagee](#)
To: [Ball, Calvin](#); boe@hcpss.org; [CouncilMail](#); bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS Funding
Date: Saturday, March 2, 2024 1:28:20 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 hope this email finds you well. I am writing to express my concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in HCPSS, and to urge you to reconsider the cuts to the music programs- specifically third grade strings.

I am a first-year music teacher in HCPSS, and I am so grateful that I was able to see first-hand the impact that starting instrumental music in 3rd grade has on these students and the joy that it brings them. I am absolutely devastated that future students will not have this same opportunity. The impact of our elementary music programs goes so much further than the ability to play an instrument. Students in these programs learn teamwork, discipline, and perseverance in addition to being able to collaborate with students that they do not see in their homeroom classes.

I completed my student teaching at two schools- one was in Howard County, and the other was not. I was able to see first hand how the benefits of being a part of a music program in Howard County contributed to students' problem-solving abilities, perseverance, and compassion. Howard County was my first choice for employment as a music teacher because of the abundance of opportunities for young musicians and because I felt that HCPSS was a place where I could make the biggest impact on my students' lives and their musical development.

Without third grade strings, the entire structure of elementary school instrumental music changes. Currently, students in fourth and fifth grade have the incredible opportunity to rehearse as a full ensemble once a week after a year of small, beginner classes to learn the basics of their instrument. I have not seen any other school system in Maryland with this kind of collaborative musical experience for elementary students. I did not grow up in Howard County, but I planned to settle here and raise my children in this county because of the unique opportunities that this county offers young students. If the proposed cuts go through, I will be reconsidering where I would like to raise a family.

I am writing not only to advocate for full funding of the music programs, but for full funding of every program. I am writing to advocate for class sizes, the GT program, special education resources, and every single program and staff member at risk of being cut which has made this school system great.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that music programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to music funding and continue to support all programs that are essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.
Rachel Hagee

From: [Alayne Huntimer](#)
To: [Ball, Calvin](#); boe@hcpss.org; [CouncilMail](#); bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: HCPSS funding
Date: Sunday, March 3, 2024 2:38:04 PM

[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.

As a proud parent of two HoCo students, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

Music education plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My children's involvement in music in Howard County schools has not only enriched their academic experience but has also contributed to their overall personal development. Teamwork lessons alone have been invaluable.

Research consistently highlights the positive impact of music education on academic performance. Students engaged in music often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the music room and positively influence their academic achievements.

Furthermore, our Gold Standard music programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. The collaborative nature of musical ensembles teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that music programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to music funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Alayne

From: [Alexis K](#)
To: [Ball, Calvin](#); boe@hcpss.org; [CouncilMail](#); bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS Funding
Date: Sunday, March 3, 2024 9:31:42 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 hope this letter finds you well. Here in Howard County we are once again facing cuts to education. This is frustrating to hear as an HCPSS educator and graduate of HCPSS. I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System. While I was glad to see that some of the proposed cuts were reversed at the most recent work session, I am shocked that the BOE voted not to reinstate funding for the 3rd Grade Strings and Elementary GT programs. These two programs have profound effects on many students.

I attended several of the public hearings in the past month, and I have one important point that I want to bring up that I have not heard shared previously. These two programs - 3rd grade strings and GT - are two of the only curricular choices our elementary students get to make. While any good teacher provides options for student choice within their lessons, our youngest students get very little choice regarding what courses they take. Every elementary school student will take ELA and math, and they will experience science, social studies, and health through content. However, students CHOOSE to enroll in instrumental music. They decide whether or not to participate in GT instructional seminars. As someone who teaches elementary instrumental music in the county, I can tell you that these students are excited to come to instrumental music class. They look forward to learning new songs and skills. As one of my students recently remarked, they are genuinely excited to just come and play their instruments and learn in a different way than they do anywhere else in the school building.

3rd grade strings is the foundation of our HCPSS instrumental music community, and one of the first choices our students get to make about their education. 3rd grade strings and GT also promote equitable access to instruction for all students, as well as a sense of belonging. We ensure that our students who need instruments and other materials to access music instruction have them - even if it means scouring yard sales and repairing instruments ourselves to acquire them. No student is turned away from the instrumental music program.

The 3rd grade strings program also helps to promote a sense of belonging for students. Not every student is an athlete, and not every student can access extracurricular activities due to time and finances. Yet every student can be a musician, and participate in instrumental music courses during the school day. As I like to remind my students, they are not just someone who plays their instrument - they are musicians. Each and every one of them makes up the ensemble that we call our school band and orchestra, and without their important contribution our ensemble would never be the same. It's amazing to see how that simple idea builds

confidence and self-efficacy for so many of our youngest learners.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, and I know how difficult it must be to make these hard choices, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that music programs make to our students' lives. Though it may seem to be an easy solution to eliminate third grade strings in this budget cycle, this change will have long-lasting impacts on the quality of music education in our county and the benefits our students experience. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to music funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Alexis Kalivretenos
ask0109@gmail.com

From: [Bonnie Zeitler](#)
To: [Ball, Calvin](#); boe@hcpss.org; [CouncilMail](#); bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS music funding
Date: Sunday, March 3, 2024 7:02:46 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, Howard County Council, Howard County Board of Education, and Superintendent Barnes,

I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential music program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System. I am writing to ask Ms. McCoy to please vote to restore funding to the string program. I am asking you to work together to fund schools rather than another library.

It is shocking to see so many cuts to positions and programs. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year. We do not want a new library, we want the best education for the children.

Music education plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My children's involvement in school music has not only enriched their academic experience but has also contributed to their overall personal development.

Research consistently highlights the positive impact of music education on academic performance. Students engaged in music often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the music room and positively influence their academic achievements.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that music programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to music funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Bonnie Zeitler

From: [CLES Music Boosters](#)
To: boe@hcpss.org; Bill_Barnes@hcpss.org; [Ball, Calvin](#); [CouncilMail](#); Karalee_TurnerLittle@hcpss.org
Subject: Petition: Save Music in HCPSS
Date: Sunday, March 3, 2024 10:41:06 PM

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

We would like to call your attention to a petition started on Saturday, March 3, 2024, Save Music in HCPSS!!

<https://www.change.org/p/save-music-in-hcpss>

This petition, demanding **full funding of Music** in HCPSS, has only been online for 34 hours and has already garnered over 2,600 signatures.

Music in HCPSS is a hallmark of our county school system. Cutting 3rd grade strings and reducing music positions throughout elementary, middle, and high school will irrevocably damage Music in HCPSS. These cuts will also be effectively terminating many amazing teachers. Although assurances have been given that all school based staff will be absorbed and will not lose their jobs, the opposite is true because these individuals are only certified to teach music.

We will be sending you files with signatures and comments from the petition the morning of Tuesday, March, 5, 2024, prior to the BOE meeting, for review. In the meantime, review the petition online and read the comments posted.

Please realize that the traction this petition has gotten over the past 34 hours is significant and that the HCPSS community will not quietly let Music in our Howard County be taken away. We request that you **fully fund** Music at all school levels and put it back into the budget for the next school year.

From: [a216vcti](#)
To: bill_barnes@hcpss.org; boe@hcpss.org; [Ball, Calvin](#); [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS funding
Date: Sunday, March 3, 2024 7:27:27 AM

[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 hope this letter finds you well. As a proud parent of two music-loving student, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year. I also want to email to remind our elected officials that music education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My child's involvement in music in Howard County schools has not only enriched their academic experience but has also contributed to their overall personal development. Research consistently highlights the positive impact of music education on academic performance. Students engaged in music often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the music room and positively influence their academic achievements. Furthermore, our Gold Standard music programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. The collaborative nature of musical ensembles teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers. I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that music programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community. I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to music funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Cliff Itwaru
14770 Triadelphia Mill Road
Dayton, MD 21036

From: [Adam Burstein](#)
To: [Ball, Calvin](#); boe@hcpss.org; [CouncilMail](#); bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Support for Howard County Music and Arts
Date: Monday, March 4, 2024 9:43:05 PM

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

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing this email to you in support of the Music and Arts programming in Howard County Public Schools. I respectfully request that you share this with those who are shaping the fate of these programs.

We find ourselves, yet again, at the precipice of potential budget cuts throughout the school system. It's becoming a tired story: the county and/or school administrators propose detrimental cuts to Music and Arts, parents find themselves rallying behind the programs, and the school system realizes it's playing the short game rather than thinking strategically about the health, welfare, and educational needs of our students. It's time to cut out this insane process, and stop putting Music and Arts on the chopping block.

A school would never propose cutting math, science, languages, or history, because they see them as somehow different from what Music and Arts provides. A school would never consider cutting its football, baseball, or soccer programs since they put physical prowess on display and are thought of as team sports. Music and Arts provides, not only incredible educational value, but also the glue that binds the entirety of those programs together, physical and emotional rigor, and perhaps MORE teamwork and collaboration than the traditional sports.

Study after study has shown that Music and Arts are critical for the success of students throughout the educational spectrum. Hallam (2010, Oxford University Press) discusses the role of music in mood management, interpersonal relationship growth, and its benefits on physiology, behavior, and concentration. Petress (Education 126(1), 2005) shows how such programs result in individuals who are more successful in society, school, in developing intelligence, and overall in life. I can easily reference dozens more articles on the topic, but I believe that this information is already well known within the higher ranks in HCPSS.

Music is, in itself, a structured language which requires the practitioner to learn to communicate using emotion and expression, through a variety of media — whether lyrically/vocally, or through the use of well-known instrumentation (such as strings, brass, woodwinds, percussion), or even using the environment (like tables, chairs, hands, feet). Music also enriches knowledge of other languages, as is seen in the Choir program's use of foreign language literature, or when reading a band chart with Italian-language cues.

Music relies on and fosters a strong knowledge of mathematics. Ask anyone who has ever played a chart in an odd-time signature, replete with syncopated rhythms or the aggressive use of 32nd and 64th notes. It's about more than the joke about musicians knowing how to count to four.

The very existence of musical notes is the result of physics. Favorable melodies and harmonies rely on aesthetically-pleasing combinations of vibrations at various frequencies — a term that both music and physics share for the exact same concept, harmonics.

Music's impacts on history, as well as history's impacts on music, cannot be underscored enough. While so many examples can be given on this topic, the most immediate that comes to mind relates to the 1960s in America and beyond. World events shaped the course of music forever, and music left an indelible mark on world history — not just culturally, but even how politicians responded to musical protest over the Civil Rights Movement and the Vietnam conflict.

This goes beyond just music, of course. The Arts includes performance on stage, whether through acting or dancing, as well as those arts which find themselves on display in other media — graphic arts, material arts, and more. In fact, the very existence of nearly everything one interacts with in life is the result of an artist:

- Taylor Swift is a billionaire and a cultural icon, not because music is unimportant, but because of its criticality on life. Same too of Kanye West, Dr. Dre, and even smaller-scale performers like Billy Joel, Elton John, Rush, Genesis, and more.
- The highest grossing films of 2023 included Oppenheimer (a biopic) and Barbie (a cultural phenomenon, coupled with feminine rights); clearly, film represents the arts.
- Art museums throughout the world are filled with priceless works, not because nobody cares, but because they do. Works of art fetch millions of dollars at auction and are the stuff of news — think of Banksy's self-destructing painting, the Mona Lisa, and Starry Night.
- Photography appears everywhere to help clearly communicate world events to people. The New York Times, Washington Post, Baltimore Sun, and all other outlets, are reliant on photographs to engage their readers, whether in paper or online.
- The clothing you're wearing right now came from a fashion designer who expressed his or her art in a manner appealing enough to garner sales and potentially a following. Michael Kors, Louis Vuitton, and other such brands don't exist because of the mere presence of leather as a material.
- The car you drive, the toothbrush you use each day, the plates in your kitchen, the house you live in — everything is the result of an artist.

All of these things will cease to innovate with cuts to the music and arts. That would be appalling. Sure, we can continue to use that which exists now for eternity, but we don't still use rotary dial phones anymore for a reason — a confluence of engineering and art, and as

evidenced by the many iPhones and Android devices, laptops, smart phones, headphones, tablets, e-readers, personal home assistants (Alexa, Google Home, etc) that have not escaped a single person in our society, even in the relatively short lifetimes of our children.

Moving to a more personal perspective, I am the product of New York City public schools. I was fortunate that my parents were able to invest in my personal musical journey, since the school programming in the 1980s came nowhere close to the incredible wealth of opportunity within Howard County. There was no marching program in our high schools, there were no strings or brass programs in our elementary schools (only recorder a couple of times a YEAR), elementary choir was an after-school program that was weakly attended, and only a small number of high schools had funding for stage performances of any note. In high school, I participated fully in all aspects of the music programming available to me, affording me the opportunity to learn numerous instruments at varying levels of success.

I've instilled an importance of music in my two daughters within HCPSS. My older daughter, Addison, has been fully engaged since the third grade at Worthington Elementary School, where Mr. Brandon Henley started her on her musical journey. She continued through Ellicott Mills Middle School where Mr. Robert Burns, Ms. Nicole Sobel, and Mr. Ben Denne continued to help her refine her craft. Now, under the direction of Mr. Joseph Fischer, Addison has gained so much in the way of confidence and leadership, with in-school band participation, honors band programs throughout the East coast, membership in a university ensemble each week, and of course, as the lead drum major at Mt. Hebron HS in her junior year. Also, Addison is so enamored with music and her experiences that her intent is to become a music and special educator herself, and has already started offering tuba lessons to younger community members.

Our younger daughter, Rebecca, also learned from Mr. Henley, Ms. Sobel, Mr. Burns, and Mr. Denne, and tried her hand at a number of instruments before finding her intrigue in percussion. In fact, it was Ms. Laura Shum from Patapsco Middle School who provided the foundation for Rebecca's percussion education. She is excited to continue with Mr. Bryan Welker at Howard High School this coming fall. Now that she has learned to participate fully in multiple ensembles, I fear that her musical exploration will be cut short. Howard's music program is a wonderful program, as we've seen through our various engagements in the county.

There are some widely popular quotes worth remembering:

Whenever you are feeling unsure of your abilities, just remember that you are literally making an inanimate object sing. Don't ever be discouraged.

We are the music makers, and we are the dreamers of dreams.

Please don't take away our childrens' voices and dreams.

In closing, the criticality of music and arts programming is all too often unappreciated and misunderstood as auxiliary education. It is not. For the sake of our students, I implore the county to reconsider any cuts to these programs.

Sincerely,
Adam Burstein

From: [Adam Burstein](#)
To: bill_barnes@hcpss.org; boe@hcpss.org; [Ball, Calvin](#); [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS funding
Date: Monday, March 4, 2024 10:05:29 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 hope this letter finds you well. As a proud parent of a fine arts student, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

I also want to email to remind our elected officials that arts education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My child's involvement in the arts in Howard County schools has not only enriched their academic experience but has also contributed to their overall personal development.

Research consistently highlights the positive impact of arts education on academic performance. Students engaged in the arts often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the classroom and positively influence their academic achievements.

Furthermore, our Gold Standard arts programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. The collaborative nature of musical ensembles, theater productions, dance concerts, etc., teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that arts programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to arts funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Adam Burstein
(410) 564-4930

From: [Afshin Sharifi](#)
To: [Ball, Calvin](#); boe@hcpss.org; [CouncilMail](#); bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS funding
Date: Monday, March 4, 2024 9:26:41 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 hope this letter finds you well. As a proud parent of a fine arts student, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

I also want to email to remind our elected officials that arts education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals and fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My child's involvement in the arts in Howard County schools has not only enriched their academic experience but has also contributed to their overall personal development.

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I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that arts programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to arts funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Regards,

Afshin Sharifi
afshinsharifi@comcast.net
(443) 386-8004

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privileged information. It is intended exclusively for the individual or entity to which it is addressed. Any review, forwarding, distribution, or reliance on this information by anyone other than the intended recipient is strictly prohibited. If you have received this message in error, please contact the sender and promptly delete the material from your computer.

From: [Aiden Interrante](#)
To: [Ball, Calvin](#); boe@hcpss.org; [CouncilMail](#); bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS funding
Date: Monday, March 4, 2024 10:37:23 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 a alumni of Mount Hebron High School, grad. 2022. I am currently at the Johns Hopkins Peabody Institute studying Jazz Trumpet. I am writing to express my pressing concern of the proposed budget and staffing cuts. I strongly believe that this is devastating to the quality of the education and also the individual lives of the students in the fine arts community.

It is unfortunate that the fine arts are viewed as expendable- secondary to subjects like STEM or AP courses, or sports. I understand the need to increase the county's test scores with the least amount of budget, and that fine arts is secondary to that objective, but this fails to consider the potential impact of these cuts.

The fine arts programs in every school is a close knit community of creative, sensitive, and beautiful people. It is a place of solace for students who are in need and very often serves as a secondary home to many people. Often times, quite literally. These cuts compromises the integrity of the very ground where these bonds are built.

I understand that this will not eliminate the fine arts entirely, but destabilizing the environment that so many people depend upon every day disrupts the environment that so many passionate directors and students alike have worked so hard to create. These kids need directors just as I needed them. I cannot begin to tell you how much I have learned from the faculty, and how often they are like second parents to me. This is true for many other students as well.

Please remember that creativity is not a secondary but an absolutely vital component in a student's growth, individual journey, and academic success.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that arts programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in

HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to arts funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Aiden Interrante

aiden.interrante@gmail.com

240-517-1349

From: [Candice Mumpower](#)
To: [Ball, Calvin](#)
Cc: "boe@hcpss.org"; [CouncilMail](#); "bill_barnes@hcpss.org"
Subject: Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS funding
Date: Monday, March 4, 2024 9:32:22 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 hope this letter finds you well. As a proud parent of a fine arts student, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System HCPSS. Both of my children one at Mt Hebron and one at St Johns Elementary are in the band program. My son has not only taken band in highschool but has also joined the marching unit as a percussionist. My daughter takes band and plays the Trumpet and is excited to continue through middle and high school like her big brother.

It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

I also want to email to remind our elected officials that arts education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My child's involvement in the arts in Howard County schools has not only enriched their academic experience but has also contributed to their overall personal development.

Research consistently highlights the positive impact of arts education on academic performance. Students engaged in the arts often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the class room and positively influence their academic achievements.

Furthermore, our Gold Standard arts programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. Our neighborhood gets to enjoy the Mt Hebron Marching unit, dancers and cheerleaders as they march down St Johns Lane each Fall. Everyone from the neighborhood gets to enjoy this event. Last year the marching program had 3 trips to march. This year only one was given due for budgeting reason.

The collaborative nature of musical ensembles, theater productions, dance concerts, etc., teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey

but also in their future careers.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that arts programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to arts funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Candice Mumpower- Booker
President/CEO
Commercial Insurance Managers, Inc
8600 Foundry St, Box 2030
Savage MD 20763
Mobile #443-452-7667
Office #410-799-3057

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From: [Charles Sellers](#)
To: [Ball, Calvin](#); boe@hcpss.org; [CouncilMail](#); bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Please find a way to fund HCPSS fully
Date: Monday, March 4, 2024 11:43:14 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,

Thank you for your efforts to make our county and our school system better. As a proud parent of two fine arts students, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

The proposed HCPSS budget shorfalls are so awful. I want to urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

Both of my children's academic careers have been defined by their involvement in orchestras, from 3rd grade strings through high school orchestra and the Howard County Youth Orchestra. They have also been enriched by the excellent visual art programs throughout HCPSS. My 11th grader is excited to take Art 5 and Photography as a senior and pursue a graphic design degree in college. Arts programs in HCPSS have not only enriched their academic experience but also contributed to their overall personal development.

Research consistently highlights the positive impact of arts education on academic performance. Students engaged in the arts often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the class room and positively influence their academic achievements.

Furthermore, our Gold Standard arts programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. The collaborative nature of musical ensembles, theater productions, dance concerts, etc., teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that arts programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to arts funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration,
Charles Sellers

From: [Chris Edwards](#)
To: [Ball, Calvin](#); boe@hcpss.org; [CouncilMail](#); bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS funding
Date: Monday, March 4, 2024 9:24:52 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 hope this letter finds you well. As a proud parent of a fine arts student, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

I also want to email to remind our elected officials that arts education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My child's involvement in the musical program at Mt. Hebron High School has not only enriched his academic experience but has also contributed to his overall personal development.

Research consistently highlights the positive impact of arts education on academic performance. Students engaged in the arts often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the classroom and positively influence their academic achievements.

Furthermore, our Gold Standard arts programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. The collaborative nature of musical ensembles, theater productions, dance concerts, etc., teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that arts programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

The COVID-19 took a large toll on band programs through Howard County and these cuts threaten to do even more drastic and permanent damage to the program. I fear many children will give up on music and playing in bands, orchestras and marching band programs due to the severe cuts and subsequent degradation in the quality of music instruction in HCPSS.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to arts funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Chris Edwards

Cell: 443-756-4650

Email: skip4313@yahoo.com

From: [CHRISTINA WEBB](#)
To: [Ball, Calvin](#); boe@hcpss.org; [CouncilMail](#); bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS funding
Date: Monday, March 4, 2024 11:13:31 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 hope this letter finds you well. As a proud parent of a fine arts student, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

I also want to email to remind our elected officials that arts education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My child's involvement in the arts in Howard County schools has not only enriched their academic experience but has also contributed to their overall personal development.

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Furthermore, our Gold Standard arts programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. The collaborative nature of musical ensembles, theater productions, dance concerts, etc., teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that arts programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to arts funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Christina Lepre
Cbellewebb@msn.com

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Diane Interrante](#)
To: [Ball, Calvin](#); [BoE Email](#); [CouncilMail](#); [Bill Barnes](#)
Subject: Appeal for HCPSS funding
Date: Monday, March 4, 2024 9:56:06 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,

As a proud parent of an alumni of Mt Hebron and current junior both students of fine arts, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System.

This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

It is disappointing to hear about budget cuts each year and to find myself again getting involved to advocate for our programs.

I also want to email to remind our elected officials that arts education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork.

Research consistently highlights the positive impact of arts education on academic performance. Students engaged in the arts often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the class room and positively influence their academic achievements. Both of my children have participated in Tri-M the music honor society which required them to learn leadership skills in the band programs such as marching band, wind ensemble, jazz band and pit orchestra. They've spent many volunteer hours giving free music lessons to elementary students of feeder schools then sat next to these same students at side by side concerts, with their students giggling and sitting up a little taller.

The collaborative nature of musical ensembles, theater productions, dance concerts, etc., teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers.

These large ensembles and collaborative programs foster invaluable bonding among friends. This socialization is an important foundation of the Mt Hebron community and healthy student experience. They found it a great way to relax from the stressors of their day while participating in these collaborative experiences. Simply put, my kids just really looked forward to going to school to see their friends in rehearsals, art class or choir.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to arts funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Diane Interrante
Proud Mt Hebron parent
HCPSS parent since 2009

From: [Doug G](#)
To: [Ball, Calvin](#); boe@hcpss.org; [CouncilMail](#); bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Please Defend Howard County's Arts Education
Date: Monday, March 4, 2024 9:28:52 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 hope this letter finds you well. As a proud parent of a fine arts student and an HCPSS alumnus who was involved in fine arts programs, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

I also want to email to remind our elected officials that arts education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My child's involvement in the arts in Howard County schools has not only enriched their academic experience but has also contributed to their overall personal development. Research consistently highlights the positive impact of arts education on academic performance. Students engaged in the arts often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the class room and positively influence their academic achievements.

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I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that arts programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to arts funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Doug Greenhorn
410-203-0306

From: erin.schultz
To: [Ball, Calvin](mailto:Ball_Calvin); boe@hcpss.org; CouncilMail; bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS funding
Date: Monday, March 4, 2024 10:51:36 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 hope this letter finds you well. As a proud parent of a fine arts student, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

I also want to email to remind our elected officials that arts education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork.

Acting-Superintendent Barnes attended the Howard County dance fest in January and praised the entire dance program in Howard County- the dancers and the teachers- for their hard work, dedication and talent. He also spoke about how important it was for kids to find what they are passionate about. For kids in the fine arts program, that is their passion - not math, science, foreign language or English.

My daughter's involvement in the dance program at her high school has not only enriched her academic experience but has also contributed to her overall personal development. She has learned leadership skills that she will use throughout her life. My daughter plans to major in dance in college in a year and a half and her dance experience at her school will help her with that goal.

Research consistently highlights the positive impact of arts education on academic performance. Students engaged in the arts often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the class room and positively influence their academic achievements.

Furthermore, our Gold Standard arts programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. The collaborative nature of musical ensembles, theater productions, dance concerts, etc., teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers.

Reducing the fine arts program in the high schools will also affect other programs, such as the dance teams that perform at the football games (which promotes school spirit) and the spring musicals- which are just for two examples. At my daughter's high school, the dance team coach is also the dance teacher. If the dance classes are cut in half, and she is split between two schools, it will make it difficult if not impossible for her to get back to my daughter's high school to be the coach of the dance team. Most dance teachers also do the choreography for the spring musical. If they are split between two schools that will limit their time to do the choreography and work with the theatre director of the school.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that arts programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to arts funding and continue to support all

programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Erin Schultz
443-864-2063

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Gabrielle Peters](#)
To: bill_barnes@hcpss.org; boe@hcpss.org; [Ball, Calvin](#); [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS funding
Date: Monday, March 4, 2024 10:19:07 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 hope this letter finds you well. As a proud HCPSS Alumni and active supporter of the fine arts programs, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers alike have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

I also want to email to remind our elected officials that arts education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. I have seen these attributes first hand within my classmates, other alum, and the students that are currently in the programs. My involvement in the arts in Howard County schools has not only enriched my academic experience but has also contributed to my overall personal development as a student and person within the HoCo community.

Research consistently highlights the positive impact of arts education on academic performance. Students engaged in the arts often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the class room and positively influence their academic achievements.

Furthermore, our Gold Standard arts programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. The collaborative nature of musical ensembles, theater productions, dance concerts, etc., teaches students the value of teamwork,

discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that arts programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to arts funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Gabrielle Peters

410-294-2621

gabi.peters.108@gmail.com

From: [Habeeb Shonubi](#)
To: bill_barnes@hcpss.org; [Ball, Calvin](#); [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS funding
Date: Monday, March 4, 2024 10:43:13 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 hope this letter finds you well. As a proud fine arts student, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

I also want to email to remind our elected officials that arts education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My child's involvement in the arts in Howard County schools has not only enriched their academic experience but has also contributed to their overall personal development.

Research consistently highlights the positive impact of arts education on academic performance. Students engaged in the arts often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the class room and positively influence their academic achievements.

Furthermore, our Gold Standard arts programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. The collaborative nature of musical ensembles, theater productions, dance concerts, etc., teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that arts programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to arts funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

shonubih@gmail.com

From: [Di Donato, Hannah](#)
To: [Ball, Calvin](#); boe@hcpss.org; [CouncilMail](#); bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS funding
Date: Monday, March 4, 2024 10:47:23 PM
Importance: High

[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 hope this letter finds you well. As an alumnus of the hcpss school system and band program, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

I also want to email to remind our elected officials that arts education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My involvement in the arts in Howard County schools has not only enriched my academic experience but has also contributed to my overall personal development.

Research consistently highlights the positive impact of arts education on academic performance. Students engaged in the arts often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the class room and positively influence their academic achievements.

Furthermore, our Gold Standard arts programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. The collaborative nature of musical ensembles, theater productions, dance concerts, etc., teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that arts programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to arts funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

As a student who used music to get through a parents' cancer diagnosis, the music program in Howard county was huge in my elementary, middle, and high school life. The lessons I learned, the friends I made, and the support I received was unlike anything from any other program. I wanted to give back to the program that supported me so much, so I eventually served as a Drum Major at Mt Hebron. It hurts my heart to think that these opportunities will be taken away from the kids attending school in Howard County now. My little brother is a part of the same band programs I was and thinking that he won't have the teachers he needs or the support they bring is extremely upsetting.

Please reach out to me with any questions.
Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Hannah Di Donato

Mount Hebron Class of '23
hannahdidonato@vt.edu
hannahtdidonato@gmail.com
443-812-1980

From: [Hayley Eusebio](#)
To: [Ball, Calvin](#); [BoE Email](#); [CouncilMail](#); [Bill Barnes](#)
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS funding
Date: Monday, March 4, 2024 9:08:28 AM

[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 hope this letter finds you well. As a proud music educator and Howard County resident, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county.

We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

I also want to email to remind our elected officials that music education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. The primary reason I want to live in Howard County is so that one day, when I have children, they can grow up in a school system that provides access to opportunities that other districts lack. Chief among these opportunities is early access to an excellent music education that includes ensemble performance.

Research consistently highlights the positive impact of music education on academic performance. Students engaged in music often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the music room and positively influence their academic achievements.

Furthermore, our Gold Standard music programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. The collaborative nature of musical ensembles teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that music programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to music funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Hayley Eusebio

(She/Her)

Vocal/General Music

Ilchester Elementary

410-313-2524

From: [Jackie Dutrow](#)
To: [Ball, Calvin](#); boe@hcpss.org; [CouncilMail](#); bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS Funding (Class Sizes, Elementary GT, 3rd Gr Strings)
Date: Monday, March 4, 2024 12:16:39 AM

[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 hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). I am particularly concerned with the proposed increased class sizes, reduction in elementary GT offerings and the elimination of 3rd grade strings.

It is shocking to see so many proposed cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS), particularly in a county ranked #7 in wealth in 2023 by US News and continual property tax increases. Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county and detrimental to our county standards of education. I urge our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

I volunteer at my child's elementary school quite often and I can tell you that the classrooms in his aging school would be unable to safely hold any additional students. Not to mention, our valued teachers already carry the burden of large class sizes; are spread too thin and cannot always meet the needs of ALL students.

Meeting the needs of students, includes those that struggle and those that excel. My child is a bright 3rd grader who has had the wonderful opportunity to participate in the GT seminars and lower elementary CEUs with the school's GT educators. They are his favorite classes and keep him engaged in a way that his homeroom classes cannot always provide. To reduce funding in this area would be a detriment to children who are craving a deeper learning experience and wish to be challenged beyond the typical classroom experience.

I also want to remind our elected officials that music education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My child's involvement in 3rd grade strings at his Howard County school has not only enriched his academic experience but has also contributed to his overall personal development. It is terrible that his strings teacher's job is at risk because HCPSS does not see the value in giving our children the opportunity of learning a strings instrument at this point in their education.

Research consistently highlights the positive impact of music education on academic performance. Students engaged in music often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the music room and positively influence their academic achievements.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that smaller class sizes, challenging curriculum and music programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to teacher funding, GT programs and music funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jacqueline Dutrow
HCPSS Parent

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Janine Akinrinade](#)
To: [Ball, Calvin](#); boe@hcpss.org; [CouncilMail](#); bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS funding
Date: Monday, March 4, 2024 9:29:53 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 hope this letter finds you well. As a proud parent of a fine arts student, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

I also want to email to remind our elected officials that arts education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My child's involvement in the arts in Howard County schools has not only enriched their academic experience but has also contributed to their overall personal development.

Research consistently highlights the positive impact of arts education on academic performance. Students engaged in the arts often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the classroom and positively influence their academic achievements.

Furthermore, our Gold Standard arts programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. The collaborative nature of musical ensembles, theater productions, dance concerts, etc., teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that arts programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to arts funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

On a personal note, my son is on the autism spectrum and suffers from anxiety. The art programs especially the music programs help him get through the school day. I truly do not know what would happen if his access was reduced .

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Janine Ladipo

jakin77@live.com

518-322-7230

Sent from my iPhone

From: [John Park](#)
To: bill_barnes@hcpss.org; boe@hcpss.org; [Ball, Calvin](#); [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: Regarding the Budget for HCPSS 3rd Grade Strings
Date: Monday, March 4, 2024 8:41:18 PM

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

Hello Howard County Board of Education,

My name is John Park. I am a resident of Howard County and recent dual degree graduate in Electrical Engineering and Violin Performance from the University of Maryland, College Park. I am writing to you today to implore you to reconsider your decision to cut funding for the HCPSS 3rd grade strings program.

My old violin teacher, Mrs. Linda Schroeder of the National Symphony Orchestra, once said something to me that has since remained in my heart: "Without amateur musicians, you cannot have professionals." What she meant to teach my prideful high school self was to never undermine or forget the foundation upon which my passion and talent for music was built off of.

Unfortunately, this is exactly what I see the Howard County Board of Education doing today.

I certainly would not consider myself a world class musician. As someone who has begun work in engineering, I will perhaps never even get a chance to perform in a renowned professional setting. But producing professionals was never the point of public elementary music education: the point was to get the message across to students that regardless of their socioeconomic background, they could choose to break barriers and enter fields that they might otherwise never have access to.

I would like to ask the board: what kind of vision are we setting for the next generation of students? Are we creating a society that enables all our students to freely pursue their creative interests? Or are we instead actively reducing our childrens' horizons?

Thank you for your sincere consideration of my message, and I again implore you to make the right decision for kids like me and keep 3rd grade strings in the budget.

Sincerely,

John Park

From: [JUDITH JOHNSON](#)
To: [Ball, Calvin](#); boe@hcpss.org; [CouncilMail](#); bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Cc: [JUDITH JOHNSON](#)
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS Funding
Date: Monday, March 4, 2024 10:01:22 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 hope this letter finds you well. I have lived in Howard County since 1998. I have a 2004 graduate of Mt. Hebron High School and a current student immersed in the music program at Mt. Hebron. In addition, I have three grandchildren. The commonality of the three generations that I have lived and am living is a true love of the arts and the music program in particular. I have seen the fine arts program constantly, when there are budgetary concerns, being among the first to be targeted for cuts. I would argue based on my experience, that is the last place you should be cutting. Not every child is a scholar or an athlete, or an artist for that matter. Yet each of these disciplines offers lessons, beauty, teamwork, and the opportunity to grow a successful contributing citizen. As a proud parent of a current fine arts (Class of 2024) student, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Simply, please do not cut these programs at all.

It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

I also want to email to remind our elected officials that arts education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My child's involvement in the arts in Howard County schools has not only enriched their academic experience but has also contributed to their overall personal development.

Research consistently highlights the positive impact of arts education on academic performance. Students engaged in the arts often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the classroom and positively influence their academic achievements.

Furthermore, our Gold Standard arts programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. The collaborative nature of musical ensembles, theater productions, dance concerts, etc., teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that arts programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to arts funding and

continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration, and please contact me if I can be of any assistance. This is an issue that I am very passionate about.

Sincerely,

Judith A. Johnson

judithalby@comcast.net

From: [Jules Kouatchou](#)
To: [Ball, Calvin](#); boe@hcpss.org; [CouncilMail](#); bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Protect Arts Education in HCPSS
Date: Monday, March 4, 2024 10:53:13 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 hope this letter finds you well. As a proud parent of a former fine arts student, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

I understand that there might have been losses of revenue in the country. But it is sad to learn that the school system will be significantly affected with many positions to be cut. Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

Arts education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My child, now in college, used to be involved in the arts in Howard County schools. He was mentored and encouraged by his HCPSS music teachers. He was part of groups such as African Drums, Jazz Ensemble, Symphony Ensemble, etc. His music

experience not only enriched his academic experience but also contributed to his overall personal development. My child is currently in a competitive college where he studies a STEM related field. His classes are so demanding that he finds relaxation and rest by playing music in a jazz group, something that he used to do while attending Mt. Hebron HS. I can even say that my child is successful in college because of he participated in several music programs offered from elementary school to high school.

Research consistently highlights the positive impact of arts education on academic performance. Students engaged in the arts often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the classroom and positively influence their academic achievements. It is important to also point out that if Howard County wants to maintain its competitive edge in education and its attractiveness, funding arts education should be a priority.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to arts funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jules Kouatchou
Ellicott City, MD

----- The strength of a person is not measured by
the number of weapons he/she has but by his/her ability to exercise self-
control while under pressure. KNJR -----

From: [Karissa Bryant](#)
To: [Ball, Calvin](#); [BoE Email](#); [CouncilMail](#); [Bill Barnes](#)
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS funding
Date: Monday, March 4, 2024 1:28:55 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 hope this letter finds you well. As a teacher of many music-loving students, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

I also want to email to remind our elected officials that music education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My child's involvement in music in Howard County schools has not only enriched their academic experience but has also contributed to their overall personal development.

Research consistently highlights the positive impact of music education on academic performance. Students engaged in music often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the music room and positively influence their academic achievements.

Furthermore, our Gold Standard music programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. The collaborative nature of musical ensembles teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that music programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to music funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

From: [Kelly Kirk](#)
To: bill_barnes@hcpss.org; boe@hcpss.org; [Ball, Calvin](#); [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: HCPSS budget cuts
Date: Monday, March 4, 2024 10:04:29 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 hope this letter finds you well. As a proud parent of a Howard County high school student, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). The school system is why so many families move to Howard County and it is shocking to see the number of positions that will be cut with this latest round of budget cuts.

Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes, reduction in bussing support and increased needs for fundraising for basic classroom, fine arts and athletic opportunities over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

I also want to email to remind our elected officials that arts education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, and giving students a reason to come to school. How many times do you think a kid has been less than excited about school but makes sure they are there so they can meet up with friends in their favorite arts class of the day? How many learn to play well as a team and work together to form an ensemble? Our arts programs are already so underfunded that teachers cannot afford music to teach and must rely on fundraising for basic supplies. What will happen to the Howard County system when so many arts teachers are cut from the payroll? Will families stay?

And cutting other staff - two of my daughter's favorite teachers who brought energy, technology and a strong background in their subjects are going to be let go this year. They are the future staff needed to teach the kids coming up from middle school. They are AMAZING educators and it is a critical shame that they cannot stay at Hebron.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that arts programs make to our students' lives and how having enough teachers enriches the community. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to arts funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kelly Kirk

From: [Kristin Johnson](#)
To: bill_barnes@hcpss.org; boe@hcpss.org; [Ball, Calvin](#); [CouncilMail](#)
Cc: [Keith Johnson](#); [blake johnson](#)
Subject: Please fund the visual and performing arts programs
Date: Monday, March 4, 2024 11:22:29 PM

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

Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS funding

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

As a parent of two Mt Hebron High School students, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System. Our kids have been talking and texting with friends, sharing the news of beloved teachers being cut from their school. As a family, we are very concerned about the cuts they have heard about at school. We have heard that 6 of 18 teachers are from the visual and performing arts programs and this is a drastic change to one of the reasons we choose to live in Howard County.

It is shocking to hear about a o many cuts to positions in HCPSS and this news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year. How is our school supposed to function without these 18 teachers?

This fall at MHHS, the entire music program from guitar ensemble to the marching band performed in a collaborative concert themed "This is Me." Each student made a graphic poster describing who they were and there was an entire hallway at school filled with each individual's creation and description of themselves. The concert brought me to tears and I felt so fortunate that our kids were a part of such a special music department.

So many of our students find themselves in the arts and find outlets that help relieve the pressures of being a teenager in the post Covid era. Building self confidence and expression of feelings through art being some of the most important results from participating in visual and performing arts.

We do sincerely hope that you find a way to fun our vibrant and supportive arts community in our schools. Perhaps the developers can finally pay their share via an increase to support the adequate public facilities ordinance.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that arts programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to arts funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kristin Johnson, mother to two artistic kids who found their place in visual and performing arts at Mount Hebron High School

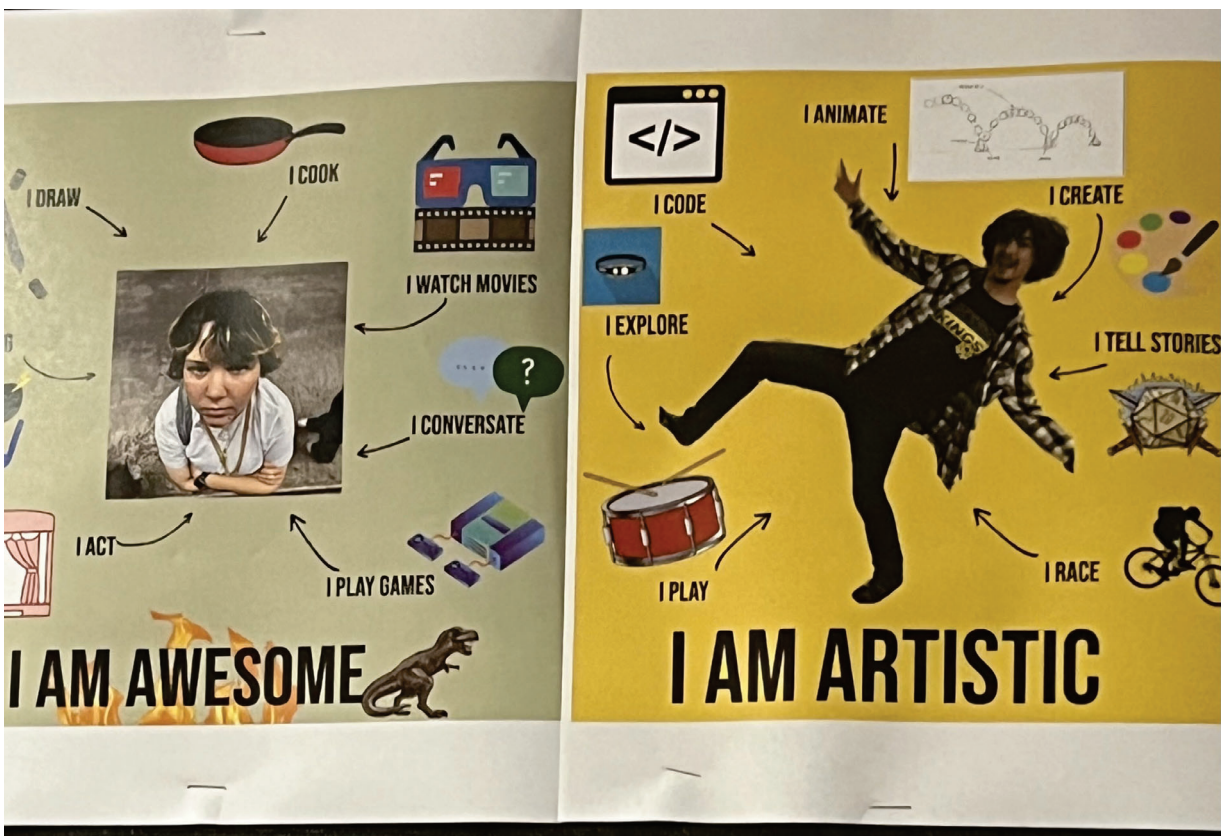
Blake Johnson, 10th grade, artist, vocalist, Theater Honor Society, theater ensemble

Keith Johnson 12th grade, committed to UMBC for visual arts, animation in fall 2024HCPSS band program since 4th grade, clarinet, Jazz Band, Marching Band, Pianist and percussion ensemble

3037 Hickorymede Dr

Ellicott City, MD 21042

443-538-4342





From: [Kristin Showalter](#)
To: [Ball, Calvin](#); boe@hcpss.org; [CouncilMail](#); bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS funding
Date: Monday, March 4, 2024 11:15:11 AM

[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 hope this letter finds you well. As a parent of a young musician and HCPSS student, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). I ask that you read this entire email, especially the text in [blue](#).

It is very disheartening and shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

I also want to remind our elected officials that music education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My child's involvement in music in Howard County schools has not only enriched her academic experience, but also has contributed to her confidence as a learner and as a growing community member. It has allowed her to find the place where she belongs and feels included, thanks to her involvement in HCPSS music programs.

My daughter was a third grade student in the first full year of COVID learning (fall of 2020). She chose to begin learning to play the cello as a third grade strings student in a year that was full of anxiety and uncertainty. Her overall educational experience during virtual learning was nothing short of challenging, and she was highly unmotivated to give her effort to virtual classes. She didn't feel a sense of connection to her class or to her overall education, and her morale was low, when in the past, she loved school.

Orchestra lessons were the one bright spot in her third grade school year. Thanks to her third grade orchestra teacher's excitement and dedication to her students, my daughter was motivated to engage in a creative arts opportunity when few other class activities offered an authentic connection to educational content. She grew as a responsible learner and looked forward to school thanks to her beginning strings lessons and her teacher's love for music and for her young students.

In a world with ever-increasing rigor and demands for increased pressure to perform and succeed academically, third grade is a highly pivotal year for children, developmentally and socially. The responsibility and commitment that is fostered through the third grade instrumental music program instills essential skills in our children that are most effectively learned at this age and at this point in their curricular learning. Statistics support the fact that while third grade is such a pivotal developmental year for children, participation in the arts at this time is incredibly supportive of this skill development.

By cutting the third grade strings program in HCPSS schools, the message is being sent to our community that the development of those skills is not truly important to our children's learning and

growth. The chance to experience responsibility and a sense of belonging at this critical age, bridging primary and intermediate years in elementary learning, is inherently part of our third grade strings curriculum and is the very nature of this type of instruction and learning. By significantly decreasing our children's exposure to this type of brain development at such a critical age, this decision will have deep impacts on not only the future of our instrumental music programs in the county, but more importantly, on our children's personal growth. It is highly disappointing to think of the future of our children in an already-challenging world, with so many negative aspects, with yet another opportunity removed from their future.

Furthermore, the concerns surrounding the equity of this situation for our community are shocking to consider. While some families in Howard County are able to choose to enroll their children in private instrumental lesson instruction, many others are financially unable to do so. Third grade strings provides an equitable opportunity for all interested families to access quality instrumental instruction at a pivotal age, without financial and socioeconomic barriers. If these programs are indeed cut, then countless families across Howard County, especially those in Title I settings, will no longer have access to these opportunities. This is not at all an equitable and accessible option for our children, if we truly value the concept of equity, inclusion, and access for all.

Research consistently highlights the positive impact of music education on academic performance. Students engaged in music often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the music room and positively influence their academic achievements.

Furthermore, our Gold Standard music programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. The collaborative nature of musical ensembles teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that music programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to music funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kristin Showalter
(610) 334-7573
songladykls83@gmail.com

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Kristin Showalter
songladykls83@gmail.com

*May your life be like a wildflower, growing freely in the beauty and joy of each day.
~ Native American proverb*

From: [Laura Curran](#)
To: boe@hcpss.org; bill_barnes@hcpss.org; [Ball, Calvin](#); [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: Music budget cuts
Date: Monday, March 4, 2024 9:29:36 AM

[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 concern with your decision to make huge cuts to music education in Howard County. As a parent of a rising 3rd grader, I am deeply concerned about these cuts and how the enrichment opportunities of 3rd graders are being taken away. 12 FTE is a huge percentage of an already small number of people. This will have a negative effect on all levels of music and all programs, not just strings. I also don't see this level of reduction in staffing anywhere else. The arts should not be targeted in this way, they are too important to a child's education. Many student's families won't be able to make up for these cuts by getting lessons for their kids outside of school so this cut is also an equity issue.

As a product of the Howard County public school system myself, when it came time to move back to the area with my kids, I insisted on purchasing in Howard county and was willing to make the financial sacrifice because of the school system. If we continue to gut important programs like music and GT in the elementary schools I'm not sure it is worth the high prices to live here anymore.

Music isn't expendable. Fund education. Do better.

Sincerely,
Laura Curran

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Luke Mihalik](#)
To: [Ball, Calvin](#); boe@hcpss.org; [CouncilMail](#); bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS funding
Date: Monday, March 4, 2024 10:48:26 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 hope this letter finds you well. As a proud parent of a fine arts student, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

I also want to email to remind our elected officials that arts education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My child's involvement in the arts in Howard County schools has not only enriched their academic experience but has also contributed to their overall personal development.

Research consistently highlights the positive impact of arts education on academic performance. Students engaged in the arts often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the classroom and positively influence their academic achievements.

Furthermore, our Gold Standard arts programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. The collaborative nature of musical ensembles, theater productions, dance concerts, etc., teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that arts programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to arts funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Luke Mihalik

From: [Noah Johnson](#)
To: [Ball, Calvin](#); boe@hcpss.org; [CouncilMail](#); bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS Funding
Date: Monday, March 4, 2024 10:08:10 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 hope this letter finds you well. As a current student involved in the fine arts program, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Having lived in Howard County my entire life, the fine arts have always played a crucial role in my development, friendships, and success I wish to enjoy in life. Plainly, if these fine arts programs are cut, I fear that we are dooming future generations, and shutting them out of opportunities to grow, thrive, and achieve in an increasingly uncertain future. Please reconsider any cuts, reductions in staff or services, or general neglect of the fine arts programs. Knowing many friends, associates, and classmates who have dedicated their lives, interests, and future plans to the fine arts, I find it imperative that these programs not only survive, but are the focus and dreams of the Howard County Public School System.

It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

I also want to email to remind our elected officials that arts education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My involvement in the arts in Howard County schools has not only enriched their academic experience but has also contributed to their overall personal development.

Research consistently highlights the positive impact of arts education on academic performance. Students engaged in the arts often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the classroom and positively influence their academic achievements.

Furthermore, our Gold Standard arts programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. The collaborative nature of musical ensembles, theater productions, dance concerts, etc., teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that arts programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to arts funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Noah J. Johnson

443-822-1699

noahjohnson33@gmail.com

From: [Raghu](#)
To: [Ball, Calvin](#); boe@hcpss.org; [CouncilMail](#); bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS funding
Date: Monday, March 4, 2024 9:35:13 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, Howard County Council and Board of Education Members, and Acting Superintendent Barnes,

I hope this note finds you well. As a parent of a fine arts student, I'm concerned about the reported staffing and program cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) detailed in the Baltimore Sun. These cuts could exacerbate the already increasing class sizes, negatively impacting our community. I urge our elected officials to collaborate with HCPSS to address these challenges and find sustainable funding solutions.

Arts education is crucial for developing well-rounded, creative, and collaborative individuals. My child's experience in Howard County's arts programs has significantly enriched their academic and personal development. Research supports the wide-ranging benefits of arts education, including improved academic performance and cognitive skills.

Moreover, our exceptional arts programs foster community and teach valuable life skills like teamwork and perseverance. Given the budget constraints HCPSS faces, it's vital to recognize the lasting value of arts education. I ask that you work together to prevent cuts to arts funding and support essential programs that benefit our county's future leaders and innovators.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,
Raghu Bemgal

From: [Ranee Mehra](#)
To: boe@hcpss.org; [CouncilMail](#); bill_barnes@hcpss.org; [Ball, Calvin](#)
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS funding
Date: Monday, March 4, 2024 9:49:06 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 hope this letter finds you well. As a proud parent of a fine arts student, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) and in particular the fine arts department at Mt. Hebron High School.

It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county, which values education and the excellence of our schools. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

I also want to email to remind our elected officials that arts education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My child's involvement in the arts at Mt. Hebron High School has not only enriched her academic experience but has also contributed to her overall personal development. Her participation in band, jazz, band, marching band and GT band programs have allowed her to be a part of a greater community and gain the confidence to perform and lead. Research consistently highlights the positive impact of arts education on academic performance. Students engaged in the arts often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the class room and positively influence their academic achievements.

Furthermore, our Gold Standard arts programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. The collaborative nature of musical ensembles, theater productions, dance concerts, etc., teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that arts programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to arts funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Ranee Mehra, MD
raneemehra@hotmail.com
203-676-5465

From: [Robin Interrante](#)
To: [Ball, Calvin](#); [BoE Email](#); [CouncilMail](#); [Bill Barnes](#)
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS Funding
Date: Monday, March 4, 2024 11:10:03 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, Howard County Council and Board of Education members, and Superintendent Barnes,

I hope this letter finds you well. My name is Robin Interrante and I am a Junior at Mount Hebron High School. I have been enrolled in the band program since my Freshman year, and have taken two Studio Art classes. Today, I am writing to you in hopes that you continue to support the Fine Arts and fund them fully. I understand the funding issues that are troubling everyone right now, it is not an easy problem to solve. However, I am heartbroken that this might directly harm the fine arts programs.

My life has changed because of the fine arts. I have met some of my closest friends, and developed a sense of community among my peers that wouldn't have been possible otherwise. For example, the Marching Band at Hebron allows for people of different ages, and different backgrounds to come together and work towards a common goal. This bonds us together like nothing else would. Band is not just a fine arts class, it is a family. The people I have met have influenced me profoundly, inspiring me to be a better leader and musician, while also providing me with memorable experiences that will last a lifetime. Band has allowed me to meet students from different schools, and support all that they are doing. This community cannot exist without a fully funded fine arts program.

In addition to the community Band has taught me discipline that I can apply in all aspects of life. When someone joins any music program there are rehearsals we have to attend, sometimes weekly. We have to show up early to football games, spend extra time practicing our instruments, perform, and all while balancing homework. This teaches discipline, and time management that is crucial both during and after highschool. Time management is something we can use our whole lives, whether that is in the occupational world or our social life. This is just one example of what we can take away from the arts programs.

The dedication that both students and teachers put into the arts should not be forgotten. Our Marching Unit has existed since 1964, and that is possible because of the work put in by parents, teachers, and students alike. However, funds are an important factor as well, and we would suffer without them. It would be a shame for this program to have funds cut, or cease to exist entirely. You cannot put a price on all the benefits that come from the fine arts.

Band is something I look forward to daily and I know I am not the only one, so I ask you to please consider solving any proposed budget cuts to arts, and continue to support all programs.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Sincerely,

Robin Interrante

From: [Ross S. Rawlings](#)
To: [Ball, Calvin](#); [BoE Email](#); [CouncilMail](#); [Bill Barnes](#)
Subject: Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS funding
Date: Monday, March 4, 2024 7:23:55 AM

[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 hope this letter finds you well. As a proud Howard County Music teacher for over 20 years, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

I also want to email to remind our elected officials that music education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My hundreds of music students' involvement in music in Howard County schools has not only enriched their academic experience but has also contributed to their overall personal development.

Research consistently highlights the positive impact of music education on academic performance. Students engaged in music often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the music room and positively influence their academic achievements.

Furthermore, our Gold Standard music programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. The collaborative nature of musical ensembles teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that music programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to music funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Ross Rawlings

Director of Choral Activities
Marriotts Ridge High School

From: [Steve Johnson](#)
To: [Ball, Calvin](#); boe@hcpss.org; [CouncilMail](#); bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS funding
Date: Monday, March 4, 2024 10:12:49 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 hope this letter finds you well. As a proud parent of a fine arts student, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

I have 2 children that are currently enrolled at Mt. Hebron High School. They are not naturally gifted at the traditional sports available through HCPSS. Instead, they have gravitated toward the arts programs, where they do have some natural talent. Without the music and arts programs at Mt. Hebron, my kids would not have found a "home".

I suppose it has happened historically, but it seems rare that there are cuts to sports programs. Why is that? Why is funding possibly being cut from the arts programs, but not sports? I don't want to see any programs cut, but how can you justify cutting arts, when it is equally important to a large percentage of the student population as sports?

I suppose cuts are inevitable. I'm not sure if it affects Howard County, but I hear stories of how funding is being diverted toward charter schools and away from public schools. Hopefully that is not the case in our county.

If cuts are unavoidable, please consider not just cutting music and arts programs, but perhaps spreading the cuts equally to other programs, like sports for example. Music and arts are critical to the success and happiness of many students.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Steve Johnson

From: [Tahmineh Shadkhoo](#)
To: [Ball, Calvin](#); boe@hcpss.org; [CouncilMail](#); bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS funding
Date: Monday, March 4, 2024 9:33:05 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 hope this letter finds you well. As a proud parent of a fine arts student, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. Our students have worked extremely hard to rebuild connections, catch up with their arts education and build community following the pandemic. This news threatens to invalidate all of they have had to overcome. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

I also want to email to remind our elected officials that arts education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My child's involvement in the arts in Howard County schools has not only enriched their academic experience but has also contributed to their overall personal development.

Research consistently highlights the positive impact of arts education on academic performance. Students engaged in the arts often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the class room and positively influence their academic achievements.

Furthermore, our Gold Standard arts programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. The collaborative nature of musical ensembles, theater productions, dance concerts, etc., teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that arts programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to arts funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Tahmineh Shadkhoo

443-745-2363

Shadkhoo@comcast.net

From: [Tina Issac](#)
To: [Ball, Calvin](#)
Cc: [CouncilMail](#); bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS funding
Date: Monday, March 4, 2024 10:18:00 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 hope this letter finds you well. As a proud parent of a fine arts student, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

I also want to email to remind our elected officials that arts education, in all of its forms, plays a pivotal role in shaping well-rounded individuals, fostering creativity, discipline, and teamwork. My child's involvement in the arts in Howard County schools has not only enriched their academic experience but has also contributed to their overall personal development.

Research consistently highlights the positive impact of arts education on academic performance. Students engaged in the arts often show improved cognitive skills, better concentration, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. These benefits extend beyond the classroom and positively influence their academic achievements.

Furthermore, our Gold Standard arts programs contribute to building a sense of community within our schools. The collaborative nature of musical ensembles, theater productions, dance concerts, etc., teaches students the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These qualities are essential not only in their academic journey but also in their future careers.

I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that arts programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to arts funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Tina Jacob DNP, ACNP-BC

Parent of Mt Hebron HS fine arts student

[

From: [hhwbcw](#)
To: [Ball, Calvin](#); [boe](#); [CouncilMail](#); [bill_barnes](#)
Subject: Urgent Appeal for HCPSS Funding
Date: Monday, March 4, 2024 11:10:39 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 hope this letter finds you well. As a proud parent of a fine arts student, I am writing to express my sincere concern regarding the potential program and staffing cuts in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

It is shocking to see the report in the Baltimore Sun regarding so many cuts to positions in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Students and teachers have already endured increased class sizes over the last few years. This news is devastating to our entire county. We urge all of our elected officials to work together with HCPSS to help during this crisis and continue to solve the funding issues that seem to plague the system every year.

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I understand the budgetary challenges that HCPSS faces, but I urge you to consider the invaluable contribution that arts programs make to our students' lives. By investing more in HCPSS overall as a county, we are investing in the future leaders, artists, and innovators of our community.

I kindly request that you work together to solve any proposed cuts to arts funding and continue to support all programs that are considered well-managed and essential in our county.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

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