

Anderson, Isaiah

From: Laituri, Mary on behalf of Walsh, Elizabeth
Sent: Thursday, March 6, 2025 4:10 PM
To: jolene_mosley@hcpss.org; boe@hcpss.org
Cc: CouncilMail; Facchine, Felix; Cornell Brown; Ball, Calvin; bill_barnes@hcpss.org; Evans, Maureen
Subject: Re: Meeting
Attachments: Administration Correspondence: CR63 - BOE IAC Amendment

Chair Mosley: Thank you for your note.

As you must know, the subject legislation was late filed: Council received it after 4pm on the Friday before our Monday 7pm legislative session. Usually bills and resolutions introduced at a given month's legislative session are voted on the following month. The ask here, though, was not just that we late-introduce the resolution, but that we vote on it that same night, too. Having been published on the Council's webpage no more than 24 business hours. No proceeding in the ordinary course after introduction. No public hearing. No submitted testimony. No work session. No amendments. I have attached the sum total of information provided to the Council in support of such a remarkable request. I assume you have seen it.

I do not know whether the Board or the school system offered explanation to any of my colleagues before CR63 was late-introduced, or after. Certainly none has been made to me.

For my part, in response, I did my best to find the Board's own consideration of the matter. Over the weekend, I watched the Board's thirty-second consent agenda vote from last week. No mention. I read through the combined fourteen pages of duplicative materials attributed to that consent agenda item buried in Board Docs. As far as I can see, without the Council having added the legislation for discussion to our upcoming Monday monthly meeting and then scheduling a special session the following Wednesday to vote only on this singular item, the Board never may have publicly acknowledged this additional budget request at all.

As you must know, CR63 would add \$9.1M to the Council-approved HCPSS capital funding request to the State—\$4.7M in County funding to leverage additional available State aid equal to \$4.4M. Five projects identified to receive those funds are 1) Forest Ridge Elementary roof, 2) Howard High roof, 3) Atholton Elementary elevator, 4) Oakland Mills High gym A/C and 5) Reservoir High gym A/C. These additional projects would append to the many already identified as part of a comprehensive State funding request approved by the Council in November 2024, as CR151.

A listing of “FY2026-2031 Long Range Systemic Renovation Projects”—E1058 in the County’s Capital Budget—is attached to both resolutions, dated October 10, 2024 for CR151-2024 and February 27, 2025 for CR63-2025. The only difference between the two seems to be the four new projects inserted between “Manor Woods ES Septic” to be funded in FY2026 per CR151 and Ilchester ES HVAC Replacement to be funded in FY2027 and 2028. The two new roofing projects are presumably included in both resolutions’ unitemized “Roofing Projects,” E1059. (You might kindly remind us why fourth additional new systemic renovation project listed “West Friendship ES Septic and Well” is not part of the CR63 funding request.)

- Where did these new projects come from. That is, why did the Board not simply advance the next chronologically identified projects on the CR151 list—presumably ordered there in some sort of reasonably defensible priority of need.
- What is the County’s schools’ total current needs priority for roofing, elevator and gym A/C projects. Has that changed since October. And how do those priorities compare to, say, replacing a whole school’s HVAC system or equipment, or domestic water piping.
- Why would the Board ask to install new A/C in the gym of a high school it has next slated for total renovation.

I am gravely concerned about how we got here. Every opportunity I’ve had in the last several meetings between Council and Board, I’ve asked: is schools’ annual capital budget request leaving State money on the table by not meeting local matching requirements—for annual CIP funds, and for the Built to Learn funds we’ve been warned will expire in FY2031. Historically, schools’ answer has been yes, but only as to Built to Learn funding, *because the County Executive won’t allot to our capital budget more than \$54M annually*. More recently, I understood that answer to have changed to *schools now will be pacing its annual requests to maximize receipt of both State CIP and Built to Learn funding, through FY2031*. Apparently I misunderstood.

- For the last six years, and this FY2026, what was the total amount of State CIP funding available to the County, and what was the Board’s ask and receipt.
- Under what circumstances did the issue of amending this year’s capital funding request arise. Initiated by whom, on what timeline, in what meetings, including what persons. Please forward to the Council all related communications and other documentation pertaining to same.
- For the last six years, and this FY2026, what was the total amount of other State capital funding available to the County, and what was the Board’s ask and receipt.
- Through FY2031, what is the Board’s plan to maximize receipt of all State capital funding available, and what is the annual corresponding local matching requirement.

I know of—and begrudgingly even very recently voted in support of—\$2.5M in forthcoming studies to include a comprehensive, honest analysis of HCPSS’s capital needs, as TAO2-2025. In the meantime, this Board still seems quite content to advance certain capital projects over others simply *because we said so*. I read aloud in the CR151 work session Board Member Watt’s unabashed admission: “It’s not the Superintendent’s capital budget, it’s ours. And it’s been historically done by Board Members placing schools on the list.” (October 10, 2024 Board Meeting, ~1:23:00)

This Board's arbitrariness, its resolute opacity, cannot continue. Plainly too much is at stake.

I eagerly await receipt of the Board's answers and further information requested in advance of Monday's meeting. I ask that you please check in with my colleagues before then to see if they might have questions or concerns additional to those of mine outlined above.

In service,

Liz Walsh

Howard County Council, Chair

410.313.2001

3430 Court House Drive

Ellicott City, MD 21043



[Sign up for our newsletter!](#)

From: Jolene Mosley <Jolene_Mosley@hcpss.org>

Sent: Wednesday, March 5, 2025 9:37 AM

To: CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov <CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov>

Subject: Meeting

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

Hello,

The other day, late in the day, it was asked that staff and Board member attend the County Council meeting that same night. Cornell Brown and myself made ourselves available and attended the meeting. We attended the full hour and a half meeting to end up being pushed off with no discussion to another

meeting. This was not an appropriate use of our time and frustrating without disclosure or discussion. The resolution was tabled for discussion from a public meeting to another public meeting when identified personnel were active and available. Can you please share more about this happening? Can you please share what questions you have so that we can address them?

Thank you

Jolene Mosley (she/her)

Howard County Board of Education Chair

Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) Board of Directors Member

Audit Committee Member