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of Howard County**

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**Board of Education of Howard County
Testimony Submitted to the Howard County Council
March 17, 2025**

**CB20-2025: FAVORABLE
Excess Surplus Revenue – Modification**

The Board of Education of Howard County (the Board) supports **Excess Surplus Revenue-Modification** for the potential to identify additional revenues that will further capital additions and improvements for the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) in FY2026.

If passed by a 2/3 vote of the Council, CB20-2025 would modify the Howard County Charter to allow excess surplus revenue from prior fiscal years to be used for deferred capital needs of HCPSS. This would only apply for the FY2026 Capital Budget. The intent, as noted in the preamble to the bill, would be to provide additional funds to address an ever-growing backlog of identified school capital needs that have been deferred due to underfunding.

On March 4, 2025, the Board adopted the FY 2026 Capital Budget totaling \$100.64 million for costs associated with: the renovation/addition of Oakland Mills Middle School; to begin the design of the renovation/addition of Dunloggin Middle School; other systemic renovations/modernizations, roofing projects and equipment; and ongoing projects such as relocatable classrooms, capital technology needs, and school parking lot expansions. The total FY2026 local request is \$62 million, which includes \$8 million above the Superintendent's proposed Capital Budget request in the categories of Systemic Renovations/Modernization and Playground Equipment.

Facility investments ensure the school system can maintain safe and efficient physical spaces that are conducive to learning. Increased construction costs, sustainability challenges, and catching up to years of rapid enrollment growth in Howard County, as well as competing interests between infrastructure and programmatic needs, are among the challenges faced by HCPSS and our funding authorities to adequately fund the Capital Budget.

As noted by CB20-2025, on average over the six prior fiscal years the County has allocated \$56.9 million annually to the school system's capital projects. This represents fluctuations from as low as \$48.5 million in FY2020 up to \$68.7 million in FY21. Over the past six fiscal years the excess surplus revenue in the County's prior year budgets has ranged from \$18.4 million in FY2019 up to \$76.1 million in FY2023.

Locating and advocating for available local revenues such as those highlighted by CB20-2025 is key to addressing gaps in the capital infrastructure needs of the school system. The Board urges the Council to support CB20-2025 and thanks Councilmember Walsh for her sponsorship.