
From: Aaron <aaron.smalls@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 10:24 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned [parent/teacher/resident] to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

During the last cuts to supported services, impact to both students receiving services like classrooms support staff were felt by everyone from teachers, the students missing critical supports AND the students not receiving those supports. My children reported significant increased disruption to their learning environment because students who previously received classroom support had those supports taken away. Schools have done their best to address these, but the impact to classrooms cannot be understated.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,

Aaron Smalls

6414 Hanover Crossing Way, Hanover, MD 21076

Aaron Smalls
aaron.smalls@gmail.com

"Without ambition one starts nothing. Without work one finishes nothing. The prize will not be sent to you. As to methods there may be a million and then some, but the principles are few. The man who grasps principles can successfully select his own methods. The man who tries methods, ignoring principles, is sure to have trouble."

-- Ralph Waldo Emerson

From: Ai Uchida <missai@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 4:39 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore full funding to HCPSS in FY 26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

I am worried about my children's education, as their schools are already stretched thin and not adequately staffed. We cannot afford further cuts, period.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,
Ai Uchida,
11012 Bittersweet Court
Ellicott City, MD

Ai Uchida (she/hers)
My first name is pronounced 'I'
My children have my husband's last name, Matsuzawa

From: Angie N. <angie.netro@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 3:59 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Please restore \$29.2 Million to HCPSS Budget!

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Members of the Howard County Council,

I'm writing to urge you to restore the minimum of **\$29.2 million** to the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) budget. Our teachers are the foundation of our community, and the best way to appreciate and support them is to **keep them teaching**—with the resources they need to succeed.

You've already heard over three hours of testimony and received hundreds of pages of written statements. The message is clear: our schools are in urgent need. If this funding is not restored, the consequences will directly and negatively impact our children. Without this support:

- Class sizes will increase.
- Teachers and paraeducators will lose their jobs.
- GT (Gifted & Talented) teachers will be cut from elementary schools.
- Music, media, and other specialist programs will be eliminated.

These cuts would hurt not only our students' education but also the morale and retention of our invaluable educators.

Looking ahead, we must also address the root causes of the constant budget shortfalls and overcrowded schools. Developers must be held accountable for paying their fair share when building in Howard County. Projections of students per household have consistently underestimated the actual impact, and our schools are suffering because of it. Families should not have to wait 15 years to see new schools built that are desperately needed to keep up with the pace of growth. There is no justification for our schools to remain overcrowded—often well over 100% capacity—**forcing hundreds of students to face unnecessary and unfair redistricting in order to accommodate for the extreme overcrowding and shortfall in attendance predictions**. While developers receive constant tax breaks and approval for unchecked development, our children are left to bear the consequences. This is unacceptable. Our children deserve better, and the families of Howard County will not stand for this any longer.

Please take action now to protect the quality of education in Howard County. **Fully restore the \$29.2 million** to the HCPSS budget, and commit to long-term solutions that prevent this crisis from repeating year after year.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Angela Netro

5017 Durham Rd W, Columbia MD 21044

410-292-3200

From: Zhaoxia Li <zhaoxiali@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 3:56 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: restore full funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council

My Name is April Li, one parent of two Howard County public school students. I am writing to urge yo to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget. Additional funding may be available by examining investment income more carefully.

HCPSS has faced years underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we will see larger class sizes, fewer programs and shortness of staff, all of which hurt our students, our community and neighborhood.

It's really unacceptable that our school system is the first victim of budget tighten. I believe you all agree that the education is the core service and basic right should be protected, not sacrificed. Our children are our future and they deserve these better education system.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you!

April

From: Ari Ashe <arijashe@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 6, 2025 11:09 PM
To: CouncilMail; Rigby, Christiana; Gelwicks, Colette; Goldscher, Paige
Subject: Fund the Full HCPSS Budget — Use the Rainy Day Fund or Delay Lower-Priority Projects
Attachments: hoco council ashe special ed.pdf

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

Dear Councilmembers,

I'm writing as a parent and Howard County resident to urge you to close the \$54.3 million shortfall in the FY26 school system operating budget.

The Board of Education has requested \$868.4 million in recurring county funding for FY26. It is not as a wish list, but as a reflection of real costs: state-mandated pension shifts, special education staffing, contractual obligations, and the baseline needs of a growing and diversifying student population. The County Executive's proposed \$800 million, while above Maintenance of Effort, does not come close to covering these essentials.

As the father of a son with autism and ADHD, I work hard to provide the best support necessary for him to succeed at his elementary school. I pay my taxes and I expect my elected representatives to set him up for success in school, not set him up for failure. This budget sets him up for failure.

I acknowledge that we are in a moment of structural fiscal pressure. County revenues are down 1.6%, income tax collections are shrinking, and federal aid is receding. At the same time, state cost shifts, such as the \$6.7 million for teacher pensions, are straining the General Fund.

If this doesn't qualify as a "**rainy day**" what does?

The purpose of the Rainy Day Fund is not to sit untouched while core public services are weakened. It exists for times *exactly like this*, when declining revenues and rising obligations threaten the integrity of our school system and the wellbeing of the children it serves. There's no point in having a Rainy Day fund if nothing qualifies as a rainy day.

Howard County ranks fourth in Maryland for per-pupil spending, trailing only Baltimore City, Somerset, and Worcester Counties. It is on-par with Montgomery County and is slightly ahead of Prince George's, Anne Arundel, and Harford Counties. It is in the middle of the pack with other districts:

- Fairfax County Public Schools in Virginia: ~\$20,940 per pupil
- Arlington Public Schools (VA): ~\$25,175 per pupil
- Lower Merion School District (PA): ~\$30,110 per pupil
- Central Bucks School District (PA): ~\$18,148 per pupil

How do we raise the funds?

If there is reluctance to use Rainy Day reserves, then I urge the Council to consider postponing lower-priority capital and operating expenditures until the school system is stabilized.

For example, I fully recognize that the Elkridge Community Center is a project with deep community roots and a compelling long-term vision. It has been in the works for years and reflects the needs of a growing part of Howard County. However, in a year where we are falling \$54.3 million short of what our children need in classrooms, I ask you to consider a temporary deferral of the \$25 million allocated in FY26 for construction. A delay of just one year could allow this critical education funding to move forward without permanently derailing the Elkridge Civic District plan.

Similarly, the \$13.7 million in Recreation and Parks Improvements and the \$9.1 million for systemic, non-urgent county building renovations are important but not urgent. While it will impact Alpha Ridge Park, Blandair Park, Centennial Park, East Columbia Library Park, Ilchester Park, Robinson Nature Center, Rockburn Branch Park, Savage Mill Trail, Schooley Mill Park, and Western Regional Park, the upgrades are not as critical as ensuring our next generation get a high-quality education, especially those with autism and other developmental delays.

These deferrals could reallocate nearly \$48 million and by dipping only \$6.3 million in the Rainy Day fund would be enough to prevent deep cuts in special education, staffing, and instructional supports across HCPSS.

Understand why I care

For children like my son, this shortfall is not abstract. It translates directly to:

- Fewer special education teachers and paraeducators
- Delays in critical speech and occupational therapy
- Overwhelmed staff who can't meet IEP goals
- Less inclusion, less support, and more distress and behavioral outbursts

I'm not asking for luxury or extras. I'm asking what is required to give every child, including those with disabilities, a free and appropriate public education in their neighborhood school.

When adjusted for inflation, Howard County's per-pupil funding has remained virtually unchanged for 15 years, while the cost of services, especially for students with disabilities has grown substantially. Even maintaining current services requires an additional \$29.2 million over the County Executive's proposal.

I urge you to close this funding gap before final budget adoption. This is about values, priorities, and equity. We cannot afford to let special education staffing, instructional support, or student wellbeing become the balancing item in a tough budget year.

Please think about the parents and children who depend on the school system to prepare their children for life and don't set them up to fail.

Thanks,

Ari Ashe

Kings Contrivance

202-630-4601 (mobile)

Subject: Fund the Full HCPSS Budget — Use the Rainy Day Fund or Delay Lower-Priority Projects

Dear Councilmembers,

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The Board of Education has requested \$868.4 million in recurring county funding for FY26. It is not as a wish list, but as a reflection of real costs: state-mandated pension shifts, special education staffing, contractual obligations, and the baseline needs of a growing and diversifying student population. The County Executive's proposed \$800 million, while above Maintenance of Effort, does not come close to covering these essentials.

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I urge you to close this funding gap before final budget adoption. This is about values, priorities, and equity. We cannot afford to let special education staffing, instructional support, or student wellbeing become the balancing item in a tough budget year.

Please think about the parents and children who depend on the school system to prepare their children for life and don't set them up to fail.

Thanks,

Ari Ashe

Ari Ashe

Kings Contrivance

202-630-4601 (mobile)

From: Beth Kunkoski <elfrank@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 10:48 AM
To: CouncilMail; Yungmann, David
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

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

Dear Mr. Yungmann,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

Triadelphia Ridge Elementary School is already crowded with significant safety issues. Cutting staff will increase class size and risk the safety of students and staff. My daughter has first hand benefited from 3rd grade strings and GT programs. These are the reasons we moved to Howard County. If they are taken away at such an early age, we will need to relocate to other more competitive school areas.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,

Beth Kunkoski
District 5

From: Brittany Jacobs <brittanyplaysviola@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 6, 2025 10:40 PM
To: CouncilMail; Budget Testimony
Subject: Fully Fund HCPSS Budget

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear County Council members,

Here in Howard County we are once again facing a budget crisis. As a parent of an elementary-aged child in our school system, I am deeply concerned about the shortfalls in funding for HCPSS. My husband and I chose to live and raise our child in Howard County because of its excellent school system, where our child can experience programs and opportunities we did not have during our PreK-12 educations. We cannot have the best education for the children of Howard County if we do not invest in it. The Board of Education is proposing numerous cuts that would disproportionately impact our youngest learners. I implore you to fully fund the HCPSS budget to prevent these cuts from occurring, and to allow the children of Howard County to have the best public education possible.

Respectfully,

Brittany Jacobs

Sent from my iPhone

From: Brooke Bergman <bbrooke1@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 11:48 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: FUND OUR SCHOOLS

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent and resident to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

My children's school, Swansfield Elementary School) is already stretched thin. We can't afford more cuts. The staff works tirelessly for our children and we can not ask them to do more with any less.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,

-Brooke Bergman
(Pronouns: she/her)
6232 Bright Plume
Columbia, MD 21044

From: Brooke Landin <brookemegan27@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 5:15 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the

FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund

Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

My child's school is already stretched thin. We can't afford more cuts.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,

Brooke Landin

Gorman Crossing Elementary School

From: snap@howardcountymd.gov
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 11:16 AM
To: Smith, Brenda; Anderson, Isaiah; Gelwicks, Colette; Respass, Charity
Subject: Case: CS0067832 – opened and unassigned

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged



Case

Short Description: Support for HCPSS Operating Budget

Case Number: CS0067832

Case Opened: 05-08-2025

Constituent:

[VIEW CASE](#)

Details:

05-08-2025 11:15:28 AM EDT - Christiana Rigby Additional comments

From: Carolyn Loughry <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 6:38 PM
To: Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: A few quick questions from a HoCo educator and voter

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

County Councilperson Christiana Rigby,

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council members,

Right now HCPSS is staring down a \$29 million hole in its budget that it

cannot fill. County Executive Ball sent educators a list of reasons why he can't fully fund schools, but I still have one question for him and for the County Council:

What would you cut from HCPSS?

It's easy to cut school funding and leave the hard choices to the Board of Education. But if you think HCPSS should have no additional funding this year, then how much would you raise class size? Which programs would you eliminate? How many staff should be laid off? Should you freeze pay increases for educators during a teacher shortage?

If you can't, or won't answer those questions, then do the right thing and restore the funding that HCPSS students and educators deserve.

I understand there are questions or issues with spending in HCPSS; as a 30-year educator and HoCo homeowner and proud parent of an HCPSS graduate, I have concerns about how we spend money. But every year, our budget is in "crisis" and every year, the cuts come at the cost of higher class sizes and fewer people in the school buildings. It's untenable and I always wonder why the cuts are at the school level and never at the management level of the school system. It has seemed top-heavy for years, especially in the face of shortages in the schools.

At this time though, a better understanding of spending is not forthcoming unless you push for it and we will lose valuable staff and programs in the meantime. We cannot call ourselves "world class" and cite our school system as a reason to move and invest here, while also facing a massive budget crisis year after year that cuts programs and raises class sizes.

Please restore the funding needed to fill the budget request for this year.

Thank you,
Ms. Carrie Loughry
Columbia, MD

Carolyn Loughry
carrieloughry@gmail.com<mailto:carrieloughry@gmail.com>
9088 Lambskin Lane
Columbia, Maryland 21045

howardcountymd.gov



Ref:MSG6119465

From: Christa <christanimm@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 6:26 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore Our 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.]

I'm writing as a parent in the Howard County Public School System. My children have been so lucky to attend at Forest Ridge Elementary and we'd be devastated to lose resources, teachers, and funding for all the things that have truly helped my kids thrive. Our schools strive to go above and beyond and they deserve the money to help meet their goals.

We ask you to restore a minimum of \$29.2 million to the HCPSS budget.

Thank you,
Christa Nimmerrichter and Bryan Palmateer
9678 Horsham Dr, Laurel, MD 20723

From: C VI <christelle.viauroux@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 6, 2025 9:46 PM
To: CouncilMail
Cc: JP; Pollard, Richard
Subject: PLEASE: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

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 Honorable Members of the Howard County Council,

I am writing to express my **deep concern regarding proposed budget cuts to K-12 education funding**, particularly for Howard County Public School System (HCPSS), which has faced years of underfunding. This year alone, the system requires \$29.2 million just to maintain its current level of services. Without this necessary funding, students will bear the brunt of larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs—all of which significantly hinder the quality of education and overall student success.

Education is the foundation upon which our future is built. Cutting funding for K-12 schools, especially when they are already strained, would have far-reaching consequences, affecting student performance, teacher retention, and the quality of instruction. These budget reductions risk widening the achievement gap and diminishing opportunities for our children.

Our daughter, Annelise, attends Longfellow Elementary and absolutely adores her teachers. However, the school is already facing staffing shortages. With 25 students in her classroom, managing daily lessons can be challenging, especially as the school grapples with limited resources to support the growing population of special education students. Further budget cuts would only worsen these difficulties, creating an even **greater burden for students who have already endured so much in the wake of the COVID pandemic.**

Robust investment in education directly correlates with economic growth, lower crime rates, and stronger communities. Well-funded schools equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary to contribute to our workforce and society. By prioritizing education, we ensure a prosperous future not just for individual students but for our county and our state as a whole

I strongly urge the Howard County council to explore alternative budget solutions that do not compromise the well-being of our students. We owe it to the next generation to provide them with every opportunity to thrive.

Please take a stand for education and reject any proposed cuts to K-12 funding, ensuring that HCPSS and all school systems receive the necessary resources to support our children's future.

Thank you for your time and dedication to the people of Howard County. I appreciate your thoughtful

consideration of this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

Christelle Viauroux
Associate Professor, UMBC
10610 Fable Row, Columbia, MD 21044

Email: christelle.viauroux@gmail.com

District: Longfellow Elementary

From: snap@howardcountymd.gov
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 11:14 AM
To: Smith, Brenda; Anderson, Isaiah; Gelwicks, Colette; Respass, Charity
Subject: Case: CS0067818 – opened and unassigned

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged



Case

Short Description: Support for HCPSS Operating Budget

Case Number: CS0067818

Case Opened: 05-08-2025

Constituent:

[VIEW CASE](#)

Details:

05-08-2025 11:13:29 AM EDT - Christiana Rigby Additional comments

From: Christina Kessler <christina_kessler@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 1:16 PM
To: Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: One quick question from a HoCo educator

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

County Councilperson Christiana Rigby,

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council members,

PLEASE DO NOT INCREASE CLASS SIZES AND PLEASE DO NOT CUT

STAFF POSITIONS THAT WORK DIRECTLY WITH STUDENTS.

ONE OPTION IS TO CUT STAFF THAT DO NOT WORK DIRECTLY WITH STUDENTS AND SIT IN AN OFFICE SOMEWHERE AND DO NOTHING FOR STUDENTS.

If you can't, or won't answer those questions, then do the right thing and restore the funding that HCPSS students and educators deserve.

Thank you,
TINA KESSLER
THUNDER HILL ELEM.

Christina Kessler
christina_kessler@hcpss.org<mailto:christina_kessler@hcpss.org>
6107 Ash Grove Court
Eldersburg, Maryland 21784

howardcountymd.gov



Ref:MSG6119421

From: Cindy LaFollette <cindy72577@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 12:54 PM
To: districtcouncil1@howardcountymd.gov; CouncilMail
Subject: School 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.]

Liz and Council Members,

What is going on? I attended our PTACHC meeting this week and am floored. We are going to lose teachers and support staff and vital programs. And stuff more kids into classrooms together.

With all of the people that showed up to testify, why are we not moving forward with funding our schools?!

World class, my ass. Fund our schools!

-Cindy LaFollette

From: cylie zhang <cylie7600@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 10:28 AM
To: CouncilMail
Cc: Budget Testimony
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget. Additional funding may be available by examining investment income more carefully.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thanks for your consideration.

A Parent of a student from Centennial High School

Wei

From: David Rosana <davidrosana2014@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 6, 2025 10:15 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

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My children's school is already understaffed, and administrators are frequently called upon to assist and are subsequently pulled away from their primary responsibilities. I began working at the school to help with lunch and recess for a few hours on a couple of days each week. It's quite stressful for me to witness the school's ongoing need for additional support. Unfortunately, we cannot afford to make further cuts.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,

Rosana Bell, Thunder Hill Elementary School

From: Davina Kwong Yu <kwongdavina@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 9:34 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs – all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System's share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

Our class sizes are already at full capacity, with an increased burden on teachers. This increased burden reduces teachers' ability to give students much-needed support.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,

Davina Kwong Yu

8625 Sunbeam Pl,

Laurel, MD 20723

From: McKenzie Consulting <consultingdeborah@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 6:30 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Fully Fund HCPSS – Protect Our Students' Success

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System's share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

My child's school is already stretched thin. And yet, it continues to provide a safe, engaging, and academically supportive environment that is helping my son thrive. He feels safe there. He loves his teachers. He is excited to go to school and is deeply engaged in the advanced coursework that challenges him. That kind of learning environment is not just rare—it is precious, and it must be protected.

Cutting funding to a school that is doing everything right under strain is not only short-sighted—it's harmful. These cuts would disrupt the positive momentum students are experiencing. They would eliminate critical support services and enrichment programs, eroding the very foundation of student success. Every dollar removed from this budget has a human cost—costs that are borne by children, families, and educators.

Let's not dismantle what's working. Let's protect it, invest in it, and ensure all students—especially those already thriving in the face of adversity—can continue to succeed.

Please prioritize students and restore full funding to HCPSS. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Deborah McKenzie, M.A.
Certified Career Counselor (CCC)
SHRM-CP
20723
Parent of a 2nd grade student at Gorman Crossing Elementary School

From: Emi Henley <emikhenley@mail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 12:06 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

My child plays an instrument, is in GT, and she would be devastated if she couldn't participate in those activities.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,
Emi Henley

From: Fernando Dominguez <fdomin@icloud.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 1:40 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore \$29.2 Million to the HCPSS Budget!

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear members of the council,

I want to add my family's voice to those advocating to restore the \$29.2M to the HCPSS budget.

Howard County's biggest asset is its exceptionally great public schools; it's the reason my wife and I moved here from Florida three years ago.

In Florida we didn't pay State taxes, and we happily pay them here since it's evident they go to towards our schools and other public works that benefit the entire community, which is important to us.

Cutting the budget by such a drastic amount will negatively impact our schools, our children, and the county; again, the quality of our education is the largest incentive we have to attract new families to our area and/or keep the ones already here.

HCPSS is the crown jewel of our county, I am shocked that is not being treated as such; I am concerned that this plan to cut the budget is perilously short sighted and is not taking into account the long term negative effects and ramifications of eroding the quality of our education.

Please reconsider.

- Fernando

From: snap@howardcountymd.gov
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 11:14 AM
To: Smith, Brenda; Anderson, Isaiah; Gelwicks, Colette; Respass, Charity
Subject: Case: CS0067808 – opened and unassigned

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged



Case

Short Description: Support for HCPSS Operating Budget

Case Number: CS0067808

Case Opened: 05-08-2025

Constituent:

[VIEW CASE](#)

Details:

05-08-2025 11:13:23 AM EDT - Christiana Rigby Additional comments

From: Gayatri Suresh <gayatri_suresh@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 10:54 PM
To: Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: One quick question from a HoCo educator

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

County Councilperson Christiana Rigby,

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council members,

Right now HCPSS is staring down a \$29 million hole in its budget that it

cannot fill. County Executive Ball sent educators a list of reasons why he can't fully fund schools, but I still have one question for him and for the County Council:

What would you cut from HCPSS?

It's easy to cut school funding and leave the hard choices to the Board of Education. But if you think HCPSS should have no additional funding this year, then how much would you raise class size? Which programs would you eliminate? How many staff should be laid off? Should you freeze pay increases for educators during a teacher shortage?

If you can't, or won't answer those questions, then do the right thing and restore the funding that HCPSS students and educators deserve.

Thank you,

Gayatri Suresh
gayatri_suresh@hcpss.org<mailto:gayatri_suresh@hcpss.org>
6972 Newberry Drive
Columbia, Maryland 21044

howardcountymd.gov



Ref:MSG6119399

From: Genevieve Bonan <genevievebonan@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 11:08 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to **fully fund the Howard County Public School System** in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System's share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

My children's school, Thunder Hill ES, is already stretched to capacity. We cannot afford more cuts that would harm children in increased class sizes.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,

Genevieve Bonan
(305) 733-2806

From: Gina Rothbaum <gina_rothbaum@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 1:43 PM
To: CouncilMail; boe@hcpss.org; Budget Testimony
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.]

I have a rising 3rd grader who is so excited to start 3rd grade strings next year, and she would also be eligible for the GT CEUs. Please do not cut these offerings from next year's budget as they benefit so many kids in the county.

Gina Rothbaum
Hammond Elementary parent

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: snap@howardcountymd.gov
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 11:14 AM
To: Smith, Brenda; Anderson, Isaiah; Gelwicks, Colette; Respass, Charity
Subject: Case: CS0067819 – opened and unassigned

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged



Case

Short Description: Support for HCPSS Operating Budget

Case Number: CS0067819

Case Opened: 05-08-2025

Constituent:

[VIEW CASE](#)

Details:

05-08-2025 11:13:29 AM EDT - Christiana Rigby Additional comments

From: Hajira Basit <hajirabasit@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 1:15 PM
To: CouncilMail <CouncilMail@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs - all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

My son is in kindergarten and my child's school is already stretched thin. They had to add a new class to address the exceeded number of students. Teachers are already overworked and quality of education that we all pride on in Howard County will suffer. My child is in IEP and it has done wonders to his growth. I want that to continue to excel even more.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,
Hajira Basit
Marriottsville

howardcountymd.gov



Ref:MSG6119420

From: Hajira Basit <hajirabasit@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 1:15 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

My son is in kindergarten and my child's school is already stretched thin. They had to add a new class to address the exceeded number of students. Teachers are already overworked and quality of education that we all pride on in Howard County will suffer. My child is in IEP and it has done wonders to his growth. I want that to continue to excel even more.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,
Hajira Basit
Marriottsville

From: Jennifer Guo <jenniejguo@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 3:20 PM
To: CouncilMail; Budget Testimony
Subject: Please Fully Fund HCPSS for Our Kids

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 Sir or Madam,

I am a HoCo resident and I am concerned about the deficit of HCPSS 2026 FY budget. Education is the foundation of success of all kids and equity. We should never move money from education system to anywhere else. We are proud of HCPSS and please protect our education system and future of our students.

We appreciate your support for HCPSS and will keep watching the process.

Thank you for your service!

Jennifer

From: snap@howardcountymd.gov
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 11:14 AM
To: Smith, Brenda; Anderson, Isaiah; Gelwicks, Colette; Respass, Charity
Subject: Case: CS0067814 – opened and unassigned

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged



Case

Short Description: Support for HCPSS Operating Budget

Case Number: CS0067814

Case Opened: 05-08-2025

Constituent:

[VIEW CASE](#)

Details:

05-08-2025 11:13:27 AM EDT - Christiana Rigby Additional comments

From: Jennifer Vining <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 3:12 PM
To: Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: One quick question from a HoCo educator

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

County Councilperson Christiana Rigby,

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council members,

Right now HCPSS is staring down a \$29 million hole in its budget that it

cannot fill. County Executive Ball sent educators a list of reasons why he can't fully fund schools, but I still have one question for him and for the County Council:

What would you cut from HCPSS?

It's easy to cut school funding and leave the hard choices to the Board of Education. But if you think HCPSS should have no additional funding this year, then how much would you raise class size? Which programs would you eliminate? How many staff should be laid off? Should you freeze pay increases for educators during a teacher shortage?

If you can't, or won't answer those questions, then do the right thing and restore the funding that HCPSS students and educators deserve.

Thank you,

Jennifer Vining
jmansir5@gmail.com<mailto:jmansir5@gmail.com>
324 Greenlow Road
Catonsville, Maryland 21228

howardcountymd.gov



Ref:MSG6119415

From: Kelly Pavlic <kelpav19@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 5:09 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restored Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned [parent/teacher/resident] to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,

Kelly Pavlic

From: Kristen Flaherty <k.flaherty321@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 10:46 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Imperative to restore \$29.2 Million to the HCPSS Budget!

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Members of the Howard County Council,

I'm writing to urge you to restore the minimum of **\$29.2 million** to the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) budget. Our teachers are the foundation of our community, and the best way to appreciate and support them is to **keep them teaching**—with the resources they need to succeed.

You've already heard over three hours of testimony and received hundreds of pages of written statements. The message is clear: our schools are in urgent need. If this funding is not restored, the consequences will directly and negatively impact our children. Without this support:

- Class sizes will increase.
- Teachers and paraeducators will lose their jobs.
- GT (Gifted & Talented) teachers will be cut from elementary schools.
- Music, media, and other specialist programs will be eliminated.

These cuts would hurt not only our students' education but also the morale and retention of our invaluable educators.

Looking ahead, we must also address the root causes of the constant budget shortfalls and overcrowded schools. Developers must be held accountable for paying their fair share when building in Howard County. Projections of students per household have consistently underestimated the actual impact, and our schools are suffering because of it. Families should not have to wait 15 years to see new schools built that are desperately needed to keep up with the pace of growth. There is no justification for our schools to remain overcrowded—often well over 100% capacity—**forcing hundreds of students to face unnecessary and unfair redistricting in order to accommodate for the extreme overcrowding and shortfall in attendance predictions**. While developers receive constant tax breaks and approval for unchecked development, our children are left to bear the consequences. This is unacceptable. Our children deserve better, and the families of Howard County will not stand for this any longer.

Please take action now to protect the quality of education in Howard County. **Fully restore the \$29.2 million** to the HCPSS budget, and commit to long-term solutions that prevent this crisis from repeating year after year.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kristen Flaherty

10872 Olde Woods Way, Columbia, MD 21044

From: Lauren Barnes <lobarnes1@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 10:30 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Imperative to restore \$29.2 Million to the HCPSS Budget!

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Members of the Howard County Council,

I'm writing to urge you to restore the minimum of **\$29.2 million** to the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) budget. Our teachers are the foundation of our community, and the best way to appreciate and support them is to **keep them teaching**—with the resources they need to succeed.

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Please take action now to protect the quality of education in Howard County. **Fully restore the \$29.2 million** to the HCPSS budget, and commit to long-term solutions that prevent this crisis from repeating year after year.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Lauren Barnes
5034 Durham Rd. West, Columbia, MD 21044

301-509-1814

--
Lauren Barnes

From: Lavanya Codur <lavanyacodur26@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 9:29 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

My child's school has programs that cater to various student needs and overall development. My child has developed such great interest in music and orchestra over the years that any budget reduction would deprive my child of this exposure. My child learned a lot from one of the projects led by the GT teacher and built her confidence on the particular subject. Also, any increase in teacher to student ratio would make it difficult for both parties. Students are the future of this country and any amount of budget cuts will have a direct impact on their development.

I humbly request you to prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,
Lavanya Codur
8087 Trotters Chase
Ellicott City, MD 21043

From: Lehigh Mearns <lehigh.mearns@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 6, 2025 10:37 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Re: PLEASE fully fund HCPSS operating budget

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing again as a concerned parent and resident to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

My child's school is already stretched thin. We can't afford more cuts, especially since we house one of the county's Special Education Regional Programs. I have the wonderful privilege of volunteering in school, so I see first hand the incredible energy, hard work, and amazing support our schools provide for our young future. Just today, I was volunteering for Staff Appreciation Week, and overheard so many worried staff, not necessarily for their jobs, but for the wellbeing and education for the children.

I understand this is just one step and piece of a much larger picture, but I believe you and our government want to continue to lift up our students and foster a stronger, brighter future for our community.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,

Lehigh Mearns, TRES parent

On Tue, Apr 22, 2025, 8:46 PM Lehigh Mearns <lehigh.mearns@gmail.com> wrote:

Hello,

I am a current parent of 3 young children in Howard County Public Schools. My oldest is in 5th grade, my middle in 2nd, and my youngest will be in Kindergarten in the fall. We moved here from Northern VA, which many consider to be more competitive and robust than Howard County. We analyzed the two and saw comparable offerings, which kept Howard County closely behind Fairfax County. For that reason, we were ok with moving and placing our children in HCPSS.

Since we've moved, the budget, operating costs, and opportunities for our children to grow and thrive have continually been put on the chopping block. And our taxes are significantly higher here than in VA!

Please please please fully fund the operating budget for HCPSS, which would allow the County to remain a premier and prestigious school system with opportunities for all... one that continues to perform well and produce wonderful contributions to the community and the greater good.

Thank you.

Lehigh Mearns

From: Lindsay Anne Belliveau <la.birdie@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 12:07 PM
To: Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail
Subject: School 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 Councilman Ball and Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a very concerned rising Kindergarten and 1st grade parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

My kids' school (Swansfield Elementary School) is already losing Title I status this year and they can't afford to do more cuts. The system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll end up with larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs - all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has NOT kept up with historic norms and inflation.

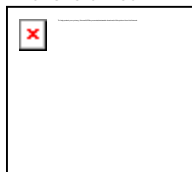
Especially in the wake of extreme cuts by the president, we need supportive staff who are PAID a living wage now more than ever!! Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,
Lindsay Anne Belliveau from Hickory Ridge / Swansfield Elementary School Parent

Lindsay Anne Belliveau
www.labirdiephotography.com

443-631-0195

Office Hours: M-F 9 AM-3 PM. Emails returned in 24-48 hours during business days.



From: Lindsay Michael <kiddolinds@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 6, 2025 10:10 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Prioritize Our Schools — Restore Full Funding to HCPSS

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I am writing as a concerned parent and former student in Howard County to urge you to restore funding to the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) in the FY26 Operating Budget.

Over the past several years, HCPSS has been consistently underfunded. HCPSS needs at least an additional \$29.2 million to keep our current level of services. Without any additional funding, our community will face larger class sizes, reductions in programs, and layoffs of valued teachers and staff -- all of which negatively impact the quality of education for our students and hurt our community. HCPSS is one of the main reasons families move to Howard County. The school system should not be leading the way in cuts. Education is a core public service — not a luxury item to be scaled back. An investment in our public schools is an investment that pays back in dividends and makes Howard County stronger.

As a Glenelg graduate and parent of five eventually six children in HCPSS, I see firsthand how thin resources already are and how class sizes have grown since our senior was in elementary school!

Howard County's reputation for excellence is built on its schools. I urge you to prioritize our students and schools by restoring the necessary funding to HCPSS.

Thank you for your leadership and attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,
Lindsay Michael

From: snap@howardcountymd.gov
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 11:16 AM
To: Smith, Brenda; Anderson, Isaiah; Gelwicks, Colette; Respass, Charity
Subject: Case: CS0067829 – opened and unassigned

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged



Case

Short Description: Support for HCPSS Operating Budget

Case Number: CS0067829

Case Opened: 05-08-2025

Constituent:

[VIEW CASE](#)

Details:

05-08-2025 11:15:27 AM EDT - Christiana Rigby Additional comments

From: Lydia Perez Poole <lppoole10@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 4:44 PM
To: CouncilMail <CouncilMail@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Howard county schools

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

I live in Howard County and I've been a resident for almost 20 years. I have 2 kids in public schools. I know times are challenging and budgets are limited, but our children cannot pay the price. Schools and teachers need and deserve more funding.

I request that you look at other budget areas that are more "nice to have"

and/or can be delayed and you prioritize education accordingly. Asking schools to do more with less is not how this County should operate.

Sincerely

Lydia Poole

howardcountymd.gov



Ref:MSG6119464

From: Lydia Perez Poole <lppoole10@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 4:44 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Howard county schools

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

I live in Howard County and I've been a resident for almost 20 years. I have 2 kids in public schools. I know times are challenging and budgets are limited, but our children cannot pay the price. Schools and teachers need and deserve more funding.

I request that you look at other budget areas that are more "nice to have" and/or can be delayed and you prioritize education accordingly. Asking schools to do more with less is not how this County should operate.

Sincerely

Lydia Poole

From: snap@howardcountymd.gov
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 11:14 AM
To: Smith, Brenda; Anderson, Isaiah; Gelwicks, Colette; Respass, Charity
Subject: Case: CS0067815 – opened and unassigned

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged



Case

Short Description: Support for HCPSS Operating Budget

Case Number: CS0067815

Case Opened: 05-08-2025

Constituent:

[VIEW CASE](#)

Details:

05-08-2025 11:13:27 AM EDT - Christiana Rigby Additional comments

From: Maureen Coffey <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 11:48 PM
To: Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: One quick question from a HoCo educator

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

County Councilperson Christiana Rigby,

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council members,

Right now HCPSS is staring down a \$29 million hole in its budget that it

cannot fill. County Executive Ball sent educators a list of reasons why he can't fully fund schools, but I still have one question for him and for the County Council:

What would you cut from HCPSS?

It's easy to cut school funding and leave the hard choices to the Board of Education. But if you think HCPSS should have no additional funding this year, then how much would you raise class size? Which programs would you eliminate? How many staff should be laid off? Should you freeze pay increases for educators during a teacher shortage?

If you can't, or won't answer those questions, then do the right thing and restore the funding that HCPSS students and educators deserve.

Thank you,

Maureen Coffey
mcoffey328@yahoo.com<mailto:mcoffey328@yahoo.com>
7854 Butterfield Drive
Elkridge, Maryland 21075

howardcountymd.gov



Ref:MSG6119418

From: snap@howardcountymd.gov
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 11:14 AM
To: Smith, Brenda; Anderson, Isaiah; Gelwicks, Colette; Respass, Charity
Subject: Case: CS0067811 – opened and unassigned

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged



Case

Short Description: Support for HCPSS Operating Budget

Case Number: CS0067811

Case Opened: 05-08-2025

Constituent:

[VIEW CASE](#)

Details:

05-08-2025 11:13:25 AM EDT - Christiana Rigby Additional comments

From: Melissa Kuczynski <melissa_kuczynski@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 3:08 PM
To: Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: One quick question from a HoCo Special Educator

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

County Councilperson Christiana Rigby,

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council members,

Right now HCPSS is staring down a \$29 million hole in its budget that it

cannot fill. County Executive Ball sent educators a list of reasons why he can't fully fund schools, but I still have one question for him and for the County Council:

What would you cut from HCPSS?

It's easy to cut school funding and leave the hard choices to the Board of Education. But if you think HCPSS should have no additional funding this year, then how much would you raise class size? This matters for specialized instruction. Which programs would you eliminate? This matters as we prepare students for career and college readiness. How many staff should be laid off? This matters since we are already understaffed and overworked. Should you freeze pay increases for educators during a teacher shortage? This matters because educators will begin to find other opportunities breaking down the school community.

If you can't, or won't answer those questions, then do the right thing and restore the funding that HCPSS students and educators deserve.

Thank you,
~Melissa Kuczynski

Melissa Kuczynski
melissa_kuczynski@hcpss.org<mailto:melissa_kuczynski@hcpss.org>
8937 Tawes Street
Fulton, Maryland 20759

howardcountymd.gov



Ref:MSG6119412

From: Miesha Suber <miesha.suber@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 7:06 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the

FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

My child attends Gorman Crossing Elementary School, and this was a purposeful choice to not send him to private school. We believe in HCPSS, especially its teachers. It distresses me to know gifted and talented staff may face cuts. Please don't put our gifted children at a disadvantage.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,
Miesha Suber
9430 Riverbrink Ct, Laurel, MD 20723
District 06



Miesha L. Suber
Realtor

☎ 301.907.7600
📠 410.207.7905
✉ Miesha.Suber@LNF.com
🌐 <https://longandfoster.com>

Long & Foster
ABR, GREEN

📍 7373 Wisconsin Ave
STE 17
Bethesda, MD 20814

LONG & FOSTER     



Check out my reviews on [Zillow!](#)

From: Mitra Akhavi <mitra.akhavi@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 11:47 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as as a parent of two children in Howard county to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation. My children's school is already stretched thin. We can't afford more cuts. These kids are the future of this country. Let's do what's right for them.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,
Mitra Akhavi

From: Nicole Cestola <cestola@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 11:12 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Imperative to restore \$29.2 Million to the HCPSS Budget!

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Members of the Howard County Council,

I'm writing to urge you to restore the minimum of **\$29.2 million** to the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) budget. Our teachers are the foundation of our community, and the best way to appreciate and support them is to **keep them teaching**—with the resources they need to succeed.

You've already heard over three hours of testimony and received hundreds of pages of written statements. The message is clear: our schools are in urgent need. If this funding is not restored, the consequences will directly and negatively impact our children. Without this support:

- Class sizes will increase.
- Teachers and paraeducators will lose their jobs.
- GT (Gifted & Talented) teachers will be cut from elementary schools.
- Music, media, and other specialist programs will be eliminated.

These cuts would hurt not only our students' education but also the morale and retention of our invaluable educators.

Looking ahead, we must also address the root causes of the constant budget shortfalls and overcrowded schools. Developers must be held accountable for paying their fair share when building in Howard County. Projections of students per household have consistently underestimated the actual impact, and our schools are suffering because of it. Families should not have to wait 15 years to see new schools built that are desperately needed to keep up with the pace of growth. There is no justification for our schools to remain overcrowded—often well over 100% capacity—**forcing hundreds of students to face unnecessary and unfair redistricting in order to accommodate for the extreme overcrowding and shortfall in attendance predictions.** While developers receive constant tax breaks and approval for unchecked development, our children are left to bear the consequences. This is unacceptable. Our children deserve better, and the families of Howard County will not stand for this any longer.

Please take action now to protect the quality of education in Howard County. **Fully restore the \$29.2 million** to the HCPSS budget, and commit to long-term solutions that prevent this crisis from repeating year after year.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Nicole Cestola
5209 Woodam Court
Columbia, MD 21044

From: Nina Shearer <theshearerclan@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 6, 2025 9:47 PM
To: CouncilMail; Budget Testimony
Subject: HCPSS Budget

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

Please fully fund the Board of Education's requested budget. This week is teacher appreciation week. Please show the teachers they are appreciated by fully funding our schools so they don't have to teach larger and larger classes, so they can keep their jobs, and to ensure our students get the education and resources they deserve.

Additionally, I have heard rumors that there is talk of going to a 4 and 4 type schedule to save money in high schools. This would be very bad. It would leave huge parts of the year where students aren't studying, or reinforcing, core subjects. It would be detrimental for music classes as well. Fall classes wouldn't be able to participate in adjudication; spring classes would have only weeks to prepare. Families and students would miss out on half of the concerts. Students need daily interaction with all subjects to get the most learning out of school.

Like many, we moved here more the schools. We are one of the wealthiest counties in the state. Yet it feels like every year we lose more and more ground in education in this county, and we have to beg the county every year to properly fund the education our children. Please help our future by fully funding the budget requested by the school board for HCPSS.

thank you for your time,
Nina Shearer
Mom to 2 HCPSS students.

From: octavia morman <omorman1@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 12:12 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned HCPSS parent and Howard County resident to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

I am so proud to have my children enrolled in Howard County Public Schools. It was my primary reason for moving to this county six years ago. Our educators go above and beyond day in and day out for our children, so it's our duty to fight for them. We cannot afford to lose the quality educators that have continuously worked tirelessly to support and teach our children. If the schools suffer, the community will suffer. We can't afford more cuts!

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Octavia Morman
Gorman Crossing Elementary School Parent

From: Rebecca Terilli <rterilli@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 7:38 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept of with historic norms and inflation.

My child's school has already had to prioritize specific programs and increase class sizes because of cuts in previous years and the loss of additional programs will only hurt our children's development.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,

Dr. Rebecca Veenhuis

COUNCILMANIC DISTRICT: 002

From: Rosana <rosanap1208@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 6, 2025 10:15 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

My children's school is already understaffed, and administrators are frequently called upon to assist and are subsequently pulled away from their primary responsibilities. I began working at the school to help with lunch and recess for a few hours on a couple of days each week. It's quite stressful for me to witness the school's ongoing need for additional support. Unfortunately, we cannot afford to make further cuts.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,

Rosana Bell, Thunder Hill Elementary School

From: WENJIANG LUO <wenjiangluo@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 5:10 PM
To: CouncilMail; Budget Testimony
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget. Additional funding may be available by examining investment income more carefully.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System's share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation. My child's school is already stretched thin. We can't afford more cuts.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,
Ruth

From: Salil Aryal <salilaryal53@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 6, 2025 9:09 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent and resident to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

My child's school - Rockburn ES is already stretched thin. We can't afford more cuts.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,

Salil Aryal
Elkridge, MD
salilaryal53@gmail.com

From: snap@howardcountymd.gov
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 11:16 AM
To: Smith, Brenda; Anderson, Isaiah; Gelwicks, Colette; Respass, Charity
Subject: Case: CS0067824 – opened and unassigned

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged



Case

Short Description: Support for HCPSS Operating Budget

Case Number: CS0067824

Case Opened: 05-08-2025

Constituent:

[VIEW CASE](#)

Details:

05-08-2025 11:15:24 AM EDT - Christiana Rigby Additional comments

From: Silvia Bravo <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 5:09 PM
To: Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: One quick question from a HoCo educator

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

County Councilperson Christiana Rigby,

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council members,

Right now HCPSS is staring down a \$29 million hole in its budget that it

cannot fill. County Executive Ball sent educators a list of reasons why he can't fully fund schools, but I still have one question for him and for the County Council:

What would you cut from HCPSS?

It's easy to cut school funding and leave the hard choices to the Board of Education. But if you think HCPSS should have no additional funding this year, then how much would you raise class size? Which programs would you eliminate? How many staff should be laid off? Should you freeze pay increases for educators during a teacher shortage?

If you can't, or won't answer those questions, then do the right thing and restore the funding that HCPSS students and educators deserve.

Thank you,

Silvia Bravo
s.bravo.6508@gmail.com<mailto:s.bravo.6508@gmail.com>
9537 Kilimanjaro Rd
Columbia, Maryland 21045

howardcountymd.gov



Ref:MSG6119479

From: snap@howardcountymd.gov
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 11:16 AM
To: Smith, Brenda; Anderson, Isaiah; Gelwicks, Colette; Respass, Charity
Subject: Case: CS0067826 – opened and unassigned

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged



Case

Short Description: Support for HCPSS Operating Budget

Case Number: CS0067826

Case Opened: 05-08-2025

Constituent:

[VIEW CASE](#)

Details:

05-08-2025 11:15:25 AM EDT - Christiana Rigby Additional comments

From: Summer Blachowicz <Summer_Blachowicz@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 6:04 PM
To: Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: One quick question from a HoCo educator

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

County Councilperson Christiana Rigby,

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council members,

Right now HCPSS is staring down a \$29 million hole in its budget that it

cannot fill. County Executive Ball sent educators a list of reasons why he can't fully fund schools, but I still have one question for him and for the County Council:

What would you cut from HCPSS?

It's easy to cut school funding and leave the hard choices to the Board of Education. But if you think HCPSS should have no additional funding this year, then how much would you raise class size? Which programs would you eliminate? How many staff should be laid off? Should you freeze pay increases for educators during a teacher shortage?

If you can't, or won't answer those questions, then do the right thing and restore the funding that HCPSS students and educators deserve.

Thank you,
Summer Blachowicz

Summer Blachowicz
Summer_Blachowicz@hcpss.org<mailto:Summer_Blachowicz@hcpss.org>
8004 Greeb Tree Court
Elkridge, Maryland 21075

howardcountymd.gov



Ref:MSG6119480

From: Suruchi Shrestha <shrsuruchi@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 9:27 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs – all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

Our schools are already operating under significant financial constraints, and further reductions in funding would severely impact the quality of education that our students receive. These cuts could lead to larger class sizes, reduced extracurricular activities, and the elimination of essential programs that support student development and success.

Investing in education is investing in the future. Our children deserve access to the best possible resources and opportunities to thrive academically and personally. By maintaining and increasing school funding, we can ensure that our students are equipped with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in an increasingly competitive world.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,

--
Suruchi

From: Tracy Waclawski <tracybean06@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 11:33 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: PLEASE Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm continuing to write to you as a concerned parent, community member, and citizen of this country to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget. I strongly believe that the predicament we are in today with our society is due to an abject failure of our public education system.

HCPSS in particular has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

Please prioritize our future and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you again,

Tracy Waclawski

(HoCo resident and mother to a kindergartener)

From: T V <tvfirsthome@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 6:49 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs – all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

My child's school is already stretched thin. We can't afford more cuts. Students need to be empowered with knowledge.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,

Vivian Tinsley

From: xinhang lin <linxinhang09@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 8:39 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore full funding to hopes in fy26 CLES district 1

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget. Additional funding may be available by examining investment income more carefully. HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students. It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation. My child's school is already stretched thin. We can't afford more cuts. Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS. Thank you

From: Xuxing Li <xuxingli88@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 8:43 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore full funding to HCPSS in FY26 district 1

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget. Additional funding may be available by examining investment income more carefully.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

My child's school is already stretched thin. We can't afford more cuts.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you

发自我的 iPhone

From: Yasmin Mejia <aryselle@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 11:01 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

My child's school is already stretched thin. We can't afford more cuts and the work these teachers and staff do is needed and extremely important for the lives of our upcoming generations.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,

Yasmin Mejia

10914 Trotting Ridge Way

Columbia MD 21044

From: Yiting Duan <dyt9423@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 8:14 PM
To: CouncilMail; Budget Testimony
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26 Dear Howard County Council

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

Dear Howard County Council,

Hope this email finds you well!

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget. **Additional funding may be available by examining investment income more carefully.**

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

My child's school is already stretched thin. We can't afford more cuts.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,

Yiting (Parent of Centennial Lane Elementary School, District 5)

From: Zhang E. <zxy_sh1111@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 6, 2025 7:59 PM
To: CouncilMail; Budget Testimony
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

As a parent of a middle school and elementary school student.

I'm writing to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget. Additional funding may be available by examining investment income more carefully.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

My children's school is already stretched thin. We can't afford more cuts.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,

District 1

From: Ali Dougherty <alexandra.n.martin@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 9:25 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Budget Gap - PLEASE FILL

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear County Council,

I am writing to you, pleading to fill the \$29.2M budget gap so that NORTHFIELD ELEMENTARY does not reap the repercussions.

As a mom of a K and 1st grader, we will directly be affected, should this not be filled. It is crucial that we keep class sizes as they are (they are already too large and it is criminal to students if they increase any further), keep and or increase the GT and Paraeducator budget AND Keep the 3rd string band.

Northfield is a unique community, where parents are deeply involved and care about the future of this county overall. PLEASE, find it in the budget to account for these programs.

Thank you,
Ali Dougherty

From: A.B. Rosen <abrosen87@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 3:51 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Save our schools!!

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs - all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

I have four children at Howard County public schools and have appreciated the education they have received. We moved to this county for the schools and have done so at great personal expense. Please help ensure that they continue to receive the quality education they deserve.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you.

Alyssa Rosen

A. Brackett Rosen
Peace Corps Botswana, *School and Community Liaison for Life Skills*
George Mason University, M.S., *Conflict Analysis and Resolution*

From: Andrea Mello <amello10129@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 7:18 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Protect the Education Budget

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Hello,

I am writing as a parent and a concerned citizen to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public school system in the FY 26 capital budget. HCPSS has faced years of understaffing. This year, the system needs at least 29.2 million just to maintain current Services. Without it, we will see larger class sizes, fewer programs and staff layoffs all of which hurt our students. It is acceptable that our schools are the first to face cut when budget tightens. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County public school system share of recurring general fund revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation. My children's school is already stretched thin. We cannot afford more cuts. Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS. Thank you.

-Andrea Mello
21042

Sent from my iPhone

From: snap@howardcountymd.gov
To: [Smith, Brenda](#); [Anderson, Isaiah](#); [Gelwicks, Colette](#)
Subject: Case: CS0067978 – opened and unassigned
Date: Monday, May 12, 2025 9:09:20 AM
Attachments: [image](#)
[image](#)
[image](#)

Howard County Logo



Case

Short Description: Support for HCPSS Operating Budget

Case Number: CS0067978

Case Opened: 05-12-2025

Constituent:

VIEW CASE

Details:

05-12-2025 09:08:37 AM EDT - Christiana Rigby

Additional comments

From: Andrew Hallendorff <hcea@schmide.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 1:49 PM
To: Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: From Utopia to Dystopian Leadership. Do Something. The Pillars are Crumbling.

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

County Councilperson Christiana Rigby,

From Utopia to Dystopian Leadership.

As you watch Columbia grow, new dense housing replaces once unique communities. This may be necessary to maintain it, but what you spend on one side must be supported on the other. What once felt like the shining center for communities, now feels like jewels for the few. Something is getting done, just only for some.

Let's look at our leadership

<https://www.howardcountymd.gov/county-executive>

You see a resume for Calvin Ball including "Our Pillars" touting many ideals purported as accomplishments. However, if you click on "Ready and Successful Students"

You get a list of accomplishments which, if just glancing at it, look like what we're all about.

However. The first crack in the glass house happens when you click on the link at the bottom.

"Click here to view our infographic for how we addressed concerns from our listening sessions in the first year in office."

404 Page Not Found

<https://www.howardcountymd.gov/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=yXcjni8BIM%3d&tabid=3061&portalid=0>

This led me down a rabbit hole ending in the realization. Nothing is getting done.

Going back in time

The original page for county-executive (first link above) hasn't changed in 5+ years.

<https://web.archive.org/web/20210926003556/https://www.howardcountymd.gov/county-executive><<https://web.archive.org/web/20210926003556/https://www.howardcountymd.gov/county-executive>>

Moreover, the link at the bottom disappeared shortly after its creation.

Let's find it.

<https://web.archive.org/web/20201018093738/https://www.howardcountymd.gov/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=yXcjni8BIM%3d&tabid=3061&portalid=0><<https://web.archive.org/web/20201018093738/https://www.howardcountymd.gov/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=yXcjni8BIM%3d&tabid=3061&portalid=0>>

Beautiful ideals...

Ready and Successful Students.

Howard County is known for our public-school system. However, there is always room for improvement. We understand the importance and value of a good education, which is why we created the "Ready and Successful Students" Pillar. Since we took office:

Funded a new bus serving low-income students enrolled in early education at Howard County Head Start centers

Committed to building more High Schools

Funded design of a new mathematics building and athletics complex at Howard Community College.

"Please fund high school 13, we need this school"

"Please make school budgets your top priority."

Provided significant funding for our schools, with 607.2 million. This is a 5.9% increase from last year, with education funding making up 63.9% of our operating budget.

At the bottom

When we first took office we head a series of listening sessions across our county, to hear directly from residents about their hopes and dreams for the future of Howard County. The voices of all our residents guided us to create the seven pillars of my administration to become not just the best county overall, but for all. - Calvin Ball, County Executive

(I typed all that text from the image. If there are mistakes, they are human as no AI was used in this review.)

Where did they go?

If we judge accomplishments from their own webpage. They've done nothing in the past 5+ years except maybe cover up what they said they were going to do. At best this lack of action should have saved enough money to maintain a growing community and its schools. At worst they are chopping our schools to fund positions needed to update their webpage. At least they're not using AI to hallucinate accomplishments.

In a way we can only blame ourselves. We reelected someone without looking at their record. An old record with no record of change. A broken record playing us the same old tune.

Do Something. The Pillars are Crumbling.

Andrew Hallendorff
hcea@schmide.com<mailto:hcea@schmide.com>
10700 Rain Dream Hill
Columbia, Maryland 21044

howardcountymd.gov



Ref:MSG6129938

From: Angela Alborn <angela.alborn@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 10:51 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: HCPSS Funding Crisis

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent and resident to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs - all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

My children are both special education students in HCPSS. My son will be a Senior at Centennial High School, a school that has been in dire need of renovation and completely ignored for other county projects. My daughter will be in the third grade at Northfield Elementary School. She is an IEP student in need of continued support to make sure she is successful and maintaining progress with her peers. She will also be attending Dunloggin Middle School in a few years which is another school that Howard County has completely ignored its need for complete renovation.

Need the council to be reminded that HCPSS is this county's greatest asset. HCPSS is the reason many tax paying families choose to live in Howard County.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you.

Angela Alborn
District 1

--

*Angela Alborn, LCSW-C
Leader
GS Troop 4251*

From: snap@howardcountymd.gov
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 11:13 AM
To: Smith, Brenda; Anderson, Isaiah; Gelwicks, Colette; Respass, Charity
Subject: Case: CS0067799 – opened and unassigned



Case

Short Description: Support for HCPSS Operating Budget

Case Number: CS0067799

Case Opened: 05-08-2025

Constituent:

[VIEW CASE](#)

Details:

05-08-2025 11:11:48 AM EDT - Christiana Rigby Additional comments

From: Angela Huang <angelahuang0428@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 10:04 AM
To: CouncilMail <CouncilMail@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Written Testimony about Budget--Centennial High School Renovations

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

Good evening County Council members.

My name is Angela Huang, and I'm a junior at Centennial High School. I currently serve as the Junior Liaison for our SGA, and I'm active in the sports, clubs, and theater departments

I know our budget is tight, it always is, and we need to allocate a large

chunk of our money for things like wages and emergencies—but emergencies? Our school building has reached a breaking point, becoming an emergency, and we need renovations now.

Think of a food item passing its “best by” date: it might be safe to eat for a few weeks, but soon it will spoil, mold, and become unsafe. That’s what’s happening at Centennial. Our ceilings are falling in, flooding classrooms and destroying student art. Yes you heard that right, our ceilings are falling, piece by piece. Thankfully no one’s been hurt yet, but visible cracks are spreading across walls and ceilings. Not one day goes by and I’m not scared that a piece of my school is going to fall on my head. Our toilets either won’t flush or leak constantly, mice run everywhere, and mold is growing in every classroom—triggering allergies, eczema, and respiratory issues in students and staff who’ve never had them before.

Our lights are so harsh several people, like me, will have migraines and lightheadedness nearly every day. How often does one building get power outages, maybe once or twice a year? Well at Centennial we had 5 power outages in one week—one lightbulb had burst backstage and caused a small fire during a theater production, and another caused us to be stuck in the dark—without ac or internet for an hour.

Outside, our sports teams face equally unsafe conditions. There are NO outdoor bathrooms. The only bathrooms we have are inside the main building which require people to go up steep ramps that aren’t ADA-compliant, and forcing athletes and visiting families to wander through unlocked hallways—an obvious shooter and security risk. Our wrestling team practices in the cafeteria, yes our cafeteria, where every student and staff eats. Our softball field is full of holes that lead to twisted ankles, and our track is so damaged we’ve haven’t been able to host a home meet.

You might say, “Centennial’s test scores are strong—why renovate?” But academics alone don’t define our school experience. We’re dealing with broken bones from uneven fields, severe eczema from mold and heat, migraines, fire hazards, and safety concerns every day. That doesn’t feel like a healthy learning environment.

Please, allocate even a portion of this year’s budget to renovate Centennial. Our students and staff deserve a safe, functional building where we can learn, teach, and create without fear of our walls collapsing on us. So on behalf of Centennial, I trust that you will hear us and finally budget for the renovations we need.

Thank you.

Angela Huang

Ref:MSG6119360

From: Blene Bekure <blenebekure@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 7:05 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Urgent- Fund HCPSS Fully

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

I am writing as a parent, concerned citizen, and a PTA representative to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public school system in the FY 26 capital budget. HCPSS has faced years of understaffing. This year, the system needs at least 29.2 million just to maintain current Services. Without it, we will see larger class sizes, fewer programs and staff layoffs all of which hurt our students. It is unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cut when budget tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County public school system share of recurring general fund revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation. My children's school is already stretched thin. We cannot afford more cuts. Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS. Thank you.

Blene Bekure

From: Brittany Jacobs <brittanyplaysviola@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 11:14 PM
To: CouncilMail; Budget Testimony
Subject: Fully Fund HCPSS Budget

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

Dear County Council members,

Here in Howard County we are once again facing a budget crisis. As a parent of an elementary-aged child in our school system, I am deeply concerned about the shortfalls in funding for HCPSS. My husband and I chose to live and raise our child in Howard County because of its excellent school system, where our child can experience programs and opportunities we did not have during our PreK-12 educations. We cannot have the best education for the children of Howard County if we do not invest in it. The Board of Education is proposing numerous cuts that would disproportionately impact our youngest learners. I implore you to fully fund the HCPSS budget to prevent these cuts from occurring, and to allow the children of Howard County to have the best public education possible.

Respectfully,

Brittany Jacobs

Sent from my iPhone

From: C Su <susuwj@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 1:36 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore a Minimum of \$29.2M to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council Members,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to restore a **minimum of \$29.2 million** in the FY26 Operating Budget to fully fund the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

Year after year, HCPSS has operated under financial strain. This \$29.2 million is not for expansion — it is the bare minimum needed just to maintain current staffing levels, class sizes, and student services. Without it, we risk larger class sizes, loss of key programs, and painful staff reductions — consequences our students simply cannot afford.

It is unacceptable that public education continues to be on the chopping block when budgets tighten. Education is not just another line item — it's a core county responsibility that must be protected. The percentage of recurring General Fund revenue going to HCPSS has fallen behind both inflation and historical norms.

As a parent, I see firsthand how much our schools are already stretched. More cuts would directly harm students, educators, and families across our county.

Please prioritize our children's education. **Restore at least \$29.2 million in funding to HCPSS** to preserve the quality of education our community expects and deserves.

Sincerely,
Chengcen Su

Parent of Manor Woods Elementary School

From: Christine Bielen <Christine_Bielen@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 3:52 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: PLEASE; Don't cut the budget

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned [parent/teacher/resident] to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs - all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

I am a special education teacher at NES and we are already stretched so thin. We don't have enough staff to educate the special education students, keep them safe or meet any of the service hours as documented on their IEP's. Please spend a day at my school to understand how badly we require full/ additional staffing. We can't afford more cuts.]

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you.

Christine Bielen

Special Educator -Instructional Team Lead

Christine_Bielen@hcpss.org

(410) 313-2806

Northfield Elementary School

9125 Northfield Rd, Ellicott City, MD 21042

Please know your: Parental Resources

Maryland Procedural Safeguards

Parents' Guide to Habilitative Services

From: Dawn Rea <dawnmrea@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 10:43 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Fully fund the budget

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

Many people move to this county for the schools and as funding has dropped and class sizes have grown the county is sure to see a change in the schools being a draw for people to live here.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,

Dawn Rea

Northfield Elementary School Parent

From: Diana Rivi <diana.b.rivi@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 1:16 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

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.]

Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent and resident to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

Both of my daughters have significantly benefited from these programs which help them remain competitive amongst their peers.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,
Diana Rivi
Manor Woods elementary

From: Dmitry Gurvits <dgurvits@me.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 2:02 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned [parent/teacher/resident] to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

My child's school, Manor Woods Elementary School, is already experiencing extreme cuts. Both of my kids have to go to these classes outside in a semi temporary space. The teachers are amazing and the GT program at Manor Woods is incredible, you would be doing our children a diss-service. The education system is already lacking, but takign away things that are not the problem is just contributing to the fire. Why not lower salaries of our Government officials as a suggestion?

WE NEED MORE TEACHERS!!!! We need Less Politicians!!!!

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Best Regards,

*Dmitry Gurvits
2941 Excelsior Springs Ct
Ellicott City, MD
21042*

From: Liz Robinson <elizrobinson80@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 6:13 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

My child's school has already been stretched thin and can't afford more budget cuts. My child's school is a Title One school and our student population truly depends on the services the school provides to succeed in life. Do not sacrifice our children's future.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,

Elizabeth Robinson

From: Evan Rea <rea.evan@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 9:49 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: HCPSS budget shortfall

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Good morning Howard County Council,

I am a resident and parent to a HCPSS student (and another who will be entering kindergarten next year). Reading the news and updates from the county and the school system, I can see and accept all of the challenges facing the budget.

However . . . the school system is why we are here, living and paying taxes in Howard County. It is what brought us here and it is why we paid (probably overpaid) for our house, and what keeps those property values high. There is no part of Howard County more valuable and more essential than the school system. Please, find a way to fund it without forcing more cuts to existing staff and services. Thank you.

Evan Rea
Ellicott City

From: Evelyn Calamari <Evelyn_Calamari@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 3:08 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: funding the budget

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing to you not only as a teacher, but as someone who has dedicated the last 19 years of my life to educating the children of this county. I'm urging you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has endured years of underfunding, and this year it needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without this funding, we will see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and the continued loss of talented educators. These are not abstract consequences—these are real impacts on our students, schools, and community.

It's personally defeating to feel like my career is always on the chopping block. Last year, I was honored to be nominated for Teacher of the Year. Yet for the past two years, my job has been in jeopardy due to budget shortfalls. How do we ask teachers to give their all—emotionally, physically, and professionally—when stability and respect are no longer guaranteed?

It is unacceptable that public education is consistently the first-place cuts are made when budgets tighten. Education is a foundational service and deserves to be treated as such. The Howard County Public School System's share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept pace with historic norms or inflation, and our students are paying the price.

We must do better. We must treat our educators, students, and schools as the priorities they are—not afterthoughts.

Please prioritize our students and fully fund HCPSS in the FY26 budget.

Sincerely,
Evelyn Calamari
G/T Resource Teacher
Howard County Educator for 15+ Years

Evelyn Calamari, NBCT
G/T Resource Teacher
Northfield Elementary School



National Board Certified Teacher (Renewed/MOC 2024)

From: Geethapriya Sundharamurthy <geethamurthy0628@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 11:31 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Potential G/T Program Cuts

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

Our child's school is already stretched thin and we can't afford more cuts.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,
Geetha
Howard county,
Marriottsville, MD

From: Guruprasad Gatamaneni <guruprasad2u@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 1:13 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned [parent/resident] to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,
Guruprasad
+1-703-835-0253

From: Harriett Katzen <hkatzen7@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 2:19 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Prioritize Our Schools — Restore Full Funding to HCPSS

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,
As a concerned Howard County resident and parent of two graduates of Howard County public schools. I strongly urge you to restore full funding to the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) in the FY26 Operating Budget.

Over the past several years, HCPSS has been consistently underfunded. To maintain even a same-services budget this year, the school system needs at least \$80.6 million. Without this funding, our community will face larger class sizes, reductions in essential programs, and layoffs of valued staff -- all of which directly impact the quality of education for our students. It is troubling that when financial pressures arise, it is our schools that are first in line for service reductions. The school system should not be leading the way in cuts. Education is a core public service — not a luxury item to be scaled back.

Recent investment reports suggest the county will have at least \$10 million more in available funds than currently projected. Instead of shifting "extra" money into PAYGO projects, we should prioritize critical services like education. Our students, teachers, and schools should not be asked to sacrifice while funding is diverted elsewhere.

Howard County's reputation for excellence is built on its schools. I urge you to prioritize our students and schools by restoring the necessary funding to HCPSS.

Thank you for your leadership and attention to this urgent matter. I am counting on you to

fully fund our schools.

Sincerely,
Harriett Katzen

From: Harsha Thai <harshathayi@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 3:29 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unfortunate that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

My kids attend HCPSS elementary and high schools and our school system has made a meaningful contribution to their lives.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,
Harsha Thai
Ellicott City, MD 21042

From: hlb4me2 <hlb4me2@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 9:38 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Correct 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.]

Hello

I am writing this letter on my behalf of my child and all children learning at Northfield and beyond. The proposed budget is not in support of HoCo's mission. It will, in fact, set the county back many years. Class sizes are already too large, these cuts will worsen that issue. Schools are already over crowded, and our special needs children already have aides who's workloads exceed their compensation. This proposed budget worsens that as well. Do NOT do this to our children, teachers and all involved with NES

The proposed budget will also continue to erode HoCos reputation. Rethink this budget right away and give our educators the support they need by finding the appropriate finding for our school!

Sincerely,
Heather

From: Hilary Lovell <hdlovell@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 3:28 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: HCPSS budget gap

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council:

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs - all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

Our students and teachers will suffer with larger class sizes and fewer paraeducators. Our classrooms are already maxed out at the existing class sizes. We need more paraeducators, not less. And why would we cut 3rd grade strings? HCPSS has a wonderful music program that is so valuable to our kids. Music is proven to boost IQ and math concepts. We need to keep 3rd grade strings in place. These will have huge impacts. While we should be working to increase the school budget; right now I ask that you fund the budget gap to maintain the current services.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you.
Hilary Lovell

From: Ian Wang <weiyi1025@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 1:45 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore a Minimum of \$29.2M to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council Members,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to restore a minimum of \$29.2 million in the FY26 Operating Budget to fully fund the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

Year after year, HCPSS has operated under financial strain. This \$29.2 million is not for expansion — it is the bare minimum needed just to maintain current staffing levels, class sizes, and student services. Without it, we risk larger class sizes, loss of key programs, and painful staff reductions — consequences our students simply cannot afford.

It is unacceptable that public education continues to be on the chopping block when budgets tighten. Education is not just another line item — it's a core county responsibility that must be protected. The percentage of recurring General Fund revenue going to HCPSS has fallen behind both inflation and historical norms.

As a parent, I see firsthand how much our schools are already stretched. More cuts would directly harm students, educators, and families across our county.

Please prioritize our children's education. Restore at least \$29.2 million in funding to HCPSS to preserve the quality of education our community expects and deserves.

Sincerely,
Ian Wang

Parent of Manor Woods Elementary School

From: Jada Lee <jada0416@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 11:09 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Please Fully Fund HCPSS in the FY26 Operating Budget

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

Dear Members of the Howard County Council,

I am writing as a concerned parent and resident of Howard County to respectfully urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) in the FY26 Operating Budget.

For years, HCPSS has struggled with inadequate funding. This year alone, the school system requires an additional \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without this funding, we risk seeing larger class sizes, reduced programs, and critical staff layoffs — all of which directly undermine the quality of education our children receive.

It is deeply concerning that our schools are among the first to face cuts during budget shortfalls. Education is not a luxury; it is a foundational public service that deserves strong and consistent investment. Yet, HCPSS's share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has failed to keep pace with historic funding levels and inflation.

As a parent, I've already seen the impact of limited resources in my child's school. Teachers are stretched thin, support staff are overburdened, and programs that enrich learning are at risk. Further cuts would only worsen these challenges.

I urge you to make education a true priority and fully restore funding for HCPSS. Our students, families, and educators are counting on your leadership.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jada Lee

3064 Bethany Lane Ellicott City MD 21042

443-641-3330

Sent from my iPhone

From: Jade Chang <jadechang888@outlook.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 3:07 PM
To: CouncilMail
Cc: Budget Testimony
Subject: Request to restore full funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I am writing as a concerned parent of 3 HCPSS students to urge you to restore full funding to HCPSS for FY26.

Howard County's reputation for excellence is built on its schools. Over the past several years, HCPSS has been consistently underfunded. To maintain even a same-services budget, the school system needs at least **\$29.2 million**.

Without this funding, our community will face larger class sizes, reductions in essential programs, and layoffs of valued staff — all of which directly impact the quality of education for our students. It is troubling that when financial pressures arise, it is our schools that are first in line for service reductions. The school system should not be leading the way in cuts. Education is a core public service — not a luxury item to be scaled back.

Moreover, **recent investment reports suggest the county will have at least \$10 million more in available funds than currently projected**. Instead of shifting "extra" money into PAYGO projects, we should prioritize critical services like education. Our students, teachers, and schools should not be asked to sacrifice while funding is diverted elsewhere.

Thank you for your leadership and continuous services.

Sincerely,

Jade Chang

Ellicott City, MD (District 1)

From: Jennifer Morningstar <jenn.morningstar@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 3:16 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: PLEASE help with the \$29.2 million budget gap!

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent of 8yr old twins to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget!

HCPSS has faced too many years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs - all of which hurt our students.

It's shocking and unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

My children's elementary school is already stretched very thin. The students can't afford larger classes or less essential supplies. Each year much of the burden for essentials falls to parents, teachers and PTA. The prolonged failure to completely rebuild Dunloggin Middle School is another embarrassing and highly concerning failure for HCPSS.

Please, I urge you to prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS as soon as possible.

Thank you so much!

Jennifer Morningstar
Highly concerned Northfield Elementary mother

From: Jessica Estrogano <jessica.estrogano@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 10:43 AM
To: CouncilMail; boe@hcpss.org; Jones, Opel
Cc: Email - Mine
Subject: Budget Testimony

[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 as a parent of a student at Jeffers Hill Elementary School (JHES). I am writing to implore you to fund schools. The emails being sent out by the County Executive that portray schools as "fully funded" by the county, are false. Schools are in disrepair, JHES itself is 50 years old and has never had a renovation. The county does not have enough public schools and Council continues to approve more development and housing. Stop allowing development until the current schools are up to code and date, and until we have enough schools to comfortably serve every Howard County student.

In 2025, we were already hit with 192 positions eliminated, class size increases of 11 even in schools that have older footprints and truly do not have space for even one more desk in the classroom, reduced student supports, fewer special educators for a growing special education student population, decreased summer opportunities, and diminished centralized functions and supports.

If the proposed budget is passed as it is, we will be hit with *another* class size increase in spaces that simply cannot handle the additional desk or student, elimination of at least 222 FTE positions to include elimination of middle school general education paraeducators, reduced elementary school paraeducators, reduced high school teacher secretaries, reduced high school media specialists, reduced dual enrollment, reduced elementary gifted and talented (G&T) teachers; and elimination of third grade strings. My child is in second grade and is very excited to move to the G&T program and pick up strings next year. The idea that those things should be taken away from children because adults are not making responsible decisions, is shameful.

The Spending Affordability Advisory Committee projects a budget deficit of nearly \$340 million by 2031, just 5.5 years away. This accumulated decline affects the most vulnerable. Taxes and fees on residents continue to rise while developers continue to receive favorable zoning and land use decisions. Howard Hughes Corporation resides on public amenities paid for by taxpayer dollars to increase its property values. Remember: You serve your constituents, not corporations. You are funding a new Performing Arts Center at \$68 million and a new central library and parking garage at \$150 million- these are nice-to-haves, not requirements. Nobody is negatively impacted by not building a new arts center or a new library and parking garage. Children and families will be significantly and negatively impacted if schools are not funded at the HCPSS Board of Education's full budget request. This decision making reflects misaligned priorities.

I don't want to hear that we don't have the money. We absolutely have the money, we just need you- the people with decision making power- to make ethical decisions because they are the right thing to do,

rather than careless decisions to please your boss or generate personal revenue for yourselves. You owe this to the children and the County

Make the right choice: Fund the full HCPSS Board of Education budget request. There is no other right choice.

Jessica Estrogano

From: Jessica N Eng <eng.jessica@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 3:58 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Please Fund Howard County Schools - Close the \$29M GAP

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I am a Howard County homeowner and parent to two children, aged 7 and 10, at Northfield Elementary School in Ellicott City.

I'm writing as a concerned parent to **urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System** in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. **This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services.** Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs - all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. **The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.**

My children's middle school, Dunloggin Middle School, is already extremely delayed for renovation. **We cannot afford more cuts.** As you may be aware, Dunloggin Middle School is plagued by crumbling infrastructure problems, overcrowding issues, a 50:1 student to toilet ratio, and pest infestations. The renovation has been so delayed that Andre Gao, a former Northfield Elementary parent who had a middle schooler at the time the renovation was scheduled, had his son go off to college before seeing any renovations to the school.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you.

Jessica N. Eng
Concerned Howard County Homeowner and Parent

From: Ji Wang <wjsusu@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 1:51 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore a Minimum of \$29.2M to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council Members,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to restore a minimum of \$29.2 million in the FY26 Operating Budget to fully fund the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

Year after year, HCPSS has operated under financial strain. This \$29.2 million is not for expansion — it is the bare minimum needed just to maintain current staffing levels, class sizes, and student services. Without it, we risk larger class sizes, loss of key programs, and painful staff reductions — consequences our students simply cannot afford.

It is UNACCEPTABLE that public education continues to be on the chopping block when budgets tighten. Education is not just another line item — it's a core county responsibility that must be protected. The percentage of recurring General Fund revenue going to HCPSS has fallen behind both inflation and historical norms.

As a parent, I see firsthand how much our schools are already stretched. More cuts would directly harm students, educators, and families across our county.

Please prioritize our children's education. Restore at least \$29.2 million in funding to HCPSS to preserve the quality of education our community expects and deserves.

Sincerely,
Ji Wang

Parent of Manor Woods Elementary School

From: busola adetoye <bussyadet@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 12:00 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Urgent Request to Fully Fund HCPSS in the FY26 Operating Budget

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I am writing as a concerned parent and resident to respectfully urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

For years, HCPSS has operated under significant financial strain. In the upcoming fiscal year, the system requires an additional \$29.2 million simply to maintain current services. Without this funding, our schools will face larger class sizes, reduced programs, and staff layoffs, consequences that directly undermine the quality of education our children deserve.

It is deeply troubling that education continues to be one of the first areas impacted during budget shortfalls. Public education is not optional, it is a foundational service that shapes our community's future. The school system's share of recurring General Fund revenue has failed to keep pace with historical norms and inflation, further eroding its capacity to serve students effectively.

As a mother of three children in the public school system, I've seen firsthand how stretched our schools already are. Teachers are doing their best with limited resources, but they can only do so much. Additional cuts would jeopardize not just programs, but the stability and well-being of students and staff alike.

I urge you to prioritize our children's education and restore adequate funding to HCPSS.

Thank you for your time and commitment to our community.

Sincerely,
Joy Adebayo
Pine Orchard Lane, Ellicott City, MD 21042
Howard County Resident

[Yahoo Mail: Search, Organize, Conquer](#)

From: K. Terilli <kterilli@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 5:02 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned grandparent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept of with historic norms and inflation.

My granddaughters' school has a budget that is already lacking. Please prioritize public education for ALL of our Howard County children and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,
Karen B. Terilli
10708 Symphony Way
Columbia, MD 21044

From: kartikeya makker <makkerfamily2011@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 9:08 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

My child's school is already stretched thin. We can't afford more cuts. The foundation of Howard county school system is its education

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,
Kartikeya Makker MD
Assistant Professor
Johns Hopkins School of Medicine
Medical Director
Bayview Medical Center NICU
Baltimore, MD
USA
Home address: 2923 poland springs
Ellicott City

From: fuller family <kateandandrewfuller@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 3:53 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Fully Fund Howard County Public School System

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs - all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

As a parent of a student at Northfield Elementary School, I worry that without adequate funding, our children won't have access to the level of instruction they need to thrive. Many students are eager for challenges and enrichment, and it's heartbreaking to think their potential might go unmet simply because the resources aren't there.

Please prioritize our students by restoring full funding to HCPSS. Our children's future—and the strength of our community—depends on it.

Thank you.

Kate Fuller
District 5

From: Kelly Gailey Walker <Kelly_GaileyWalker@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 9:43 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: NOT OKAY

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

As a teacher and a mother in Howard County, I am appalled at the choices that have been made by our county, this is not a representation of who our community is. I am beyond disappointed. I have lived in this county since birth and attended Howard county public schools my entire school life as are my children. We need smaller class sizes in schools, paraeducators are a vital role and third grade needs strings!

Kelly Walker
Grade Two Teacher
IIT Liaison
Northfield Elementary School

From: Kenneth Katzen <kkatzen01@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 12:58 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Meet the School System Budget

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

I am a retired Howard County teacher. We moved to the county in 1971 for its superior school system, and now that is in jeopardy. If we do not meet the requested budget, we'll have larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students, make them less competitive, and make the county less attractive.

At that, the BOE budget just maintains where we are. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept of with historic norms or inflation. Failure to fund in the requested amount would just make things worse.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,

Ken Katzen

4905 Canvasback Drive

Columbia, MD 21045

From: Kristina Heimlich <kristina.heimlich@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 10:51 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students. It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

My 3 kids will be in elementary school next year, one in 5th grade, one in 3rd grade, and one in Kindergarten. **If HCPSS cannot fill this budgetary gap, the list of potential ramifications on the list that will affect my kids, Northfield ES, and everyone in the community as a whole would include:**

1. **Class size INCREASE**
2. **REDUCING Elementary GT Teachers AND Paraeducators**
3. **ELIMINATING 3rd grade strings**

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,
Kristina Heimlich

From: Hun Kim <hunkim78@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 10:57 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

My child's school is already stretched thin. We can't afford more cuts

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,
Kyong Hun Kim
10310 Pine Ridge Dr
Ellicott City, MD 21042

From: McNeill Family <ohanamcneill@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 6:07 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Urging you to restore the HPCSS Budget

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Hello,

First, I wish to extend a sincere thanks to the council for all the work you are doing to make Howard County one of the best places to live in Maryland.

Today, I am urging you to restore at least \$29.2 million to the HPCSS budget. With schools facing federal cuts, and pressure at all levels, this money is critical to keeping our class sizes down, gifted programs in our schools, livable wages for our teachers, and continued arts education for our children. Given the lack of support our children are getting in so many other areas and from the federal government, it is more important than ever that Howard County steps up and provides them the future they deserve.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Lenae McNeill
Parent of Bryant Woods elementary student

Sent from my iPhone

From: snap@howardcountymd.gov
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 11:14 AM
To: Smith, Brenda; Anderson, Isaiah; Gelwicks, Colette; Respass, Charity
Subject: Case: CS0067817 – opened and unassigned

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged



Case

Short Description: Support for HCPSS Operating Budget

Case Number: CS0067817

Case Opened: 05-08-2025

Constituent:

[VIEW CASE](#)

Details:

05-08-2025 11:13:28 AM EDT - Christiana Rigby Additional comments

From: Liz Robinson <elizrobinson80@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 6:13 AM
To: CouncilMail <CouncilMail@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

My child's school has already been stretched thin and can't afford more budget cuts. My child's school is a Title One school and our student population truly depends on the services the school provides to succeed in life. Do not sacrifice our children's future.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,

Elizabeth Robinson

howardcountymd.gov



Ref:MSG6119419

From: Mardea Caulcrick-Grimes <mcgrimes0201@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 4:10 PM
To: CouncilMail
Cc: Mardea Caulcrick-Grimes
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a very concerned parent and resident to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

I am a parent with two students currently in the HCPSS. I have an elementary student at Manor Woods and a middle schooler at Mount View. Our schools are already stretched thin. We absolutely can not afford any more cuts. We must invest in our children's future now so that they are prepared and equipped with the necessary skill sets needed to be successful in a world that's continuously changing and advancing in new technologies and the way in which we think and operate.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS. We must invest into our future leaders in order to ensure they have all the tools and resources to compete and be their best!

Thank you,
Mardea Caulcrick-Grimes
10401 Resort Rd, Unit T
Ellicott City, MD 21042

[Yahoo Mail: Search, Organize, Conquer](#)

From: Mayuri Cherka <mayuricherka@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 12:22 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned Parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

My child's school is already stretched thin. We can't afford more cuts.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,
Mayuri Cherka
2624 Vardon Ln
Ellicott City -21042

From: ariespearl213 <ariespearl213@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 4:00 PM
To: CouncilMail; Budget Testimony
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

My child's school is already stretched thin. We can't afford more cuts.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,

Meizhuo Lan (Manor Woods Elementary school)

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

From: Micaela Fritz <micaela.hinojosa@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 9:43 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

My child's elementary school and future middle school are already stretched thin. We can't afford more cuts.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,

Micaela Fritz

Dunloggin Neighborhood

From: Moinuddin Qazi <moinqazi@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 3:15 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: BUDGET CONCERNS FOR HCPSS - CONCERNED PARENT

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I am a father of 2 HCPSS students. I am writing to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

With \$29.2 million of shortage, HCPSS will not be able to provide the quality education that it is known for, and the reason we moved to Howard County.

Its very frustrating to see that we send so much money overseas for wrong foreign policy decisions, while our schools, the back bone of our country, remains under funded.

I think we have already seen enough cuts and can't afford any more cuts!

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you.

Moinuddin Qazi
father of 2 HCPSS students

From: Natalie Kahla <nkahla@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 10:51 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent and resident to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs – all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

My children's school is already stretched thin due to the regional program. We can't afford more cuts.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,

Natalie Kahla

12827 Folly Quarter Rd

M

From: Neelima Yerra <dr.yerradds@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 11:07 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

we cannot afford to lose anymore budget cuts , as the schools are already stretched thin.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,
Neelima Yerra
Ellicott City, MD

From: Olivia Souweine <oliviagkelly@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 10:46 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Rstore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million to maintain current services. Without it, we will see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It is unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected. The percentage of HCPSS share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

My children's school is already understaffed, and class sizes are growing. There are not enough paraeducators to support the number of students with IEPs, which puts additional stress on the teachers who have to manage it all solo. Our school system has a reputation for being great and is a key reason why Howard County is such a desirable place to live and raise a family. Maintaining this should be a priority of the Council.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,

Olivia Souweine

From: Pavan Kumar Ravela <pavanravela@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 11:49 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Urging the Council to restore full funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear **Howard County Council**,

Howard County residents contribute significantly through high taxes, yet the current budget allocation raises concerns about its ability to support the quality education our children deserve. If these funds cannot adequately provide for our schools, how can we expect students to excel in an increasingly competitive world?

The proposed budget shortfall of \$54.3 million risks undermining essential programs, increasing class sizes, and affecting teacher retention—challenges that directly impact the academic success and future prospects of our children. Programs such as **Gifted & Talented education, special needs services, and extracurricular STEM initiatives** face potential cuts, diminishing opportunities for students who rely on these critical resources.

Investing in education is investing in the county's future. The long-term benefits of a well-funded school system translate into a stronger economy, a skilled workforce, and a community that continues to thrive. I urge you to prioritize full funding for HCPSS to ensure our students receive the support they need to succeed.

I appreciate your time and consideration and look forward to hearing how the County Council plans to address these concerns.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

From: Regina Coyne <regina.coyne@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 3:39 PM
To: Ball, Calvin
Cc: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

My children were redistricted to Swansfield E.S., which we love and are so happy with. SES is also in jeopardy of losing Title 1 status (because of this redistricting process). Why stretch this school thin? How many things must we take away from our children and school staff? What is more important than our children and their education? Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,

Regina Steuer

Columbia 21044

From: robyndfsagatov@gmail.com
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 3:21 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget

Importance: High

Follow Up Flag: Follow up

Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs - all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,
Robyn Sagatov

District 1

Paul Mill Road
Ellicott City, MD 21042

From: Samantha Norris <samanthasydney@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 11:26 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: HCPSS Operating Budget

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Members of the County Council,

I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the proposed budget deficits to our school system. As a resident of Howard County, I have witnessed firsthand the exceptional quality of education that our schools provide-- both having attended the schools myself, and subsequently moving my family back to the county nearly 20 years ago. This excellence is a primary reason why many families choose to move to our county, contributing significantly to our local economy.

Increasing class sizes and cutting programs like Elementary GT programming and Strings should not be on the table year after year. Our classrooms are already overcrowded, our teachers overworked, and our students underserved. The decline in our test scores is evidence that these strategies are failing. Students and teachers should not be bearing the brunt of poor planning and poor decision making, and parents and community members should not have to make the same arguments year after year. Is Howard County a great place to live? Yes. Will people continue to move here when they don't feel the schools can provide the education they want for their children? The answer is a resounding "NO."

The quality of our schools is not just a matter of pride; it is a cornerstone of our community's prosperity. When families move here for the schools, they also invest in our local businesses, housing market, and community services. This significantly boosts our property value, which then contributes to our tax revenue as well. A decline in educational quality will inevitably lead to a decline in these areas, causing a ripple effect that will harm every aspect of our county's economy.

Fully funding the school system budget is not merely an expenditure; it is an investment in the future of our community. It ensures that our children receive the education they deserve, that our teachers have the resources they need, and that our county remains a desirable place to live and work.

I urge you to reconsider any budget cuts to the school system and to prioritize the funding necessary to maintain the high standards of education that our county is known for. The long-term benefits of a well-funded school system far outweigh the short-term savings of budget cuts.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter. I look forward to your positive response and to seeing our County continue to thrive.

Sincerely,

Samantha Norris

From: Sandra Jones <sschurman426@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 8:57 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: School Budget

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Council people,

Just a note to say that my husband and I are in support of fully funding the school budget for the 2025-2026 school year. As taxpayers and registered voters the outcome regarding school funding will influence how we decide to vote in future years. Kids matter! They are our future! The schools are already working so hard to make things work without enough staff and supplies. Give our schools the money they desperately need to educate our kids!

Sandra Jones

From: Sandra Jones <sschurman426@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 3:57 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: School Budget

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent] to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

My child's school is a Title 1 school that cannot afford any more cuts.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,

Sandra Jones, Columbia resident

From: Sandy <sandy@ledopizza.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 3:58 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: funding to HCPSS.

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent and resident to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs - all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

As a parent, I'm furious and heartbroken. Year after year, we're told there's not enough money for our kids' education—and every year, they're the ones who pay the price. How is it acceptable that our children are being packed into overcrowded classrooms, losing access to programs that inspire them, and watching beloved teachers and staff disappear due to budget cuts?

This isn't just disappointing—it's infuriating. Our schools are being asked to do more with less until there's almost nothing left. My child—and every child in this county—deserves better. We moved to Howard County because of its strong public schools, but if this continues, I don't know how much longer that reputation will hold.

Enough is enough!!

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you.

--

Thanks

Sandy

From: seba.kurian@gmail.com
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 1:19 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Enhance education 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 Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent of an elementary school child to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Maryland's economy has depended on an educated workforce that seeks residing in counties that prioritize education. Howard County in particular has drawn affluent families because of the public schools. The economy will directly suffer if education is de-prioritized. Education is a core service and should be enhanced and protected, not sacrificed.

The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation. We are at a precipice where parents need to protest and vocalize against the demolition of the education of our children.

My child is in school that is more than 75 years old and the building has not been touched in almost 20 years. The technology, space, and special programs lag other DMV schools. We have a critical need for basic infrastructure. We need more funds directed towards the Howard County schools, not less.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS. Take a stand for what is right for Howard County today and vital for Howard County tomorrow.

Thank you,

Seba Kurian, 2320 old maple ct, Ellicott City

From: sonali shekhar <sonalishekhar@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 10:52 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Please Fully Fund HCPSS in the FY26 Operating Budget

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

Dear Howard County Council,

As a concerned parent, I'm writing to respectfully urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has been underfunded for years. This year alone, it requires an additional \$29.2 million just to sustain existing services. Without this support, we risk increased class sizes, cuts to valuable programs, and staff reductions — outcomes that will negatively impact our students and teachers.

It's troubling that education continues to bear the brunt of budget shortfalls. Public schools are an essential service, and their funding should reflect that priority. The school system's share of recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept pace with historical trends of inflation, placing even more strain on our classrooms.

My child has greatly benefited from the GT Math program, which has helped him thrive academically and gain confidence. Programs like this are vital and should be preserved — not threatened by funding gaps.

I urge you to invest in our children's future by fully funding HCPSS in the FY26 budget.

Sincerely,

Sonali Shekhar

From: snap@howardcountymd.gov
Sent: Monday, May 12, 2025 9:09 AM
To: Smith, Brenda; Anderson, Isaiah; Gelwicks, Colette; Respass, Charity
Subject: Case: CS0067985 – opened and unassigned



Case

Short Description: Support for HCPSS Operating Budget

Case Number: CS0067985

Case Opened: 05-12-2025

Constituent:

[VIEW CASE](#)

Details:

05-12-2025 09:08:43 AM EDT - Christiana Rigby Additional comments

From: Stephen Rice <stephen_rice@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 1:39 PM
To: Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Questions from a Howard County Professional Educator

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

County Councilperson Christiana Rigby,

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council members,

I have read the responses to previous communications, and I am left to wonder how any of other expenditures will matter when schools are overcrowded and understaffed. How will Howard County attract business leaders and technology start-ups when the educational system is quickly

deteriorating because of funding cuts and failure to retain the best teachers?

Right now, HCPSS is staring down a \$29 million deficit in its budget that it cannot fill. County Executive Ball sent educators a list of reasons why he can't fully fund schools, but I still have questions:

What would you cut from a district that claims to be a national leader in the delivery of a quality education? Our reputation is important and should be earned. The reality in the school buildings is trending toward a different image and children are suffering the consequences. Reading levels are down and students are graduating without the competitive ability to think critically. We are still in recovery mode from the pandemic and the weakening of a quality pool of teaching candidates.

It is a privileged position to propose cuts in school funding and then leave the impossible choices to the Board of Education. But if you think HCPSS should have no additional funding this year, then how much would you raise class size? Keep in mind that this choice has a negative impact on my ability to spend time with individual students who are far below reading level when I can barely walk through my classroom with 31 students present. I have approximately 1.6 minutes per student each day to provide instruction, support, and feedback.

Which programs would you eliminate?

How many staff should be laid off?

Should you freeze pay increases for educators during a teacher shortage? We are losing young teachers at an alarming rate, morale is at an all-time low, and none of my students has any interest in becoming a teacher.

Please restore the funding that HCPSS students and educators desperately need and deserve.

Thank you,
Stephen Rice

Stephen Rice
stephen_rice@hcpss.org<mailto:stephen_rice@hcpss.org>
9537 Pamplona Road
Columbia, Maryland 21045

howardcountymd.gov



From: snap@howardcountymd.gov
Sent: Monday, May 12, 2025 9:07 AM
To: Smith, Brenda; Anderson, Isaiah; Gelwicks, Colette; Respass, Charity
Subject: Case: CS0067977 – opened and unassigned



Case

Short Description: Support for HCPSS Operating Budget

Case Number: CS0067977

Case Opened: 05-12-2025

Constituent:

[VIEW CASE](#)

Details:

05-12-2025 09:07:04 AM EDT - Christiana Rigby Additional comments

From: Tammy Preuett <tammy_preuett@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 12:33 PM
To: Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: One quick question from a HoCo educator

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

County Councilperson Christiana Rigby,

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council members,

Right now HCPSS is staring down a \$29 million hole in its budget that it cannot fill. County Executive Ball sent educators a list of reasons why he can't fully fund schools, but I still have one question for him and for the County Council:

What would you cut from HCPSS?

It's easy to cut school funding and leave the hard choices to the Board of Education. But if you think HCPSS should have no additional funding this year, then how much would you raise class size? Which programs would you eliminate? How many staff should be laid off? Should you freeze pay increases for educators during a teacher shortage?

If you can't, or won't answer those questions, then do the right thing and restore the funding that HCPSS students and educators deserve.

Thank you,

Tammy Preuett
tammy_preuett@hcpss.org<mailto:tammy_preuett@hcpss.org>
6316 Arbor Way
Elkridge, Maryland 21043

howardcountymd.gov



Ref:MSG6129896

From: Tanner Schlee (Elite Fish) <tannerschlee@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 6:45 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Cut 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 Howard County Board,

I have been informed that you intend to cut funding for certain educational programs including elementary GT math, CEUs, and seminars. This seems to be a terrible idea because these programs can be very important for a child's journey towards success. When I myself was in elementary school I was in a lot of advanced classes including GT math that helped to prepare me to go on to further excellence in middle and now high school. If it wasn't for these classes and the caring help I received in them I likely would not be able to handle much of the workload I'm facing today and also would likely be in lower level classes. These elementary school classes are instrumental in preparing students for high level learning in following grades. So I would suggest to not cut funding to such important areas and find something else.

Thanks, concerned citizen

From: Tim Corbin <timothycorbin@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 1:16 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Upcoming planned HCPSS 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.]

Dear Howard County Council Members,

This is no doubt an incredibly difficult set of choices you are currently tasked with in the face of a massive budget shortfall, which will directly affect Howard County Public Schools. Tens of millions of dollars needed to just sustain the already under-staffed school system is a significant challenge.

But these are the times *we need you more than ever*. Howard County Public Schools are the envy of and model for so many other systems. Just two weeks ago we had friends visiting from Northern Virginia — a nice area by all accounts. We were trying to convince them to move nearby. "Yeah, but how are the schools?" they asked. "What are the ratings?" We pulled up those ratings and watched their jaws drop. 8 out of 10, 9 out of 10, 10 out of 10. Their local public schools? 2 out of 10.

Howard County stands apart with its incredible programs. I think of GT and Music in particular — two programs that have had wonderfully positive impacts on our children. Cutting these programs cuts into the future of all students. It snatches away potential and eliminates opportunities from the future of our world, nation, state, county, neighborhoods, and families. It also takes jobs away from passionate, hard-working teachers that we entrust with our children every day.

Perhaps this is time for the County and HCPSS to get creative with raising revenue, as it is indeed a time of desperation, but cutting nearly \$30 million from the budget will have *decades worth* of real life consequences on our children, in schools that already have overfilled classrooms with not enough resources and budgets that have not sufficiently kept up with per student spending.

I hope you can, together with the Board of Education, find ways to *put our students first* when it comes to determining the County budget. Howard County is a tremendous place to live, and many people, including our family, seek out Howard County as a place to raise their children *because of the schools*. We cannot let this escape us.

Howard County Public Schools are exceptional. They are a place where seeds are planted. A place where leaders are born. A place where children develop into the people they will become under the caring eye of teachers and administrators who strive for excellence each and every day.

We must properly fund our schools and ensure the future of our children is as bright as every parent hopes and dreams it can be.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Tim Corbin

timothycorbin@gmail.com

Students in 1st, 4th, and 5th grades at Manor Woods Elementary

From: lakshmi <lakshvenki@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 1:44 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

It is completely unfair to remove educational programs from schools and limit children's learning opportunities. As a parent, I can confidently say that my children have been able to explore deeper knowledge thanks to gifted and talented (GT) programs. Instead of restricting education, we should be working to enhance the benefits students receive. Expanding educational opportunities for young children is crucial for their development. If budget cuts are necessary, they should be made elsewhere—not at the expense of children's education.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,
Venkata L Kurasa
2658 legends way
Ellicott City
MD 21042

From: Li, Zhe (Zoe) <Zhe.Li@fda.hhs.gov>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 11:49 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I am Dr. Zhe Li, a clinical pharmacology reviewer at FDA. I'm writing as a concerned parent and resident to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

My children's school Manor Woods Elementary is already stretched thin. We can't afford more cuts. Currently my old child is in GT math program and a GT stem afterschool program. He enjoyed the knowledge the GT teachers offered in math, chemistry and American history. My younger child has not even enjoyed any of those yet and always looked forward to them as he heard his brother talking about the fascinating facts. Our education of this generation is something that should only leap forward and never backward at any price. We can not afford failing this young generation given the overwhelming corrosion of social media, short video clips, video games, let alone the recent budget cut of science and research whole country wide. All these are triggering a cascading effect on a major recession of intelligence, innovation, science, and technology etc. Your decision of funding education will be a critical turning point that can help America winning this battle for many years to come!

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,
Zhe
Ellicott City

From: Z Li <liztseng.li@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 11:37 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

My children's school Manor Woods Elementary is already stretched thin. We can't afford more cuts. Currently my old child is in GT math and a GT stem afterschool program. He enjoyed the knowledge the GT teachers offered in math, chemistry and American history. My younger child has not even enjoyed any of those yet and always looked forward to them as he heard his brother talking about the fascinating facts. Our education on this generation is something that should only leap forward and never backward at any price.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,
Zoe Li
Ellicott City

From: Abdul Khadeer Mohammed <khadeer.sharief@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 9, 2025 10:57 AM
To: CouncilMail
Cc: Khanam Lubni
Subject: Strong Opposition to Proposed Budget Cuts in Education

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

Hi,

I am writing to express my deep concern and strong opposition to the proposed budget cuts outlined in [<https://www.cbsnews.com/baltimore/news/howard-county-2026-budget-teachers-pay-contract-schools/>]. These cuts will have serious and lasting consequences for society . My elder daughter goes to High school. Previous budget cuts had an adverse impact; she couldn't get help needed when she got a lower psat score from the high school ,since due to the budget the school didn't offer the assistance program .

Reducing funding further for education threatens the quality and accessibility of services that many rely on daily for educational needs. These programs are not luxuries—they are vital supports that foster safety, education, and opportunity.

I would like to quote " Education is the most powerful weapon that can change the world -- Nelson mandela "

I urge you to reconsider this proposal and to explore more sustainable and equitable alternatives. Education is one value that can't be deprioritized . We need a budget that reflects our shared values and prioritizes long-term investment in our community's well-being and future.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this further .

Sincerely,

Abdul Khadeer Sharief Mohammed .

From: snap@howardcountymd.gov
Sent: Monday, May 12, 2025 9:29 AM
To: Smith, Brenda; Anderson, Isaiah; Gelwicks, Colette; Respass, Charity
Subject: Case: CS0068027 – opened and unassigned



Case

Short Description: Support for HCPSS Operating Budget

Case Number: CS0068027

Case Opened: 05-12-2025

Constituent:

[VIEW CASE](#)

Details:

05-12-2025 09:28:51 AM EDT - Christiana Rigby Additional comments

From: Alexis Irby <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Friday, May 9, 2025 9:45 AM
To: Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: One quick question from a HoCo educator

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

County Councilperson Christiana Rigby,

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council members,

Right now HCPSS is staring down a \$29 million hole in its budget that it cannot fill. County Executive Ball sent educators a list of reasons why he can't fully fund schools, but I still have one question for him and for the County Council:

What would you cut from HCPSS?

It's easy to cut school funding and leave the hard choices to the Board of Education. But if you think HCPSS should have no additional funding this year, then how much would you raise class size? Which programs would you eliminate? How many staff should be laid off? Should you freeze pay increases for educators during a teacher shortage?

If you can't, or won't answer those questions, then do the right thing and restore the funding that HCPSS students and educators deserve.

Thank you,

Alexis Irby
alexis.irby3@gmail.com<mailto:alexis.irby3@gmail.com>
6145 Waiting Spring
Columbia, Maryland 21045

howardcountymd.gov



Ref:MSG6130247

From: snap@howardcountymd.gov
Sent: Monday, May 12, 2025 9:31 AM
To: Smith, Brenda; Anderson, Isaiah; Gelwicks, Colette; Respass, Charity
Subject: Case: CS0068037 – opened and unassigned



Case

Short Description: Support for HCPSS Operating Budget

Case Number: CS0068037

Case Opened: 05-12-2025

Constituent:

[VIEW CASE](#)

Details:

05-12-2025 09:30:14 AM EDT - Christiana Rigby Additional comments

From: Angela McMellen Brannigan <mcmellen@fastmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 9, 2025 11:47 AM
To: CouncilMail <CouncilMail@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Fully Fund HCPSS

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System's FY26 Operating Budget. The school system is the engine of growth in Howard County. Families move here for the school, but HCPSS has faced years of underfunding.

This year, HCPSS needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Last year the school system faced a \$30M budget cut the resulted in over

192 positions lost. With an additional cut of \$29.2 we will see additional staff layoffs, fewer programs, and larger class sizes. Class size has been shown in study after study to be one of the single best predictors of student success. Larger class sizes and less supports for classroom students will result in more difficulties for students, especially the most vulnerable ones.

Why our schools one of the first places the county looks to cut funding when budgets tighten? Education is an investment in the future of our county and should be a priority and not an afterthought. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

My HCPSS student is currently at a Title 1 school (Swansfield Elementary School), which will lose Title 1 status next school year while still maintaining a sizeable portion of students with enhanced needs. Any budget cuts will be especially difficult for our school as it will be a double hit. Howard County has been a place people want to be to raise families because of the schools, but that reputation is being tarnished by a County Council that refuses to make the necessary investments in our schools. Do not scarifice our students futures. Fully fund the schools.

Thank you,
Angela McMellen Brannigan
District 4

howardcountymd.gov



Ref:MSG6130303

From: snap@howardcountymd.gov
Sent: Monday, May 12, 2025 9:29 AM
To: Smith, Brenda; Anderson, Isaiah; Gelwicks, Colette; Respass, Charity
Subject: Case: CS0068026 – opened and unassigned



Case

Short Description: Support for HCPSS Operating Budget

Case Number: CS0068026

Case Opened: 05-12-2025

Constituent:

[VIEW CASE](#)

Details:

05-12-2025 09:28:50 AM EDT - Christiana Rigby Additional comments

From: Ann Marie Irby <ann_marie_irby@hcpss.org>
Sent: Friday, May 9, 2025 8:26 AM
To: Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: One quick question from a HoCo educator

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

County Councilperson Christiana Rigby,

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council members,

Right now HCPSS is staring down a \$29 million hole in its budget that it cannot fill. County Executive Ball sent educators a list of reasons why he can't fully fund schools, but I still have one question for him and for the County Council:

What would you cut from HCPSS?

It's easy to cut school funding and leave the hard choices to the Board of Education. But if you think HCPSS should have no additional funding this year, then how much would you raise class size? Which programs would you eliminate? How many staff should be laid off? Should you freeze pay increases for educators during a teacher shortage?

If you can't, or won't answer those questions, then do the right thing and restore the funding that HCPSS students and educators deserve.

Thank you,

Ann Marie Irby
ann_marie_irby@hcpss.org<mailto:ann_marie_irby@hcpss.org>
6145 Waiting Spg
Columbia, Maryland 21045

howardcountymd.gov



Ref:MSG6130235

From: Brett Li <brettli@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 9, 2025 2:50 PM
To: CouncilMail
Cc: ariel
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students, the leaders in the next generation.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

Howard County is home to one of the nation's top school systems. Cutting its funding not only jeopardizes student success but also undermines the reputation that has long made our county a destination for families and professionals.

Investing in education must remain a top priority. Students should never be shortchanged. I urge you to restore full funding to HCPSS and uphold our commitment to the next generation of leaders.

Thank you,
Brett
mobile phone: 443-917-8553
3175 Pine Orchard Lane, Apartment 101
Ellicott City MD 21042

From: Brian Aldrich <brian.a.aldrich@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 9, 2025 4:57 PM
To: CouncilMail; Budget Testimony
Subject: HCPSS Funding

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I am writing as a concerned parent in Howard County to urge you to restore full funding to the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) in the FY26 Operating Budget.

Over the past several years, HCPSS has been consistently underfunded. To maintain even a same-services budget this year, the school system needs at least \$80.6 million. Without this funding, our community will face larger class sizes, reductions in essential programs, and layoffs of valued staff --all of which directly impact the quality of education for our students. It is troubling that when financial pressures arise, it is our schools that are first in line for service reductions. The school system should not be leading the way in cuts. Education is a core public service — not a luxury item to be scaled back.

Moreover, recent investment reports suggest the county will have at least \$10 million more in available funds than currently projected. Instead of shifting "extra" money into PAYGO projects, we should prioritize critical services like education. Our students, teachers, and schools should not be asked to sacrifice while funding is diverted elsewhere. We have already made so many cuts to education in recent years. Class sizes are larger than ever. Buildings are deteriorating. Programs are being cut or downsized. I am tired of seeing increased class sizes, cuts to special education, cuts to music and cuts to GT programs. These are the most important things our students need. We can not afford any more cuts.

Howard County's reputation for excellence is built on its schools. House values will deteriorate. More and more families will choose private schools or even leave the county if we do not properly fund our schools. I urge you to prioritize our students and schools by restoring the necessary funding to HCPSS.

Thank you for your leadership and attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,
Brian Aldrich

From: Brittany Jacobs <brittanyplaysviola@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 9, 2025 10:53 PM
To: CouncilMail; Budget Testimony
Subject: Fully Fund HCPSS Budget

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear County Council members,

Here in Howard County we are once again facing a budget crisis. As a parent of an elementary-aged child in our school system, I am deeply concerned about the shortfalls in funding for HCPSS. My husband and I chose to live and raise our child in Howard County because of its excellent school system, where our child can experience programs and opportunities we did not have during our PreK-12 educations. We cannot have the best education for the children of Howard County if we do not invest in it. The Board of Education is proposing numerous cuts that would disproportionately impact our youngest learners. I implore you to fully fund the HCPSS budget to prevent these cuts from occurring, and to allow the children of Howard County to have the best public education possible.

Respectfully,

Brittany Jacobs

Sent from my iPhone

From: Colleen Daly <colleenjdaly@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 9, 2025 3:59 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: PLEASE FULLY FUND HCPSS EDUCATION

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs - all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

On a personal note, my rising 3rd grader is SO excited to finally participate in the 3rd grade strings program. After 2 years of watching his older brother participate and flourish in the program, he will be devastated if he cannot participate as well. He has already asked for a violin.

My rising 6th grader is excited to attend Dunloggin Middle, but has watched the scheduled renovation of the school be delayed for the entirety of his elementary school career. He will now be entering Dunloggin while it is in dire need of a complete renovation, and will very unlikely see any of that renovation come to fruition during his time there.

We still have a third son that will be facing these same issues and more, and he hasn't even started Kindergarten yet.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS!!

Thank you.

Colleen Daly
Northfield Elementary School/Dunloggin Middle School/Wilde Lake High School

--

Colleen Daly

www.colleendaly.com

From: dana garrett <danangarrett@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, May 9, 2025 6:33 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: 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.]

To Whom it May Concern/decision makers;

As a lifetime Howard county resident and HCPSS graduate, and now HCPSS parent, I am concerned with the proposed budget cuts for next year. Please fully fund the schools! They are impart what makes the county a desirable location to live and raise children. Our schools are already understaffed and are not in compliance with special education requirements. While the goal would be to not cut any services or increase classroom sizes, safety must be a priority! Currently there are only three general education para educators that work in each elementary school (providing support for 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th grades). They do car loop morning and afternoon assistance, lunch and recess duty, classroom support, backup for teachers each week for IEP and 504 meetings, pull outs for special education support and close adult support. We need to return to one para educator per grade NOT less! Children today have many more issues (seems like the percentage of special needs children are almost higher than neurotypical) and these children require ALOT of attention and direction to get assignments and work completed. When children get frustrated or angry there are often safety concerns within classrooms and teachers are left to balance behavior issues and classroom safety with general education learning. All children are missing a quality education!!!!

GT classes and GT teachers must be saved too! They not only provide more challenging curriculum, they also in turn make math classroom sizes smaller.

Dual enrollment is also a part of the HCPSS that makes us superior. Our children can enroll and experience college classes while completing in High School credits. My oldest is a freshman and was looking forward to this program.

If the County Executive and County Council doesn't start paying attention and provide adequate funding and resources to maintain our school systems superior reputation we will no longer be the "destination" or "best" place to live. Please stop the building and funding of the new library, the performing arts center, office agriculture and Glenwood gardens projects. While they are all wonderful projects, our communities NEEDS should be the priority! We have outgrown our hospital and our schools. Please reevaluate the county budget and prioritize spending!!!!

Thank you for your time and consideration!

Dana Garrett
Sent from my iPhone

From: Emely Tijerina <ebaniez@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 9, 2025 7:44 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Re: Budget Cap

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

Hello Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent and resident to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs - all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

I have four kids that will be attending through this school system and my hope is that they each will have a better experience than their siblings from previous years. My husband and I already working full time jobs to provide the best for our kids, please let their education be one of them.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you.

Emely Tijerina
Northfield/Dunloggin Schools

Sent from my iPhone

From: snap@howardcountymd.gov
Sent: Monday, May 12, 2025 9:31 AM
To: Smith, Brenda; Anderson, Isaiah; Gelwicks, Colette; Respass, Charity
Subject: Case: CS0068036 – opened and unassigned



Case

Short Description: Support for HCPSS Operating Budget

Case Number: CS0068036

Case Opened: 05-12-2025

Constituent:

[VIEW CASE](#)

Details:

05-12-2025 09:30:13 AM EDT - Christiana Rigby Additional comments

From: Emilia K <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Friday, May 9, 2025 12:01 PM
To: Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: One quick question from a HoCo educator

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

County Councilperson Christiana Rigby,

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council members,

Right now HCPSS is staring down a \$29 million hole in its budget that it cannot fill. County Executive Ball sent educators a list of reasons why he can't fully fund schools, but I still have one question for him and for the County Council:

What would you cut from HCPSS?

It's easy to cut school funding and leave the hard choices to the Board of Education. But if you think HCPSS should have no additional funding this year, then how much would you raise class size? Which programs would you eliminate? How many staff should be laid off? Should you freeze pay increases for educators during a teacher shortage?

If you can't, or won't answer those questions, then do the right thing and restore the funding that HCPSS students and educators deserve.

Thank you,
Emilia

Emilia K
emiliakatkow@gmail.com<mailto:emiliakatkow@gmail.com>
5125 Bonnie Acres Drive
Ellicott city, Maryland 21043

howardcountymd.gov



Ref:MSG6130295

From: Stella & Oliver Lei <hyleikids@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 9, 2025 7:59 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Please Fully Fund HCPSS in the FY26 Operating Budget

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

As a concerned parent, I urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

For years, HCPSS has faced chronic underfunding. This year alone, the school system needs an additional \$29.2 million just to maintain its current level of services. Without that funding, our community will face larger class sizes, the loss of valuable programs, and staff layoffs—all of which directly harm our children’s education and future.

It is unacceptable that our public schools are consistently the first target for budget cuts. Education is not optional—it is a foundational service that deserves protection and investment. Yet, the school system’s share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has fallen behind both historical levels and inflation.

I respectfully urge you to prioritize our students and restore full funding to HCPSS. Our children deserve nothing less.

Thank you for your service and attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,
HsiangYu Liu

(A mom of two kids at Northfield, with the 3rd one on the way to Northfield)

From: Huan Zhou <huan.z.us@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 9, 2025 1:35 PM
To: CouncilMail; Budget Testimony
Subject: Please Restore Full Funding to HCPSS for FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Members of the County Council,

I am writing as a concerned parent and resident of Howard County to urge you to fully restore funding to the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) in the FY26 budget.

Howard County's strength and appeal are deeply rooted in the quality of its public schools. Unfortunately, HCPSS has been underfunded for several years, and to maintain even a same-services budget next year, the school system requires at least \$29.2 million in additional funding.

Without this support, our students and educators will bear the consequences — larger class sizes, cuts to vital programs, and the loss of valued staff members. These reductions compromise the quality of education that our children receive. It is deeply concerning that, in times of fiscal pressure, education continues to be one of the first areas considered for cuts. Public education is a foundational service, not a discretionary expense.

Furthermore, updated investment reports suggest the county may have at least \$10 million more available than previously projected. Instead of allocating those funds to capital projects through PAYGO, I urge you to prioritize our schools and the well-being of the students and families they serve.

Our community's future depends on the strength of our public education system. Please do not allow our schools to suffer due to budgetary shortfalls that could be avoided.

Sincerely
Huan Zhou

From: snap@howardcountymd.gov
Sent: Monday, May 12, 2025 9:29 AM
To: Smith, Brenda; Anderson, Isaiah; Gelwicks, Colette; Respass, Charity
Subject: Case: CS0068017 – opened and unassigned



Case

Short Description: Support for HCPSS Operating Budget

Case Number: CS0068017

Case Opened: 05-12-2025

Constituent:

[VIEW CASE](#)

Details:

05-12-2025 09:28:43 AM EDT - Christiana Rigby Additional comments

From: Jacob Smith <jacob.smith1470@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 9, 2025 6:47 AM
To: CouncilMail <CouncilMail@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned [parent/teacher/resident] to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

Cutting GT programs is unacceptable. As someone who went through these programs, they were critical to my success as a student as well as in my career. Getting our future best and brightest kids in these programs is a success story for the student and the county. DO NOT CUT GT!

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,
Jacob Smith
9754 Michaels Way
Ellicott City, 21042

howardcountymd.gov



Ref:MSG6130241

From: Jim Braman <21042jim@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 9, 2025 6:43 PM
To: CouncilMail; Ball, Calvin
Subject: URGENT: Please fully fund HCPSS

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

To Whom It May Concern,

I am reaching out to express my strong concern regarding the potential shortfall in funding for the Howard County Public School System's operating budget next year. Without sufficient financial resources, our schools will face serious consequences, including teacher reductions, larger class sizes, and cutbacks in essential services.

Special education programs in Howard County are vital to ensuring that every student receives the personalized support they need to succeed, regardless of their learning challenges. These programs are not optional extras—they are fundamental to the success of students with diverse needs. If funding is reduced, children who rely on specialized instruction and crucial resources will be directly impacted, limiting their opportunities for growth and achievement. Protecting these programs must be a priority.

Another critical concern is the potential reduction of paraeducators, who play a key role in supporting teachers and providing students with more individualized attention. Teachers rely heavily on paraeducators to ensure that all students, especially those with additional learning needs, receive the help they require to thrive. Cutting paraeducator positions will only further strain teachers who are already managing overwhelming workloads, making it harder to maintain high-quality instruction for all students.

Class sizes are also an urgent issue. Many students are already learning in overcrowded classrooms, stretching teachers beyond capacity. Educators are facing overwhelming workloads, inadequate compensation, and an increasing departure from the profession. Larger class sizes mean less individualized attention, increased academic difficulties for students, and a decline in overall educational quality. If we allow this trend to continue, we will be failing our children—and they deserve better.

We must also safeguard Gifted & Talented (GT) programs, which provide advanced learners with the enrichment they need to reach their highest potential. Every child deserves access to a learning environment that nurtures their growth, whether through specialized assistance or advanced opportunities.

Fully funding our schools is not just about budget allocations—it is an investment in the future of our students and the strength of our community. We urge you to make education funding a priority so that

Howard County schools can continue to provide quality instruction, reasonable class sizes, and equitable opportunities for all students.

Let's work together to ensure that our schools remain a source of pride for our community.

Thank you for your time and attention to this critical issue.

Best,

James Braman

From: Jen Herson <jen.herson@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 9, 2025 3:45 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2M just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs - all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage the Howard County Public School System shares of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms of inflation.

My child currently attends ALL primary classes (not including related arts) in a trailer outside of his school that is filled with 30 kids. His teacher does his absolute best, but it is nearly impossible to meet every kid's needs now - what on earth will they do if you add more students and reduce staff? The time and attention each kid deserves to be successful is at risk. It has been proven time and again that a strong education and foundational knowledge builds all aspects of a community, including economic growth and overall life expectancy. These cuts are short-sighted and dangerous.

Thank you,

Jennifer Herson
Resident, District 6

From: Jigsa Duguma <jigsad@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, May 9, 2025 4:11 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: HCPSS 2026 Operating Budget

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council Members,

I am writing to you today as a deeply concerned parent and resident of Howard County to express my urgent plea for the full and equitable funding of the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) in the upcoming FY26 Operating Budget. The proposed budget, as it currently stands, falls drastically short of meeting the vital needs of our students and educators. The requested \$29.2 million is not simply a budgetary line item; it represents the critical resources necessary to maintain the current level of educational services. Without this funding, the consequences will be far-reaching and detrimental to the future of our community.

Years of underfunding have already stretched HCPSS resources to their breaking point. Further cuts will inevitably lead to a cascade of negative impacts, including, significantly increased class sizes hindering individualized attention and effective learning; the elimination or severe reduction of crucial enrichment programs, which foster their development; and, most distressingly, potential staff layoffs, resulting in a loss of experienced and dedicated educators who are essential to our children's academic success and well-being.

This is not merely about maintaining the status quo; it's about safeguarding the future. Education is the bedrock of a thriving community and a strong economy. To allow our schools to suffer from continued underfunding is to shortchange our children's potential and to jeopardize the long-term prosperity of our County. The fact that education is consistently the first area targeted for budget cuts is discouraging and reflects a misalignment of priorities. The percentage of the recurring General Fund Revenue allocated to HCPSS has demonstrably failed to keep pace with historical norms and pressure of inflation, leaving our schools increasingly vulnerable.

My child attends Northfield Elementary School, a school I know firsthand is already operating at maximum capacity. Any additional cuts will inflict irreparable harm on its students and staff. I implore you to prioritize the needs of our students and restore full funding to the HCPSS in the FY26 Operating Budget. The future of Howard County depends on it.

Sincerely,

Jigsa Duguma
District 1

From: joanna epstein <jepstein303@hotmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 9, 2025 11:12 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Please Fund the Budget

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a dedicated educator who has spent the past 28 years serving the students and families of Howard County as a GT Resource Teacher. Throughout my career, I've worked to challenge and support learners at all levels, earning a graduate degree and MSDE certificate in Gifted and Talented Education. I am currently pursuing National Board Certification to deepen my practice. My love for teaching and belief in the power of education have never wavered — but like many of my colleagues, I am growing increasingly concerned about the future of our schools.

HCPSS is facing a \$29.2 million shortfall just to maintain current services in the FY26 Operating Budget. Without this funding, we will see larger class sizes, the elimination of vital programs, and staff layoffs — devastating consequences that directly harm our students and weaken our schools.

Year after year, education is the first target when budgets tighten. This is unacceptable. Education is not a luxury — it is a core public service that deserves protection and investment. The share of recurring General Fund revenue allocated to HCPSS has not kept pace with inflation or historic norms, and the effects of that neglect are now impossible to ignore.

Our students, families, and educators deserve better. Please fully fund HCPSS in the FY26 Operating Budget and ensure that our schools remain strong, equitable, and supported.

Thank you for your attention and leadership.

Sincerely,
Joanna Epstein

From: snap@howardcountymd.gov
Sent: Monday, May 12, 2025 9:29 AM
To: Smith, Brenda; Anderson, Isaiah; Gelwicks, Colette; Respass, Charity
Subject: Case: CS0068025 – opened and unassigned



Case

Short Description: Support for HCPSS Operating Budget

Case Number: CS0068025

Case Opened: 05-12-2025

Constituent:

[VIEW CASE](#)

Details:

05-12-2025 09:28:50 AM EDT - Christiana Rigby Additional comments

From: John Hunsicker <john_hunsicker@hcpss.org>
Sent: Friday, May 9, 2025 10:21 AM
To: Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: One quick question from a HoCo educator

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

County Councilperson Christiana Rigby,

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council members,

Right now HCPSS is staring down a \$29 million hole in its budget that it cannot fill. County Executive Ball sent educators a list of reasons why he can't fully fund schools, but I still have one question for him and for the County Council:

What would you cut from HCPSS?

It's easy to cut school funding and leave the hard choices to the Board of Education. But if you think HCPSS should have no additional funding this year, then how much would you raise class size? Which programs would you eliminate? How many staff should be laid off? Should you freeze pay increases for educators during a teacher shortage?

If you can't, or won't answer those questions, then do the right thing and restore the funding that HCPSS students and educators deserve.

Thank you,
John Hunsicker

John Hunsicker
john_hunsicker@hcpss.org<mailto:john_hunsicker@hcpss.org>
428 Hardmoore Ct
Glen Burnie, Maryland 21061

howardcountymd.gov



Ref:MSG6130234

From: J Lee <jleex415@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 9, 2025 10:56 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs - all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

Investing in proper education for our children is of paramount importance which cannot be neglected by providing insufficient funds.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you.

Justine Ferrigan
Howard County Public School

From: Kelly Ulloa <kellyulloa79@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 9, 2025 11:39 AM
To: CouncilMail
Cc: boe@hcpss.org; bill_barnes@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of HCPSS's share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms or inflation.

Programs like music and the arts are not extras — they support cognitive development, mental health, and academic achievement. GT seminars challenge advanced learners and foster critical thinking. Paraeducators provide essential support for students with learning differences and behavioral needs, helping ensure equitable access to education. And smaller class sizes allow teachers to give each child the attention they deserve, improving outcomes across the board.

These are not luxuries. They are the foundation of a well-rounded, effective education system. Our children deserve better than a stripped-down version of what Howard County has historically promised.

Please prioritize students and restore full funding to HCPSS.

Sincerely,

Kelly Ulloa

From: Leslie Ammann <Leslie_Ammann@hcpss.org>
Sent: Friday, May 9, 2025 11:05 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Please Fund our Children's Education!

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I am writing as a concerned teacher AND parents in Howard County to urge you to restore full funding to the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) in the FY26 Operating Budget.

Over the past several years, HCPSS has been consistently underfunded. The other counties around us seem to have their budgets ready much earlier and are able to hire long before HCPSS. Instead, HCPSS plays games with staff and many of the same people find themselves on a possible chopping block EVERY year while also losing quality staff to other counties. Instead of eliminating tasks from our plate, we are then asked to do more as we watch our colleagues fall around us because their positions are removed. We are labeled as "the best", told we are appreciated, and put on a pedestal if our students perform well. Now, it's time to back it up with more than just lip service. We are shown that we do not in fact matter when we find ourselves in this same situation each year.

Are you willing to let HCPSS sacrifice more school-based staff, the people on the front lines WITH the students, when we are already understaffed, overworked, and underpaid? Which legacy are you going to choose to leave as a mark on this county?

This is my 20th year in HCPSS, a county that I cannot even afford to live in. I pay tuition for both of my own children to attend school in this county. My job is on the line next year because HCPSS has decided that it only takes 1 certified librarian to run a high school library for 1300-1600 students. If you do not fully fund the budget, students will miss out on critical research and information literacy instruction, books talks, on-demand tech support and triage, reading support for our most vulnerable learners, cross-curricular instruction, digital education supervision, and full access to a safe space. All staff services that we offer would have to be completely cut out. We are the only teachers in the building that are required to have a teaching certificate AND a master's degree in school library science. Other than admin., we are also the only staff in the building that serves the ENTIRE school community, not just the students.

Howard County's reputation for excellence is built on its schools, and it takes our entire community village to achieve it. I urge you to prioritize our students and schools by restoring the necessary funding to HCPSS. This game of finances and peoples' livelihoods is old and tired. We demand and deserve better!

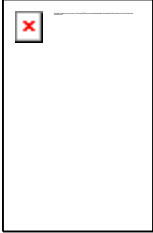
Thank you for your leadership and attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

Leslie Ammann
Library Media Specialist
Video Production Teacher
Mt. Hebron High School

410-313-2880

Currently Reading



Get your own email signature

From: Lindsay Howard <lindsayhoward@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 9, 2025 6:15 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Please help!

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.]

Copied the template letter below:

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs - all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public School System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

My child's school is already stretched thin. We can't afford more cuts.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you.

Lindsay Howard
District 1

From: Lori Lilly <llilly@howardecoworks.org>
Sent: Friday, May 9, 2025 2:59 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: EcoWorks FY26 budget support

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.]

My name is Lori Lilly and I am the Founder and Executive Director of Howard EcoWorks. EcoWorks engages and educates the community about environmental sustainability and restoration, while creating pathways to green jobs through our workforce development programs.

I regret that I cannot make the public meeting on May 12 and am submitting this written testimony instead.

I write to ask for your support for the County Executive's proposed budget for us in the FY26 Operating Budget.

The past year saw continued support to the County through implementation of debris management efforts under the Safe and Sound Plan, maintenance of County best management practices and stormwater structures, continued tree planting and pollinator garden installations in urban and underserved areas and the administration of multiple green jobs and green career exploration programs. We continued our partnership with the State Dept of Labor for a green infrastructure workforce development program and the Baltimore region's Climate Corps network. We partnered with the State Dept of Service and Civic Innovation to host two Climate Corps members. And we launched a new state partnership in 2025 with the MD Forest Service to continue engaging vulnerable communities in forest management efforts.

At EcoWorks, we have seen year-to-year increases in the number and acreage of best management practices that we are to manage without a concomitant increase in funding. When looking at this one metric alone without consideration of Safe and Sound support and other services that we provide to the County and community, the cost per acre of practices maintained has decreased by 22% from 2022 to 2025. While we are continuously looking for opportunities to increase the cost effectiveness of our work, we have requested an increase in our budget to account for the increasing workload and increasing costs of labor and materials needed to support maintenance of County facilities.

We are very disappointed in the recent actions of the federal administration, particularly the near elimination of the AmeriCorps program. EcoWorks had been developing an AmeriCorps program to serve the Central MD region, but our planning grant was terminated effective immediately on 4/25. We are exploring options through several state programs to potentially pivot and utilize those resources in a similar way – these conversations are currently ongoing. In the meantime, we remain grateful for your past support and commitments to Howard EcoWorks and for your consideration of our FY26 request.

--

Lori Lilly, CEP, CBLP
Founder & Executive Director
443-518-7666 (o)
443-936-8805 (c)

Join us at our annual [Soak It Up! event](#) on June 12, 2025!

From: Lymor Barnhard <lymor.ringer@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 9, 2025 1:45 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,
Lymor Barnhard
10316 Greenbriar Ct Ellicott City, MD

From: snap@howardcountymd.gov
Sent: Monday, May 12, 2025 9:29 AM
To: Smith, Brenda; Anderson, Isaiah; Gelwicks, Colette; Respass, Charity
Subject: Case: CS0068022 – opened and unassigned



Case

Short Description: Support for HCPSS Operating Budget

Case Number: CS0068022

Case Opened: 05-12-2025

Constituent:

[VIEW CASE](#)

Details:

05-12-2025 09:28:48 AM EDT - Christiana Rigby Additional comments

From: Mary Kate Tagliaferri <mary_tagliaferri@hcpss.org>
Sent: Friday, May 9, 2025 8:10 AM
To: Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: One quick question from a HoCo educator

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

County Councilperson Christiana Rigby,

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council members,

Right now HCPSS is staring down a \$29 million hole in its budget that it cannot fill. County Executive Ball sent educators a list of reasons why he can't fully fund schools, but I still have one question for him and for the County Council:

What would you cut from HCPSS?

It's easy to cut school funding and leave the hard choices to the Board of Education. But if you think HCPSS should have no additional funding this year, then how much would you raise class size? Which programs would you eliminate? How many staff should be laid off? Should you freeze pay increases for educators during a teacher shortage?

If you can't, or won't answer those questions, then do the right thing and restore the funding that HCPSS students and educators deserve.

Thank you,

Mary Kate Tagliaferri
mary_tagliaferri@hcpss.org<mailto:mary_tagliaferri@hcpss.org>
946 Piney Hill Rd
Monkton, Maryland 21111

howardcountymd.gov



Ref:MSG6130244

From: Melissa Porta <melissalynnh@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 9, 2025 9:00 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a deeply concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

My older son has ongoing attention deficit and executive functioning challenges that impact his daily routines and learning. His early elementary years were a struggle until he found his place in the GT program and the 3rd grade strings program offered at Manor Woods Elementary. More importantly, he found the extraordinary teachers who pour their energy into making these programs so impactful, giving him a sense of purpose and connection. They ignited a love of learning at a pivotal time in his education, and just as importantly, helped him build so much confidence. With this strong foundation, he's now set up to thrive throughout his future years in HCPSS.

Now, his younger brother is just entering the school system, and I'm devastated by the thought that he may not have the same opportunities in the next few years. His experience in Kindergarten has transformed him from an introverted and hesitant learner into a confident, outgoing student, thanks to the incredible support his classroom receives from our school's paraeducators. I witness their impact every time I visit his class - keeping students engaged, offering individualized attention, and creating a sense of safety and belonging that every young student deserves. It breaks my heart to imagine a Kindergarten classroom missing these invaluable resources. This is the kind of support we should be expanding, not dismantling.

As we renovate our Ellicott City home, we're paying a staggering \$54,000 in permit fees - **\$40,000 of which is a Public School Surcharge**. The size of the fee was shocking, but we accepted it, trusting that this substantial investment would help sustain the strength and quality of our public schools. Knowing that this surcharge increased by over 450% just 3 years ago, it's incredibly frustrating and confusing to see the school system facing budget threats year after year. How can such a massive investment in school infrastructure coexist with cuts to the programs that bring those buildings to life?

To say it's disheartening to see proposals to weaken the very programs that make our school system so strong - and so sought after - is an understatement. The impact on my two fairly typical children has been profound in just 5 years with HCPSS, yet we are only one small part of a much larger community that counts on these programs to lift up all learners. It is only a matter of time before residents turn elsewhere for quality education, relocating from the county we chose to raise our children, drawn by

its reputation for excellent public education. This will greatly affect my family's small business - the trickle-down effect is not something to be taken lightly.

We are counting on you to provide our children with the resources they deserve. Restore full funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,
Melissa Porta
District 5

From: Nathan Garrett <ngarre9430@inst.hcpss.org>
Sent: Friday, May 9, 2025 6:07 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: URGENT: DO NOT CUT THE BUDGET

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear HCPSS Council Members,

My name is Nathan Garrett, and I'm a 7th grader at Mount View Middle School. These cuts might seem like a financial benefit to you, but to us it means more, and so I hope you understand that we need to ensure that you don't cut the budget.

One major problem that is on the top of mind is reducing/cutting all Media Specialists. Media Specialists help us learn and navigate information in today's world. These educators inspire us to be critical thinkers and responsible users of information. Without them, many students will struggle to develop the skills we need for success in the future.

Furthermore, cutting para-educators is an enormous mistake. They are the unsung heroes in our classrooms, giving much needed help to students who need extra support. Without enough para-educators, the learning environment will suffer, and students who rely on this support could fall behind.

Eliminating dual enrollment programs is the third bad decision. Since dual enrollment means letting you get college credits in high school, taking away these opportunities will limit our chances to excel in higher education and achieve our goals.

I urge you to understand the consequences of these budget cuts. We are the students who will shape the future, and we need you to stand up for us. Cutting these vital programs will reflect poorly on the council's commitment to education.

Respectfully urging you to reconsider these budget cuts,
Nathan Garrett
7th Grade
Mount View Middle School

From: Paul H <myoldsmoky@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, May 9, 2025 11:31 AM
To: CouncilMail; Budget Testimony
Subject: Prioritize Our Schools — Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I am writing as a concerned parent and resident of Howard County to urge you to restore full funding to HCPSS for FY26.

Howard County's reputation for excellence is built on its schools. Over the past several years, HCPSS has been consistently underfunded. To maintain even a same-services budget, the school system needs at least \$29.2 million.

Without this funding, our community will face larger class sizes, reductions in essential programs, and layoffs of valued staff — all of which directly impact the quality of education for our students. It is troubling that when financial pressures arise, it is our schools that are first in line for service reductions. The school system should not be leading the way in cuts. Education is a core public service — not a luxury item to be scaled back.

Moreover, **recent investment reports suggest the county will have at least \$10 million more in available funds than currently projected.** Instead of shifting "extra" money into PAYGO projects, we should prioritize critical services like education. Our students, teachers, and schools should not be asked to sacrifice while funding is diverted elsewhere.

Sincerely,

Paul Huang

4905 Alice Ave
Ellicott City, MD 21043

From: Praveen Teegula <pteegula@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 9, 2025 10:36 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: FY26 Operating Budget for Howard County Public School System

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs - all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

My child's school is already stretched thin. We can't afford more cuts.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you.

Praveen Teegula
Howard County

From: Qiang Fu <fuqiang0316@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 9, 2025 7:07 PM
To: CouncilMail; Budget Testimony; Ball, Calvin
Subject: Prioritize Our Schools — Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

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 and Howard County Council,

I am writing as a concerned parent and resident of Howard County to urge you to restore full funding to HCPSS for FY26.

Howard County's reputation for excellence is built on its schools. Over the past several years, HCPSS has been consistently underfunded. To maintain even a same-services budget, the school system needs at least **\$29.2 million**.

Without this funding, our community will face larger class sizes, reductions in essential programs, and layoffs of valued staff — all of which directly impact the quality of education for our students. It is troubling that when financial pressures arise, it is our schools that are first in line for service reductions. The school system should not be leading the way in cuts. Education is a core public service — not a luxury item to be scaled back.

Moreover, **recent investment reports suggest the county will have at least \$10 million more in available funds than currently projected**. Instead of shifting "extra" money into PAYGO projects, we should prioritize critical services like education. Our students, teachers, and schools should not be asked to sacrifice while funding is diverted elsewhere.

Best Regards,

Qiang Fu

From: Rachel Thompson <rachelwthompson@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 9, 2025 12:52 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: FY26 Operating Budget

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs - all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

Some of the cuts proposed, including reducing elementary GT teachers and eliminating third grade strings, would have a direct impact on my children's educational experience. My son has absolutely loved his experience in 3rd grade strings, and the GT programming has provided needed enrichment for my children. Furthermore, with my youngest child starting kindergarten in the Fall, I am very concerned about what her experience will be like if class sizes are increased and teachers are stressed beyond their already overextended resources.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you.

Rachel Thompson
District 1

From: rashmi bista <rashmibista@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, May 9, 2025 10:54 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

Many talented and hard-working students will be deprived of the advanced level studies which they deserve. It will be very unfortunate for them.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,
Rashmi Pandey
Howard County

From: Shen Zhao <shen.yao.2015@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 9, 2025 5:14 PM
To: Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

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

I am writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) in the FY26 Operating Budget. This year, HCPSS needs an additional \$29.2 million just to maintain its current level of services. Without this funding, our schools will face larger class sizes, program cuts, and staff layoffs—all of which directly harm our children's education.

This is not a new issue. HCPSS has endured years of underfunding, and the cumulative effects are beginning to erode the quality of education that once made Howard County a model for others. The school system's share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept pace with inflation or with historic funding norms. As a result, we are now at a critical juncture.

It is unacceptable for education to be treated as optional when budget decisions get difficult. Public education is a core responsibility of the government, and it must be protected. Howard County's reputation for excellent schools is the foundation of its prosperity. Families move here because of the schools. Strong schools drive property values, fuel the local economy, and attract employers. Undermining public education undermines everything else.

My child's school is already stretched thin. We cannot afford to lose more teachers, counselors, or programs. The continued disinvestment is not just hurting students—it's weakening the long-term future of the entire county. Once the reputation of our school system is lost, it will be extraordinarily difficult to rebuild.

I respectfully urge you to restore full funding to HCPSS in FY26. Please prioritize our students and invest in the future of Howard County.

Thank you for your time and leadership.

Sincerely,

Shen Zhao

Parent of Centennial Lane ES, District 1

From: Shiowei Cheng <shio.the.way@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 9, 2025 9:49 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Fund HCPSS

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs - all of which hurt our students and families.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

Howard County has a reputation for having one of the best school districts in the state. It is shameful that budgetary cuts are being considered which will inevitably be a stain on this reputation. My children have greatly benefited from GT programs and 3rd grade strings, and if these programs are cut due to budget restraints, school will become less of a place for learning and educational exploration. My neighbors are concerned about the dilapidated, outdated buildings their children will be going to when entering middle and high school. If Howard County wants to continue being seen as a place that values education and investing in the next generation, this underfunding needs to be addressed.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you.

Shiowei Cheng
District 1

From: Shirley Nan <shirleynan2017@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 9, 2025 4:25 PM
To: Jung, Debra
Cc: CouncilMail; Ball, Calvin; Cc: Shashank Patel; Daniel Diep; pankajpatil80@gmail.com; Anu Prabhala; yang.yang.fda@gmail.com; sriprasadmmba@gmail.com
Subject: Re: Support Fiscally Responsible Alternative to Redistricting

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 Councilmember Jung,

On behalf of the Centennial Overlook community, we sincerely thank you for your kind reply and your willingness to elevate our concerns during your upcoming discussions with the Board of Education.

We fully understand that the County Council does not have direct authority over redistricting decisions or Pre-K program placement, **which makes your support all the more meaningful**. Your openness to hearing from residents and amplifying community-driven, fiscally responsible solutions—such as the relocation of Pre-K programs—gives us hope that collaborative and practical approaches can still be pursued.

Support from you and the Council for the [proposed Pre-K adjustment plan](#) is **especially urgent in light of HCPSS's recent insistence on displacing current K–12 students through redistricting to create space for anticipated Pre-K expansion by 2035**. If adopted, this approach would disrupt established communities by prioritizing future Pre-K students—many of whom are not yet born—over the immediate needs of students currently enrolled in our schools. It is clear that HCPSS must adopt more practical, student-centered policies that prioritize the well-being of today's learners.

We have reattached our [earlier correspondence to HCPSS](#), which directly addresses—and **refutes with facts and data**—the arguments previously used to dismiss Pre-K adjustment as a viable alternative to redistricting.

We would be **honored to welcome you or any interested County Council member** for a brief visit to our neighborhood at your convenience. It would be a wonderful opportunity to meet in person, hear directly from local families, and see the strong sense of community that has motivated our advocacy efforts.

Thank you again for your public service and thoughtful engagement on issues that affect the daily lives of families across our county.

Warm regards,
Centennial Overlook Community

On Wed, May 7, 2025 at 1:33 PM Jung, Debra <djung@howardcountymd.gov> wrote:

Thank you for sharing your comments and suggestions with the County Council. While the County Council does not have any purview over redistricting scenarios or placement of Pre-K programs, we can certainly elevate these discussions during an upcoming meeting with the Board of Education.

Deb Jung
Councilmember, District 4
3430 Court House Dr., Ellicott City, MD 21043
(410) 313-2001

Sign-up for Deb's District Update [here](#).

From: Shirley Nan <shirleynan2017@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 4, 2025 10:58 AM
To: Ball, Calvin <cball@howardcountymd.gov>; CouncilMail <CouncilMail@howardcountymd.gov>
Cc: Shashank Patel <shashankspatel@gmail.com>; Daniel Diep <dandiep.mtl@gmail.com>; pankajpatil80@gmail.com <pankajpatil80@gmail.com>; Anu Prabhala <prabhala.anu@gmail.com>; yang.yang.fda@gmail.com <yang.yang.fda@gmail.com>; sriprasadmiba@gmail.com <sriprasadmiba@gmail.com>
Subject: Support Fiscally Responsible Alternative to Redistricting

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

Dear County Executive Ball and Members of the County Council,

On behalf of the Centennial Overlook community in Ellicott City, we are writing to express our deep concern about the [redistricting plan](#) announced by the Howard County Board of Education on February 13, 2025. Intended to address overcrowding at Centennial Lane and Bryant Woods elementary schools, the plan would redraw boundaries for up to 11 schools with a combined enrollment of approximately 7,300 students—**threatening to disrupt established communities and incur substantial increase in transportation costs.**

Our community, along with many others, has raised serious concerns about the disruptive nature of this plan, especially amid ongoing fiscal uncertainty and social strain. Residents have put forward more cost-effective and less disruptive alternatives, yet these solutions have been **repeatedly dismissed** by HCPSS without adequate justification.

Relocating Pre-K Programs at CLES and BWES

One proposal that has received widespread community support is [Strategic Adjustments to Select Pre-K Locations as an Alternative to Disruptive Redistricting](#). This plan highlights that the most urgent and practical solution to overcrowding at CLES and BWES is the relocation of their Pre-K programs. Data indicate that the addition of Pre-K classes is a primary factor driving overutilization at both schools—the very condition prompting the current redistricting proposal under Policy 6010.

This approach offers clear advantages:

- **Cost Efficiency:** Adjusting Pre-K locations does not require additional transportation costs, whereas redistricting could lead to millions in new transportation expenses—an unsustainable burden given the current budget challenges.
- **Immediate Relief:** If implemented by the 2025–2026 school year, this change would proactively address overcrowding, while any relief from attendance area adjustments would not take effect until the 2026–2027 school year.
- **Minimal Disruption:** This solution avoids unnecessary upheaval for K–12 students, sparing them the disruption and psychological stress often accompanying redistricting.
- **Community Support:** There is strong community support for this proposal, reflecting a shared interest in practical, student-centered solutions.

Pre-K programs are established in public schools according to the vision of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. However, **the Blueprint supports a flexible approach** to Pre-K placement—prioritizing the use of schools with available capacity, investing in dedicated Pre-K centers, and expanding access through a mixed-delivery model that includes both public and private providers. **Displacing tightly knit communities to accommodate Pre-K programs is neither consistent with this vision nor aligned with HCPSS Policy 6010.**

Preserving Walker Zones to Save Costs and Strengthen Communities

Additionally, we expressed concern about the Board's **repeated reversal of Policy 5200** through its decision to reduce school walker zones—an action that will impose a recurring cost of \$1.2 million per year. While some vocal parents and community members have advocated for this change, many families and neighborhoods strongly support maintaining the current walker zones, which is the **only fiscally responsible option** given the current budget crisis. Beyond the clear cost savings, preserving walkability promotes student health and well-being, increases participation in after-school activities, and strengthens neighborhood connections.

We urge you, as leaders of our county, to:

- **Support a more sensible and cost-effective approach to addressing school overcrowding** by guiding the Superintendent and the Office of School Planning to thoroughly evaluate the relocation of Pre-K programs as a viable alternative to costly and disruptive redistricting—**either in advance of or as part of the June feasibility study.**
- **Advocate for the preservation of current walker zones**, a fiscally responsible measure that reduces transportation costs, promotes student well-being, and helps strengthen neighborhood communities.

Amid mass federal layoffs and significant cuts to education funding, Howard County residents deserve leadership that prioritizes fiscal responsibility and community cohesion in these challenging times. It is becoming increasingly clear that HCPSS will not pursue these priorities without direct action from the County Executive and County Council.

For your reference, we have attached a recent letter and accompanying slide deck with supporting data, submitted to the Office of School Planning. The letter urges consideration of targeted Pre-K location adjustments as a sensible alternative to costly and disruptive redistricting. We have also attached a slide deck with information about our community. If the attachments do not come through, you can access them from the following links.

[Letter to OSP](#)
[Plan for Pre-K Adjustment](#)
[About Our Community](#)

Warm regards,
Centennial Overlook Community

From: snap@howardcountymd.gov
Sent: Monday, May 12, 2025 9:31 AM
To: Smith, Brenda; Anderson, Isaiah; Gelwicks, Colette; Respass, Charity
Subject: Case: CS0068038 – opened and unassigned



Case

Short Description: Support for HCPSS Operating Budget

Case Number: CS0068038

Case Opened: 05-12-2025

Constituent:

[VIEW CASE](#)

Details:

05-12-2025 09:30:15 AM EDT - Christiana Rigby Additional comments

From: Stuart Irby <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Friday, May 9, 2025 2:18 PM
To: Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: One quick question about our School budget

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

County Councilperson Christiana Rigby,

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council members,

Right now HCPSS is staring down a \$29 million hole in its budget that it cannot fill. County Executive Ball sent educators a list of reasons why he can't fully fund schools, but I still have one question for him and for the County Council:

What would you cut from HCPSS?

It's easy to cut school funding and leave the hard choices to the Board of Education. But if you think HCPSS should have no additional funding this year, then how much would you raise class size? Which programs would you eliminate? How many staff should be laid off? Should you freeze pay increases for educators during a teacher shortage?

If you can't, or won't answer those questions, then do the right thing and restore the funding that HCPSS students and educators deserve.

Thank you,

Stuart Irby
silenceisconsent@verizon.net<mailto:silenceisconsent@verizon.net>
6145 Waiting Spg
Columbia, Maryland 21045

howardcountymd.gov



Ref:MSG6130304

From: Tigist Kelkay <m.tigist@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 9, 2025 9:46 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Prioritize Our Schools: Fully Fund HCPSS

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent and an active member of our community to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) in the FY26 Operating Budget. As a parent, I've seen firsthand how a well-supported school system can inspire, educate, and empower our children. But I've also seen the challenges that arise when funding falls short—impacting teachers' ability to provide personalized instruction and limiting opportunities for our students to thrive.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

As a parent, I believe every child deserves access to quality education, and I know our community can and should do better. Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,
Tigist Kelkay
Ellicott City, District 1

From: snap@howardcountymd.gov
Sent: Monday, May 12, 2025 9:33 AM
To: Smith, Brenda; Anderson, Isaiah; Gelwicks, Colette; Respass, Charity
Subject: Case: CS0068044 – opened and unassigned



Case

Short Description: Support for HCPSS Operating Budget

Case Number: CS0068044

Case Opened: 05-12-2025

Constituent:

[VIEW CASE](#)

Details:

05-12-2025 09:32:59 AM EDT - Christiana Rigby Additional comments

From: Tracy Stansbury <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Friday, May 9, 2025 3:41 PM
To: Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: One quick question about our School budget

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

County Councilperson Christiana Rigby,

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council members,

Please fully fund the HCPSS budget. The school system is the reason why people move to this county. Please keep our school system progressive and one of the best in the country.

Right now HCPSS is staring down a \$29 million hole in its budget that it cannot fill. County Executive Ball sent educators a list of reasons why he can't fully fund schools, but I still have one question for him and for the County Council:

What would you cut from HCPSS?

It's easy to cut school funding and leave the hard choices to the Board of Education. But if you think HCPSS should have no additional funding this year, then how much would you raise class size? Which programs would you eliminate? How many staff should be laid off? Should you freeze pay increases for educators during a teacher shortage?

If you can't, or won't answer those questions, then do the right thing and restore the funding that HCPSS students and educators deserve.

Thank you,

Tracy Stansbury
tracy.stansbury@gmail.com<mailto:tracy.stansbury@gmail.com>
4612 E. Leisure Ct
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

howardcountymd.gov



Ref:MSG6130345

From: Kelly Huang <tzufeng.huang@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 9, 2025 2:17 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned [parent/teacher/resident] to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

My child's school, Manor Woods Elementary, is already stretched thin. We can't afford more cuts.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,
Tzufeng Huang
Turf Valley Overlook in Ellicott city

From: Bethann Ritter Snyder <britte19@hotmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, May 10, 2025 11:23 AM
To: Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail; CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov
Subject: Fully fund HCPSS for FY26
Attachments: Request to CE & Council to fund FY26 HCPSS Budget.docx

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Please see attached. Thank you.

May 10, 2025

Dear Howard County Council & County Executive Ball:

I am a community member and parent in ElkrIDGE, with two young children in Howard County Public Schools. I am writing to you today to ask you to fully fund the Board of Education's FY26 operating budget request as a Mother's Day gift to ALL of the mothers, grandmothers, and mother-figures in our community. Fund our schools to give our children a better future.

Superintendent Barnes described his proposed FY26 Operating Budget as a same services request, asking only for more special education staff, moderate staff compensation markers, and additional security assistants. After listening to the people of Howard County – your constituents – the Board of Education added funding for athletic trainers and instructional team leaders on top of what the superintendent proposed. The BOE's FY26 request is grounded in essential services with rock solid justification for every dollar. It is not aspirational nor is it extravagant. It is what the community needs to grow and thrive and what HCPSS – our CHILDREN – deserve.

The request that the BOE made to the County Executive is the direct result of effective constituent advocacy and encouragement for them to ask for what they'd need in order to provide the high-quality education our county's children deserve. The BOE's budget request would return HCPSS to receiving around 59% of the county's budget, the level it last received in 2019 (which was low by historical standards, as the share was 60% or more in the early teens). The massively reduced budget proposed by the County Executive would fund HCPSS at a historically low 56% of the county budget, showing a lack of care for our children. That proposal is a disservice to the children of our county and a slap in the face to our educators, asking all of them to deal with reduced services, instruction, and even larger class sizes. You can do better.

Howard County wants to be seen as a place where everyone is welcome and valued. We like to talk about valuing equity and ensuring our youth have opportunities. If the County Executive and Council fund the full FY26 HCPSS budget proposed by the BOE, it means HCPSS can maintain current class sizes and retain opportunities for students to develop executive function skills, logical & critical thinking, public speaking, group work, and so much more. Studies have shown that 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. I've seen that with my own children, as learning to read music and play the viola unlocked their ability to read books, a skill they had struggled with for

years. Thanks to learning the viola in 3rd grade, my child went from struggling to read picture books and simple graphic novels to now joyously reading Harry Potter or Narnia books as a 4th grader. We should ensure that all of our students – our children – have access to these types of programs that unlock the joy of learning like it has for my child.

I frequently see complaints in community groups on social media about youth having nothing to do after school; the Mall in Columbia has even imposed restrictions on youth in the mall. But the programs the BOE would likely cut if you don't fully fund their FY26 budget request are just the sort of programs to engage kids in productive activities. We should be expanding these opportunities – programs like theater and debate and Model UN that are provided through the schools - because that is the one place kids can definitely get to every day.

I and many others in the community believe there is enough room in the budget. Howard County has the funding for the school system. Possible sources above tax revenue include the larger- than-budgeted earnings from investment funds, which are currently outpacing both the FY25 budgeted amount and FY26 projections. Further, you have the ability to impose fees on developers who are looking to place more stress on our school system with the developments they have planned. Increase their fees so we can maintain quality schools. Members of our community have also noticed that the SAAC estimates of additional revenue are extremely conservative and have created wide gaps in actual earned revenue, which turns into Pay Go money and does not prioritize the school system.

Last year, HCPSS experienced staff reductions and program cuts. Class sizes got bigger, and teachers had to do more with less – limits were even placed on how much paper teachers could use and subscriptions for electronic resources (ebooks for classroom use and other electronic learning tools) were cut. We are counting on Council's leadership in these uncertain times to do what is necessary to maintain excellence and prevent class size increases and staff reductions from happening again this year. We ask that you show us your commitment to our public schools by fully funding the HCPSS FY26 operating budget.

Sincerely,

Bethann Snyder
Elkridge Resident and HCPSS Parent

From: Brittany Jacobs <brittanyplaysviola@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, May 10, 2025 10:17 PM
To: CouncilMail; Budget Testimony
Subject: Fully Fund HCPSS Budget

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear County Council members,

Here in Howard County we are once again facing a budget crisis. As a parent of an elementary-aged child in our school system, I am deeply concerned about the shortfalls in funding for HCPSS. My husband and I chose to live and raise our child in Howard County because of its excellent school system, where our child can experience programs and opportunities we did not have during our PreK-12 educations. We cannot have the best education for the children of Howard County if we do not invest in it. The Board of Education is proposing numerous cuts that would disproportionately impact our youngest learners. I implore you to fully fund the HCPSS budget to prevent these cuts from occurring, and to allow the children of Howard County to have the best public education possible.

Respectfully,

Brittany Jacobs

Sent from my iPhone

From: Carol Eckstein <cceckstein@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, May 10, 2025 3:45 PM
To: Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail
Subject: funding our schools!

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council Members

As you work together with the Board of Education to close the gap for the HCPSS FY26 Operating Budget, understand that students, parents, and all county residents rely upon maintaining the excellence of Howard County schools many people move here for.

We would like to respond County Executive Ball's memo sent on May 8th which suggested HCPSS use their budget in a different way so that more than 222 positions won't be cut from the FY26 school budget. We appreciate the need for transparency and dialogue in order to use County funds more efficiently and we emphasize the County's role in obtaining the necessary funding to avoid a second year of class size increase, program cuts, and extensive firings.

We agree on the following steps for HCPSS:

- HCPSS should use the health fund surplus as long as county guarantees future support if required
- HCPSS General Fund Balance should be used if greater than 1% recommended balance specified by HCPSS policy
- HCPSS investment income may be available, although likely less than last year due to less funds available for investment

We urge the county to continue partnering with HCPSS by doing the following:

- Increase County conservative estimate of investment income and direct surplus to HCPSS.
- Review County salary growth (27% since 2018, compared to teachers 17%) and reduce if needed to allow HCPSS teachers to catch up to other county colleagues.
- Consider the recent history of record surplus revenue, and Pay Go funds being used repeatedly for some programs. Current investment fund report notes that fund balance is approximately \$200M above expected level for FY25. Whether through additional revenue or additional sacrifice, we expect that support for HCPSS will allow for continuance of current programs and staffing levels.

We must balance fiscal responsibility for the future and our children's educational needs today. Drawing down the surplus health fund balances increases shortage risks in the future which the county will have to cover. HCPSS General fund balance dropping below 1% risks requiring additional appropriations like the county is voting on this month (5.5M to HCPSS to cover unexpected additional cost in CR88-2025).

No one can predict the future – but overly conservative estimates of investment income come at its own opportunity cost. Costs like increased class sizes for the second year in a row, 48% reduction in Elementary school gifted and talented program and 3rd grade strings. Teachers can't withstand another increase in workload. Students can't withstand losing even more teachers from each school and some classrooms cannot physically fit one more desk in the room.

We ask the County to prioritize residents' commitment to their own educational needs.

Thank you,
Carol Eckstein
2618 Melba Rd.

From: Carrie Wilson Stockwell <carrielynn@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, May 10, 2025 9:32 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Prioritize Our Schools — Restore Full Funding to HCPSS

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I am writing as a concerned parent and citizen in Howard County to urge you to restore funding to the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) in the FY26 Operating Budget.

Howard County attracts numerous families, including ours, to start and raise families here precisely because of the excellent public schools. We are both proud to support the local public schools, and grateful for the wonderful and nurturing environment it provides for our children. We strongly urge you to keep this virtuous cycle strong for the future of our county, to continue to invest in our schools and keep attracting families who support and value public education.

Over the past several years, HCPSS has been consistently underfunded. HCPSS needs at least an additional \$29.2 million to keep our current level of services. Without any additional funding, our community will face larger class sizes, reductions in programs, and layoffs of valued teachers and staff -- all of which negatively impact the quality of education for our students and hurt our community. HCPSS is one of the main reasons families move to Howard County. The school system should not be leading the way in cuts. Education is a core public service — not a luxury item to be scaled back. An investment in our public schools is an investment that pays back in dividends and makes Howard County stronger.

As a parent of three children in HCPSS, I see firsthand how the resources here help our students and community succeed. For our family, the GT teachers have made an immense difference in their lives. My children aren't too enthusiastic about school, however they love their GT teachers and come alive with excitement about the topics they get to learn - showing that these teachers are providing exactly the kind of challenge they need and creating something they can connect with in their school community.

Howard County's reputation for excellence is built on its schools. I urge you to prioritize our students and schools by restoring the necessary funding to HCPSS.

Thank you for your leadership and attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,
Carrie Stockwell

14600 Monticello Dr
Cooksville MD 21723
219.688.7023

From: snap@howardcountymd.gov
Sent: Monday, May 12, 2025 9:44 AM
To: Smith, Brenda; Anderson, Isaiah; Gelwicks, Colette; Respass, Charity
Subject: Case: CS0068059 – opened and unassigned



Case

Short Description: Support for HCPSS Operating Budget

Case Number: CS0068059

Case Opened: 05-12-2025

Constituent:

[VIEW CASE](#)

Details:

05-12-2025 09:43:37 AM EDT - Christiana Rigby Additional comments

From: Danielle Affinito <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Saturday, May 10, 2025 12:55 PM
To: Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: One quick question about our School budget

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

County Councilperson Christiana Rigby,

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council members,

Right now HCPSS is staring down a \$29 million hole in its budget that it cannot fill. County Executive Ball sent educators a list of reasons why he can't fully fund schools, but I still have one question for him and for the County Council:

What would you cut from HCPSS?

It's easy to cut school funding and leave the hard choices to the Board of Education. But if you think HCPSS should have no additional funding this year, then how much would you raise class size? Which programs would you eliminate? How many staff should be laid off? Should you freeze pay increases for educators during a teacher shortage?

If you can't, or won't answer those questions, then do the right thing and restore the funding that HCPSS students and educators deserve.

Thank you,

Danielle Affinito
dannyaффinito@gmail.com<mailto:dannyaффinito@gmail.com>
7992 Millstream Court
Elkridge, Maryland 21075

howardcountymd.gov



Ref:MSG6130460

From: snap@howardcountymd.gov
Sent: Monday, May 12, 2025 9:58 AM
To: Smith, Brenda; Anderson, Isaiah; Gelwicks, Colette; Respass, Charity
Subject: Case: CS0068101 – opened and unassigned



Case

Short Description: Support for HCPSS Operating Budget

Case Number: CS0068101

Case Opened: 05-12-2025

Constituent:

[VIEW CASE](#)

Details:

05-12-2025 09:57:10 AM EDT - Christiana Rigby Additional comments

From: Dayana Bordon <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Saturday, May 10, 2025 6:46 PM
To: Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: One quick question about our School budget

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

County Councilperson Christiana Rigby,

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council members,

Right now HCPSS is staring down a \$29 million hole in its budget that it cannot fill. County Executive Ball sent educators a list of reasons why he can't fully fund schools, but I still have one question for him and for the County Council:

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If you can't, or won't answer those questions, then do the right thing and restore the funding that HCPSS students and educators deserve.

Thank you,

Dayana Bordon
dayanagmadrid@outlook.com<mailto:dayanagmadrid@outlook.com>
6401 Frothingham CT
Elkridge , Maryland 21075

howardcountymd.gov



Ref:MSG6130679

From: snap@howardcountymd.gov
Sent: Monday, May 12, 2025 9:45 AM
To: Smith, Brenda; Anderson, Isaiah; Gelwicks, Colette; Respass, Charity
Subject: Case: CS0068058 – opened and unassigned



Case

Short Description: Support for HCPSS Operating Budget

Case Number: CS0068058

Case Opened: 05-12-2025

Constituent:

[VIEW CASE](#)

Details:

05-12-2025 09:43:37 AM EDT - Christiana Rigby Additional comments

From: Douglas Odom <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Saturday, May 10, 2025 11:16 AM
To: Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: One quick question about our School budget

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

County Councilperson Christiana Rigby,

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council members,

Right now HCPSS is staring down a \$29 million hole in its budget that it cannot fill. County Executive Ball sent educators a list of reasons why he can't fully fund schools, but I still have one question for him and for the County Council:

What would you cut from HCPSS?

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If you can't, or won't answer those questions, then do the right thing and restore the funding that HCPSS students and educators deserve.

Thank you,

Douglas Odom
daodom7@yahoo.com<mailto:daodom7@yahoo.com>
10309 Wesleigh Drive
Columbia, Maryland 21046

howardcountymd.gov



Ref:MSG6130477

From: snap@howardcountymd.gov
Sent: Monday, May 12, 2025 9:58 AM
To: Smith, Brenda; Anderson, Isaiah; Gelwicks, Colette; Respass, Charity
Subject: Case: CS0068106 – opened and unassigned



Case

Short Description: Support for HCPSS Operating Budget

Case Number: CS0068106

Case Opened: 05-12-2025

Constituent:

[VIEW CASE](#)

Details:

05-12-2025 09:57:14 AM EDT - Christiana Rigby Additional comments

From: Grace Torres <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Saturday, May 10, 2025 5:08 PM
To: Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: One quick question about our School budget

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

County Councilperson Christiana Rigby,

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council members,

Right now HCPSS is staring down a \$29 million hole in its budget that it cannot fill. County Executive Ball sent educators a list of reasons why he can't fully fund schools, but I still have one question for him and for the County Council:

What would you cut from HCPSS?

It's easy to cut school funding and leave the hard choices to the Board of Education. But if you think HCPSS should have no additional funding this year, then how much would you raise class size? Which programs would you eliminate? How many staff should be laid off? Should you freeze pay increases for educators during a teacher shortage?

If you can't, or won't answer those questions, then do the right thing and restore the funding that HCPSS students and educators deserve.

Thank you,

Grace Torres

graciela_torres22@hotmail.com<mailto:graciela_torres22@hotmail.com>

6210 greenblade Garth

Columbia , Maryland 21045

howardcountymd.gov



Ref:MSG6130703

From: snap@howardcountymd.gov
Sent: Monday, May 12, 2025 9:45 AM
To: Smith, Brenda; Anderson, Isaiah; Gelwicks, Colette; Respass, Charity
Subject: Case: CS0068061 – opened and unassigned



Case

Short Description: Support for HCPSS Operating Budget

Case Number: CS0068061

Case Opened: 05-12-2025

Constituent:

[VIEW CASE](#)

Details:

05-12-2025 09:43:39 AM EDT - Christiana Rigby Additional comments

From: Jala Atufa <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Saturday, May 10, 2025 12:57 PM
To: Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: One quick question about our School budget

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

County Councilperson Christiana Rigby,

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council members,

Right now HCPSS is staring down a \$29 million hole in its budget that it cannot fill. County Executive Ball sent educators a list of reasons why he can't fully fund schools, but I still have one question for him and for the County Council:

What would you cut from HCPSS?

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If you can't, or won't answer those questions, then do the right thing and restore the funding that HCPSS students and educators deserve.

Thank you,

Jala Atufa
jalaty824@gmail.com<mailto:jalaty824@gmail.com>
13000 Key St
Beltsville, Maryland 20705

howardcountymd.gov



Ref:MSG6130479

From: snap@howardcountymd.gov
Sent: Monday, May 12, 2025 9:58 AM
To: Smith, Brenda; Anderson, Isaiah; Gelwicks, Colette; Respass, Charity
Subject: Case: CS0068099 – opened and unassigned



Case

Short Description: Support for HCPSS Operating Budget

Case Number: CS0068099

Case Opened: 05-12-2025

Constituent:

[VIEW CASE](#)

Details:

05-12-2025 09:57:07 AM EDT - Christiana Rigby Additional comments

From: Kathleen Protokowicz <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Saturday, May 10, 2025 6:52 PM
To: Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: One quick question about our School budget

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

County Councilperson Christiana Rigby,

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council members,

Right now HCPSS is staring down a \$29 million hole in its budget that it cannot fill. County Executive Ball sent educators a list of reasons why he can't fully fund schools, but I still have one question for him and for the County Council:

What would you cut from HCPSS?

It's easy to cut school funding and leave the hard choices to the Board of Education. But if you think HCPSS should have no additional funding this year, then how much would you raise class size? Which programs would you eliminate? How many staff should be laid off? Should you freeze pay increases for educators during a teacher shortage?

If you can't, or won't answer those questions, then do the right thing and restore the funding that HCPSS students and educators deserve.

Thank you,

Kathleen Protokowicz
clkatyyp@aol.com<mailto:clkatyyp@aol.com>
10436 hickory ridge road
Columbia, Maryland 21044

howardcountymd.gov



Ref:MSG6130689

From: snap@howardcountymd.gov
Sent: Monday, May 12, 2025 9:58 AM
To: Smith, Brenda; Anderson, Isaiah; Gelwicks, Colette; Respass, Charity
Subject: Case: CS0068103 – opened and unassigned



Case

Short Description: Support for HCPSS Operating Budget

Case Number: CS0068103

Case Opened: 05-12-2025

Constituent:

[VIEW CASE](#)

Details:

05-12-2025 09:57:12 AM EDT - Christiana Rigby Additional comments

From: Korin Ford <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Saturday, May 10, 2025 7:15 PM
To: Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: One quick question about our School budget

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

County Councilperson Christiana Rigby,

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council members,

Right now HCPSS is staring down a \$29 million hole in its budget that it cannot fill. County Executive Ball sent educators a list of reasons why he can't fully fund schools, but I still have one question for him and for the County Council:

What would you cut from HCPSS?

It's easy to cut school funding and leave the hard choices to the Board of Education. But if you think HCPSS should have no additional funding this year, then how much would you raise class size? Which programs would you eliminate? How many staff should be laid off? Should you freeze pay increases for educators during a teacher shortage?

If you can't, or won't answer those questions, then do the right thing and restore the funding that HCPSS students and educators deserve.

Thank you,

Korin Ford
korin.m.ford@gmail.com<mailto:korin.m.ford@gmail.com>
11 Guild Hall Ct
Windsor Mill, Maryland 21244

howardcountymd.gov



Ref:MSG6130702

From: Leyla Abdella <alyel63@yahoo.com>
Sent: Saturday, May 10, 2025 6:26 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

•

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned [parent/teacher/resident] to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

My child's school is already stretched thin. We can't afford more cuts.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,

Leyla Abdella

Ellicott city MD

•

From: Lulu Dang <luludangumd@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, May 10, 2025 12:09 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Fwd: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I am writing as a deeply concerned parent and community member to strongly urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) in the FY26 Operating Budget. Our schools are at a critical juncture, and your leadership in restoring and safeguarding their funding is more important than ever.

Over the past several years, HCPSS has endured persistent underfunding. This year, the school system faces a \$29.2 million shortfall just to sustain current services. Without this critical funding, we are looking at increased class sizes, reduced academic and extracurricular programs, and the potential for staff reductions — all of which will directly harm the quality of education and support our children receive.

As a parent, I already see the strain on my child's school — from limited instructional resources to overextended teachers and staff. Further cuts would only deepen these challenges, undermining our students' learning environment and overall well-being.

It is unacceptable that education is among the first areas to face cuts when budgets tighten. Our schools should be among the last. Education is not a luxury — it is a fundamental public service that shapes the future of our community and county. The share of recurring General Fund Revenue allocated to HCPSS has not kept pace with historic norms, inflation, or the growing needs of our student population.

I also urge the Council to examine all possible revenue sources and spending priorities to help close the gap. For example, there may be additional flexibility in the county's investment income that could be used to support public education without compromising other services.

Fully funding our schools is not just an investment in students — it is an investment in the strength, prosperity, and long-term vitality of Howard County.

Please prioritize our students, teachers, and families by restoring full funding to HCPSS in the FY26 budget.

Thank you for your time, service, and consideration.

Sincerely,

Lulu

Centennial Lane Elementary School, District 1

From: snap@howardcountymd.gov
Sent: Monday, May 12, 2025 9:45 AM
To: Smith, Brenda; Anderson, Isaiah; Gelwicks, Colette; Respass, Charity
Subject: Case: CS0068073 – opened and unassigned



Case

Short Description: Support for HCPSS Operating Budget

Case Number: CS0068073

Case Opened: 05-12-2025

Constituent:

[VIEW CASE](#)

Details:

05-12-2025 09:43:48 AM EDT - Christiana Rigby Additional comments

From: Marissa Scharf <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Saturday, May 10, 2025 3:00 PM
To: Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: One quick question about our School budget

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

County Councilperson Christiana Rigby,

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council members,

Right now HCPSS is staring down a \$29 million hole in its budget that it cannot fill. County Executive Ball sent educators a list of reasons why he can't fully fund schools, but I still have one question for him and for the County Council:

What would you cut from HCPSS?

It's easy to cut school funding and leave the hard choices to the Board of Education. But if you think HCPSS should have no additional funding this year, then how much would you raise class size? Which programs would you eliminate? How many staff should be laid off? Should you freeze pay increases for educators during a teacher shortage?

If you can't, or won't answer those questions, then do the right thing and restore the funding that HCPSS students and educators deserve.

Thank you,

Marissa Scharf
mschar2624@gmail.com<mailto:mschar2624@gmail.com>
6426 Frothingham Ct
Elkridge, Maryland 21075

howardcountymd.gov



Ref:MSG6130493

From: snap@howardcountymd.gov
Sent: Monday, May 12, 2025 9:45 AM
To: Smith, Brenda; Anderson, Isaiah; Gelwicks, Colette; Respass, Charity
Subject: Case: CS0068068 – opened and unassigned



Case

Short Description: Support for HCPSS Operating Budget

Case Number: CS0068068

Case Opened: 05-12-2025

Constituent:

[VIEW CASE](#)

Details:

05-12-2025 09:43:44 AM EDT - Christiana Rigby Additional comments

From: Mark Ramey <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Saturday, May 10, 2025 12:55 PM
To: Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: One quick question about our School budget

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

County Councilperson Christiana Rigby,

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council members,

Right now HCPSS is staring down a \$29 million hole in its budget that it cannot fill. County Executive Ball sent educators a list of reasons why he can't fully fund schools, but I still have one question for him and for the County Council:

What would you cut from HCPSS?

It's easy to cut school funding and leave the hard choices to the Board of Education. But if you think HCPSS should have no additional funding this year, then how much would you raise class size? Which programs would you eliminate? How many staff should be laid off? Should you freeze pay increases for educators during a teacher shortage?

If you can't, or won't answer those questions, then do the right thing and restore the funding that HCPSS students and educators deserve.

Thank you,

Mark Ramey
markramey61@gmail.com<mailto:markramey61@gmail.com>
9425 woodsong ct
Laurel, Maryland 20723

howardcountymd.gov



Ref:MSG6130468

From: snap@howardcountymd.gov
Sent: Monday, May 12, 2025 9:45 AM
To: Smith, Brenda; Anderson, Isaiah; Gelwicks, Colette; Respass, Charity
Subject: Case: CS0068074 – opened and unassigned



Case

Short Description: Support for HCPSS Operating Budget

Case Number: CS0068074

Case Opened: 05-12-2025

Constituent:

[VIEW CASE](#)

Details:

05-12-2025 09:43:49 AM EDT - Christiana Rigby Additional comments

From: Marlene Katz Bishow <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Saturday, May 10, 2025 12:59 PM
To: Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: One quick question about our School budget

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

County Councilperson Christiana Rigby,

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council members,

Right now HCPSS is staring down a \$29 million hole in its budget that it cannot fill. County Executive Ball sent educators a list of reasons why he can't fully fund schools, but I still have one question for him and for the County Council:

What would you cut from HCPSS?

It's easy to cut school funding and leave the hard choices to the Board of Education. But if you think HCPSS should have no additional funding this year, then how much would you raise class size? Which programs would you eliminate? How many staff should be laid off? Should you freeze pay increases for educators during a teacher shortage?

If you can't, or won't answer those questions, then do the right thing and restore the funding that HCPSS students and educators deserve.

Thank you,

Marlene Katz Bishow
mlbishow@gmail.com<mailto:mlbishow@gmail.com>
10001 Windstream Drive
Columbia , Maryland 21044

howardcountymd.gov



Ref:MSG6130494

From: snap@howardcountymd.gov
Sent: Monday, May 12, 2025 9:45 AM
To: Smith, Brenda; Anderson, Isaiah; Gelwicks, Colette; Respass, Charity
Subject: Case: CS0068071 – opened and unassigned



Case

Short Description: Support for HCPSS Operating Budget

Case Number: CS0068071

Case Opened: 05-12-2025

Constituent:

[VIEW CASE](#)

Details:

05-12-2025 09:43:46 AM EDT - Christiana Rigby Additional comments

From: Nina Ball <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Saturday, May 10, 2025 3:39 PM
To: Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: One quick question about our School budget

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

County Councilperson Christiana Rigby,

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council members,

Right now HCPSS is staring down a \$29 million hole in its budget that it cannot fill. County Executive Ball sent educators a list of reasons why he can't fully fund schools, but I still have one question for him and for the County Council:

What would you cut from HCPSS?

It's easy to cut school funding and leave the hard choices to the Board of Education. But if you think HCPSS should have no additional funding this year, then how much would you raise class size? Which programs would you eliminate? How many staff should be laid off? Should you freeze pay increases for educators during a teacher shortage?

If you can't, or won't answer those questions, then do the right thing and restore the funding that HCPSS students and educators deserve.

Thank you,

Nina Ball (no relation to Calvin Ball)

Nina Ball
nbaek80@gmail.com<mailto:nbaek80@gmail.com>
7116 Winter Rose Path
Columbia, Maryland 21045

howardcountymd.gov



Ref:MSG6130487

From: snap@howardcountymd.gov
Sent: Monday, May 12, 2025 9:58 AM
To: Smith, Brenda; Anderson, Isaiah; Gelwicks, Colette; Respass, Charity
Subject: Case: CS0068107 – opened and unassigned



Case

Short Description: Support for HCPSS Operating Budget

Case Number: CS0068107

Case Opened: 05-12-2025

Constituent:

[VIEW CASE](#)

Details:

05-12-2025 09:57:14 AM EDT - Christiana Rigby Additional comments

From: Pamela Vaughn <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Saturday, May 10, 2025 6:17 PM
To: Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: One quick question about our School budget

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

County Councilperson Christiana Rigby,

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council members,

Right now HCPSS is staring down a \$29 million hole in its budget that it cannot fill. County Executive Ball sent educators a list of reasons why he can't fully fund schools, but I still have one question for him and for the County Council:

What would you cut from HCPSS?

It's easy to cut school funding and leave the hard choices to the Board of Education. But if you think HCPSS should have no additional funding this year, then how much would you raise class size? Which programs would you eliminate? How many staff should be laid off? Should you freeze pay increases for educators during a teacher shortage?

If you can't, or won't answer those questions, then do the right thing and restore the funding that HCPSS students and educators deserve.

Thank you,

Pamela Vaughn
vaughnclan5@yahoo.com<mailto:vaughnclan5@yahoo.com>
9351 Enquiry Court
Columbia, Maryland 21045

howardcountymd.gov



Ref:MSG6130698

From: snap@howardcountymd.gov
Sent: Monday, May 12, 2025 9:58 AM
To: Smith, Brenda; Anderson, Isaiah; Gelwicks, Colette; Respass, Charity
Subject: Case: CS0068102 – opened and unassigned



Case

Short Description: Support for HCPSS Operating Budget

Case Number: CS0068102

Case Opened: 05-12-2025

Constituent:

[VIEW CASE](#)

Details:

05-12-2025 09:57:11 AM EDT - Christiana Rigby Additional comments

From: Paulina Castillo <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Saturday, May 10, 2025 5:14 PM
To: Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: One quick question about our School budget

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

County Councilperson Christiana Rigby,

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council members,

Right now HCPSS is staring down a \$29 million hole in its budget that it cannot fill. County Executive Ball sent educators a list of reasons why he can't fully fund schools, but I still have one question for him and for the County Council:

What would you cut from HCPSS?

It's easy to cut school funding and leave the hard choices to the Board of Education. But if you think HCPSS should have no additional funding this year, then how much would you raise class size? Which programs would you eliminate? How many staff should be laid off? Should you freeze pay increases for educators during a teacher shortage?

If you can't, or won't answer those questions, then do the right thing and restore the funding that HCPSS students and educators deserve.

Thank you,

Paulina Castillo
betyDuran6070@gmail.com<mailto:betyDuran6070@gmail.com>
9536 Haddaway Pl
Laurel , Maryland 20723

howardcountymd.gov



Ref:MSG6130692

From: Pola Olczak <polaolczak7@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, May 10, 2025 11:14 AM
To: CouncilMail; Budget Testimony
Subject: Please Fully Fund HCPSS in the FY26 Capital Budget

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

To whom it may concern,

I am writing as a parent and concerned citizen to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) in the FY26 capital budget.

Although my children are not yet enrolled in the school system, my older son will be starting in August, and I am deeply invested in the future of our public schools. For years, HCPSS has faced chronic understaffing and underfunding. This year, the system needs at least \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without this support, we risk larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs—all of which directly impact student success.

It is unacceptable that our schools are among the first to face cuts when budgets are tight. Education is a core public service that must be protected, not sacrificed. The school system's share of recurring general fund revenue has not kept pace with inflation or historic norms, putting additional strain on already limited resources.

As a parent preparing to send a child into this system, I am concerned about the quality of education and support he—and his peers—will receive. Please prioritize our students' futures and restore full funding to HCPSS.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Pola Olczak, PhD

From: snap@howardcountymd.gov
Sent: Monday, May 12, 2025 9:45 AM
To: Smith, Brenda; Anderson, Isaiah; Gelwicks, Colette; Respass, Charity
Subject: Case: CS0068067 – opened and unassigned



Case

Short Description: Support for HCPSS Operating Budget

Case Number: CS0068067

Case Opened: 05-12-2025

Constituent:

[VIEW CASE](#)

Details:

05-12-2025 09:43:44 AM EDT - Christiana Rigby Additional comments

From: Racheal Margerum <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Saturday, May 10, 2025 2:04 PM
To: Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: One quick question about our School budget

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

County Councilperson Christiana Rigby,

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council members,

Right now HCPSS is staring down a \$29 million hole in its budget that it cannot fill. County Executive Ball sent educators a list of reasons why he can't fully fund schools, but I still have one question for him and for the County Council:

What would you cut from HCPSS?

It's easy to cut school funding and leave the hard choices to the Board of Education. But if you think HCPSS should have no additional funding this year, then how much would you raise class size? Which programs would you eliminate? How many staff should be laid off? Should you freeze pay increases for educators during a teacher shortage?

If you can't, or won't answer those questions, then do the right thing and restore the funding that HCPSS students and educators deserve.

Thank you,

Racheal Margerum
holoart288@gmail.com<mailto:holoart288@gmail.com>
6052 Augustine Ave
Elkridge, Maryland 21075

howardcountymd.gov



Ref:MSG6130467

From: snap@howardcountymd.gov
Sent: Monday, May 12, 2025 9:45 AM
To: Smith, Brenda; Anderson, Isaiah; Gelwicks, Colette; Respass, Charity
Subject: Case: CS0068072 – opened and unassigned



Case

Short Description: Support for HCPSS Operating Budget

Case Number: CS0068072

Case Opened: 05-12-2025

Constituent:

[VIEW CASE](#)

Details:

05-12-2025 09:43:47 AM EDT - Christiana Rigby Additional comments

From: Sydney Reed <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Saturday, May 10, 2025 4:03 PM
To: Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: One quick question about our School budget

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

County Councilperson Christiana Rigby,

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council members,

Right now HCPSS is staring down a \$29 million hole in its budget that it cannot fill. County Executive Ball sent educators a list of reasons why he can't fully fund schools, but I still have one question for him and for the County Council:

What would you cut from HCPSS?

It's easy to cut school funding and leave the hard choices to the Board of Education. But if you think HCPSS should have no additional funding this year, then how much would you raise class size? Which programs would you eliminate? How many staff should be laid off? Should you freeze pay increases for educators during a teacher shortage?

If you can't, or won't answer those questions, then do the right thing and restore the funding that HCPSS students and educators deserve.

Thank you,

Sydney Reed
Sreedmjk9@gmail.com<mailto:Sreedmjk9@gmail.com>
808 Jackson Valley Ct.
Bowie, Maryland 20721

howardcountymd.gov



Ref:MSG6130492

From: snap@howardcountymd.gov
Sent: Monday, May 12, 2025 9:45 AM
To: Smith, Brenda; Anderson, Isaiah; Gelwicks, Colette; Respass, Charity
Subject: Case: CS0068066 – opened and unassigned



Case

Short Description: Support for HCPSS Operating Budget

Case Number: CS0068066

Case Opened: 05-12-2025

Constituent:

[VIEW CASE](#)

Details:

05-12-2025 09:43:43 AM EDT - Christiana Rigby Additional comments

From: Thea Parent <theaparent@gmsil.con>
Sent: Saturday, May 10, 2025 1:14 PM
To: Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: One quick question about our School budget

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

County Councilperson Christiana Rigby,

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council members,

Right now HCPSS is staring down a \$29 million hole in its budget that it cannot fill. County Executive Ball sent educators a list of reasons why he can't fully fund schools, but I still have one question for him and for the County Council:

What would you cut from HCPSS?

It's easy to cut school funding and leave the hard choices to the Board of Education. But if you think HCPSS should have no additional funding this year, then how much would you raise class size? Which programs would you eliminate? How many staff should be laid off? Should you freeze pay increases for educators during a teacher shortage?

If you can't, or won't answer those questions, then do the right thing and restore the funding that HCPSS students and educators deserve.

Thank you,

Thea Parent
theaparent@gmsil.con<mailto:theaparent@gmsil.con>
5241 Raccoon Vt
Columbia, Maryland 21045

howardcountymd.gov



Ref:MSG6130483

From: snap@howardcountymd.gov
Sent: Monday, May 12, 2025 9:45 AM
To: Smith, Brenda; Anderson, Isaiah; Gelwicks, Colette; Respass, Charity
Subject: Case: CS0068070 – opened and unassigned



Case

Short Description: Support for HCPSS Operating Budget

Case Number: CS0068070

Case Opened: 05-12-2025

Constituent:

[VIEW CASE](#)

Details:

05-12-2025 09:43:46 AM EDT - Christiana Rigby Additional comments

From: Toni Rosen <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Saturday, May 10, 2025 3:37 PM
To: Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: One quick question about our School budget

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

County Councilperson Christiana Rigby,

Don't fail the most important resource in Howard County, our kids. Please.

Building, enhancing, growing - all worthy. But without the clarity of a well trained and well skilled generation, none of the growth you're planning is worthwhile.

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council members,

Right now HCPSS is staring down a \$29 million hole in its budget that it cannot fill. County Executive Ball sent educators a list of reasons why he can't fully fund schools, but I still have one question for him and for the County Council:

What would you cut from HCPSS?

It's easy to cut school funding and leave the hard choices to the Board of Education. But if you think HCPSS should have no additional funding this year, then how much would you raise class size? Which programs would you eliminate? How many staff should be laid off? Should you freeze pay increases for educators during a teacher shortage?

If you can't, or won't answer those questions, then do the right thing and restore the funding that HCPSS students and educators deserve.

Thank you,

Toni Rosen
trosen111@gmail.com<mailto:trosen111@gmail.com>
11113 Swansfield Road
Columbia, Maryland 21044

howardcountymd.gov



Ref:MSG6130485

From: snap@howardcountymd.gov
Sent: Monday, May 12, 2025 9:58 AM
To: Smith, Brenda; Anderson, Isaiah; Gelwicks, Colette; Respass, Charity
Subject: Case: CS0068098 – opened and unassigned



Case

Short Description: Support for HCPSS Operating Budget

Case Number: CS0068098

Case Opened: 05-12-2025

Constituent:

[VIEW CASE](#)

Details:

05-12-2025 09:57:07 AM EDT - Christiana Rigby Additional comments

From: Veronica Pavon <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Saturday, May 10, 2025 9:04 PM
To: Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: One quick question about our School budget

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

County Councilperson Christiana Rigby,

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council members,

Right now HCPSS is staring down a \$29 million hole in its budget that it cannot fill. County Executive Ball sent educators a list of reasons why he can't fully fund schools, but I still have one question for him and for the County Council:

What would you cut from HCPSS?

It's easy to cut school funding and leave the hard choices to the Board of Education. But if you think HCPSS should have no additional funding this year, then how much would you raise class size? Which programs would you eliminate? How many staff should be laid off? Should you freeze pay increases for educators during a teacher shortage?

If you can't, or won't answer those questions, then do the right thing and restore the funding that HCPSS students and educators deserve.

Thank you,

Veronica Pavon
veroa1923@gmail.com<mailto:veroa1923@gmail.com>
9720 Whiskey Run
Laurel Maryland , Maryland 20723

howardcountymd.gov



Ref:MSG6130688

From: snap@howardcountymd.gov
Sent: Monday, May 12, 2025 9:58 AM
To: Smith, Brenda; Anderson, Isaiah; Gelwicks, Colette; Respass, Charity
Subject: Case: CS0068104 – opened and unassigned



Case

Short Description: Support for HCPSS Operating Budget

Case Number: CS0068104

Case Opened: 05-12-2025

Constituent:

[VIEW CASE](#)

Details:

05-12-2025 09:57:13 AM EDT - Christiana Rigby Additional comments

From: Yang Liu <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Saturday, May 10, 2025 8:35 PM
To: Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: One quick question about our School budget

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

County Councilperson Christiana Rigby,

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council members,

Right now HCPSS is staring down a \$29 million hole in its budget that it cannot fill. County Executive Ball sent educators a list of reasons why he can't fully fund schools, but I still have one question for him and for the County Council:

What would you cut from HCPSS?

It's easy to cut school funding and leave the hard choices to the Board of Education. But if you think HCPSS should have no additional funding this year, then how much would you raise class size? Which programs would you eliminate? How many staff should be laid off? Should you freeze pay increases for educators during a teacher shortage?

If you can't, or won't answer those questions, then do the right thing and restore the funding that HCPSS students and educators deserve.

Thank you,

Yang Liu
siriusblack87@gmail.com<mailto:siriusblack87@gmail.com>
7527 thicket run
Hanover, Maryland 21076

howardcountymd.gov



Ref:MSG6130696

From: Ami Patel <abpatel714@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 11, 2025 8:17 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: HCPSS Budget Concerns

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Council Members:

I am writing to encourage you to work with the Howard County Public School System to adequately fund our schools. This year millions of dollars in cuts have been proposed that will greatly impact our school system. It is important to sustain current programs and services to meet the demanding needs of our generation of kids. Schools are becoming more crowded than ever with recent county development, we need to support our teachers, school buildings, and keep safety as number one priority for all.

Thank you for your dedication to our county.

Sincerely,

Ami Patel
Ellicott City Resident

From: Blessing Enekwe <blessingo@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 11, 2025 3:43 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned [parent/teacher/resident] to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer essential programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

My child's school is already stretched thin. We can't afford more cuts, especially for children who are currently and expect to be in GT classes next year, children with IEPs, and those that are in need of para professional support. Because of the challenges we will surely face with the reduction of federal support, it is even more imperative that we adequately fund our schools.

Please prioritize children and restore funding to HCPSS.
Thank you and sincerely,

Blessing Enekwe
HCPSS Parent of 2

From: Brittany Jacobs <brittanyplaysviola@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 11, 2025 7:36 PM
To: CouncilMail; Budget Testimony
Subject: Fully Fund HCPSS Budget

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear County Council members,

Here in Howard County we are once again facing a budget crisis. As a parent of an elementary-aged child in our school system, I am deeply concerned about the shortfalls in funding for HCPSS. My husband and I chose to live and raise our child in Howard County because of its excellent school system, where our child can experience programs and opportunities we did not have during our PreK-12 educations. We cannot have the best education for the children of Howard County if we do not invest in it. The Board of Education is proposing numerous cuts that would disproportionately impact our youngest learners. I implore you to fully fund the HCPSS budget to prevent these cuts from occurring, and to allow the children of Howard County to have the best public education possible.

Respectfully,

Brittany Jacobs

Sent from my iPhone

From: 辣妈玩儿期权 <wdanping@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 11, 2025 9:18 PM
To: Ball, Calvin
Cc: CouncilMail
Subject: Demand to fully restore HCPSS funding for FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council Members

As you work together with the Board of Education to close the gap for the HCPSS FY26 Operating Budget, understand that students, parents, and all county residents rely upon maintaining the excellence of Howard County schools many people move here for.

We would like to respond County Executive Ball's memo sent on May 8th which suggested HCPSS use their budget in a different way so that more than 222 positions won't be cut from the FY26 school budget. We appreciate the need for transparency and dialogue in order to use County funds more efficiently and we emphasize the County's role in obtaining the necessary funding to avoid a second year of class size increase, program cuts, and extensive firings.

We agree on the following steps for HCPSS:

- HCPSS should use the health fund surplus as long as county guarantees future support if required
- HCPSS General Fund Balance should be used if greater than 1% recommended balance specified by HCPSS policy
- HCPSS investment income may be available, although likely less than last year due to less funds available for investment

We urge the county to continue partnering with HCPSS by doing the following:

- Increase County conservative estimate of investment income and direct surplus to HCPSS.
- Review County salary growth (27% since 2018, compared to teachers 17%) and reduce if needed to allow HCPSS teachers to catch up to other county colleagues.
- Consider the recent history of record surplus revenue, and Pay Go funds being used repeatedly for some programs. Current investment fund report notes that fund balance is approximately \$200M above expected level for FY25. Whether through

additional revenue or additional sacrifice, we expect that support for HCPSS will allow for continuance of current programs and staffing levels.

We must balance fiscal responsibility for the future and our children's educational needs today. Drawing down the surplus health fund balances increases shortage risks in the future which the county will have to cover. HCPSS General fund balance dropping below 1% risks requiring additional appropriations like the county is voting on this month (5.5M to HCPSS to cover unexpected additional cost in CR88-2025).

No one can predict the future – but overly conservative estimates of investment income come at its own opportunity cost. Costs like increased class sizes for the second year in a row, 48% reduction in Elementary school gifted and talented program, and 3rd grade strings. Teachers can't withstand another increase in workload. Students can't withstand losing even more teachers from each school and some classrooms cannot physically fit one more desk in the room.

We ask the County to prioritize residents' commitment to their own educational needs.

Thank you,

Danping Wang

CLES Parent

3936 white rose way

From: zhao zhang <zhangzhao@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 11, 2025 9:34 PM
To: CouncilMail; Ball, Calvin
Subject: Demand to fully restore HCPSS funding for FY26

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

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

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council Members

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We ask the County to prioritize residents' commitment to their own educational needs.

Thank you,

Jenny Zhang
CLES
Ellicott City
21042

From: Jhonna S <jhonna27@hotmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 11, 2025 12:38 AM
To: CouncilMail; Ball, Calvin
Subject: Please fully fund Hcpss Budget

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council Members,

As you work together with the Board of Education to close the gap for the HCPSS FY26 Operating Budget, understand that students, parents, and all county residents rely upon maintaining the excellence of Howard County schools many people move here for.

We would like to respond County Executive Ball's memo sent on May 8th which suggested HCPSS use their budget in a different way so that more than 222 positions won't be cut from the FY26 school budget. We appreciate the need for transparency and dialogue in order to use County funds more efficiently and we emphasize the County's role in obtaining the necessary funding to avoid a second year of class size increase, program cuts, and extensive firings.

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No one can predict the future – but overly conservative estimates of investment income come at its own opportunity cost. Costs like increased class sizes for the second year in a row, 48% reduction in Elementary school gifted and talented program, and 3rd grade strings. Teachers can't withstand another increase in workload. Students can't withstand losing even more teachers from each school and some classrooms cannot physically fit one more desk in the room.

We ask the County to prioritize residents' commitment to their own educational needs.

Thank you,

Jhonna Seifert

7238 Single Wheel Path

Columbia

From: Jessica liu <jieliu2017@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 11, 2025 10:57 PM
To: Ball, Calvin
Cc: CouncilMail
Subject: Urgent: Prevent Cuts to Howard County Schools

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council Members,

As you work with the Board of Education to address the HCPSS FY26 funding gap, please remember that strong public schools are central to Howard County's quality of life, property values, and continued growth.

We appreciate the May 8 memo outlining alternative budget strategies to avoid eliminating over 222 HCPSS positions. We support transparent fiscal management but stress the County's essential role in securing sufficient funding to prevent larger class sizes, program cuts, and job losses.

We support the following actions, with appropriate safeguards:

- Using the health fund surplus, contingent on future County support if needed.
- Drawing from the General Fund Balance while maintaining the 1% minimum.
- Considering investment income, acknowledging it may be lower than in past years.

To strengthen our partnership, we urge the County to:

- Reassess conservative investment income estimates and allocate surplus funds to HCPSS.
- Address the imbalance in salary growth between County staff (27%) and teachers (17%) since 2018.
- Leverage higher-than-expected FY25 fund balances—reportedly \$200 million above projections—to protect core educational services.

We must balance fiscal responsibility with urgent student needs. Over-reliance on reserves now may create future risks, while underestimating revenues has real costs: increased class sizes, steep reductions to the Gifted and Talented program, elimination of 3rd-grade strings, and worsening teacher burnout.

We urge the County to reaffirm its commitment to our students and preserve the excellence of Howard County Public Schools.

Thank you for your leadership.

Jie Liu

Parent of Centennial Lane ES student

Ellicott City, Howard County,

21042, District 1

From: jieting lin <jietinglin@icloud.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 11, 2025 9:56 PM
To: Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail
Subject: Demand to fully restore HCPSS funding for FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council Members,

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We would like to respond County Executive Ball's memo sent on May 8th which suggested HCPSS use their budget in a different way so that more than 222 positions won't be cut from the FY26 school budget. We appreciate the need for transparency and dialogue in order to use County funds more efficiently and we emphasize the County's role in obtaining the necessary funding to avoid a second year of class size increase, program cuts, and extensive firings.

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We must balance fiscal responsibility for the future and our children's educational needs today. Drawing down the surplus health fund balances increases shortage risks in the future which the county will have to cover. HCPSS General fund balance dropping below 1% risks requiring additional appropriations like the county is voting on this month (5.5M to HCPSS to cover unexpected additional cost in CR88-2025).

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We ask the County to prioritize residents' commitment to their own educational needs.

Thank you,

Jieting Lin

9144 Windflower Dr

Ellicott city, MD 21042

From: Kelly Fasinski <singerkas@hotmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 11, 2025 9:05 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

Without this funding, our community could be directly impacted by reductions in 3rd grade strings, GT teachers, and paraeducators—all of which play a critical role in supporting our students. These programs have had a significant direct positive contribution to the well-being of my children. Increases in class size would spread thin our already over worked teachers and leave our most vulnerable students with fewer resources.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,
Kelly Fasinski
5428 Chatterbird Place, Columbia, MD
District 2

From: snap@howardcountymd.gov
Sent: Monday, May 12, 2025 9:47 AM
To: Smith, Brenda; Anderson, Isaiah; Gelwicks, Colette; Respass, Charity
Subject: Case: CS0068078 – opened and unassigned



Case

Short Description: Support for HCPSS Operating Budget

Case Number: CS0068078

Case Opened: 05-12-2025

Constituent:

[VIEW CASE](#)

Details:

05-12-2025 09:46:24 AM EDT - Christiana Rigby Additional comments

From: Lisa Dickerson-Guerra <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Sunday, May 11, 2025 10:51 PM
To: Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: One quick question about our School budget

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

County Councilperson Christiana Rigby,

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council members,

Right now HCPSS is staring down a \$29 million hole in its budget that it cannot fill. County Executive Ball sent educators a list of reasons why he can't fully fund schools, but I still have one question for him and for the County Council:

What would you cut from HCPSS?

It's easy to cut school funding and leave the hard choices to the Board of Education. But if you think HCPSS should have no additional funding this year, then how much would you raise class size? Which programs would you eliminate? How many staff should be laid off? Should you freeze pay increases for educators during a teacher shortage?

If you can't, or won't answer those questions, then do the right thing and restore the funding that HCPSS students and educators deserve.

Thank you,

Lisa Dickerson-Guerra
l.dickerson.guerra@gmail.com<mailto:l.dickerson.guerra@gmail.com>
6136 Gatsby Grn.
Columbia, Maryland 21045

howardcountymd.gov



Ref:MSG6130564

From: Mary Fry <m.fry2kids@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 11, 2025 9:43 PM
To: Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail
Subject: HCPSSFY26 Operating Budget

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council Members;

As you complete the school budget for 2026, I would encourage you to fund it as fully as possible. The Howard County School System is known for the high level of education that is provided throughout the country.

My two children graduated from this system and are extremely successful professionals because of the foundations of education provided here in Howard County. My son has moved back into the county so his three children are provided with that same level of education. I have a concern that level in the school system is no longer there.

Such programs as the Gifted and Talented, music and sports programs must be continued. My grandchildren will be participating in these programs.

I know many many programs are contending for funds but the schools are so essential for the future of our children, Howard County and the country.

A concerned citizen and Howard County resident of more than 40 years,
Mary K. Fry

From: Sara Trans <saratrans9527@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 11, 2025 10:15 PM
To: CouncilMail; Budget Testimony; Ball, Calvin
Subject: Prioritize Our Schools — Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I am writing as a concerned parent and resident of Howard County to urge you to restore full funding to HCPSS for FY26.

Howard County's reputation for excellence is built on its schools. Over the past several years, HCPSS has been consistently underfunded. To maintain even a same-services budget, the school system needs at least **\$29.2 million**.

Without this funding, our community will face larger class sizes, reductions in essential programs, and layoffs of valued staff — all of which directly impact the quality of education for our students. It is troubling that when financial pressures arise, it is our schools that are first in line for service reductions. The school system should not be leading the way in cuts. Education is a core public service — not a luxury item to be scaled back.

Moreover, **recent investment reports suggest the county will have at least \$10 million more in available funds than currently projected**. Instead of shifting "extra" money into PAYGO projects, we should prioritize critical services like education. Our students, teachers, and schools should not be asked to sacrifice while funding is diverted elsewhere.

Sincerely,

From: snap@howardcountymd.gov
Sent: Monday, May 12, 2025 9:57 AM
To: Smith, Brenda; Anderson, Isaiah; Gelwicks, Colette; Respass, Charity
Subject: Case: CS0068093 – opened and unassigned



Case

Short Description: Support for HCPSS Operating Budget

Case Number: CS0068093

Case Opened: 05-12-2025

Constituent:

[VIEW CASE](#)

Details:

05-12-2025 09:55:59 AM EDT - Christiana Rigby Additional comments

From: Sarah Sterner <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Sunday, May 11, 2025 5:56 PM
To: Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: One quick question about our School budget

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

County Councilperson Christiana Rigby,

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council members,

Right now HCPSS is staring down a \$29 million hole in its budget that it cannot fill. County Executive Ball sent educators a list of reasons why he can't fully fund schools, but I still have one question for him and for the County Council:

What would you cut from HCPSS?

It's easy to cut school funding and leave the hard choices to the Board of Education. But if you think HCPSS should have no additional funding this year, then how much would you raise class size? Which programs would you eliminate? How many staff should be laid off? Should you freeze pay increases for educators during a teacher shortage?

Something that makes Howard County stand out is their dedication to teaching information literacy and digital citizenship. These skills are essential for future student success and often overlooked. Making further cuts to the Office of Instructional Technology and Library Media reduces the emphasis placed on these skills and will impact students' education.

I ask that you restore the funding that HCPSS students and educators deserve.

Thank you,

Sarah Sterner
slsterner7@yahoo.com<mailto:slsterner7@yahoo.com>
1 Buttrick Ct 301
Timonium, Maryland 21093

howardcountymd.gov



Ref:MSG6130650

From: Stephanie Miller-Smith <stephanie.miller.1445@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 11, 2025 6:30 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Restore Full Funding to HCPSS in FY26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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

Dear Howard County Council,

I am writing as a concerned parent to urge you to fully fund the Howard County Public School System in the FY26 Operating Budget.

HCPSS has faced years of underfunding. This year, the system needs \$29.2 million just to maintain current services. Without it, we'll see larger class sizes, fewer programs, and staff layoffs — all of which hurt our students.

It's unacceptable that our schools are the first to face cuts when budgets tighten. Education is a core service and should be protected, not sacrificed. The percentage of Howard County Public Schools System share of the recurring General Fund Revenue has not kept up with historic norms and inflation.

The reason why we live in Howard County is because of the school system. We moved here so our children could attend the excellent schools in Howard County. However, if the budget is not restored, the county will not be able to maintain the services we've come to expect and rely on. We absolutely cannot afford these cuts to the school system.

Please prioritize students and restore funding to HCPSS.

Thank you,

Stephanie Miller-Smith
Manor Woods Elementary School District Resident of Howard County
stephanie.miller.1445@gmail.com

From: snap@howardcountymd.gov
Sent: Monday, May 12, 2025 9:47 AM
To: Smith, Brenda; Anderson, Isaiah; Gelwicks, Colette; Respass, Charity
Subject: Case: CS0068081 – opened and unassigned



Case

Short Description: Support for HCPSS Operating Budget

Case Number: CS0068081

Case Opened: 05-12-2025

Constituent:

[VIEW CASE](#)

Details:

05-12-2025 09:46:26 AM EDT - Christiana Rigby Additional comments

From: Viviana Lindo <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Sunday, May 11, 2025 10:53 PM
To: Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: One quick question about our School budget

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

County Councilperson Christiana Rigby,

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council members,

Right now HCPSS is staring down a \$29 million hole in its budget that it cannot fill. County Executive Ball sent educators a list of reasons why he can't fully fund schools, but I still have one question for him and for the County Council:

What would you cut from HCPSS?

It's easy to cut school funding and leave the hard choices to the Board of Education. But if you think HCPSS should have no additional funding this year, then how much would you raise class size? Which programs would you eliminate? How many staff should be laid off? Should you freeze pay increases for educators during a teacher shortage?

If you can't, or won't answer those questions, then do the right thing and restore the funding that HCPSS students and educators deserve.

From a worried mother
Thank you,

Viviana Lindo
lindoviviana@yahoo.com<mailto:lindoviviana@yahoo.com>
10320 Hickory Ridge Rd
Columbia , Maryland 21044

howardcountymd.gov



Ref:MSG6130565

From: Xinyi Zhang <zhangxinyi0310@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 11, 2025 9:43 PM
To: Ball, Calvin
Cc: CouncilMail
Subject: HCPSS FY26 Operating Budget Petition

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

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

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council Members

As you work together with the Board of Education to close the gap for the HCPSS FY26 Operating Budget, understand that students, parents, and all county residents rely upon maintaining the excellence of Howard County schools many people move here for.

We would like to respond County Executive Ball's memo sent on May 8th which suggested HCPSS use their budget in a different way so that more than 222 positions won't be cut from the FY26 school budget. We appreciate the need for transparency and dialogue in order to use County funds more efficiently and we emphasize the County's role in obtaining the necessary funding to avoid a second year of class size increase, program cuts, and extensive firings.

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We urge the county to continue partnering with HCPSS by doing the following:

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- Review County salary growth (27% since 2018, compared to teachers 17%) and reduce if needed to allow HCPSS teachers to catch up to other county colleagues.
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We must balance fiscal responsibility for the future and our children's educational needs today. Drawing down the surplus health fund balances increases shortage risks in the future which the county will have to cover. HCPSS General fund balance dropping below 1% risks requiring additional appropriations like the county is voting on this month (5.5M to HCPSS to cover unexpected additional cost in CR88-2025).

No one can predict the future – but overly conservative estimates of investment income come at its own opportunity cost. Costs like increased class sizes for the second year in a row, 48% reduction in Elementary school gifted and talented program, and 3rd grade strings. Teachers can't withstand another increase in workload. Students can't withstand losing even more teachers from each school and some classrooms cannot physically fit one more desk in the room.

We ask the County to prioritize residents' commitment to their own educational needs.

Thank you,

Xinyi Zhang

Triadelphia Ridge Elementary School

Ellicott City, MD 21042

From: Actuarial Bro <frankzyn@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 11, 2025 9:28 PM
To: Ball, Calvin
Cc: CouncilMail
Subject: Demand to restore HCPSS funding for FY26

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

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

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council Members,

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We ask the County to prioritize residents' commitment to their own educational needs.

Thank you,

Yanan Zhao