

The Youth's Benefit Elementary School PTA, Fallston Middle School PTA, and the Fallston High School PTA are working hard to research and understand the Harford County Public School's FY20 budget request, the Harford County Executive's stance on this budget request, and how this will impact the quality of education that our children receive. We have received feedback from the County Executive's Office with regards to the concerns that we have raised and appreciate the dialog. The most recent response from the County Executive does not adequately address our concerns. Please see our responses interspersed throughout specifically addressing the County Executive's response. The County Executive's responses are in italics. We look forward to continued and productive discussions with the County Executive in the weeks to come as he prepares his budget for County Council submission by the beginning of April.

*"Thank you for your email below to the county executive, and for the opportunity to address budget issues. As the county executive's liaison to HCPS, he has asked me to respond.*

*First, we strongly agree with your support for education. In fact, county funding was instrumental in building the state-of-the-art facility for YBES."*

- The BoE's budget request is funded through Harford County's Operating Budget, which is separate from Harford County's Capital Budget.
- The Capital Budget funds for the construction of new schools and represents only 6% of the total Harford County Budget for FY19.
- Harford County typically focuses on one school replacement project at a time, currently building the replacement for Havre de Grace Middle and High School.
- Baltimore County invests 10% of its total budget on school capital improvements, with 8 school replacement projects currently in various phases of development.

*"At the same time we increased operating funding to HCPS to record levels in each of the four years of our administration despite flat student enrollment. You may also remember the many years that teachers went without pay increases. Our administration has reversed that trend and restored salaries in each of the past four years, and we expect to continue on this upward path for next year."*

- HCPS has seen an increase of more than 400 students since County Executive Glassman took office. This is a 1% increase in student population, which is not an insignificant increase to the budgetary burden of HCPS.
- For FY19, the BoE received an Operating Budget increase of \$7.1 million, a 3.0% increase. This increase was not enough to cover salary increases, let alone any increases incurred due to the increased costs of health insurance or other budgetary items. HCPS employees went 7 years without a cost of living increase or steps. Since the County

Executive did not fund the FY19 BoE budget request in full, these unfunded expenses are carried forward into FY20 and must be made up for this year.

- The County government often claims that 50% of their budget is spent on education. The FY19 Total Harford County Budget saw an increase of \$83.3M, while the total HCPS funding (including debt service, PAYGO, and capital improvements) increased only \$10.7M. Harford County students are not receiving their share of the county budget increases. If education actually received 50% of the Total Harford County Budget for FY19, that would have been an additional \$31 million above and beyond the \$10.7 million increase. This would have allowed HCPS to fully fund all of their operational expenses and HCPS would not be in the position of eliminated teaching positions, administrative positions, and programs in FY20.

*"Specifically, the county executive has said that he would work toward the \$10 million increase recommended by the superintendent, which would be the largest increase in a decade despite enrollment that is still well below its peak in 2004."*

- The BoE has requested an increase of only \$15 million for FY20, despite recognizing a \$35 million budget shortfall due to chronic underfunding.
- This budget shortfall is comprised of the following increased costs:
  - Health insurance of \$14 million
  - FY19 funding shortfall of \$11 million
  - Salaries and wages of \$8 million
  - General operating expenses of \$2 million.
- To cope with this structural deficit, the Board of Education will still need to cut approximately 80 teachers and 26 administrative positions from HCPS even if the County Executive fully funds the \$15M BoE budget request.

- HCPS has already lost over 400 teachers, staff and administrator positions over the last decade. This has created the largest class sizes in the State of Maryland. Our elementary classrooms have an average of 33 student versus the state average of 21. The average for all grades in Harford County is 26 versus the state average of 20.

#### AVERAGE CLASS SIZE PER COUNTY (MSDE 2017)

	Total			Elementary		
County	Total Classes	Avg Class Size	Rank	Total Classes	Avg Class Size	Rank
KENT	1,072	14.22	1	479	15.89	2
ST. MARY'S	1,660	14.46	2	740	15.36	1
WORCESTER	3,158	16.66	3	1,329	19.07	6
CHARLES	13,031	16.98	4	5,420	20.3	9
ALLEGANY	4,403	17.46	5	1,798	22.37	19
BALTIMORE CITY	32,098	18.28	6	7,351	18.18	4
WASHINGTON	9,956	18.38	7	4,510	20.72	12
TALBOT	2,204	18.75	8	1,059	19.13	7
GARRETT	1,672	18.97	9	669	19.7	8
MONTGOMERY	88,344	19.03	10	33,914	18.87	5
CARROLL	11,138	19.2	11	3,975	20.54	11
CECIL	7,872	19.29	12	3,895	20.52	10
CALVERT	6,734	19.43	13	2,812	21.85	17
DORCHESTER	1,751	19.48	14	1,141	17.3	3
ANNE ARUNDEL	45,403	20.45	15	18,824	21.12	13
QUEEN ANNE'S	3,492	20.48	16	1,639	21.35	14
BALTIMORE COUNTY	38,931	21.14	17	18,793	21.36	15
WICOMICO	6,538	21.54	18	3,025	25.78	22
HOWARD	22,272	21.85	19	10,078	22.95	20
CAROLINE	2,511	22.03	20	741	34.01	24
SOMERSET	5,888	22.09	21	3,279	21.96	18
PRINCE GEORGE'S	73,581	22.29	22	33,368	21.81	16
FREDERICK	13,568	24.31	23	6,459	23.89	21
<b>HARFORD</b>	<b>13,516</b>	<b>26.33</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>5,587</b>	<b>33.44</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>STATE</b>	<b>410,793</b>	<b>20.46</b>		<b>170,885</b>	<b>21.34</b>	

- The portion of the Harford County Budget dedicated to the HCPS operating budget is at a historic low of 43% of the Harford County General Fund despite having record levels of revenue collected through income and property taxes. Over the last 3 years, HCPS has received 1% less each year as a percentage of the Harford County General Fund.

#### **BOE OPERATIONAL BUDGET AS A PERCENTAGE OF HARFORD COUNTY GENERAL FUND**

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>BOE (Primary/ Secondary Ed)</b>	<b>BOE Operations Budget (a)</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>	<b>Total County General Fund</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>
2009	45%	\$ 210,914,800		\$ 472,316,523	
2010	47%	\$ 210,914,800	0.00%	\$ 446,240,857	-5.52%
2011	47%	\$ 214,061,789	1.49%	\$ 454,504,275	1.85%
2012	45%	\$ 214,291,627	0.11%	\$ 476,439,692	4.83%
2013	45%	\$ 219,821,368	2.58%	\$ 487,488,257	2.32%
2014	45%	\$ 221,300,729	0.67%	\$ 496,925,918	1.94%
2015	46%	\$ 223,667,302	1.07%	\$ 488,486,824	-1.70%
2016	46%	\$ 228,208,971	2.03%	\$ 502,604,595	2.89%
2017	45%	\$ 233,534,504	2.33%	\$ 524,570,000	4.37%
2018	44%	\$ 238,715,645	2.22%	\$ 543,100,000	3.53%
2019	43%	\$ 245,815,645	2.97%	\$ 571,655,000	5.26%

*"At the same time, state funding next year is expected to increase by \$5 ½ million more than originally expected, which, when combined with county funding, would meet the school board's requested \$15 million increase. This additional state funding is not yet factored into the HCPS budget, but would be factored in once the state budget is finalized by the legislature."*

- Even If HCPS receives this funding in addition to a fully funded budget request from Harford County, HCPS will still need to cut at least 10 teaching positions and all 26 administrative positions.

*"The superintendent has also indicated that teachers are not being fired; some will be transferred and moved to another grade or another school, but because of annual turnover due to retirements, etc. there are more than enough open positions each year that can then be filled with existing staff."*

- Fewer positions still means fewer classrooms, larger class sizes, and fewer resources for the students of Harford County.

- In addition, some teachers will be moved from schools where they have established relationships with students, staff, and administration. This is a less than ideal situation, as teachers will consider taking positions in surrounding counties, which pay an average of \$12,000 more in annual salary. HCPS is risking the loss of their most qualified and highest achieving teachers to other school systems.

*"Although we do not control these staffing decisions, we have encouraged the school board to find efficiencies within their budget and redirect resources to the classroom. For example in county government, we have saved more than \$9 million over four years in Procurement alone, through better negotiations for necessary purchases, and taken steps to address the rising cost of healthcare. These efficiencies helped us to direct 96% of all new, ongoing county revenue to education and public safety, which are our top priorities."*

- The PTAs applaud Harford County's efforts to find efficiencies and cost savings. Dr. Bulson and HCPS are aggressively exploring cost efficiency measures to help mitigate the impacts of the rising cost of doing business.
- Harford County ranks dead last, 24th out of 24 counties for total per pupil funding. Any cost savings and efficiencies found with in HCPS operations should be dedicated to additional investments in the school system, not as a substitute for funding from the County Executive.
- Regardless of where funding originates for the County, the growth of the County's General Fund has outpaced the growth of HCPS budget.

#### **PER PUPIL FUNDING BY COUNTY, FY2019**

<b>County</b>	<b>Local</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Overall Rank</b>
Worcester	\$13,528	1	\$4,122	23	\$18,472	1
Somerset	\$3,618	22	\$12,822	1	\$18,353	2
Baltimore City	\$3,703	21	\$12,223	2	\$17,493	3
Kent	\$9,572	4	\$6,524	15	\$17,239	4
Montgomery	\$10,807	2	\$5,507	21	\$16,859	5
Prince George's	\$5,982	16	\$9,792	7	\$16,664	6
Howard	\$10,603	3	\$5,524	20	\$16,630	7
Allegany	\$3,770	20	\$11,165	3	\$16,148	8
Dorchester	\$4,232	19	\$10,417	6	\$15,835	9
Charles	\$6,921	12	\$7,776	10	\$15,255	10
Baltimore	\$7,426	11	\$6,951	12	\$15,231	11
Garrett	\$7,496	10	\$6,825	13	\$15,180	12
Calvert	\$8,153	7	\$6,129	17	\$14,912	13
Wicomico	\$2,963	23	\$10,713	5	\$14,882	14
Caroline	\$2,617	24	\$11,118	4	\$14,852	15
Cecil	\$5,616	17	\$8,223	9	\$14,537	16
Carroll	\$7,749	8	\$6,118	18	\$14,519	17

**PER PUPIL FUNDING BY COUNTY, FY2019**

<b>County</b>	<b>Local</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Overall Rank</b>
St. Mary's	\$6,092	15	\$7,046	11	\$14,390	18
Anne Arundel	\$8,482	6	\$5,290	22	\$14,341	19
Washington	\$4,518	18	\$8,970	8	\$14,289	20
Talbot	\$9,251	5	\$4,010	24	\$14,066	21
Queen Anne's	\$7,584	9	\$5,559	19	\$13,970	22
Frederick	\$6,571	14	\$6,744	14	\$13,970	23
<b>Harford</b>	<b>\$6,666</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>\$6,465</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>\$13,776</b>	<b>24</b>

*"Looking beyond next year, we are also encouraging the state to provide a fairer share of funding to HCPS. Over the past four years, increases from the county have outpaced increases from the state by 4 to 1, ranking Harford in the middle (13th out of 24 jurisdictions) in Maryland for county funding, which is the only funding we control. State funding is based on funding formulas that will soon be under review, so you may want to contact your state representatives about these formulas."*

- We are advocating aggressively to the State of Maryland for increased funding for HCPS and a reevaluation of the state funding formula. This does not negate the responsibility of Harford County to make up for any perceived funding shortfall from the State of Maryland. Eight counties (Calvert, Carroll, Queen Anne's, Howard, Montgomery, Anne Arundel, Worcester, and Talbot) receive less funding per pupil than Harford County, and all of them take ownership of the funding shortfalls and provide significantly more funding per student than Harford County (both on a per pupil basis and as a percentage of each County's budget).
- With the 5th highest property taxes and the 9th highest income taxes in the state, Harford County should be doing much better than 13th for county funding. We are holding the Harford County Executive, Barry Glassman, accountable for understanding and taking ownership of the funding for our children's education.

Fallston Area PTAs look forward to continued discussions with the County Executive.