

ADVOCATING FOR SCHOOL FUNDING

HCCPTA

January 23, 2025

Data Source: HCPS FY 26
Budget Considerations Report



How did we get here?

◆ HCPS Has Three Funding Sources:

- ◆ State of Maryland – Blueprint for Maryland’s Future – comes with both funded and unfunded mandates
- ◆ Federal Government – Title I, Child Nutrition Act and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act – represents smallest portion of revenue, set by formula
- ◆ Harford County Government – Largest funding source.

HCPS Local Share

- ◆ Multiple years of near flat funding by Harford County Government
- ◆ HCPS share of all of HC budget funds with debt service and paygo has dropped from 40.58% in 2015 to 37% in 2025.



How did we get here (cont.)

◆ HCPS Local Share (cont.)

- ◆ HCPS expenses are increasing at a higher percentage than local funding increases..
- ◆ County government has been diverting HCPS share of funding outside of HCPS.
- ◆ HCPS could reasonably expect an increase of 5% per year above prior years' funding due to increasing costs of doing business. 2024 budget represented a **DECREASE** of 2.9% and 2025 budget an increase of 2.1%.
- ◆ **BOE Fund Balance**
- ◆ Fund balance represents one time funds from savings that cannot be assigned to ongoing expenses.
- ◆ BOE forced to use 15.1 Million of fund balance for 2025 budget to honor salary increases. Not an acceptable budgetary practice.



How did we get here (cont.)

- ◆ **Blueprint for Maryland's Future – State legislation passed in 2020 focused on five areas:**
 - ◆ Early childhood Education
 - ◆ High-quality and diverse teachers and leaders
 - ◆ College and Career Readiness
 - ◆ Resources to ensure all students are successful
 - ◆ Governance and accountability
- ◆ **Blueprint comes with increased State funding, but also an expectation of increased local funding to implement requirements.**



How did we get here (cont.)

- ◆ **Local funding share outside of Blueprint for investment in local infrastructure, class size, student needs, local programs and services is \$77,778,032**
 - ◆ Blueprint does not account for: school needs such as transportation, extracurriculars, inflation and the cost of special education.
- ◆ **Needs of students and types of students have changed.**
 - ◆ Special education has grown from 13.8% of total HCPS enrollment in 2021-22 to 15.6% of HCPS enrollment in 2023-24.
 - ◆ Cost of increases in special education funding comes from local government funding.



HCPS 2026 BUDGET REQUEST

- ◆ **2026 Budget need is \$60 Million over 2025 Budget**
 - ◆ 86.7% represents instruction and transportation for students
 - ◆ 10.5% represents operations and maintenance
 - ◆ 2.8% represents administration
 - ◆ County Executive has indicated that he is unwilling to increase County funding for 2026 Budget.
- ◆ **Where does that leave HCPS?**
 - ◆ Board would have to make cuts to budget or look for ways to add revenue.
 - ◆ School Systems are not required to provide transportation under state law. Charging for transportation, athletics or extracurriculars could be revenue sources, but these disproportionately affect student communities.
 - ◆ Board could make a smaller request that includes pre-emptive cuts in the hopes of getting at least some increase in County funding.



HCPS 2026 BUDGET REQUEST

◆ Possible cuts?

- ◆ 85% of Budget represents people cost, i.e. salaries, benefits, etc.
- ◆ Reduce proposed salary package to employees. This could increase the number of employees who leave for other systems.
- ◆ Any significant reduced budget request will likely include significant cuts to positions. Those will include central office positions, but classrooms will also be impacted.
- ◆ Reduction in classroom teachers will impact class sizes.



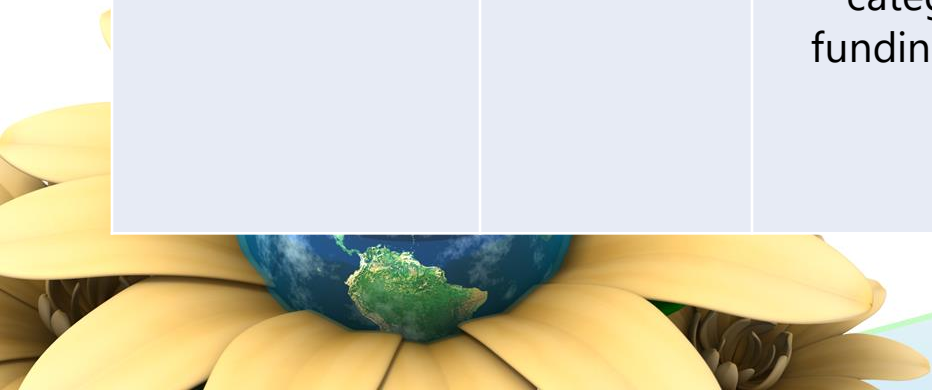
What can PTAs do?

- ◆ **Understand budget process and influencers**
- ◆ **Educate your membership**
- ◆ **Encourage engagement**
- ◆ **Attend budget meetings at all phases of budget**
- ◆ **Ask for meetings**
- ◆ **Send emails**
- ◆ **Invite influencers to your meetings**
- ◆ **Be realistic**
- ◆ **Understand the limitations**



Budget Timeline/Decision Makers

Who	When	Powers/Influence	Limitations	Tactics
Superintendent	August – January	With budget team, staff, system employees and community input, develops proposed HCPS budget	(1) Cannot raise funds; can only request; (2) legal requirements; (3) bargaining	(1) Attend input mtgs; (2) speak at board mtgs.; (3) invite to HCCPTA membership meetings (4) emails
Board of Education	January – February; May or June	Reviews and approves HCPS budget; can add or take away from categories or funding requests	Same as above	(1) Attend BOE budget mtg.; (2) ask for mtgs with ind. BOE members; (3) invite to PTA mtgs; (4) speak at Board mtgs; (5) emails



Budget Timeline/Decision Makers Cont.

Who	When	Powers/Influence	Limitations	Tactics
County Executive	February – April	With budget team, reviews each depts. budget request; requests community input	(1) Revenue; (2) State wealth formula	(1) Attend input mtg; (2) invite to HCCPTA membership mtgs; (3) send emails
County Council	April – June 15	(1) Meets with County Executive to identify their budget priorities; (2) Reviews and approves budget; (3) Can move funds within budget	(1) Revenue; (2) cannot add or take away from budget; can only move funds within budget	(1) Attend CC mtgs; (2) speak about budget prior to April; ask for mtgs with ind. CC members; (3) invite to PTA mtgs;



Budget Timeline/Decision Makers Cont.

Who	When	Powers/Influence	Limitations	Tactics
Harford Delegation	January – April	Amend Blueprint to slow down implementation of local funding portion and timeline of implementation	Opposition by activists in favor of implementing Blueprint as passed.	(1) Send emails; (2) Attend MD PTA legislative night in Annapolis – ask for meetings

Ref: Handout – Contact information elected officials

