

Board of Education  
Howard County Public School System  
10910 Clarksville Pike  
Ellicott City, MD 21042

26 September 2019

Dear Members of the Board,

My name is Jeff Heiges. My wife and I reside in Polygon 176 with our two children. I'm a former Naval Officer, having spent 24 years serving our country in the military. I enjoyed my time in the Navy, but decided to leave active duty to spend time with my family. You see, military life, while rewarding, involves being away from home a lot. Anybody who has served in our armed forces will attest to that. When we returned from deployment, I witnessed how my peers would have to uproot their families and move to another duty station and begin their lives again. Their kids would enter new schools with new teachers, have to make new friends, and learn the ropes of a new community. The stress of relocating was added to the 'normal stressors' like increased academic demands, establishing new peer relationships, and conflict in child / parent relationships. New teachers, new curriculum, new schools (both physical campus differences and culture / policies), made adjustment and "fitting in" even more difficult. I've listened to my military friends describe the anguish of their children struggling to fit into a new school environment. It was then that I made the decision to leave the service to find a stable environment where I would not have to move my family around.

I've looked at some studies, and the most common stressor seems to have been the challenge of making and maintaining close friendships (Bradshaw et al., 2010). Many kids have described that the ending of close relationships led them to avoid making close connections with peers at new schools. All this at a time, during very formative years, when close relationships with friends is extremely important. New students have often found it difficult to gain acceptance in social networks and established friend groups. Further studies have also shown that moving to a new high school can make it more difficult for students to become involved in extracurricular activities, especially if student groups have already been established. This occasionally has led to mental health concerns, as a decline in such activities have caused further withdrawal and depressive symptoms (Rossen & Carter, 2011).

All of these concerns can be applied to our kids today. It has been said by the Superintendent and members of the Board that all of our schools are great. So, why subject our children to these extra stressors? True, we are not physically moving from one house to another, or one city to another. However, our children still have to deal with all of the issues stated above. We can not overlook the potential negative impacts of moving 7400 children to different schools in Howard County. I've spent years defending my country, and now I'm fighting for my children to have a stable school environment. Give them the stability they deserve! Allow our children to keep attending their neighborhood schools; Allow them to maintain their sense of community; Allow them to maintain their close relationships with friends. Not even one child needs to suffer!

*Bradshaw, C.P., Suddhinaraset, M., Minari, K., & Blum, R.W. (2010). School transitions among military adolescents: A qualitative study of stress and coping. School Psychology Review 39, 84-105.*  
*Rossen, E. & Carter, C.D. (2011, February). Supporting students from military families. Principal Leadership, 11(6), 14-18.*

My name is Rebecca Keller and I am a member of polygon 2028. Thank you for your consideration and all that you do for our children and community.

We very much need to develop a plan that strengthens education opportunities and provide supports to close the achievement gap for students in need. Howard County is a naturally diverse community filled with excellent programs, sought out as a place to live by families from around the world. When I moved here, I was so happy to see all the things Howard County offered, and I was so impressed by the community...

Then came this redistricting plan. Why has something meant to be so beneficent been delivered to the community in an abrupt, heavy handed, almost malicious fashion?

We are told that "the kids will be fine"... Is it really fine to disrupt a familiar environment / comfort zone, (even drive past several schools to get to yours), without solid support networks in place in a new learning environment for transitioning students. It is a bit concerning that we are cutting out assistive faculty - so if there are less staff, where are the children going to get their support...

YOU are NOT addressing the root causes to these problems. HOW is moving a student from school A to school B going to help close that individual's achievement gap when you are taking AWAY educators. If you move individuals from varying performance arrangements around you can orchestrate it such that an INSTITUTION's performance averages out but what about the children?

HOW is moving a student from school A to school B going to fix the HISTORIC ECONOMIC disparities?!!!

HOW is moving a student from school A to school B going to fix racial disparities - This plan has certainly stirred heated discussion within the community but nothing has been beneficial, and mostly hurtful and harmful so WHAT are you going to do about that?

If you want to close an achievement gap, why not have programs and educators that target deficiencies and help students correct them - and have available at all institutions, and then make more institutions, like magnet schools, instead of spending resources on sending children all over the place.

If you want to fix economic disparities and improve diversity, then why not examine the land use and see what problems historic housing and community choices have created and consider re-examining the "land use" to enhance access to more members of the community.

If you want to fix racial disparities, then I quote [Letter from a Birmingham Jail (King, Jr)] "I am sure that none of you would want to rest content with the superficial kind of social analysis that deals merely with the effects and does not grapple with the underlying cause..."

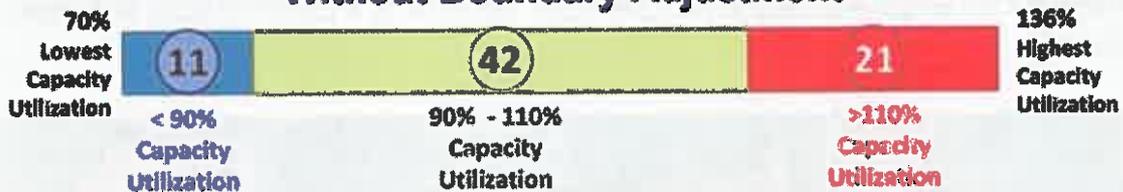
Please take care in what you are doing for the community... I want to believe in your good intentions.

You should not use the supposed end goals to justify negative or harmful means by which you seek to obtain them. We should always be mindful of all that we say and do... our children are watching.

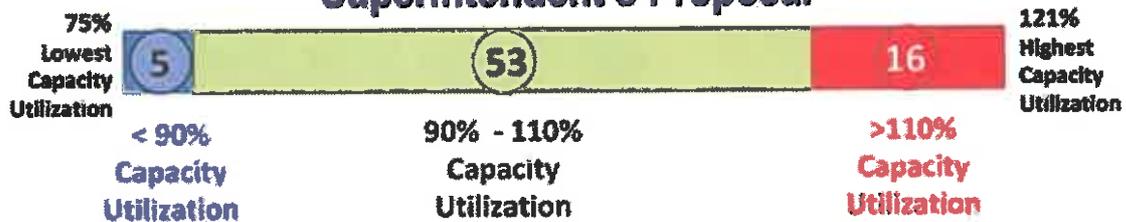


## Impact: CAPACITY Utilization

### Without Boundary Adjustment

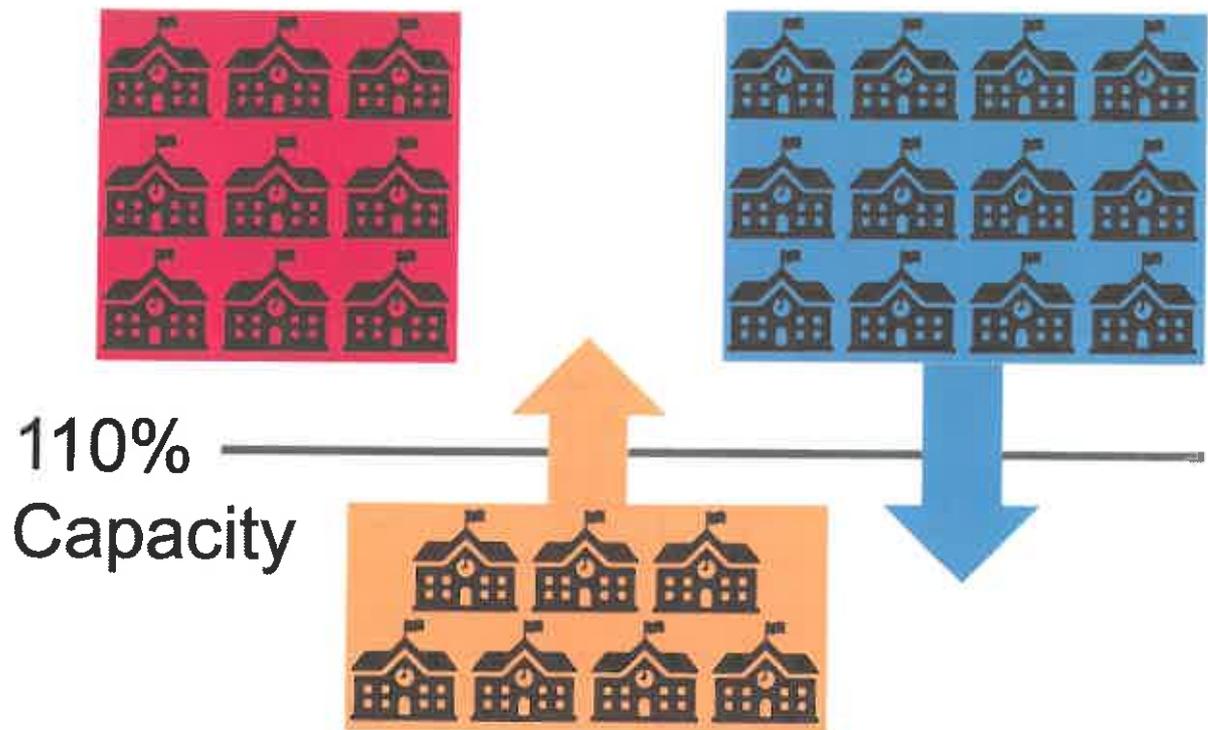


### Superintendent's Proposal



This chart, from the Superintendent's proposal, shows that we go from 21 down to 16 schools greater than 110% capacity. This isn't five schools moving over that line. This is a *net* change of five schools. And "greater than 110%" is totally arbitrary. If it were "greater than or equal to" instead of "greater than", we'd be going down from 22 to 19 - a net reduction of only three schools! This difference includes two high schools which increase from 95% to **exactly** 110% utilization - and one of those is Wilde Lake. Where is the equity in overcrowding the students who we are most trying to help?

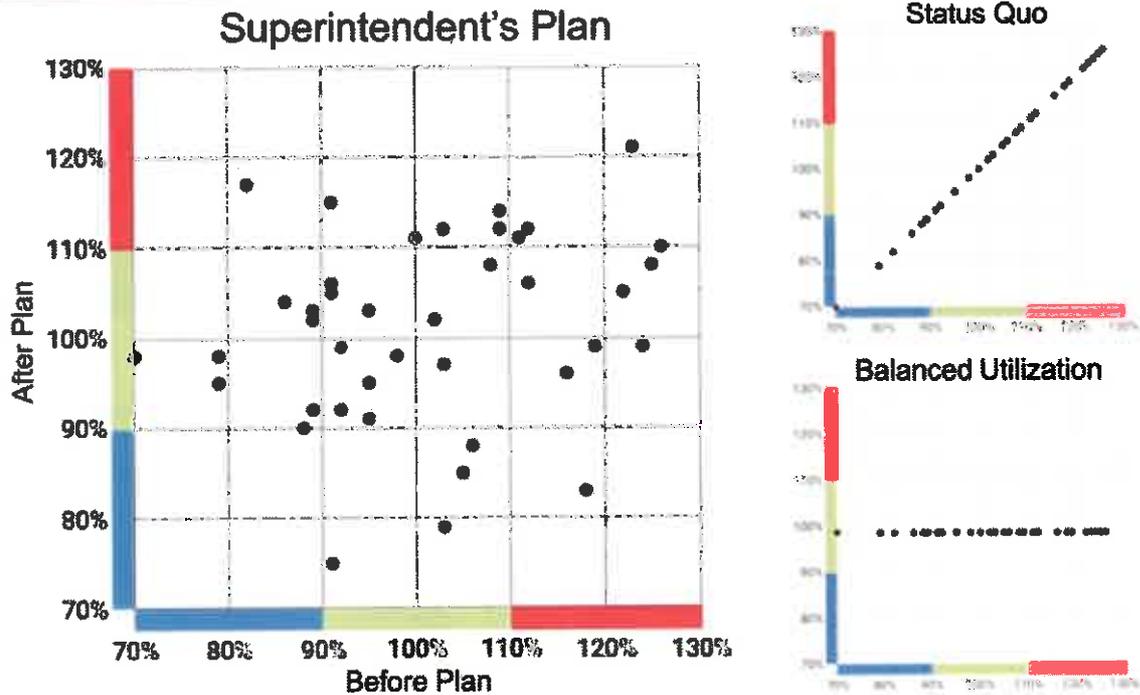
But let's go ahead with "greater than."



Across elementary, middle, and high schools, there are seven schools which are pushed to over 110% capacity, twelve brought below 110%, and nine which remain over 110%.

Here's a graph which shows how seemingly random the changes are in elementary school utilization.

## Utilization of Elementary School Capacity



Amongst elementary schools, there is a *net* reduction of **two** elementary schools over 110% capacity, but **six** schools are pushed to become **over** 110% capacity in the shuffle.

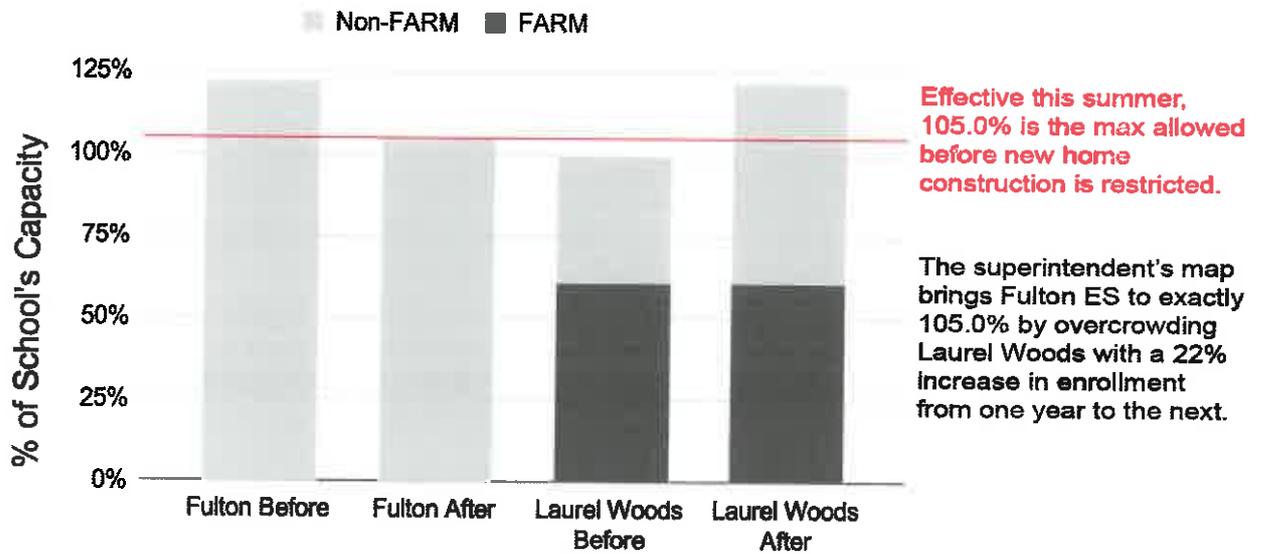
So, which schools become or remain overcrowded? The county's #1 most overcrowded school will be Laurel Woods Elementary - a Title 1 school that would jump from 100% to 122% capacity.

# 100% → 122%

Coming in second, overcrowded at 121%, is Talbott Springs Elementary - also a Title 1 school.

Stevens Forest Elementary, another Title 1 school, is another of the schools brought above 110% utilization.

And what of Fulton Elementary, whose only change is offloading our polygon to Laurel Woods?



The net result is that Fulton will **remain** near-zero FARM, but will be brought to **exactly** the 105% "adequate facility" maximum utilization, which will then allow for new high-end real estate development.

Laurel Woods would remain a Title 1 school, but will have the added challenges of onboarding a tremendous number of students, teachers, and trailers over a single summer.

Much has been made of Fulton's over-1000-student enrollment, but Fulton is our highest **capacity** elementary school. That's **without** accounting for Fulton's trailers and additional staff, which have been added gradually. It is just plain wrong to force a dramatic and sudden transition to extreme overcrowding on Title 1 schools like Laurel Woods. The status quo is far **better** in terms of both utilization and equity. If you must make changes, please consider the detailed alternatives that my Maple Lawn neighbors and I have proposed in earlier testimony.

My name is Amy Grutzik, and I live in polygon 224. I have an 8th grader and a 5th grader in the HCPSS. I am currently the PTA President of WFES.

Ninety-four years ago, West Friendship Elementary School's doors opened, bringing several one-room school houses together. This "little old country school" has seen many changes over the past ten decades, from being a two-story building with 1st-11th grades to a one-story building with K-5th grades.

In addition to the brick and mortar changes over the years, the make-up of the student population has also changed. West Friendship is a melting pot of farming and non-farming families who have been here for many years, families who have moved in and replaced empty nesters, families who have moved to small, new developments, and last year we welcomed families from Manor Woods Elementary School. We are Filipino, Korean, Chinese, Indian, Colombian, Lithuanian, Russian, African-American, Caucasian, Ethiopian, bi-racial--and that is just our 5th grade! Our community takes pride in our children and the inclusiveness that the students and their parents show others. Our school motto is "I will always be a friend at West Friendship!" and our kids practice that daily.

WFES has a 100% feed to Mount View Middle School. Looking at the map of polygons, you will see that Mount View is located in the center of the West Friendship school community. **See Exhibit A**

WFES's current enrollment is 394 students, with capacity of 414. A 95% utilization for our school is near perfection. The superintendent proposes moving 141 students from West Friendship. These students include the families who were redistricted to our school last year and families on the west side of Route 32. This would leave West Friendship at 79% utilization for the 2020-2021 school year and leave other schools in our region over capacity.

With the unique make-up of our community, a cookie-cutter approach for projecting enrollment in our area is not prudent.

The 2013 Feasibility Study stated, “West Friendship ES has consistently shown declining enrollment in recent projections. This report recommends proceeding with the closure of West Friendship ES ... and funds are more wisely invested in **construction of a new school** located within the sewer service area.” They recommended West Friendship students be distributed between Waverly, Manor Woods, and Bushy Park Elementary Schools.

The WFES community testified to the BOE to keep our community school open, knowing that the OSP projections of declining enrollment were incorrect. In fact, the 2013 report predicted enrollment to be **225** in 2017. Actual 2017 enrollment was **328**, a difference of 103 students, 46% more than projected. This was only a four-year projection. Why were the OSP numbers so off? Thank goodness the BOE listened to our testimonies, trusted that we knew our community, and did not close our school. **See Exhibit B**

We disagree with the OSP’s current enrollment projections for our school and feel they are too aggressive in projecting homeowner turnover. Since our school is not over capacity, we ask the BOE to keep all current students at WFES. This will give the families who were recently redistricted to our school time to settle and allow the students west of 32 to continue at our school without increasing their already long bus rides.

**The WFES PTA conducted a community survey and holds the following positions:**

1. School communities must be protected by county government from over-development with realistic consideration of school capacities and long-term assessment.

The Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO) is a land use policy that helps to manage the pace of growth in response to the pressure that growth places on school and roadway capacity. It links residential construction to an elementary schools test, a school regions test, and a road test. This legislation from the county government was put in place to protect our communities.

Effective January 1, 2019, the schools test added that high school districts must be below 115%, reduced elementary school districts testing to 105%, and reduced middle school districts testing to 110%. We are thankful to the county government for strengthening this test.

But here's the kicker: APFO does **NOT** apply to the Turf Valley development. The developer was grandfathered due to exemption 16.1107(b)(6). At the time, the exemption was most likely tailor-made for this developer. This developer is not concerned with the lack of capacity for schools to absorb new populations. This is very apparent with the continual development of Turf Valley where **1,005 additional housing units** are slated to be built. By 2030, a total of **1,547** housing units will have been built without having to abide by the schools test! In addition, Chapelgate Development across the street from Turf Valley is scheduled to be built in 2021. The County Council and BOE need to recognize that there is no safeguard for this community. **See Exhibits C & D.**

The current over-development at Turf Valley is disrupting established neighborhoods and school communities. Existing students are being pushed out of their school communities for new students. With this community having no safeguard from APFO, we are asking the BOE to be very deliberate in making attendance area decisions. **Although the BOE is not in charge of APFO, they can redistrict in a way to help protect our community and students. Lowering school utilization just opens the gate for queued-up development, which would put families in our community in an even worse situation.**

2. No elementary student should be redistricted more than once between kindergarten and 5th grade.

As outlined in Policy 6010, one of the factors in the review of any school attendance area adjustment plan is community stability. Where reasonable, school attendance areas should promote a sense of community by:

- avoiding feeds of less than 15% at the receiving school;

- keeping areas that are made up of contiguous communities or neighborhoods together; and
- making every attempt to not move a student more than once at any school level.

The superintendent's plan recommends moving polygons 171, 179, 1179, 178, and 1178 from WFES to Triadelphia Ridge Elementary School. These polygons were moved to WFES for the 2018-2019 school year. Moving these polygons again so soon would result in their children going to their third elementary school within four years, while living in the same house. How is this reasonable?

In addition, the feed from TRES to Mount View MS would be approximately 2.5%.

Polygon 171 does not currently have any students. We agree with moving this polygon to TRES as it will make a contiguous community with polygon 1171 and TRES. There will be new housing built there in a few years, and it makes sense to move this polygon prior to students moving in.

3. There should be a limit on one-way bus transportation times for students with a maximum of 60 minutes and the least amount of time possible on highways.

Longer bus routes in the rural western and northwestern parts of the county are inevitable, due to greater distances between homes and fewer children getting on the bus at each stop. However, every effort should be made to limit the total time students are on the buses, particularly for our youngest children.

The longer the bus has to travel, the more likely there is to be an accident. Moving polygons 232, 231, and 1231 to the western feeder schools will make those students travel down route 32 during morning rush hour traffic. Route 32 is a major artery, and there are many accidents on this road. The bus rides of students in polygons, 232, 231, and 1231 to WFES are already pushing 60 minutes each way. Moving these students will increase their already-long commute, and just one

fender bender would push their time on the bus well past the current 60-minute limit.

4. A school which has seats available, should be able to maintain their current student body and, when possible, bring in new students to help relieve schools that are over capacity.

If a school is not overcrowded, students should not be moved out of it. If the school has capacity, students from overcrowded schools can be moved to that school but not to the detriment of the current student body. Moving students from school to school negatively impacts students' academic performance. It also results in added workload for school teachers and staff, who have to plan academically for the new students based on their school records, IEPs, 504 plans, etc. WFES is not over capacity; therefore, current students should stay there.

5. Any changes to current students for Mount View Middle School feeder elementary school assignments should be delayed, and the promised Turf Valley ES should be fast tracked.

To quote the 2019 Feasibility study "... elementary schools in the northern region of the county, which includes Centennial Lane ES, Hollifield Station ES, Northfield ES, St Johns Lane ES, West Friendship ES, and Waverly ES, will require 600-700 additional seats by SY 2024-25."

The promised Turf Valley Elementary School should be designated the new ES #43 and be fast tracked to coincide with redistricting in 2022. We understand that the money for building Turf Valley ES would come from the state and county, so the BOE needs to pressure our county executive and council representatives to make this capital project a high priority.

The superintendent's plan for the northern region would put it at risk for more immediate residential development, which would renew the cycle of increased student enrollment and more schools at overcapacity. **See Exhibit E.** We have suggestions on how to avoid this situation.

First, given that high school #13 in Jessup will open in the 2023-2024 school year, there will be another unavoidable school redistricting process in 2022, so it makes sense to postpone redistricting until then.

Second, split polygon 304. During the 2017 BOE redistricting work sessions, Ms. Delmount-Small requested polygons with expected high enrollment to be split. We recommend that this polygon be split between areas that currently have housing units and areas where building is planned. This way the “ghost” students could be moved to the closest ES with capacity, and students who attend Waverly ES could remain there. In addition, Manor Woods ES is not overcapacity, so students currently enrolled there should remain there.

Lastly, taking into account the WFES PTA’s enrollment projections. Given the inaccuracies in previous enrollment projections for WFES, we did our own projections based on an analysis of Polygon 232 and prior OSP calculations. See **Exhibit F**. We calculated utilization assuming all current polygons stay at WFES. For the next four years, our utilization would be 92%, 97%, 100%, and 104%. There would be no need to move students from WFES.

If the BOE follows these suggestions, students will be able to remain at their community schools, schools’ capacity would not be at a level that would attract more development, and new developments would be assigned to the closest school with capacity without moving established neighborhoods out of their communities.

6. Being forced to change schools is detrimental to the student’s and parent’s emotional health because it removes their community support system.

“It takes a village to raise a child.” There could not be a truer statement in the face of modern challenges for families of Howard County. The “village” is created by family, friends, neighbors, and the school community, who are all invaluable factors that influence children’s safety, security, and development. There is so much research to support this that it would be redundant to review it all in this testimony.

Childhood depression, anxiety disorders, and suicidal thoughts and attempts have skyrocketed in our country in the last decade. Howard County General Hospital's pediatric ER nurses report being overwhelmed by these cases. This Board of Education's response cannot be to disassemble the community support which protects our children on a daily basis and holds them together.

Switching school communities every few years increases stress for parents as well, as it can interfere with carpooling and before and after school childcare, which can put a financial strain on families.

7. Assignment to schools farther away than the nearest school to a community should be by choice, as in the option of magnet programs.

Parents choose where their families live, taking into consideration the public schools assigned to a community. Once students have begun attending a school, it should only be by their parents' choice to send them to a different public school. If redistricting results in changing students' assigned school, parents should be given the option to keep their children enrolled in their current school, as long as they can arrange for their transportation.

The only instance in which students should be attending a public school farther away than the nearest school to their community should be if parents choose to enroll them in magnet programs, which do not exist in our school system. Magnet programs provide more school choice to families and, according to the national non-profit Magnet Schools of America, they also are developed around a core set of five principles, which we believe align with the values of our school system: diversity, innovative curriculum and professional development, academic excellence, high-quality instructional systems, and family and community partnerships.

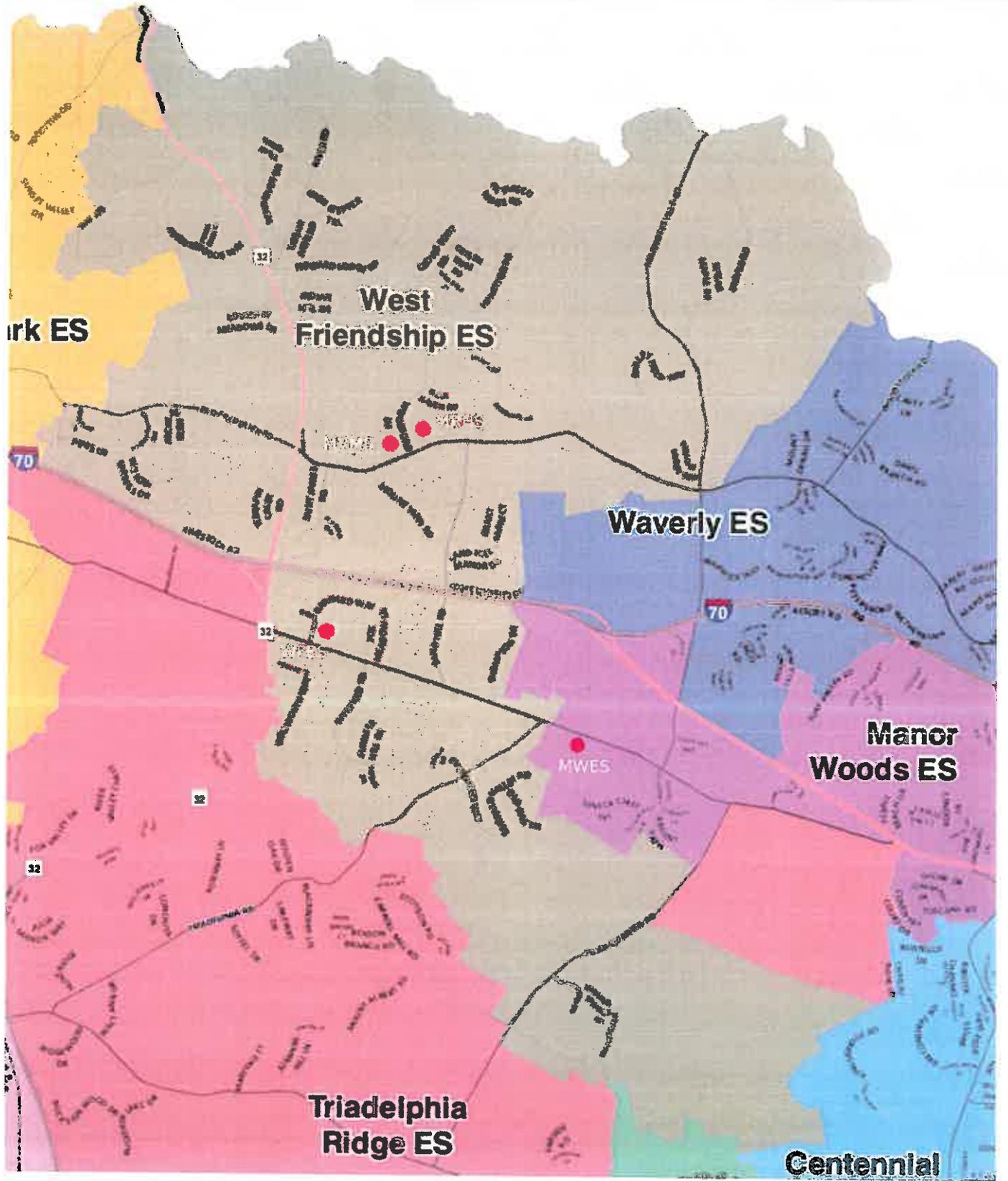
8. A minimum of 2 years advanced notice should be given to any polygon before it is moved to allow time for the BOE to research the impact on students to be transferred, get community input, make modifications, share information, and conduct long-term analysis of the plan.

Due diligence is necessary, and community input is important to completely understand any proposal for redistricting. Families have been given only three months to consider the superintendent's current proposal, which is not enough time. Also, these three months coincide with one of the busiest times of the school year.

We fear that redistricting decisions are going to be made quickly without long-term consideration, which will result in having to redistrict again in just a couple of years. Long-term solutions need to be made so that students are not moved around multiple times over their elementary, middle, and high school years.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

**Exhibit A**



**Exhibit B**

**Actual WFES Enrollment Compared to OSP Projected Enrollment**

	<b>2013 Feasibility Study Projected WFES enrollment</b>	<b>Actual WFES enrollment</b>	<b>Difference from Projection</b>	<b>% change</b>
<b>2013</b>	<b>273</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	
<b>2014</b>	<b>264</b>	<b>287</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>9%</b>
<b>2015</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>27%</b>
<b>2016</b>	<b>239</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>36%</b>
<b>2017</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>46%</b>

Exhibit C

## Turf Valley Growth

	Current Units		2019 New Units		2020 New Units		2021 New Units		2022 New Units		2023 New Units		2024 New Units		2025 New Units		2026 New Units		2027 New Units		2028 New Units		2029 New Units		2030 New Units		
	304	305	304	305	304	305	304	305	304	305	304	305	304	305	304	305	304	305	304	305	304	305	304	305	304	305	
Polygon	304	305	304	305	304	305	304	305	304	305	304	305	304	305	304	305	304	305	304	305	304	305	304	305	304	305	
Single Family	91	96	2	0	21	0	30	0	30	1	15	15	0	15													
Townhouse	74	59	8	17	42	28	48	29	30	20	30	30	35	19	17											3	
Apartment	192	30	0	30	0	0	40	0	40	0	40	0	40	0	40	50	40	40	40	0	40	0	40	0	40	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>357</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>3</b>	

Current Number of Units - never had to adhere to APFO			
Polygon 304	357		
Polygon 305	185	current =	542
<b>Total</b>	<b>542</b>		

Number of Units by the end of 2022 - never had to adhere to APFO			
Polygon 304	648		
Polygon 305	310	increase from current =	416
<b>Total</b>	<b>958</b>		

Number of Units by the end of 2030 - never had to adhere to APFO			
Polygon 304	1,065		
Polygon 305	482	increase from current =	1,005
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,547</b>		

**Exhibit D**

# Chapelgate Development

	Current Units	2019 New Units	2020 New Units	2021 New Units	2022 New Units	2023 New Units	2024 New Units	Grand Total
<b>Polygon</b>	1304	1304	1304	1304	1304	1304	1304	1304
<b>Single Family</b>	16	0	0	0	0	0	0	16
<b>Townhouse</b>	0	0	0	33	33	34	34	134
<b>Apartment</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	16	0	0	33	33	34	34	150

**Exhibit E**

**Superintendent's Plan For Northern Region Schools**

Supt. Proposal - Elementary		Enrollment	Projected Enrollment				Projected Utilization				
Elementary School	Capacity	BASE	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	BASE (2020-21)	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Manor Woods ES	681	624	676	685	672	703	92%	99%	101%	99%	103%
Centennial Lane ES	647	715	715	718	736	727	111%	111%	111%	114%	112%
St Johns Lane ES	612	726	606	614	627	641	119%	99%	100%	102%	105%
Hollifield Station ES	732	923	806	791	772	753	126%	110%	108%	105%	103%
Waverly ES	788	886	833	839	844	849	117%	106%	106%	107%	108%
West Friendship ES	414	426	327	344	350	368	103%	79%	83%	85%	89%

Supt. Proposal - Middle School		Enrollment	Projected Enrollment				Projected Utilization				
Middle School	Capacity	BASE	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	BASE (2020-21)	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Burleigh Manor MS	779	806	794	799	803	778	103%	102%	103%	103%	100%
Folly Quarter MS	662	674	674	677	664	660	102%	102%	102%	100%	100%
Mount View MS	798	842	854	905	922	921	106%	107%	113%	116%	115%
Patapsco MS	643	775	729	780	806	818	121%	113%	121%	125%	127%

Supt. Proposal - High School		Enrollment	Projected Enrollment				Projected Utilization				
	Capacity	BASE	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	BASE (2020-21)	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Centennial HS	1,360	1,634	1,505	1,519	1,556	1,571	120.3%	111%	112%	114%	116%
Marriotts Ridge HS	1,615	1,530	1,783	1,818	1,859	1,878	94.7%	110%	113%	115%	116%
Mt Hebron HS	1,400	1,644	1,458	1,482	1,510	1,527	117.4%	104%	106%	108%	109%

Exhibit F

Polygon 232 Student data as of September 2019

Address	Private/Home school	< 1yo	1yo	2yo	3yo	4 yo	K	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th
Street W	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	2	1	0	2	0	0	1	0
Street A	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	3	0	1	0	1	2	1	1	1
Street H	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	0
Street P	0	0	1	2	0	2	2	3	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Street T	3	0	0	1	2	1	3	1	2	2	2	2	2	5	5	0	8	1	3
Street O	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	5	1	2	1	2	0	0	0	1	1
Street U	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	3	1	0	2	0	0	1	0	1	0	2	0
Street G	3	3	0	3	1	2	0	1	1	2	0	2	1	1	1	0	0	1	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>

	WFES PTA proj	OSP proj	Delta	%
ES	52	50	-2	
MS	27	28	1	
HS	26	37	11	
<b>2019 Total</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10%</b>
ES	51	54	3	
MS	26	27	1	
HS	31	38	7	
<b>2020 Total</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>10%</b>
ES	43	57	14	
MS	28	29	1	
HS	34	39	5	
<b>2021 Total</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>19%</b>
ES	41	57	16	
MS	32	30	-2	
HS	30	40	10	
<b>2022 Total</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>23%</b>

Members of Board of Education and Superintendent,

My name is Hong Hsu, a registered voter living in Ellicott City of Howard County.

Before I read superintendent's proposal, I have read general counsel Mark Blom's thesis "A Legal Roadmap from Desegregation to Diversity". Therefore, I saw three issues have been touched from the thesis: first issue is racial segregation, second issue is poverty concentration, and third issue is students' performance at school. I also watched Larry Walker's speech at Celebration of Church at Columbia from Internet regarding his comment on the issue.

Unfortunately, Mark Blom misunderstood concept of diversity which is the central talking point in his thesis. I would like to point out that diversity cannot, and should not be interpreted solely as a racial diversity. Diversity has broader meaning, for example, intellectual and talent diversity. It is BOE's responsibility to denounce his oversimplified interpretation using our taxpayers' money.

With Mark Blom's thesis in handy, unfortunately again superintendent used Mr. Blom's thesis as legal base and released his redistricting proposal. superintendent stated "..... my proposal is significantly different than the recommendations presented in the feasibility study. Our driving priorities through this process have been to relieve advance equity by addressing distribution of FARM students across." In other words, this strategic action is to use busing 7,400 students across whole county to reduce top FARM rate schools of 12 Elementary Schools, 2 Middle Schools and 4 High Schools down to 54% for ES, 45% for MS, and 42% for HS respectively. Because highest FARM rate is still above average 22.5% FARM rate in Maryland, multi-years implementation is needed to get FARM rate down to average 22.5%.

I notice that the proposal didn't use word racial segregation, didn't use word poverty concentration and didn't focus on students' performance issue. Instead word equity which has broader meaning has been used many times in the proposal. Because this proposal was directed by Board of Education in January, I would like to ask each member of BOE and superintendent three questions to clarify understand issues which divided Howard County residents and students' families right now:

First, should Howard County schools take students' performance issue including achieving gap as major focus?

Secondly does Howard County school has legal responsibility for the poverty concentration?

Thirdly does Howard County has racial segregation?

It becomes clear that difference in understanding on these issues is the root of current bifurcation. Each member of BOE and superintendent must answer these three questions unambiguously.

From the definition of equity from Strategic Call to Action from hcpss website

<https://www.hcpss.org/scta/>

“EQUITY is providing the access, opportunities and supports needed to help students, families and staff reach their full potential by removing barriers to success that individuals face. It does not mean equal or giving everyone the same thing.”

It seems to me that this equity definition is line with diversity definition. What are outcome measurements of equity with student group? Based on HCPSS, these equity measurements are:

No.1 high school graduation rate

No.2 Suspension rate K-12 in discipline practices

No.3 English language proficiency assessment from Maryland Report Card

No.4 9th grader’s four credits in any of the following: English language, mathematics, science, social studies, world language.

No.5 PARCC assessment of math and English

No.6 3 AP exams performance, SAT college readiness score 1010 ( 480 for Evidence-Based Reading and Writing and 530 for Math) .

No.7 Meet University of Maryland minimum academic requirement.

I read these equity measurements carefully. and you can see that superintendent’s redistricting proposal doesn’t line with any of above equity measurements! This proposal does nothing to help socioeconomic disadvantaged students to achieve equity success.

Abhijit Banerjee, the one of three Nobel economics prize winner this year and author “Poor Economics” said in his book that If the politics are right, good policies will eventually emerge. And conversely, without good politics, it is impossible to design or implement good policies, at least not on any scale when he discusses why school fail in Chapter 3 and Chapter 10. Abhijit Banerjee also lists three factors to help students from poor family:

First factor is a focus on basic skills, and a commitment to the idea that every child can master them as long as she/he, and her/his teacher, expends enough effort on it.

Second factor is training effective remedial teachers, at least in the lower grades.

Third, there are large potential gains to be had by reorganizing the curriculum and the classrooms to allow children to learn at their own pace, and in particular to make sure the children who are lagging behind can focus on the basics.

Rewarding top percent FARM students who did excellent job in basic reading and math proved extremely effective.

That lead me to ask an inconvenient question to each of BOE member and superintendent: What are the top threats to our Howard County Public School System today?

In my opinion, three threats to our school: A) school budget shortage, B) Less support to extracurricular activity including FARM student's involvement, C) huge different understanding to the direction of school system.

If we are trying to address equity issue, then students moved in and moved out and their families are core body for that implementation of equity. Without understanding what the redistricting mission and measurable objective are, these 74,000+ students would hardly be served for that mission. From all of testimonies from day one overwhelming majority speaker believes that students' performance including reducing achieving gap, is the No. 1 priority. That is the evidence!

In addition, the BOE needs to know the cost of redistricting. Without know the cost is similar to having Iraq war without knowing the cost. (in a March 16, 2003 Meet the Press interview of Vice President Dick Cheney, held less than a week before the Iraq War began, host Tim Russert reported that "every analysis said this war itself would cost about \$80 billion, recovery of Baghdad, perhaps of Iraq, about \$10 billion per year. We should expect as American citizens that this would cost at least \$100 billion for a two-year involvement." The United States Department of Defense's direct spending on Iraq totaled at least \$757.8 billion)

Dear each member of BOE, Details matter. Our schools have no exception.

As a professional education consultant, my suggestion to uplift all students should be:

- A) school must promote students' lasting interest in learning through a long-term learning atmosphere.**
- B) it must promote students to discover potential as early as possible in terms of individuality and improve the national quality of classes across subjects.** It is obviously that busing students around superintendent suggested didn't address students' performance issue. I believe the proposal oversimplified obstacle we are facing and it led to a wrong direction for our schools without having students' performance as a major focus consistently
- C) If we can have high 4-year college acceptance rate with student group, then high school graduation rate would increase automatically. Add 4-year college acceptance rate including FARM students' achieving gap as one of measurement for advance equity. We should increase numbers of counselors significantly at 4 higher FARM rate high schools and expands numbers of clubs significantly in middle and high schools. Experience proves that it is very effective approach!**

This redistricting proposal reflected superintendent's preconceived idea and bad politics by his ignorance. 64 years ago, the U.S. Supreme Court states that "public school does not hold responsible for school segregation unless the school denied student enrollment to his/her school closest to their home". Superintendent ignored this history today.

Dear BOE members, you heard hundred testimonies these days. you heard stress and fear from students, parent and Howard county tax payers. You also heard many positive suggestions. Now it's time for you to make decision to protect 7 thousand students from been tortured by the long bus trip. It's time for you to make decision to help FARM student to achieve equity success. It's time for you make decision to keep Howard county public school system in a right direction. Howard county' future should be decided by Howard count people. Howard county's future should not be decided by a general council, a disqualified superintendent or a professor of College Park.

Thanks for your consideration.

September 25, 2019

Jonathan Weiner  
5007 Altogether Way  
Polygon 1200

Re: Proposed School Redistricting Plan

Dear Board of Education,

I strongly oppose Superintendent Martirano's proposed school redistricting plan and ask that you vote against it.

The proposed plan would result in high school students from polygon 1200 attending Wilde Lake High School instead of River Hill High School. The commute from our neighborhood to Wilde Lake High School will take over an hour each way when accounting for traffic and bus stops. The long distance required to commute is unnecessary when our current high school is a short distance and short drive away.

My children will not have the opportunity to participate in before school or after school activities if so much of their day is wasted commuting to and from school and if it is more difficult for their parents to make a trip to the school when still needing to commute to and from work.

The added cost to transport students and the added time and cost for parents to drive further when needing to attend school functions, participate in activities, and assist students has not been accounted for with a feasibility study. The entire plan should be rejected until more information can be collected and reviewed.

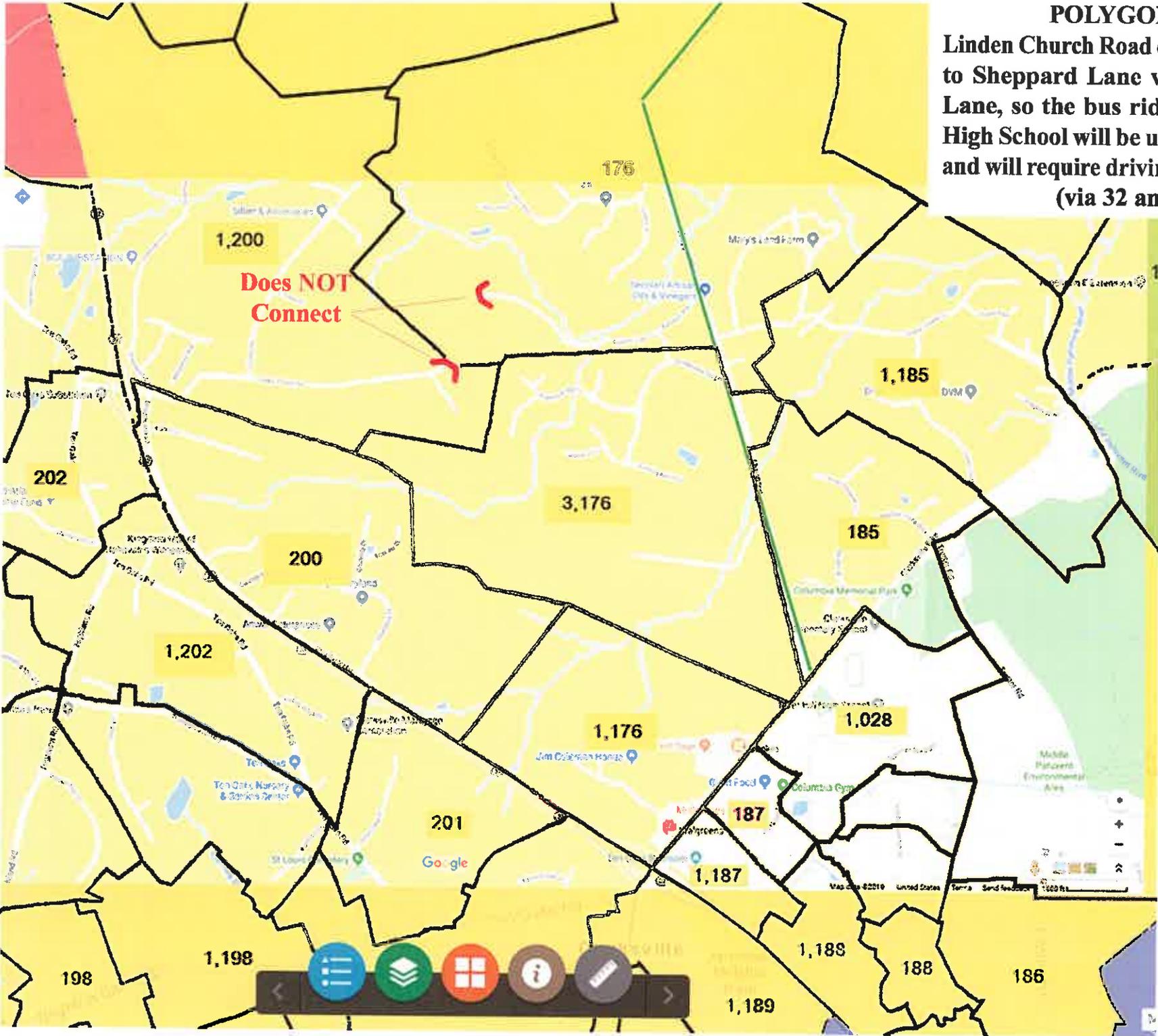
In addition to the longer commute times, the proposed plan violates the concept of Community Stability as outlined in Policy 6010(IV)(B)(2) as it isolates polygon 1200 as a land island. Polygon 1200 is isolated geographically by dead end back roads because Linden Church Road does not connect to any back roads that feed to Sheppard Lane, so it will create a very difficult commute that will rely on congested highways to drive to and from Wilde Lake High School. According to the "data-enroll-projections-suppressed.xlsx" spreadsheet provided by HCPSS, Polygon 1200 is projected to have 31 high school students in the 2020-2021 school year. A bus picking up these students will likely need to pick up students from another polygon to fill the bus, so the commute time will be extremely long because there is no access to a neighboring polygon by utilizing back roads. Furthermore, the proposed plan's redistricting of Polygon 1200 violates the concept of Community Stability because it isolates Polygon 1200 by making it the only polygon that attends Dayton Oaks Elementary School that will then attend Wilde Lake High School. Friendships and a sense of community developed over six years of attending elementary school with neighboring friends will be lost.

The Superintendent's plan is too flawed to pass in its current form and I ask that you vote against it.

Sincerely, Jonathan Weiner

# POLYGON 1200

Linden Church Road does NOT connect to Sheppard Lane via Autumn Tree Lane, so the bus ride to Wilde Lake High School will be unreasonably long and will require driving on the highway (via 32 and 29).



October 15, 2019

Good evening. My Name is Marybeth Steil and I live in polygon 1186. I am an attorney, but I am here solely in my individual capacity and not on behalf of any client.

I believe I am number 425 in the order of Testimony for this Group 3. Many of my neighbors have testified previously and I share their objections to the Superintendent's proposed move of our polygon from Clarksville Middle School to Harpers Choice Middle School.

But Tonight, my testimony is a little different. I have a couple of requests of the Board to make in their work sessions and deliberation.

First, the Board needs to demand Accurate Data with which to work. This Polygon system, and even the FARMS data and enrollment data, has some serious flaws. Feasibility study data on enrollment and capacities do not match the Superintendent's Plan nor does the school capacity data match the Maryland state totals. I am not clear on all of the reasons why the data seems to be so wrong. It's clear that the Board is not using a shared set of facts with which to work, and that **MUST** be remedied before you move forward.

Second, I believe the Board should demand an objective legal review of any plan it puts forward. As an attorney, I read the memo and watched the presentation of General Counsel Mark Blom. I have some specific issues with the characterization of some of the cases he cited, and I have enumerated those in an attachment to my written testimony for your review. Dr. Martirano's plan did try hard to stay within the race-neutral guidelines from Mr. Blom by primarily using FARMS data. However, we have since learned that people advising the Superintendent voiced unlawful race-based motivations for certain moves. As a taxpayer, I am not interested in spending tax dollars to defend an Unconstitutional plan.

Third, due to all that has happened, our community is divided. It's clear that this Plan was not formulated by a diverse group of individuals chosen to represent a cross-section of our community. 3 out of 12 high schools were not represented in the Attendance Area Committee. Racially, the committee failed to represent our Asian community, which makes up 20% of our county. This is wrong.

You, the Board of Education, have an opportunity to reject this divisiveness. In the spirit of healing this broken community, I urge you to Unanimously reject this Plan, use one of the Feasibility studies to relieve the most urgent overcrowding, and move forward instead to formulate a broad, community-based Plan that is truly representative of our diversity as a County. This Diversity is our Strength. We have an unbelievable array of smart, caring people who all want what is best for Howard County's students. Our objections are not about a fear of poverty or racism – it's because the formulation of this Plan did not include us. We want to do

**what will be truly effective in closing the achievement gap. Please reject the Superintendent's Plan.**

**Thank you.**

**Attachment**

## Memorandum

To: Board of Education, Howard County Public Schools

From: Marybeth L. Steil, Esq. (respectfully submitted individually and not on behalf of a client), resident of Polygon 1186

Date: October 15, 2019

Re: Questions for General Counsel to HCPSS regarding Dr. Martirano's Redistricting Plan

As stated in my oral testimony, I strongly oppose Dr. Martirano's Redistricting Plan as presented in August 2019. This memo is respectfully submitted with the intention of raising questions that should be answered by an independent legal review of whichever Redistricting Plan the Board of Education approves.

As you will recall, Mark Blom, General Counsel to HCPSS submitted a memo to this Board entitled "A Legal Roadmap from Desegregation to Diversity in America's Public Schools" from March 2019. He followed up that memo with a PowerPoint presentation to the board in May of 2019. These public statements were made in advance of the Attendance Area Committee meetings which occurred in June and July 2019, as well as the presentation of Dr. Martirano's plan in August. In short, a lot has transpired between Mr. Blom's advice and today, which raises questions as to whether Dr. Martirano's plan of using FARMS data as a race-neutral criterion to achieve equity in HCPSS is constitutional.

In Blom's memo, he cites the case of *Cruz-Guzman v. Minnesota*, 916 N.W.2d 1 (Minn. 2018) as a "green light" for potential desegregation lawsuits. In fact, this case's holding is only that the plaintiffs' claims of violations of the Minnesota state constitution's Education Clause were judiciable, vice the purview of the Legislature. See *Cruz-Guzman*, at 9. Further, after this case was remanded, it made its way through the courts again under *Forslund v. Minnesota*, 924 N.W. 2d 55 (Ct. App. Minn. 2019) where the Court of Appeals of Minnesota found that the plaintiff's failed to state claims for relief under the Education and Equal Protection Clauses of the State constitution, and the claim was dismissed.

In section II of Blom's memo, he cites and explains the *Parents Involved* case at length. *Parents Involved v. Seattle*, 551 U.S. 701 (2007), but fails to discuss an important part of the majority opinion in the case, mainly that "the Constitution is not violated by racial imbalance in the schools, without more." *Parents Involved*, at 721, quoting *Milliken v. Bradley*, 433 U.S. 267, 280 n. 14 (1977). Further, in the opinion of four of the Supreme Court justices (Roberts, Thomas, Scalia and Alito) racial balancing was strongly disfavored ("In design and operation, the plans are directed only to racial balance, pure and simple, an objective this Court has repeatedly condemned as illegitimate." *Parents Involved*, at 726.) Importantly, a result of Dr. Martirano's plan for certain school moves in River Hill High School and Harper's Choice Middle Schools, the population shifts are between Asian students and African-American students, presumably to more closely match Howard County generally, rather than the actual housing trends in the immediate school area. This would not be viewed favorably by those four justices (or likely the more conservative US Supreme Court as currently constituted), as

“...the racial demographics in each district – whatever they happen to be – drive the required “diversity” numbers. The plans here are not tailored to achieving a degree of diversity necessary to realize the asserted educational benefits; instead the plans are tailored...to the goal established by the school board of attaining a level of diversity within the schools that approximates the district’s overall demographics.”

*Parents Involved*, at 726-7.

Next, Blom cites *Doe v. Lower Merion School District*, 655 F.3d 526 (3<sup>rd</sup> Cir. 2011), *cert. denied* (2012) for the proposition that a school district could use student race as a factor when the formal goals of redistricting did not include race, but the school board there had considered the racial make-up of the student population under various redistricting plans. While this is correct, there are a number of important distinctions in *Lower Merion* that may prove problematic when applying it to HCPSS; first, the racial demographics in *Lower Merion* were quite different than here in Howard County, as under any one plan under consideration by the school board there the highest percentage of African American students (the largest minority group) would have been 14.5% (see *Lower Merion*, at 533). Clearly, this presents a very different diversity challenge than the schools that make up Howard County, in which only one high school presently constituted has over 50% white student population, and the white population does not change materially under Dr. Martirano’s plan (Gleneig High School, see page 26 of the plan, it drops from 76% to 74%). Further, the school plan adopted by the Lower Merion Board of Education and affirmed by the appeals court was based on keeping school feeds together, not other racial or socio-economic data. *Lower Merion*, at 537.

There are also a couple of cases not cited in Blom’s memo, which may prove helpful to a legal analysis, including persuasive case law that neighborhood schools are legal.

First, *Spurlock v. Fox*, 716 F.3d 383 (6<sup>th</sup> Cir. 2013), *cert. denied* 571 U.S. 954 ,134 S. Ct. 436, 187 L. Ed. 2d 283, 571 U.S. 954 (2013), which found that there was no violation of the Equal Protection Clause of the US Constitution in a student-assignment plan in Nashville, Tennessee, which used the choice of either attending neighborhood schools or busing to a more distant school in their same “cluster” as the basis for their plan, in order to balance school under-enrollment and overcrowding. The Sixth Circuit found that it is not the job of courts to rectify voluntary segregation in housing patterns:

“But to accept the general claim that geography-based school-assignment policies are unconstitutional because they are really nothing more than race-based policies in disguise would mean that any neighborhood-school policy adopted in a community with racially identifiable housing patterns is unconstitutional. Such a far-reaching implication has been repeatedly disavowed by both the Supreme Court and this circuit. See *Freeman v. Pitts*, 503 U.S. 467, 495 (1992) (“Where re-segregation is a product not of state action but of private choices, it does not have constitutional implications. It is beyond the authority and beyond the practical ability of the federal courts to try to counteract these kinds of continuous and massive demographic shifts. To attempt such results would require ongoing and never-ending supervision by the courts of school districts simply because they were once de jure segregated.”); accord *Parents Involved*, 551 U.S. at 721, 736-37; see also *Nat’l Ass’n for the Advancement of Colored People v. Lansing Bd. of Educ.*, 559 F.2d 1042, 1049 (6th Cir. 1977) (“As a matter of general principle, assigning school children to schools in their neighborhoods does not offend the constitution. Racial imbalance in the schools does not, in itself, establish a

**constitutional violation. The Constitution imposes no duty on school officials to correct segregative conditions resulting from factors over which they have no control, such as residential patterns, and the failure to anticipate the effect on racial composition of the schools of adherence to a neighborhood school policy does not signify that a school board has created a dual system, absent a showing of segregative intent.”** (internal citations omitted).”

*Spurlock*, at 396 (emphasis added).

A contrasting case to that of the *Cruz-Guzman v. Minnesota* case can be found in Florida, in *Citizens for Strong Schools v. Florida State Board of Education*, 262 So.3<sup>rd</sup> 127 (Fla. 2019), where the Supreme Court of Florida rejected a challenge to the State’s K-12 public education system based on the State’s alleged failure to comply with the mandate in article IX, section 1(a) of the Florida State Constitution that the state provide “uniform, efficient, safe, secure, and high quality system of free public schools that allows students to obtain a high quality education” for failing to provide a high quality education for certain subgroups of students, namely minority, low income and students with disabilities. *See Citizens for Strong Sch., Inc.*, at 129-131. Further, the plaintiffs in the Florida case not only “failed to establish any causal relationship between any alleged low student performance and a lack of resources” but also presented evidence which found a “lack of any causal relationship between additional financial resources and improved student outcomes.” *Citizens for Strong Sch., Inc.*, at 143. Important to note for HCPSS is that there has yet to be any allegation that the current achievement gap is due to any deficiency in funding resources. Additionally, there is not any evidence presented that additional financial resources would improve student outcomes here in Howard County for any section or subsection of students. Dr. Martirano’s plan does not address either question.

In conclusion, it is imperative that the Board receive sound, objective advice on the constitutionality of any plan upon which it will vote. As Dr. Martirano’s plan may not be constitutional. It is abundantly clear that Blom’s original advice of using choice-based plans, like magnet or charter schools, remains less contentious and is more likely to enjoy broad-based community support.

October 15, 2019

Good evening Howard County Board of Education:

My name is Katie Fry Hester. I live in polygon 180, in the Woodmark Community. I have been a resident of Howard County for almost 20 years and am the mother of two girls, ages 10 and 13. Thank you for increasing the number of scheduled public hearings to allow for ample opportunity for community participation. (I know what long hearings are like!)

I'm also the State Senator for District 9, which encompasses parts of Howard and Carroll County. Today the Howard County Senators issued a joint statement regarding the need for redistricting in our County. We have no role in the determination of school boundaries. However, a significant amount of annual capital funding for school construction and renovation originates from the state's budget, and we recognize the importance of addressing school capacity issues. In 2019, we passed legislation enabling the County Council to increase the school facility surcharge. Next year, we will be advocating for tens of millions of additional school construction dollars statewide. That said, there are insufficient public funds to rely exclusively on new school construction to alleviate current overcrowding. Bottom line, we can't build our way out of the overcapacity problem, and it does not serve the long term benefit of the School System to kick the can down the road any longer. Our full statement is attached.

Given the importance of public input, I have encouraged constituents who have react out to our office to contact you directly -- and am submitting copies of the emails and letters I have received as backup. The detailed requests are mostly for specific changes or improvements to HCPSS Policy 6010, which currently calls for consideration of: facility utilization, community stability and the demographic

characteristics of the student population<sup>1</sup>. The letters I received also cited additional research on student health, achieving equity, and a lengthy petition on grandfathering juniors. I implore this body to take the comments and concerns of your constituents and community members seriously.

I'd like to step out of my role as a State Representative for a moment and into my role as a partnership professional who has spent decades working to bring people with diverse perspectives together to solve difficult challenges. I have some perspectives to share. With almost no exceptions, successful partnerships and change programs all have three characteristics: 1) a clear and transparent process, 2) engagement of all stakeholders as partners, and 3) a recognition that real progress is not a linear process. Real progress takes considerable time, effort, and compromise.

I embrace the pursuit of equity in Howard County. And I would like to see the county succeed in establishing an open, inclusive, and long-term process to build equity in Howard County. Precisely because of this, I also believe that a thoughtful process that results in a modified redistricting plan is not a vote against equity. The input of your constituents matter, and should be considered no matter which side of this specific plan you are on. I encourage you to consider three key questions:

- 1) **How do we ensure success when the final plan is launched?** What did we learn from the Jump Start program? What type of wrap-around support will our children and teachers need? How does the further roll out of Kirwan impact our local plans?
- 2) **How can we work more collaboratively to promote equity?** I support a collaborative process across the BOE, County Council and State and representative community members to promote

- 
- <sup>1</sup> **Facility utilization** including the efficient use of available space, projected enrollment, fiscal responsibility, anticipated transportation time and distance, and maintaining an equitable distribution of regional programs located throughout the county.
  - **Community stability** including feeds that encourage keeping students together (avoiding feeds of less than 15%), the contiguousness of communities and neighborhoods, and the frequency with which any one student is reassigned.
  - **Demographic characteristics of the student population** including racial/ethnic and socioeconomic composition (as measured by federal FARMS program data), academic performance as measured by standardized testing, level of enrollment in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programs, and the number of students moved while taking into account the outcomes of all of the factors above.

equity using evidence-based strategies. How can we increase opportunities for student disproportionately impacted by the achievement gap? What role can parent choice and magnets schools play in promoting equity?

- 3) **Last but not least, what can we do to bring the community back together?** It has been a tense few months, to say the least. But this can be an opportunity to build on our Courageous Conversation about Race and Religion with an even deeper type of support. What could this look like? Is it a broader, more grass roots effort such as the national Living Room Conversations<sup>2</sup> program? Or is it similar to the work Tri County Mediation has done on the Eastern Shore<sup>3</sup>? Maybe it's an ongoing group of community members from around our diverse county that champion equitable policies across all parts of County government for years to come. We don't know yet, but I invite those interested to join me in having that conversation. Further, I have identified that the state court system<sup>4</sup> does has a unique grant for community mediation we could pursue, and I am more than willing to help.

It's no secret that we live in a highly polarized time. However, even when we disagree on positions, there are still core, underlying values we share. The only path forward towards a good solution is one where we listen and try to understand each other. As a state senator, parent, and Howard County community member, I am committed to supporting processes that engage all people from our community as equal partners and work to unite the community in support of all of our children. Thank You.

Katie Fry Hester

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.livingroomconversations.org>

<sup>3</sup> <https://salisburyindependent.net/publicforum/community-engages-in-conversations-about-race/>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.mdcourts.gov/procurement/grants/macro/crcurrentopportunity>



THE MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**Joint Statement from Howard County Senators on the HCPSS School Boundary Review Process**

**October 15, 2019**

*This is a joint statement from Senators Clarence Lam, Guy Guzzone, and Katie Fry Hester, and it is not an endorsement of any specific boundary proposal.*

As Howard County State Senators, we have an ongoing interest in the Howard County Public School System's (HCPSS) school boundary review process (also known as "school redistricting"). While we as state legislators have no role in the determination of the new boundaries, we have been monitoring the progress of HCPSS in this process because a significant amount of annual capital funding for school construction and renovation originates from the state's budget and because we recognize the importance of addressing the current school enrollment and capacity issues.

During the 2019 legislative session, the Maryland General Assembly passed HB1409 to enable the Howard County Council to implement increases to the school facilities surcharge (also known as impact fees) as part of a comprehensive consideration of school and housing needs. Furthermore, the General Assembly leadership has indicated an intent to prioritize additional capital funding for public school systems with their plan to introduce HB1 and SB1 in the 2020 session, which will allow for hundreds of millions of additional school construction dollars statewide. However, these measures must work in conjunction with school redistricting efforts by the Board of Education.

The Howard County Delegation convened a special work session on January 12, 2019 in part to seek information from HCPSS regarding the school redistricting process. Based on that meeting, it remains our firm belief that:

- There are insufficient public funds at the state and local levels to rely exclusively on new school construction to alleviate current overcrowding.
- School redistricting is the most immediate and efficient method of addressing overcrowded schools and can no longer be delayed because of worsening overcapacity at certain schools and the underutilization of space in other schools within HCPSS.
- The final determination of school boundaries lies solely with the Howard County Board of Education (Maryland Code, Education Article §4-109 (c)<sup>1</sup>), and any feedback on redistricting is encouraged to be submitted directly to them.

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<sup>1</sup> (c) With the advice of the county superintendent, the county board shall determine the geographical attendance area for each school established under this section.

- Members of the Delegation retain the legal authority to sponsor legislation that can compel the Board to initiate the school boundary review process (e.g. in order to reduce overcrowding and ensure school capacity is within optimal target utilization).<sup>2</sup>

We would like to commend the Board of Education for voting unanimously after the January 2019 work session to initiate the school redistricting process in accordance with HCPSS Policy 6010, which calls for the following factors to be taken into account in the boundary review process:

- **Facility utilization** including the efficient use of available space, projected enrollment, fiscal responsibility, anticipated transportation time and distance, and maintaining an equitable distribution of regional programs located throughout the county.
- **Community stability** including feeds that encourage keeping students together (avoiding feeds of less than 15%), the contiguousness of communities and neighborhoods, and the frequency with which any one student is reassigned.
- **Demographic characteristics of the student population** including racial/ethnic and socioeconomic composition (as measured by federal FARMS program data), academic performance as measured by standardized testing, level of enrollment in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programs, and the number of students moved while taking into account the outcomes of all of the factors above.

Although this joint statement is not an endorsement of any specific boundary proposal, we are pleased that HCPSS Superintendent Dr. Michael Martirano and the Board of Education have continued to work in good faith to comprehensively address school system boundaries consistent with HCPSS Policy 6010. We applaud the Board's effort and willingness to increase the number of scheduled public hearings in order to allow for ample opportunity for community participation, and we urge the Board of Education to continue proceeding in a thoughtful and deliberative manner in the redistricting process.

We would like to remind community members that the boundary review process is still underway, and members of the Board of Education can amend or change any proposal based in part on testimony received from the public. We encourage all interested community members to continue to make their voices heard directly to the Board of Education in a respectful and civil manner, with written testimony being accepted by the Board through 4:30pm on November 19, 2019. (The HPCSS School Boundary Review webpage has comprehensive information on redistricting, including summaries, timelines, details and other tools available to the public.) The Board has several upcoming work sessions for deliberations on proposed changes that are open to the public before a final Board vote is scheduled for November 21, 2019.

In keeping with the Board of Education's timeline, we look forward to seeing a final plan for school redistricting approved by the Board on November 21st.



Senator Clarence Lam  
Chair, Howard County Senate Delegation  
District 12



Senator Guy Guzzone  
District 13



Senator Katie Fry Hester  
District 9

<sup>2</sup> See attached letter from the Office of the Attorney General articulating the authority of the state legislature to oversee the school boundary review process.

**cc: Members of the Howard County Delegation  
Members of the Howard County Board of Education  
HCPSS Superintendent Dr. Michael Martirano  
Members of the Howard County Council  
Howard County Executive Dr. Calvin Ball**

BRIAN E. FROSH  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

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ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL OF MARYLAND  
OFFICE OF COUNSEL TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

January 5, 2018

The Honorable Guy Guzzone  
Maryland General Assembly  
121 James Senate Office Bldg.  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

The Honorable Eric Ebersole  
Maryland General Assembly  
305 House Office Bldg.  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Senator Guzzone and Delegate Ebersole:

You asked for advice about the authority of the General Assembly to enact legislation requiring county education boards to adjust school attendance zones under specified circumstances. You further asked whether the legislation could apply to only one county. As discussed below, it is my view that such legislation would be constitutional even if it applied to only one county.

The Court of Appeals has recognized that legally county education boards are State agencies:

County school boards are considered generally to be State agencies because (1) the public school system in Maryland is a comprehensive State-wide system, created by the General Assembly in conformance with the mandate in Article VIII, § 1 of the Maryland Constitution to establish throughout the State a thorough and efficient system of free public schools, (2) the county boards were created by the General Assembly as an integral part of that State system, (3) their mission is therefore to carry out a State, not a county, function, and (4) they are subject to extensive supervision by the State Board of Education in virtually every aspect of their operations that affects educational policy or the administration of the public schools in the county.

*Chesapeake Charter Inc. v. Anne Arundel Co.*, 358 Md. 129, 136-37 (2000). Moreover, the Court has also recognized that the subject of public education has been entirely preempted by the legislature. *McCarthy v. Anne Arundel Co.*, 280 Md. 634, 651 (1977). No county government is authorized to enact an ordinance governing the geographic

The Honorable Guzzone and Ebersole  
January 5, 2018  
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boundaries for schools. State law currently empowers the county education boards to establish school boundaries. Education Article, § 4-109(c) ("With the advice of the county superintendent, the county board shall determine the geographical attendance area for each school established under this section.").

In light of the foregoing, it is my view that the General Assembly may exercise its authority over public schools by passing legislation requiring county education boards to adjust school attendance zones under specified circumstances. Moreover, such legislation could constitutionally apply to only one county.

Sincerely,



Sandra Benson Brantley  
Counsel to the General Assembly

Testimony in Opposition to the Superintendent's Redistricting Plan  
Before the Howard County Board of Education

October 10, 2019

**Indira K. Sharma**  
**Polygon 176**  
**Families for Education Improvement, Inc.**  
Contact: [indira.k.sharma@gmail.com](mailto:indira.k.sharma@gmail.com)

Good evening. My name is Indira Sharma, Polygon 176, and I have three children in our school system. I am here today, along with my group members, on behalf of Families for Education Improvement.

FEI opposes the Superintendent's redistricting plan as it does not address equity and poses harm to all kids. We support redistricting *to address overcrowding* in accordance with Policy 6010. We support addressing equity through solutions recommended by researchers and reputable organizations like the NEA. However, redistricting based on FARM rates is not one of those recommended solutions.

In addition to being an attorney at a large firm, I serve as Chair of my firm's Diversity and Inclusion Committee and have spent over a decade doing diversity work. I also chaired a non-profit serving underprivileged Baltimore City students. I know what the words diversity and equity mean and they are not synonymous.

Diversity is having the right numbers with respect to different groups and as your Policy 6010 states it includes many different factors such as race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status and more. Section IV(B)(3) of the policy includes socioeconomic status as just one six subfactors of diversity to be considered and does not place greater weight on this factor versus others. To adopt the Superintendent's plan which places greater weight on socioeconomic status would be a violation of your policy. Policy 6010 is not an equity plan and if this Board wants an equity plan, then it should take the time necessary to develop one that will actually work.

Unfortunately, the words diversity and equity have been conflated here. The plan has been marketed as "equity in action" but it really just plays with numbers. It does nothing to actually "remove barriers to success" for FARM students or provide them with "fair access, opportunities and support" as your Policy defines the term "equitable." In fact, this plan creates more barriers for all students by resulting in longer commute times, less sleep, less participation in after school activities and reduced parental involvement— factors that directly impact academic success.

Manipulating FARM numbers addresses socioeconomic diversity – not equity. We agree diversity in our schools enhances our learning environment. But, according to the Maryland Equity Project, our schools are already the most diverse in the region— both by race and socioeconomics. See Exhibit 1. Our Research Committee has yet to find any research declaring the optimal FARM rate for a school. Even the Century Foundation upon which proponents rely has concluded that "more research is needed" on

the optimal FARM rate. See Exhibit 2. Could some schools be more socioeconomically diverse? – Yes. But, moving 7400 students to make minimal, statistically insignificant changes in FARM rates in the name of “equity” is irresponsible given the greater negative impact on *all* children. See Exhibit 3.

Early this year, your General Counsel spoke to you about three ways to improve diversity numbers in schools: (1) parent controlled choice, (2) magnet schools and (3) redistricting. He said that redistricting was the most contentious. Why then would this Board even consider the most contentious option when (1) there are other options, (2) the evidence does not support redistricting will achieve equity and (3) as you have heard and will continue to hear, it poses harm to all students. I urge you to come up with a real equity plan because the Superintendent’s redistricting plan is not it.

## EXHIBIT 1

The Baltimore Sun commissioned an analysis from the Maryland Equity Project at the University of Maryland to create a database that breaks down every public school's racial and socioeconomic makeup. This project was supported with a grant from the Education Writers Association (a professional organization of members of the media who cover education at all levels.) The link to the data analysis can be found at: <http://data.baltimoresun.com/news/bridging-the-divide/>

If you go about half-way down the page, you can find the calculator that shows how integrated each school district is – by race and poverty. Below is an image of the calculator. This analysis shows Howard County to be the most integrated district. The citation is as follows: "Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data. Data analysis by the Maryland Equity Project, College of Education, University of Maryland."

### How integrated is your school district?

Race Poverty

Minority students in Maryland are more likely to attend school with minority students. White students are more likely to attend schools with white students. If schools were integrated, as research has shown benefits all students, the demographics of the schools would match the demographics of people living in the school district.

Select a school district to see how integrated your school is.

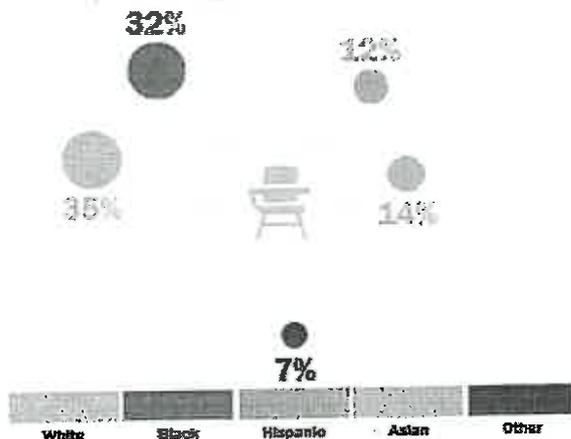
SELECT DISTRICT

Howard

If you are a **black student in Howard County** this is the racial makeup of the school you are likely to attend.

SELECT RACE

Black



Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data. Data analysis by the Maryland Equity Project, College of Education, University of Maryland.

Based on the above analysis, another article in the series (<http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/investigations/bs-md-school-segregation-series-howard-20170325-story.html>) states: "Howard County is the most integrated school district in the region, according to the Maryland Equity Project of the University of Maryland. Children of different races — especially those who are black and white — are more likely to sit next to each other in Howard than almost anywhere else in the state. But within that diversity, school leaders have uncovered a de facto system of segregation. Enrollment data obtained by The Baltimore Sun through a public records request shows that the district's advanced classes — honors, gifted and talented, and AP — are disproportionately white, while the regular and remedial classes are disproportionately black."

## Exhibit 2

The Century Foundation Source:

<https://tcf.org/content/report/recruiting-enrolling-diverse-student-body-public-choice-schools/>

Stating, "TCF (The Century Foundation) researchers have considered schools to be racially diverse if the largest racial or ethnic group in the school comprises no more than 70 percent of the student body. They have considered schools socioeconomically diverse if 30–70 percent of students are low-income (that is, eligible for free or reduced-price lunch).

Although the 30–70 percent rule of thumb is a reasonable starting place, **more research is needed to identify the thresholds for socioeconomic diversity in schools that provide for optimal learning...** there is less known about the specific demographic "tipping points" past which the benefits of a lower-poverty environment or harms of a higher-poverty environment exist."

### Exhibit 3

## WHAT THE RESEARCH SHOWS

Howard County Families for Education Improvement believes Superintendent Michael Martirano's Proposed Area Adjustment Plan, while well-intentioned, is ill-informed, may not improve the achievement gap in Howard County Public Schools, and may actually harm the very children we are aiming to help based on the following research:

- **Howard County Public Schools are a model for integration.** We acknowledge achievement gaps exist in Howard County Public Schools by race and socioeconomic status, DESPITE being the most integrated school district in the region. Therefore, a misguided effort focusing on "integrating" an already integrated school system will completely miss the root causes of the opportunity gap.
  1. A false narrative has been pushed that Howard County schools are the most segregated in the state. To the contrary, independent examination has shown these findings to be incorrect and based on seriously flawed statistical analysis.
  2. In fact, "Howard County is the most integrated school district in the region, according to the Maryland Equity Project of the University of Maryland. Children of different races — especially those who are black and white — are more likely to sit next to each other in Howard than almost anywhere else in the state." (Source: *Baltimore Sun*, March 2017, "Within Integrated Schools, de facto segregation persists").
  3. "The experience of Howard County — consistently ranked among the strongest public school districts in the nation — demonstrates that bringing students of different backgrounds together in the same schools isn't enough to ensure their success. Where educators have long spoken of the achievement gap — the differences in academic performance between white students and black, and affluent and poor — some are now focusing on the so-called opportunity gap." (Source: *Baltimore Sun*, March 2017, "Within Integrated Schools, de facto segregation persists")
- **Despite proponents' claims of "decades of research" supporting socioeconomic integration as a mechanism to address the achievement gap, the research is in fact inconclusive.** "It's not clear from the research available today that socioeconomic integration alone would produce the hoped-for gains on the academic side of the integration equation. The research on the effects of socioeconomic integration, including studies frequently cited by the strategy's proponents, is inconclusive." (Source: *A Reality Check on the Benefits of Economic Integration*, FutureEd, Georgetown University McCourt School of Public Policy, Sarah A. Cordes PhD, August 26, 2019)
  1. Flaws of prior studies: Association does not equal causation & Selection Bias: "It is hard to conclude from these studies that attending a socioeconomically integrated school causes better performance. The results instead could reflect underlying differences in the low-income students who make their way to higher socioeconomic status schools."
  2. Peer achievement, not socioeconomic status, drives academic improvement: "In a carefully controlled study of more than 130,000 students in Wake County, N.C., Caroline Hoxby of Stanford and Getchen Weingarth found that the improved academic performance of low-income students who moved to more affluent schools was mostly

explained by these students being exposed to higher-achieving peers, and that the socioeconomic status of students' peers and parents' education (often used as an alternative measure of SES) had no independent effect. This suggests that peers' achievement, rather than their economic status, was more important for improving test scores."

3. Importance of high educational expectations: "Rumberger and Palardy found in their national representative sample of more than 14,000 students that the relationship between school economic level and student performance was almost entirely explained by differences in teacher expectations, the amount of homework students do, the number of rigorous courses available to students... there's no evidence that an affluent student population is a prerequisite for effective educational practices."
- **Misguided attempts to address the opportunity gap through socioeconomic integration, without any understanding of its root causes, poses harm to low-income students.** Research shows that socioeconomic integration is associated with worse academic and psychosocial outcomes, particularly for African American and Latino students.
  1. A study of a nationally representative sample of 1,100 students by Richard Crosnoe of the University of Texas at Austin found that low-income students who attended higher income schools performed no better academically, had a slower progression through math and science courses, and had worse psychosocial outcomes.
  2. "As the proportion of the student body with middle- or high-income parents increased, low-income students progressed less far in math and science. Moreover, as the proportion of the student body with middle- or high-income or college-educated parents increased, low-income students experienced more psychosocial problems. Such patterns were often more pronounced among African American and Latino students." (Source: Crosnoe, R. *American Sociological Review*, 2009 October 1; 74(5): 709–730)
  3. In a study supported by the Center for Poverty at UC Davis, a Harvard researcher found that redistricting can "hurt already disadvantaged students and communities. Parents whose main mode of transportation was either walking or the bus system expressed concern about their future ability to reach their child's school in the event of an emergency... Many parents felt the increased commute would also prevent them from being actively involved at the school, or from enrolling their children in after-school activities." (Source: Penn D. *School Closures and Redistricting Can Reproduce Educational Inequality*, Center for Poverty Research, University of California Davis. <https://poverty.ucdavis.edu/policy-brief/school-closures-and-redistricting-can-reproduce-educational-inequality>)
  4. The 2019 HCPSS Equity Report, itself, suggests negative impact of the proposed plan by removing low-income students from their *familial and neighborhood supports* and increasing geographic and transportation barriers to *beyond school opportunities*, both of which are correlated in HCPSS data with higher graduation rates.

#### **Contact information for the cited research and policy experts:**

1. Sarah A Cordes, Ph.D. Assistant professor at Temple University's College of Education in the department of Policy, Organizational, and Leadership Studies. Her research focuses on the ways in which the urban context, including school choice, transportation, housing, and neighborhoods affect student outcomes. <https://www.future-ed.org/contact/>

2. Robert Crosnoe, Ph.D. Associate Dean of Research, College of Liberal Arts; Rapoport Centennial Professor, Department of Sociology; The University of Texas, Austin. His research suggests harm to low-income students from socioeconomic integration.  
<https://liberalarts.utexas.edu/sociology/faculty/crosnoer>

Dear HCPSS Board of Education members,

My name is Sharon Hoover and I live in polygon 1183. I have three children in HCPSS, two in middle school (Folly Quarter MS) and one in high school (River Hill HS).

**I embrace promoting equity in Howard County.** I have worked as a psychologist in the Baltimore City schools for several years and have seen the injustices of inequitable education and health on students in Baltimore. I now serve as Co-Director of the National Center for School Mental Health at the University of Maryland School of Medicine. This Center (and my career) focuses on advancing equitable mental health supports within schools across our nation, including in Howard County.

In 2014, I worked directly with the HCPSS Board of Education and Howard County Health Department as they implemented the County's first school mental health program at Bollman Bridge Elementary. I worked with Dr. Cindi Schulmeyer at HCPSS to augment existing student supports by providing accessible student mental health services during the school day. With the support of the Horizon Foundation and Health Department, this program expanded to five schools over the next three years, including Wilde Lake High School, and is now in several more County schools. I have served on the Howard County Mental Health Community Advisory Council since its inception, and now also serve on Superintendent Martirano's Mental Health Subcabinet. I remain committed to all students in Howard County, and recognize that we are all privileged to live here. That said, some of us hold more privilege than others, and we all benefit from recognizing privilege and power as a serious responsibility.

I applaud the Superintendent's vision of equity in education. I agree with the statement of our former Secretary of Education John King, Jr. that "the future of education is equity."

I do, however, have some concerns about Superintendent Martirano's redistricting proposal and the process used to develop and disseminate it. I am a strong proponent of community-partnered approaches that embrace building consensus through co-development and identification of shared values. Such a consensus-building planning process requires an investment of more time, important now, and also for the future. I urge you to consider a thoughtful approach to moving this forward, and one that meaningfully engages and informs all sectors of our County. **A thoughtful process that results in a modified plan is not a vote against equity.**

Specific recommendations for the current redistricting plan include:

- 1. Allow any student (9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> grade) who has already started in a high school the option to continue attending that high school.** This allows for parent/family and student choice to remain in their current school. There is irrefutable evidence on the value of school connectedness, particularly for high school age students, as they separate from parents, establish their identities, and connect with their high school peers, very often among their most significant friends for life. While connectedness is important for all students, it is uniquely important for high school students during this developmental stage. One of my colleagues, Dr. Peter Wyman, published an article last week on the increased risk of suicide among students who have fewer or less stable peer and adult networks in their high school, and it presents a

compelling case for the value of student-student and student-educator relationships in high school in fostering positive mental health and connectedness. To be clear, redistricting will not result in mental illness or suicidality for most students, especially those without existing mental health issues. However, maintaining stability of schooling in the high school years is a mental health matter, and a significant responsibility we must all assume in making decisions about moving students during this developmental stage. Students who have started in one high school should be allowed the opportunity to remain in that school for the duration of high school.

I acknowledge that double bussing of three grades is expensive. I recommend a cost analysis by Central Office and that the Board of Education ask Superintendent Martirano for what is needed to accomplish this important goal. In addition, if the County Council supports integration as stated in CR-112, then the funds to support this integration in a way that also minimizes disruptions to students during high school, must be provided. If double bussing is deemed too costly, consider allowing students to remain in their originating high school if families are able to provide transportation to the school. (There is precedent for allowing rising 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders to finish out in their current school even without HCPSS-provided transportation (done in my former neighborhood 10+ years ago when redistricted from Marriotts Ridge HS to River Hill HS).

2. Embrace options for moving students that do not cause undue transportation burden on the HCPSS system or the student/family. There are many examples of proposed moves in Superintendent Martirano's plan that run counter to Policy 6010, and will result in additional travel time/expense and have negative impacts on costs, sleep, before/after care, etc.
  - a. Our community (polygon 1183) is proposed for redistricting from River Hill HS (5 miles away) to Wilde Lake HS (8 miles away). **Polygon 1183 is 2.5 miles from Glenelg HS, which is currently at 82% capacity.** Our high school bus currently comes at 6:25am. I believe a move of our polygon to WLHS would require our community's high school students to **get on the bus before 6am**. That is counter to all data on school start time impacts on adolescent sleep hygiene, with well-identified negative impacts on those students' academic performance, school conduct, school attendance and tardiness, and even risks for harm from travel-related accidents. High school students biologically "change" during this developmental period with altered melatonin release (and thus later time to go to sleep, no matter where they reside), such that only deleterious impacts result from any travel or other conditions that make school start times earlier. There is simply no data from any school in any State thus far published that shows different (better) outcomes by having students get up earlier to attend high school, and all medical organizations (American Academy of Pediatrics, American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, etc.) remain united in their efforts to dissuade school districts from having earlier school start times for high school students.

Consistent with Policy 6010, a plan that adjusted polygons 1183 and 2183 to move to GHS from RHHS (which was recommended in one AAC report) would seem preferable both imminently, and, based on growth projections and school construction, for the foreseeable future. **Polygons 1183 and 2183 are the two closest to GHS that are currently being proposed for redistricting to WLHS.** Given Policy 6010 directives to *reduce* the number times a student/polygon is redistricted, it seems unwise to move polygons 1183 and 2183 to WLHS when they will likely have to be redistricted again in the near future to GHS to manage capacity issues. It would be preferable for polygons 1183 and 2183 to either remain at RHHS or be redistricted to GHS. Although moving polygons 1183 and 2183 to GHS would not move the needle on FARMs integration, issues of capacity, start times and transportation costs should also be factored in pragmatically.

- b. Keeping walking communities in their walkable schools would better support families, particularly with multiple children or limited childcare options for these children before and after school. Families rely on trusted others in their neighborhoods to help monitor and assist when parents must work or schedules impede being easily available when schools let out early, children are ill, or when other parent responsibilities limit their availability. Particularly for young children, familiarity with local schools, easy and safe access and transition to and from their schools must be balanced with any perceived advantages afforded by attending more distant schools. Increasing travel to further distances further adds a significant and unnecessary transportation cost burden on the HCPSS system.**
- 3. In partnership with a workgroup composed of broad membership of all Howard County communities, co-develop a strategic plan to promote education equity using evidence-based strategies, including consideration of the following:**
  - Recruit and support an education workforce that reflects and appreciates the racial and ethnic diversity of our community. Some strategies to achieve this include more intentional partnership with HBCUs and our local community colleges, incentivizing educators of color to work in our community, and ensuring that we are leveraging the strengths of and not overburdening or inappropriately relying on our educators of color.
  - Incentivize our most qualified educators to work with our students with the highest needs.
  - Increase opportunities and investments for students who are disproportionately impacted by an achievement gap. In Howard County, our African American and Latinx students are disproportionately impacted and this must be addressed. There are numerous strategies to increase opportunity, including adjusting how students are selected for AP classes (in which African American and Latinx students are currently less selected/enrolled in Howard County), providing more intensive individualized support for African American and Latinx

students, and investing in culturally responsive education training and implementation support for our educators.

- Implement social emotional learning (SEL) that fosters equity (see new CASEL.org guidelines on infusing equity into SEL).
- Implement restorative practices that reduce exclusionary discipline practices that disproportionately impact students of color, especially African American and Latinx students.
- Invest in early childhood and kindergarten readiness, especially in communities that have disproportionately lower readiness indicators, including students of color and lower socioeconomic status. Brain science and education science provide ample evidence that investing in these domains leads to better outcomes for children in all domains. These investments include socioemotional development of young children, cultivating bi-lingual education settings in early childhood, recruiting and supporting highly qualified early education teachers, and creating racially and socioeconomically diverse early education settings.

Again, I applaud Dr. Martirano and the Board of Education for acknowledging and taking on the important issue of equity. I urge you to be thoughtful, logical, and visionary in your decision-making as equity will not be achieved with this one decision alone; indeed, every step of this process can build cohesion and commitment toward equity, or lead to fragmentation and active opposition. There are important steps to take now, and many steps will be influenced by these initial steps and decisions. You cannot be held solely responsible for advancing equity in our community, but you can demonstrate thoughtful leadership that paves the way for ever-increasing equity in Howard County.

I believe socioeconomic equity rests on the shoulders of our entire community, and I believe most Howard County residents also share a commitment to equity for all our residents, and particularly our children. I am concerned that the Board of Education is being positioned to make up for decisions that have prohibited affordable housing in certain communities and that have limited socioeconomic integration. (I am hopeful that the County Council will consider eliminating or modifying current single family residence zoning in an effort to foster socioeconomic integration.) The Board of Education has a responsibility to promote equity, but so too does our County Council and our County Executive. I am also concerned that the limited time the Board of Education has had to make a thoughtful, due diligence decision is not in balance with the weight of this decision in this watershed moment in our County's history to advance equity.

Let us move toward equity, and do so in an exemplary reasoned, thoughtful, and positive way.

Sincerely,

Sharon Hoover, Polygon 1183 Resident and Parent

Dear Board of Education and Representatives

This testimony pertains to rising juniors and their families, county wide. If redistricting occurs in any form for the 2020-2021 school year, we are requesting that all rising juniors remain at their currently assigned high school to complete their high school education per Policy 9090, III, m. "Junior Status – The situation in which a student has earned a minimum of 10 credits, including English 9 and English 10." Historically, the Board has approved grandfathering juniors during what many claim is their most important year of high school. Below supports the grandfathering of juniors:

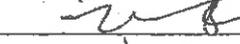
- Junior year is a critical year for students. Academically, it is the most challenging as they continue to prepare for strong college applications, which includes:
  - Continuing to work at a high level to maintain or achieve their highest GPA, as this is the last full year of grades that colleges consider
  - Preparing for standardized tests (SAT, ACT, AP Tests, Subject Tests and specialized portfolios for the arts) in addition to their ongoing and demanding workload
  - Identifying teachers who will write strong letters of recommendation for them
  - Beginning the process of college searches and visits
  - The start of internships for many juniors, requiring travel and increased workload in addition to academic requirements
  - Closely approximating a college course load so colleges can see how they manage a high level academic schedule
- Loss of established relationships with:
  - Counselors/Advisors: EVERY COUNSELOR IS REQUIRED TO WRITE A LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION FOR THEIR STUDENTS TO BE USED FOR COLLEGE AND/OR PROGRAM APPLICATIONS. For a strong letter of recommendation, the counselor/student relationship is established over four years.
  - Teachers: children rely on their teachers for letters of recommendation to colleges, for internships and work opportunities, as well as continuity in a particular course of study, such as foreign language, Project Lead the Way and various advanced classes.
  - Coaches: children are REQUIRED to make Varsity teams in almost all sports in order to play their junior and senior years. Students have spent two years demonstrating their athletic abilities to their coaches in an effort to earn a spot on a team, not to mention leadership positions such as team captain. These are earned accomplishments that improve college applications as well as personal growth
  - Sponsors: very personal relationships are built with teachers who sponsor extra-curricular and internship programs. Again, by moving rising juniors, leadership opportunities and letters of recommendation are jeopardized as well as the child's continuity in the program.
- Increased travel time and distance to new schools:
  - Children will lose on average 45 minutes of sleep due to increased commute. Multiple studies show the importance of sleep correlated to academic performance
  - Decreased involvement for students and families in before, during and after school activities. Studies have shown a decrease in school involvement based on increased distance from home school.
  - Increased distance will require to students to drive; many juniors are not eligible for their driver's license until midway through their junior year. In addition, many children will not have access to a personal car.
- Effects on Teachers/Administration:
  - Teachers work with students over four years to establish social and emotional relationships, academic achievement and to implement successful extra-curricular programs and clubs. Losing children midway through their high school career will limit a teacher's ability to follow through with truly meaningful letters of recommendation.

Moving a child during his or her junior year has devastating and potentially long term effects. It impacts emotional and mental well-being, academic performance and extra-curricular involvement. These potential consequences are unacceptable and can hinder their chances of acceptance to the colleges they are working towards. Most importantly, these changes have lasting effects on a child's self-esteem, personal growth and opportunities for success.

We, the undersigned support the above petition dated September 5, 2019.

	Printed Name	Signature	Address	Polygon	Student/Adult
1	RAKHI DE	Rakhi De	5421 Talon Ct Clarksville		
2	Jessynde Abraham	Jessynde Abraham	5475 Ten Oaks Road Clarksville		Adult
3	Dohgi Huang	Dohgi Huang	10200 Maxine St		Adult
4	Anthony Duan	Anthony Duan	10200 Maxine St	?	Student
5	Gene Ryan	Gene Ryan	13447 Chris Ave Clarksville		Family
6	Dawn Curtha	Dawn Curtha	5028 Linden Ct. Billings	176	Student
7	Ji Ye Lin	Ji Ye Lin	12021 D-Start Thunders Hill		Adult
8	Kathina Wachter	Kathina Wachter	9719 Hollowood Ct Clarksville	159	Adult
9	Hungjun Kan	Hungjun Kan	11722 Trotter Point Ct Clarksville		Adult
10	Christy Meekitt	Christy Meekitt	6307 Monday Rd. Elkridge		Adult
11	Thomas Chacko	Thomas Chacko	5475 Ten Oaks Rd Clarksville		Adult
12	Sydney Martagon	Sydney Martagon	12115 Mount Albert Rd Clarksville	181	Student

	name	sign	address	polyzn	adult/child
13.					
14	Michael Buscher	me ne	11675 Laurel oak ct 21042	2176	adult
15	Nikita Paris	<del>Paris</del>	11811 Chapel Estates 21029	1185	adult
16	All Patel	<del>Patel</del>	11811 Chapel Estates 21029	1185	
17	Breanne Shaw	Breanne Shaw	14975 Old Frederic Rd 21797		
18	Thomas Young	<del>Young</del>	2206 Cromwood Ct, Clarksville MD 21029	2052	
19	Melissa Erickson	<del>Erickson</del>	6718 Mink Hollow Rd 21029	20777	
20	Lindsay Ann	<del>Lindsay Ann</del>	6718 Mink Hollow Rd	20577	
21	Suzanne Young	<del>Young</del>	12606 Greenwood Ct. Clarksville 21029		
22	Sherry Slade	Sherry Slade	11925 Northern Bell Wg Clarksville 21029	21029	
23	Kristen P	<del>Kristen P</del>			
24	Bridgette Bodell	<del>Bodell</del>	13043 12 hills rd 21029	<del>21029</del> 1200	
25	Claire Slade	Claire Slade	11925 Northern Bell way	1200	
26	Grace Unban	Grace Unban	13445 Pondfield Ct	1797	
27	Allie Yang	Allie Yang	17606 Greenwood Ct.		
28	Angela Jin	Angela Jin	12157 Hayland Farm Way	21042	
29	Maryum Nassov	Maryum Nassov	6020 Countryside Forest Run	21029	
30	Ashlee Buscher	Ashlee Buscher	6030 Signal Flame Ct 21029	21029	
31	Quill Alewine	Quill Alewine	6840 Mink hollow RD Highland 20711		
32	Gina Asher	Gina Asher	3217 Rescommen Dr. Glenelg	21737	adult
33	LISA Chodnicki	LISA Chodnicki	11775 Chapel Estates Drive	21029	adult
34	Mark Corriere	Mark Corriere	4344 Buckskin Wood Drive	21042	
35	Sam Funk	Sam Funk	4284 Buckskin Lake Drive	21042	child
36	AVA FUNK	AVA FUNK	4284 Buckskin Lake Drive	21042	child
37	Bill Marciniak	Bill Marciniak	17132 W. 11 Tranfield Dr	21042	adult
38	Chantale Muller	Chantale Muller	4254 Buckskin Lake Dr	1183	adult
39	Raj Pingsan	Raj Pingsan	5126 Hong Lou Es Sauratown	176	Adult
40	Megan Connor	Megan Connor	204 Hayland Farm Way Hixson	176	Adult
41	Cary Conner	Cary Conner	12157 Hayland Farm Way Hixson	176	Adult
42	Zhiyong Han	Zhiyong Han	6413 Autumn Sky Way, Columbia 21086	1186	Adult
43	Meghan Dosa	Meghan Dosa	11922 Wildfire Ct. Clarksville 21029	21029	Adult
44	Aiden Zhang	Aiden Zhang	12152 Runna x Rocklax MD		Student
45	Kaylan G	Kaylan G	12152 Running Fence Lane MD		STUDENT
46	Dia Jain	Dia Jain	11209 Ellicott city MD		
47	Shrinia	Shrinia	1992 Wild cliff court		Student
48	Tinghan Yan	Tinghan Yan	5015 Lindera Ct		Adult
49	Jianning Zeng	Jianning Zeng	5015 Lindera Ct	176	adult
50	Lu Zhang	Lu Zhang	5712 Whistling Wind Clark	1028	adult
51	Aimee Zhang	Aimee Zhang	13505 Silent Lake Dr.		Adult
52	Eli Hua	Eli Hua	6413 Tara Pl	1189	Adult
53	Ed Suess	Ed Suess	12309 Autumn Tree Ln	176	Adult
54	Evan Ying	Evan Ying	12320 Preakness circle Clark	2176	Student
55	Tingting Niu	Tingting Niu	5847 Trotter Rd Clarksville	1186	Adult
56	Xianhua Hao	Xianhua Hao	6028 Ascending Moon Path	1188	Adult

	PRINTED NAME	SIGNATURE	ADDRESS	POLYGON	STDT/ ADULT
57	RICARDO MORALES		8742 CARRIAGE HILLS DR		ADULT
58	ANAN JIANG		6270 Firathon Ln		ADULT
59	Gloria Hu		6270 Firathon Ln		ADULT
60	Dehong Kong		11914 Northern Bed way		ADULT
61	Dexin Zhang		6504 Apple Blossom Ride		ADULT
62	Bryan Snow		6812 Creekwood Ct Clarksville		ADULT
63	Le Jiang		12117 Flowing Water Trail		ADULT
64	Dongyi Da		7105 Deer Valley Rd		ADULT
65	Chandra Nanjappa		5135 Sheppard Ln 2104		ADULT
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  - Teachers work with students over four years to establish social and emotional relationships, academic achievement and to implement successful extra-curricular programs and clubs. Losing children midway through their high school career will limit a teacher's ability to follow through with truly meaningful letters of recommendation.

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We, the undersigned support the above petition dated September 5, 2019.

	Printed Name	Signature	Address	Polygon	Student/Adult
1	JASLEEN BEDI		5020 LINDERA CT, 21042	167	Adult
2	Jinghua Yan		5005 LINDERA CT 21042	176	Adult
3	PINKAL PATEL		11732 TROTTER CRESSWIND	1186	ADULT
4	Khadia Khan		5553 Broadwater Ln	200	Adult
5	Rigel Wachtel		9719 HOLLOWOOD CT	159	Student
6	Mahmood Rao		5041 LINDERA CT	176	Student
7	APPA VASH		12340 BRIDGE CIR	3176	Adult
8	JANET MUNIZ		12418 RANNEY FENCE LN	3176	Adult
9	Gabriella Muniz	Gabriella Muniz	12418 RANNEY FENCE LN	3176	child
10	RUI SHAO		12415 WATKINS BRIDGE	3176	Adult
11	Tianyu Ling		5920 GREAT SHIP DR 104	1167	Adult
12	WENBO LI		6325 PARKWAY PRIME WAY	1129	Adult

13	Ke Ren		5920 Great Star Drive	Clarksville 1187	
14	Jingshan Wang		4049 Jay EM Cir.	21042	
15	Ranjal Kachwala		6121 Rippling Hides terrace	21029	
16	Julia Tu		5125 Sheppard Ln	21042	Adult
17	Stammy Zeng		5004 Lindora Ct	21042	
18	Machin Nardhapal		17233 Maple Farm way	21042	
19	Rudra Saha		5004 Lindora CT	21042	Adult
20	PRIMAL BHATIA		12122 Hayward Farmway	21042	Adult
21	KALEE SWESS		12309 A. Juan Tree	21029	Student
22	Ashley Johnson		5144 Saddle Creek	1166	Adult
23	Xiang Zhang		6452 S Wind cir	21044	adult
24	Changyi Lu		6116 Hattie Lane	21029	adult
25	Wangqing Lin		6110 Hattie Lane	21029	adult
26	Yan Sun		6032 Whittier Circle Path	21029	adult
27	Amanda Cleffor		5028 Lindora Ct E.C.	21042	Adult
28	Jean Tang		12256 Rolling Fence Ln.	3176	adult
29	Ken Frazer		3212 Robin Hood Ct	1159	adult
30	HAOJUAN HE		6116 Eternal Way pl	21029	Adult.
31	Andy Thorsen		6116 Eternal Ocean Pl	21029	Student
32	Valeria Vidi		13100 Isle of Man Way		Adult
33	Peter Vidi		13100 Isle of Man Way		Adult
34	Yong-woo Lee		13549 Broccolino Way	1199	Adult
35	Jeffrey Hartz		6466 Empty Song Rd	64	Adult
36	Sandra Hartz		6466 Empty Song Rd	64	Adult
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	Printed Name	Signature	Address	Polygon	Student/Adult
1	Arva Parekh		6805 Corina Ct	HR	Student
2	<del>HEER</del>				
3	AMRISH VYAS		5525 JACKIE LANSDALE WAY	1802	Parent
4	MANISH VYAS		5525 JACKIE LANSDALE WAY	1802	
5	KAPIL GROVER		5525 JACKIE LANSDALE WAY	1802	
6	Siveta Thaker		Arden-Candle Light Dr. Dayton		
7	SAHIL JOSHI		310 Union Way Felton		Parent
8	Garvika Joshi		Felton City		Parent
9	Krushika Shah		Laurel		STUDENT
10	PRACHI SHAH		5066 EXECUTIVE PARK DR. E.C.		PARENT
11	Kingal Patel		14719 Lewis Ct, Liberty, Mo		GRANDPARENT
12	Jose Saura		5819 HARNESS CT, Columbia		

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	Printed Name	Signature	Address	Polygon	Student/Adult
1	Enn A Kim	[Signature]	13549 Broccolini way (10242)	1199	Adult
2	ANKISH VYAS	[Signature]	5525 JACKSONVILLE WAY CLARKSVILLE 1802		Adult
3	MARK FENBERG	[Signature]	12785 Folly Quarter Rd		Adult
4	Prem Balani	[Signature]	12198 Hayland Farm way	176	Student
5	RAD A. KHAN	[Signature]	5041 LINDERA CT. ELICOTT CITY (176)		Adult
6	Krish Bahni	[Signature]	12198 Hayland Farm way	176	Student
7	SHYAM SRAMI	[Signature]	12198 HAYLAND FARM WAY	176	PARENT/ADULT
8	BIHARAT SRAMI	[Signature]	12198 HAYLAND FARMWAY	176	PARENT
9	Fen. Han	[Signature]	12227 Running Fence lane	3176	Alice
10	Poojima Balaji	[Signature]	5012 LINDERA CT,	176	Adult
11	Lauren Lessing	[Signature]	1253 Folly quarter road	1197	Student
12	Sangeetha Gudipati	[Signature]	6120 Syracuse Ct		Adult

Clarksville MD

13	Deena Sutch	Deena Sutch	13927 Triadelphia Rd, 21042	
14	Chris Sutch	Christy M Sutch	13527 TRIADAPLPHIA RD 21042	
15	Heather Rose	Heather	3034 Hickorymede Dr. 21042	
16	MARIELINE MURRAY	Marilyn Murray	12721 Folly Bunker Rd 21042	
17	Kelli Livani	Kelli Livani	2013 Carlee Plnct 21042	
18	Lori Lei	Lori	13565 Procerfins Way 21029	
19	Liss Yasa	Liss	7100 Murray Lyl + Tal 21041	
20	Slava Mueygin	Slava	3502 Lowler Ct EC. 21042	
21	Andre G. Gino	Andre Gino	9005 Labrador Lane 21042	
22	KAMALATI RARICIN	Kamalati	5127 HONEY LOCUST BELLEVUE 21042	
23	AVTAR RARICIN	Avtar	5127 HONEY LOCUST BELLEVUE 21042	
24	Tukan Duan	Tukan	10200 Maxine st 21042	
25	Sissi .z	Sissi	9819 robinson blvd	
26	SHU LU XU	Shu Lu Xu	5930 Great Star Dr. 21029	
27	KONG YI XU	Kongyi Xu	5970 Great Star Dr. 21029	
28	Yan Zhou	Yan Zhou	6109 Bay Side Path. 21029	
29	Yuehan Jy	Yuehan	↓ 21029	
30	Jun Du	Jun Du	6452 S Wind Cir 21044	
31	Wang	Majing Awad	5553 Bralander ln 21029	
32	Wang	Fun Yang	4110 Parkers est 21043	
33	Yufei Hwa	Yufei Hwa	4146 Tiber Falls Dr. 21043	
34	Cheng Xu	Cheng Xu	4110 Pemberton Pt. 21043	
35	XiaoHong Zhang	XiaoHong	3055 Mullinax Ln. 21042	
36	QUN LI	Qun Li	10400 Bowie Raton Dr 21042	
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1	Elisa Wolf		16304 Weather Dawn Rd		Adult
2	Shirley Chickering		4212 Bucksin Lake Drive	1183	Adult
3	Steve Kaye		4277 Bucksin Wood	1183	Adult
4	Anita Patel		4309 Bucksin Wood Dr	1183	Adult
5	Madeha Patel		4309 Bucksin Wood Dr	1183	Adult
6	Chloe Lingzhen		5106 Day Circle Lane	176	Adult
7	Bobbie Rusnik		13434 Chris Mars	179	Adult
8	Dorise Adams		1144 Sycamore Rd	32	Adult
9	Lori McCann		12751 Folly Quarter	1183	Adult
10	Sudhir Kashist		12344 Preakness Ln	3176	Adult
11	Megan Williams		4276 Dawn Day Dr	1059	Adult
12	Don Williams		6276 Dawn Day Dr	1059	Adult

	NAME	SIGNATURE	ADDRESS	POLYGON	STUDENT/ ADULT
13	SHIPRA SACHDEV	Shipra Sachdev	4357 BUCKSKIN WOOD DR	1183	ADULT
14	KAVITA MAHAPATRA	Kavita	15158 Highland Farm way	117	ADULT
15	ASHITA GOEL	Ashita Goel	14545 Edgewood Way,		Adult
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1	Linda Boit	<i>LB</i>	6333 Woodcrest P		
2	Hansen Dan	<i>D Hansen</i>	13272 STYERCT		
3	Lisa Feinberg	<i>Lisa Feinberg</i>	12785 Folly Quarter Rd		
4	Ashley Alko	<i>Ashley Alko</i>	5709 Crowsville Sider	1076	Adult
5	Zuofeng Zhang	<i>Zuofeng Zhang</i>	4987 Wild Olive Ct, Ellicott City 176		Adult
6	Kadhita Gummah	<i>Kadhita Gummah</i>	12118 Highland Farmway	176	Adult
7	LISA REEVES	<i>Lisa Reeves</i>	<del>6200</del> 13499 TRIMMELANIA RD.		ADULT
8	THOMAS GOODMAN	<i>Thomas Goodman</i>	6905 Wolf Creek Ct, Nantux		Adult
9	Mitula Patu	<i>Mitula Patu</i>	12160 Flowing Water	28	Adult
10	Ashwin Patu	<i>Ashwin Patu</i>	12160 Flowing Water		Adult
11	Tisha Patu	<i>Tisha Patu</i>	12160 Flowing Water	28	Adult
12	Priyeshi Patu	<i>Priyeshi Patu</i>	12160 Flowing Water	28	Adult

Printed Name	Signature	Address	Polygon	Student/Adult
13 Zhiwen Yang			3176	S
14 BIPIN DAI			1102	S
15 BASISNE SWAMINATHAN			183	S
16 MATHU RAOPI			183	A
17 Tom Kouyeas			2183	A
18 Michelle Lei			1199	46
19 Nicholas Mirecki			183	S
20 Alex Mirecki			183	S
21 MAT XU			183	A
22 Yaa Wang		3312 Debra Ct. Ellicott City	214	A
23 Logan Clark		5024 L.L. Dr. Ct. Belton	176	S
24 Logan Clark		5024 L.L. Dr. Ct. Belton	176	S
25 Amanda Clark		5024 L.L. Dr. Ct. Belton	166	A
26 Caitlin Radik		4734 Columbia Hills Ct	2111	A
27 Alexis Radik		4734 Columbia Hills Ct	2111	S
28 Brianna Radik		4734 Columbia Hills Ct	2111	S
29 Prit Bajaj		12177 Hayland Farm Way	176	A
30 Anmoldeep Bajaj		12177 Hayland Farm Way	176	A
31 Taren Bajaj		12177 Hayland Farm Way	176	S
32 Tapra Bajaj		12177 Hayland Farm Way	176	S
33 Tashen Bajaj		12177 Hayland Farm Way	176	S
34 Navin Kippall		12149 Hayland Farm Way	176	S
35 Nayshi Kippall		12149 Hayland Farm Way	176	S
36 Lisa Sharma		11747 Route 108	1185	A
37 Anika Sharma		11747 Route 108	1185	S
38 Devona Sharma		11747 Route 108	1185	S
39 Jaya Sharma		11747 Route 108	1185	A
40 Jyoti Patel		5015 Cape May Rd. Ct.	176	S
41 Jyoti Patel		5015 Cape May Rd. Ct.	176	S
42 Solomon Landzberg		11849 Tall Timber Dr	186	S
43 Xiangyang Liu		11849 Tall Timber Dr	186	A
44 Xintian Chen		6456 S Wind Cir	1186	A
45 Eileen Huang		6456 S Wind Cir	1186	S
46 Jacqueline Meredith		3012 Ebbwood Dr	159	S
47 Glenn Meredith		3012 Ebbwood Dr	159	A
48 Ann Miller		12138 Hylar Ln	167	S
49 Liliya Murghika		3502 Lowden Ct. Ee	21042	A
50 Nicole Liang		11803 Chapel		S
51 David Liang		11803 Chapel	21079	S
52 Natalie Lin		woods ct		S
53 Ming Zhen		12021 Distant Thunder		A
54 Bryan Lin		12021 Distant Thunder		S
55 Michael Lin		12021 Distant Thunder		S
56				

Dear Board of Education and Representatives

This testimony pertains to rising juniors and their families, county wide. If redistricting occurs in any form for the 2020-2021 school year, we are requesting that all rising juniors remain at their currently assigned high school to complete their high school education per Policy 9000, III, m. "Junior Status - The situation in which a student has earned a minimum of 10 credits, including English 9 and English 10." Historically, the Board has approved grandfathering juniors during what many claim is their most important year of high school. Below supports the grandfathering of juniors:

- Junior year is a critical year for students. Academically, it is the most challenging as they continue to prepare for strong college applications, which includes:
  - Continuing to work at a high level to maintain or achieve their highest GPA, as this is the last full year of grades that colleges consider
  - Preparing for standardized tests (SAT, ACT, AP Tests, Subject Tests and specialized portfolios for the arts) in addition to their ongoing and demanding workload
  - Identifying teachers who will write strong letters of recommendation for them
  - Beginning the process of college searches and visits
  - The start of internships for many Juniors, requiring travel and increased workload in addition to academic requirements
  - Closely approximating a college course load so colleges can see how they manage a high level academic schedule
- Loss of established relationships with:
  - Counselors/Advisors: EVERY COUNSELOR IS REQUIRED TO WRITE A LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION FOR THEIR STUDENTS TO BE USED FOR COLLEGE AND/OR PROGRAM APPLICATIONS. For a strong letter of recommendation, the counselor/student relationship is established over four years.
  - Teachers: children rely on their teachers for letters of recommendation to colleges, for internships and work opportunities, as well as continuity in a particular course of study, such as foreign language, Project Lead the Way and various advanced classes.
  - Coaches: children are REQUIRED to make Varsity teams in almost all sports in order to play their junior and senior years. Students have spent two years demonstrating their athletic abilities to their coaches in an effort to earn a spot on a team, not to mention leadership positions such as team captain. These are earned accomplishments that improve college applications as well as personal growth
  - Sponsors: very personal relationships are built with teachers who sponsor extra-curricular and internship programs. Again, by moving rising juniors, leadership opportunities and letters of recommendation are jeopardized as well as the child's continuity in the program.
- Increased travel time and distance to new schools:
  - Children will lose on average 45 minutes of sleep due to increased commute. Multiple studies show the importance of sleep correlated to academic performance
  - Decreased involvement for students and families in before, during and after school activities. Studies have shown a decrease in school involvement based on increased distance from home school.
  - Increased distance will require to students to drive; many juniors are not eligible for their driver's license until midway through their junior year. In addition, many children will not have access to a personal car.
- Effects on Teachers/Administration:
  - Teachers work with students over four years to establish social and emotional relationships, academic achievement and to implement successful extra-curricular programs and clubs. Losing children midway through their high school career will limit a teacher's ability to follow through with truly meaningful letters of recommendation.

Moving a child during his or her junior year has devastating and potentially long term effects. It impacts emotional and mental well-being, academic performance and extra-curricular involvement. These potential consequences are unacceptable and can hinder their chances of acceptance to the colleges they are working towards. Most importantly, these changes have lasting effects on a child's self-esteem, personal growth and opportunities for success.

We, the undersigned support the above petition dated September 5, 2019.

	Printed Name	Signature	Address	Polygon	Student/Adult
1	AMY FLORENTO	<i>Amy Florento</i>	1221 CUNNING FENCE CIRCLE	3176	ADULT
2	Ali Fujii	<i>Ali Fujii</i>	12277 Running fence lane	3170	Student
3	Lana Gobbem	<i>Lana Gobbem</i>	12413 WATKINS HOLLOW LN	3176	ADULT
4	Keena Khedkar	<i>Keena Khedkar</i>	12200 Basslers way	3176	Adult
5	Bing Wang	<i>Bing Wang</i>	12360 Preakerock Circle	3176	Adult
6	Elizabeth Weller	<i>Elizabeth Weller</i>	9719 Hollowood Ct.	159	Adult
7	Krishna Veeramani	<i>Krishna Veeramani</i>	5105 Clay Circle	179	Adult
8	A. J. V. V.	<i>A. J. V. V.</i>	12344 Preakerock Circle	3176	Adult
9	Carol Myers	<i>Carol Myers</i>	12344 Preakerock Circle	3176	Student
10	Denise Adams	<i>Denise Adams</i>	10078 Caxillon Dr		Adult
11	Denise Adams	<i>Denise Adams</i>	1144 Sykesville Rd	1237	Adult
12	AFM HARVE	<i>AFM HARVE</i>	8516 HARVEST VIEW CT, EC	100	Adult

13	Kaishvi Taveri	Kaishvi Taveri	5045 Lindera Ct.	176	Student
14	Aarushi Kataria	Aarushi Kataria	6121 Rippling Tide terrace	21029	<del>Student</del>
15	Binal Kataria	Binal Kataria	6121 Rippling Tide terrace	21029	Adult
16	Ashley Jolissart	Ashley Jolissart	10144 Saddlebrook Farm Trl	11666	Adult
17	Wang Zhang	Wang Zhang	6452 S Wind Cir	21044	Adult
18	Changye Gu	Changye Gu	6110 Flutie lane	21029	Adult
19	Wen Ang Lin	Wen Ang Lin	6110 Flutie lane	21029	Adult
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September 30, 2019

To: Howard County BOE, Dr. Michael J. Martirano, Superintendent, Howard County Public School System

Cc: County Council Members, HoCo County Executive, District 9 State Senator, District 9A State Delegates

**Subject: Oppose Dr Martirano's Redistricting Proposal**

Dear Board of Education (BOE) Members and Dr. Martirano,

As a longtime resident of Howard County Maryland (residing in Polygon 176) and a grandparent of two young children, I am writing to express my significant concerns about the impact of Dr Martirano's Attendance Area Adjustment Plan, dated August 20, 2019.

**Consider these facts:**

1. Neighborhoods in a 1-mile radius from River Hill High school will have students going to 3 different high schools!
2. Atholton sending 610 students out and receiving 471 students for a total turnover of 1081 students!!
3. Atholton and Oakland Mills High school boundaries gets split in multiple sections and separating communities.  
River Hill is an under-capacity school (projected to be at 94% Projected Utilization for 2019/2020 school. This is at the lower end of the Target Utilization range); the proposal wants to move 478 students out and bring in 741 students in that is a net gain of 229 students. The total turnover of students will be 1229 students!! That is a rate of over 80% of the school total capacity. This is the highest turnover school in the county as proposed!!! This is extremely disruptive and unnecessary for a school.
4. The polygons that they propose to move from River Hill to Wilde Lake live about 1.5-3.5miles away from River Hill.
5. The proposal will TRIPLE the distance to about 6-9 miles away and increase commute times in the morning and for after school activities.
6. The overall FARM rate of River Hill will increase from less than 5% to 5%.
7. The Proposal mentions to move 513 students from Atholton to River Hill.
8. The polygons that they propose to move live farther away to River Hill than communities closer to River Hill High School. Also, the FARM rates of Atholton are less than 10%.

**Here's how my grandchildren will be impacted:**

1. My grandchildren from Polygon 176 would have to drive through River Hill High School bus and car traffic, en route to Wilde Lake High School.
2. Their commute would triple (as compared to River Hill High School).
3. Such long commute times would affect their sleep (at least 2 hours of sleep deprivation daily), family time reduced, and could lead to higher probability of accidents given that high school students would be new drivers on the road driving longer distances with increased traffic jams.

4. Longer commute also reduces families' engagement with the schools since they're further away and this would impact the childrens' education.
5. Longer transportation times would lead to higher expenses for the Board of Education with zero return on investment and higher polluting emissions. These are our tax dollars that are being wasted instead of being spent on appropriate educational resources.
6. Given the impact on my schedule, the family may not be able to pick up my kids in time after their extracurricular activities so those activities may have to be cut down, affecting their education and all-round development.
7. Our family chose to go to these local schools (like River Hill High) when we moved to our current home. We treat our local schools as part of our community, which is being torn apart. Our friendships affected (since local children will now be sent to 3 different high schools); so, the choice taken away from us and all of us are feeling these impacts. This redistricting plan is disruptive of our community.

**Also:**

1. Any re-districting proposal should instead be focused on those five High Schools that are operating above Target Utilization levels (110%).
2. Transferring students from a school with a low FARM ratio to a school with a high FARM ratio, only results in better "averages" for the schools. IT DOES NOT PROVIDE ANY INCREMENTAL EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES OR OPPORTUNITES DIRECTLY TO THE STUDENTS.
3. Shuffling students across schools with longer commute times do not improve scores - they increase stress and hardship for families.

**Let us discuss some alternative scenarios including:**

1. River Hill High School could receive students from nearby schools such as Wilde Lake, Atholton or Howard, without sending 478 students out to other schools. There should be a way to improve capacity utilization and reduce the 7,396 students being disrupted.
2. Postpone redistricting until 2022 (for HS13) by using additional temporary classrooms. Allow time to plan the move in a non-disruptive manner. We owe stability to our kids.
  - a. Consider this article: "Switching Schools: Reconsidering the Relationship Between School Mobility and High School Dropout" published by JHU Dept of Sociology (Joseph Gasper, Stefanie DeLuca, Angela Estacion) – per the abstract– "Youth who switch schools are more likely to demonstrate a wide array of negative behavioral and educational outcomes, including dropping out of high school."
3. Do not redistrict at all. Consider creating a system where underperforming students would be given a choice where to attend school (within a certain radius); motivate such students to attend local schools with the capacity and capability. Add resources (teachers/specialists) and therefore improve scores by directly targeting underperforming students, adding resources and boost test scores. Title 1 schools already offer such resources for economically challenged students. We should focus on underperforming students for true education equity.

Thank you,

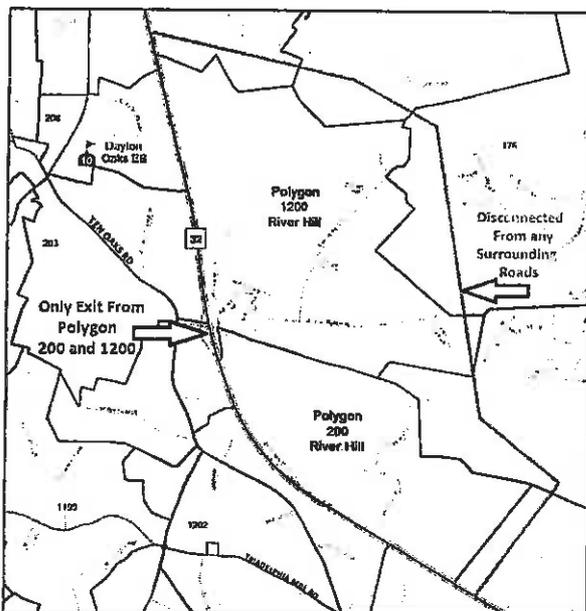
Vanita Tulliani (Very concerned grandparent)

[redistricting@hcpss.org](mailto:redistricting@hcpss.org)

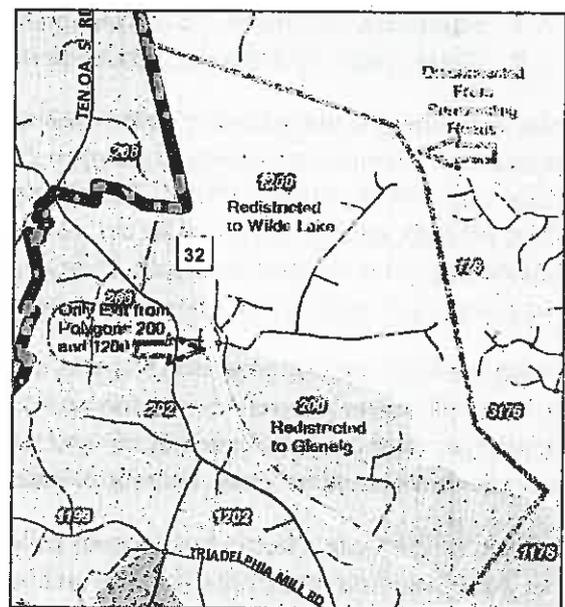
**Subject:** Vote against the proposed school redistricting plan – Polygon 1200

Dear Sir or Madam:

My name is Andrew Hlasko and I have two daughter that currently attend the River Hill High School, one in 9<sup>th</sup> grade and the other in 11<sup>th</sup> grade. My kids love their school and we love the sense of community and togetherness that I have experienced in our neighborhood. This sense of community was what James Rouse envisioned when he built Columbia and started the surrounding neighborhoods. Now my sense of stability and community has been broken with our neighborhood split in half with one part redistricted to Wilde Lake (Polygon 1200) and the other to Glenelg (Polygon 200). This despite both polygons being one neighborhood with a single shared access road to Rt. 32, both assigned to the same Elementary and Middle school except now each is being redistricted two different further away high schools!



Currently both Polygons 200 and 1200 are sent to River Hill HS and both are assigned to Dayton Oaks Elementary.



Under proposed redistricting plan our neighborhood is split in two, with Polygon 1200 to Wilde Lake and Polygon 200 to Glenelg HS, but both still sent to Dayton Oaks Elementary.

Any school redistricting that result in splitting of neighborhoods is a violation of the **BOE policy 6010 Section B.2 - Standards on Community Stability** that calls for the promotion of contiguous communities and community stability when assigning school districts through the consideration of:

- a) School feeds that encourage keeping students together from one school to the next – Kids in our neighborhood will still have the same Elementary and Middle schools.

- b) Keeping areas together that are made up of contiguous communities or neighborhoods – **Our neighborhood is a single community with single access road but made up of two polygons that would be split into two separate high schools.**
- c) Frequency with which any one student is reassigned - **Because my family has moved, our kids have changed schools twice within the last two years and would change for a third time under this proposed plan.**

Our Polygon 1200 is located the furthest away from Wilde Lake of any of the neighborhoods being relocated to Wilde Lake HS which is the eighth furthest away high school from Polygon 1200. Driving distances from our neighborhood to:

1. River Hill: 4.3 miles, 14 minute drive by car with no traffic - Current High School
2. Glenelg: 5 miles, 8 minute drive by car
3. Atholton: 7.8 miles, 16 minute drive by car
4. Reservoir: 8.7 miles, 20 minute drive by car
5. Centennial: 9 miles, 26 minute drive by car
6. Marriotts Ridge: 9.3 miles, 18 minute drive by car
7. Hammond: 9.7 miles, 16 minute drive by car
8. Wilde Lake: 10 miles, 22 minute drive by car - We have been redistricted to Wilde Lake!

Why is our neighborhood being split in half and part of our neighborhood assigned to one of the closest high schools to Glenelg in polygon 200 and the other part sent to the furthest away to Wilde Lake HS in polygon 1200? Today both polygons go to the same Elementary, Middle and River Hill high school. Why not let our neighborhood kids to continue going to River Hill or if redistricting must happen then both Polygons should go to the same Glenelg HS which is much closer and both high schools are considered under capacity?

Today my kids I get up around 5:50am to catch a 6:30am school bus. Their morning commute to River Hill takes around 45 minutes and if they have to go to Wilde Lake HS they would be driven past their current River Hill HS and then continue for another 15 to 20 minutes. This one-way commute could turn into an hour or more and that means time lost for studying or sleeping.

If Board of Education wants to integrate schools then allow this through a choice based program like JumpStart that integrates schools and communities through choices given to students, and not by forcing kids to change schools, miss school friends, and loose a sense of togetherness and community. Greater school integration programs like JumpStart would be ideal.

The best thing that could happen is for is for our kids to remain in a school that is closest to us. Next simplest solution is to move our Polygon 1200 to Glenelg HS which also the school for the other half of our neighborhood (Polygon 200). Glenelg is much closer and is also considered underutilized. Since there are seven high schools much closer to us compared to Wilde Lake, why make our kids travel so far away? Allowing us to remain in our current schools would be ideal, but there are also other alternatives to the currently proposed redistricting plan.

I sincerely ask you and urge you to please vote against this redistricting plan.

**Best Regards,**

**Andrew Hlasko  
13010 Red Maple Way  
Clarksville, MD 21029  
Polygon 1200**

Sep. 27, 2019

Dear BOE members,

This is the 4<sup>th</sup> time we write to you to ask you to vote **NO to the redistricting plan** as a family. We were not able to show up to protest or testify, so this is our way to let you know our voices as members of the Howard County community.

Last night was the 3<sup>rd</sup> public hearing on this matter. Every single one of the 108 testimonies is a loud NO to this redistricting plan, including 85 from students of all ages, from elementary, middle school to high school. Overwhelmingly people are against this plan because it buses children out of their neighborhood schools. For example, kids from our neighborhood, Polygon#3176 will be transported to Wilde Lake HS, passing our home school River Hill HS in the first five minutes bus ride. **We ask you to Keep Polygon #3176 at River Hill HS.** We have explained to you how illogical, how irrational, how harmful and how wasteful this plan is in our previous letter. And here we want you to understand this plan will disrupt at least 7400 students and their families' life. Make your decision with this in mind, look through Policy 6010 and we trust that you will vote NO.

In our 3<sup>rd</sup> letter, we pointed out to you it is beyond your authority or scope of work to solve socioeconomic disparity or poverty concentration issue. Your job is to create an environment where every kid comes into HCPSS will go out into the world with the best education. In our first letter, we pointed out programs like FARM actually helps disadvantaged children and encouraged you to device this kind of programs that actually helps. It requires you to identify the actual specific problems and come up with real solutions. We know that HCPSS have pilot pre-K programs in some elementary schools for low income families. Can you expend this program to all elementary schools with kids on FARM? Can you promote it better? There are not enough people who need it that know about it. This program is an example of good programs to help kids in need. Do FARM kids have Wi-fi internet services at home? That is a problem HCPSS might be able to help with other agencies or private companies. You need to identify issues at school that are caused by financial situations at home, then come up a remedy. Simply mixing kids is not going to help their family financial situation in any way. It only invites people to throw you the "socialist" hat, and sadly, it might fit this time. We really don't need this kind of divisive action at this time of our country.

You probably saw protest signs like "Kids before politics". And we wrote to county council members, county executives, state delegates and senators. Those who replied back all state that final decision resides with you. In one hand, we are glad it seems you are above politics; on the other hand, we feel everybody is not taking up their responsibilities. All elected officials should care about education, about our school system, about our families and children especially.

Ever since this redistricting plan was announced, we saw communities in disbelief, in anxiety, even in anger. People form grass root chat groups to dissect and analyze the plan, to come up with alternative plans, to make signs, to organize protests, to take off from work to prepare and testify for the hearing.

Dear Howard County School System Board of Education:

The proposed Howard County Public School System redistricting plan violates Policy 6010 Standards on Community Stability – “school attendance areas should promote a sense of community and represent contiguous communities or neighborhoods.”

Our neighborhood is bound by a single entry, Linden Church Road, accessible only from Ten Oaks Road which crosses over Rt. 32 or from Rt. 32 directly. There are no other through roads through our neighborhood. HCPSS establishes our neighborhood to consist of two Polygons: Polygon 1200 (North of Linden Church Rd: Greenberry, Twelve Hills, Chapel Chase) and Polygon 200 (South of Linden Church: Broadwater Ln, Chamblis Dr).

With the Superintendents current proposal, Polygon 1200 would be sent to Wilde Lake High School, while proposing Polygon 200 be sent to Glenelg High School. All other Polygons connecting to our access road are proposed to be sent to Glenelg High School or River Hill High School. Isolating Polygon 1200 clearly violates BOE policy 6010.

In addition to this violation:

- 1) Polygon 1200 would be isolated from other neighborhoods sent to Wilde Lake High School.
  - a. No common roads or direct routes connect our neighborhood to those neighborhoods proposed to attend Wilde Lake High School.
- 2) Polygon 1200 would incur a significant, unnecessary increase in time spent on bus transportation by being sent to Wilde Lake High School.
  - a. There are no direct routes to Wilde Lake High School from Polygons 1200 & 200.
  - b. Currently, Polygon 1200 & 200 spend 40 minutes riding 4 miles to River Hill High
  - c. Wilde Lake is an additional 7 miles with a conservative estimate of a 90 min. ride
- 3) There are 7 High Schools closer to Polygon 1200 than Wilde Lake High School
  - a. River Hill High and Glenelg High remain under capacity and are closer
- 4) A large portion of the community identity within Polygon 1200 will be lost.
  - a. Our sense of community will be split apart as Polygon 1200 students would attend different schools than our nearest neighbors.
  - b. No other polygon from Polygon 1200's elementary would feed to WLH.
  - c. Our children's existing relationships would become strained from significantly reduced interactions.

Logically, adjustments to the redistricting proposal need to reflect that students in Polygon 1200 stay at River Hill High School (an under-capacity school) in tandem with Polygon 200. Alternatively, Polygon 1200 could join Polygon 200 by attending Glenelg High School while grandfathering current High School students at River Hill High School. Otherwise, all redistricting should be delayed until High School 13 is open and a new feasibility study is consulted along with plausible bus routes.

Thank-you,

Michelle Reuster  
Polygon 1200  
Clarksville, MD 21029

It stresses out everyone. It already harms the community. One good thing is that this plan does unite people. It unites everyone in all the effected communities to fight against this plan. Last night's hearing is a testimony to it. So we urge you to read through all the testimonies, ask questions, hold your own hearing sessions if needed. **We urge you to vote NO to this redistricting plan.**

Thank you for your service.

Sincerely,

Hong Zhou and Xiaomin Lin

Polygon#3176

September 26, 2019

To: Howard County BOE, Dr. Michael J. Martirano, Superintendent, Howard County Public School System

**Subject: Student Testimony (Veer Tuliani) - Oppose Dr. Martirano's Redistricting Proposal**

Dear Board of Education (BOE) Members and Dr. Martirano,

My name is Veer Tuliani and some call me polygon 176. I am a student in Folly Quarter Middle School, and I attend accelerated Math classes in River Hill High School.

I am SHOCKED to think you are considering moving almost 13% of the overall student population. It is a BIG DEAL!

For my polygon, River Hill High School is an under-capacity school and you are considering transferring out students from this school. The total turnover is slated to be 80% of the total capacity! **Why?**

I live only a few minutes (2 miles!) driving distance from River Hill and you're proposing to triple my commute to a school much further away (you know I would be driving past it each day to get to my new school, right)? I would like to have some answers to my questions:

When you deprive me of 2 additional hours every day because the new school is so far away:

1. What happens to my sleep?
2. What happens to my homework that needs to be completed but I cannot because I am exhausted?
3. What happens to my desire to play with my little sister, but I have no time?
4. What happens to my family time that I crave?
5. What happens to the sports that I want to do after school? I love to play tennis and cricket.
6. What happens to my SAT scores when there's little time left to prepare?
7. What happens to the times when buses run late, and my classmates and I are left stranded in the extreme weather?
8. What happens to extra-curricular activities that I will not be able to attend?

9. What happens to my friends? My local River Hill community is being split up and sent to 3 different high schools.
10. What happens to my parents who want to come to my school and volunteer or participate in after-school clubs and activities but cannot because it is so far away?
11. What happens during early dismissals or during appointments when I need to be picked up from school and my parents must take additional time off?
12. What happens when my sister starts elementary school next year and my parents must do a round trip of 50 minutes (school to school) and can't reach in time?
13. What happens when I start driving? I would be sleep deprived and yet must face the increased school traffic on the streets? Who is responsible for keeping me safe?
14. What happens to the mental health of students like me who are unhappy with this redistricting, but you decide to impose upon us anyway?
15. What happens to the extra monetary burden you take on to fund this program?
16. What happens to the needless amount of additional carbon emissions? Do you expect my generation to take care of that?

Here's what I know and understand:

1. My elementary school was Running Brook Elementary School, a high FARMs school and a Title I school. Kudos to all my excellent teachers including Mrs. Van Reenan, Mrs. Mangus, Mrs. Filler and my superb principal Mr. Todd. I was an overachiever and got a lot more resources, just like some others (who were challenged) received additional help. I even skipped third grade. I scored in the top 5 percentile in Math Olympiad. I won every single school spelling bee and participated twice at the National Spelling Bee.
2. River Hill High School is part of my community where I belong. I would be happy to receive friends who may be transferred here but I do NOT want to be transferred OUT of this school.
3. My friend community is already diverse. I have had friends who are rich and poor. White and black. Yellow and brown. Short and tall. I do not need to go to another school to experience it nor do I think there's any meaningful benefit.
4. As a second-generation immigrant, I have seen from my family how much disruptive change can impact and uproot lives and how much adjustment it takes. So, no disruptive change should be imposed upon anyone without a sound and valid reason. This redistricting plan does not have solid reasons as far as I can tell.
5. I believe we need integration and support around student abilities, not around how much money their parents make.
6. Shuffling students across schools with longer commute times do not make for better students - they increase stress and hardship for families.

Please be thoughtful when you redistrict and do it in the least disruptive manner.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Veer Tuliani

Dear Board of Education Members:

I am writing in opposition to the Superintendent's current redistricting plan and specifically its effects on our neighborhood located within polygon 1200. As you are aware, the Superintendent's plan calls for some of our students to be redistricted from River Hill High School (RHHS) to Wilde Lake High School (WLHS), and others to Glenelg High School (GHS.) This plan, if approved, would essentially divide our community in half. A community with only one common road in and out...what many have referred to as a land island.

There are many reasons to reconsider this plan. The first in my mind and most importantly is the fragmenting of a community. Many of the students in our polygon are close friends and neighbors. They play on the same sports teams, enroll in the same academic and extra-curricular activities, and are building lifelong relationships. To divide them in schools so far apart will create a strain on those relationships. Those students won't be able to enroll in the same after school activities, and it's likely they will have trouble building lasting relationships with children from Wilde Lake's neighborhoods because of the distance. A student's life is extremely busy these days and spending extra time on a bus, getting up early to catch the same bus, will limit their ability to be involved in many enriching after school activities. The additional commute time could be over an hour each day. In addition, having a student at WLHS will limit a parent's involvement in their education. It will be harder for a parent to schedule conferences or attend meetings at the school because they will have to take additional time off work. The biggest impact of this will be the fact the Board would be going in direct violation of BOE's policy 6010 calling for contiguous communities and promotion of community stability...

**"Community Stability. Where reasonable, school attendance areas should promote a sense of community in both the geographic place (e.g., neighborhood or place in which a student lives) and the promotion of a student from each school level through the consideration of:**

- a. Feeds that encourage keeping students together from one school to the next. For example, avoiding feeds of less than 15% at the receiving school.
- b. Areas that are made up of contiguous communities or neighborhoods."

All of my above comments would be supported by this line of thinking.

The next reason for reconsideration would be environmental and financial impacts on the county. Multiple buses would need to run near identical routes increasing fuel costs and emissions. This would lead to increased maintenance costs as well. More drivers will also be required because again the routes are nearly duplicate.

Furthermore, it is my understanding a lot of this redistricting is driven by the Superintendent's desire to balance the ratio of FARM students across the county. It doesn't make sense to adversely affect some students to achieve this. Take some of that transportation money that would be spent on additional busing and apply it to the schools in need of more FARM support. Alternatively, bus any children that need that support to another school to balance the numbers, but don't penalize other children to do it.

The Board of Education has a responsibility to provide a safe and nurturing educational environment to the best of their ability. You have a responsibility to promote well being and equity among students. Students should absolutely have the right to a quality education, and if it means they need to attend a different school then so be it. However, offering support to one group of students at the expense of another's is contradictory to this effort. Let's look at how to help the students in need of a better learning environment or help with getting a healthy meal without splitting up other communities.

In closing, I'd like to reiterate that Superintendent Michael Martirano's should be reconsidered for many reasons. The impact of his proposed redistricting will have detrimental effects on our students, community, and environment while not providing many benefits to those intended to receive them. The best option would be to leave our neighborhood and polygon 1200 at RHHS. The second best option would be to move all of our students to GHS rather than dividing them. At least bus routes would be shared, commute times would be lessened compared to WLHS, and students could thrive with their neighbors. Both RHHS and GHS are currently under-utilized so send students from over capacity schools there, but don't send our students away. I urge you to vote NO on the Superintendent's current plan.

Sincerely,

Glenn C. Bowman  
Polygon 1200 resident  
13060 Twelve Hills Road  
Clarksville, MD 21029  
09/19/19

## A Rejection of the Redistricting Proposal

*"Things fall apart; the center cannot hold"*

W.B. Yeats

District 9 State Senator  
Katie Fry Hester

Dear State Senator Hester:

By reframing the need for redistricting as a need to achieve "equity" we diminish the importance of genuine improvements and present merely a facade of positive changes in our school system. **Please support our schools; do not give it the onerous task of being a primary mechanism to exert societal change.** It is a complex issue that involves factors such as county development, planning and affordability which are beyond the scope of what a school system can tackle. True change with lasting positive effects cannot happen overnight and without a united front. The redistricting plan will fragment communities and weaken identities.

While we understand the importance of redistricting to remedy capacity issues and ensure adequate resources, the latest recommendation is a sledgehammer: it causes irreparable harm on multiple fronts to achieve a level of data uniformity that appallingly masks weak performances and detracts from the need for substantive changes to improve all schools (especially those that are underperforming).

The negative effects of such seismic changes cannot be underestimated.

### Harms

- Disruption of community fabric: each school and district is enriched by the bonds of the students and families who share activities and interests. My son is not gregarious and has a few close friends. High school is a vulnerable time--especially for children who are not particularly skilled in making new friends. The loss of his relationships which have been cultivated over time will undermine his high school experience and likely academic performance.

- Blatant disregard for the deliberate choices that were made by families: In many cases, these sweeping changes will have an intensely negative impact on a segment of the population that will carry the burden of change that is \*not\* shared by the rest. It is incumbent to demonstrate concrete proof that an overall positive outcome has been achieved in order to justify this drastic reorganization.
- Injustice to the student's desires: If my child is passionate about being in a particular district in order to challenge his intellect, it is his/her right to have that choice honored. We readily reward excellence in all fields with awards and titles at every turn--why would we hypocritically discourage this innate desire? This striving is the core to success.
- Detrimental effects on students and parents: High school is a period of transition fraught with anxiety, high stress and sleep deprivation. As a primary care physician, I can attest to the deleterious effects of these changes (longer commutes, weakened social supports) and the correlation with increased depression and anxiety.
- Neglecting root causes of underperforming schools/students
- Environmental pollution: This will worsen with increased commute times and longer bus routes.

An incremental approach would allow a judicious assessment of the consequences of each change and lead to modifications that would be more readily accepted over time. Incorporating flexibility in planning would also bring more parents and students to buy-in to this decision.

As a primary care physician, I feel strongly that every individual has the right to access high quality care. Our practice accepts all patients regardless of socioeconomic status, type of insurance or even lack thereof. I treat each individual based on his/her values and I avoid lumping patients into categories or making general assumptions in order to improve their overall health. Although I may not always agree, I respect the decisions each patient makes because autonomy is a central tenet in my practice. I do not feel I have the right to impose my personal beliefs; instead I focus on providing the best care I can to each individual.

My family and I have abided by this philosophy which is being trampled upon by the proposed redistricting plan. The school system has been entrusted with the

education and welfare of every child and should employ fairness in all of its actions.

**The Howard County school system and by association the City Council must be held accountable for the proposed changes and the potential aftermath which directly affects our quality of life in Howard County.** For education, as in other fields that offer a valuable service (hospitals, health care, government programs), there should be clearly defined metrics besides just socioeconomic status and test scores that evaluate its performance in the delivery of our children's education. Only this level of transparency and nuanced assessment can truly bolster our commitment to quality.

Let's support all of our students and not assume that they will "be fine" with these changes. Many progressive school systems nationwide recognize the importance of students' well-being (physical, psychological, and social) and have implemented changes accordingly: modifying school start and end times to minimize sleep deprivation, allowing mental health days, etc. In stark contrast, this proposed plan directly assails these priorities.

**I urge you to deter the Howard County Board of Education from proceeding with the proposed plan.** Ultimately, we entrust you and other elected representatives to protect our most precious commodity... our children (and our future).

Humbly,

**Kendra Kay**  
410-948-2888

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## Fwd: Polygon 1200



Vivica Williams <vivicalw@gmail.com>

Tue 8/27, 8:26 AM

superintendent@hcpss.org; vicky\_cutroneo@hcpss.org; ewalsh@howardcountymd.gov

🔄 Reply all | ▾

Priority

You replied on 9/13/2019 12:58 PM.

Dear Howard County Council Members, Senators, and Government Officials,

I am quite upset with the redistricting proposal. Please if you could take the time to read my letter below to understand our situation.

Thank you,

Vivica Williams  
13080 Greenberry Lane

Clarksville, MD 21029  
(443)710-5700

> Dear BOE,

> I am very upset about the proposed redistricting plan. I live on Greenberry Lane in Clarksville. We have been redistricted to Wild Lake HS. Wild Lake! Do you realize how difficult it is to drive there from where we live???? There are three ways to get there. 1) 32 to 108 to Harpers Farm to Twin Rivers (passes in front of River Hill), 2) 32 to Cedar Lane to Little Patuxent Pwy to Harpers Farm to Twin Rivers (passes in front of Atholton), or 3) 32 to 29 to Broken Land Parkway, pass the Mall to Twin Rivers. Any of these routes are complicated, full of traffic lights, full of traffic, and take at least 30 min in the morning g rush hour. From where we live and our access points, this proposal is incredibly dangerous and disruptive to students, parents, and our community.

>

> Also, I am not sure if you realize this but we live in a close knit enclave, isolated to the North of Rt 32 at Linden Church Rd. This neighborhood consists of Broadwater (Districted to Glenelg), Linden Church Rd, 12 Hills, and Greenberry Lane. We always have been together. I would know, I have lived on Greenberry Lane for 44 years. This proposal would absolutely tear apart our community and is geographically bizarre.

>

> Please put the best interests of our kids first. Displacing us to a school, frankly, horrifically difficult to get to, is not the answer.

>

> Thank you,

>

> Vivica Williams  
> (443)710-5700

>

> Sent from my iPhone

Reply all | Delete Junk | ...



## Redistricting Proposal 2020-2021 School Year



Amanda Clifton <amclifton1@gmail.com>

Tue 8/27, 10:43 AM

cball@howardcountymd.gov; redistricting@hcpss.org; superintendent@hcpss.org

Reply all |

Priority

You replied on 9/13/2019 12:58 PM.

Good Morning,

No doubt you've received many e-mails echoing the communities concerns over the proposed redistricting. As a parent of children who currently and will be in the next year joining the Howard County Public School System, I'd like to express my opposition to this decision. After thoroughly reading the multiple studies I have grave concerns over the reality of implementation and what that means for our children. Many children are looking at hour plus bus rides, being separated from friendships they've cultivated over the years and the potential to be unable to participate in after school activities due to these bus rides. Shortly I'll be faced with two children on opposing sides of the county. As a working parent, it is near impossible for me to meet my work hour obligations and retrieve my children from school activities within the limited time after care provides. I will most certainly be frequently faced with paying Howard County Parks and Recreation fees for late pickups in order to accommodate my children or I will have to explain to my employer why I can no longer work the hours I was hired for, putting me in a true situation between being able to financially provide for my children and getting them to and from school. Beyond my own personal issues, how does HCPSS plan to plan for the additional bus drivers? From personal experience, CDL drivers are not in abundance. I myself used to have to search quite vigorously to staff drivers for my retirement community. Given all of this, I think this proposal seems haphazard and ill advised.

A thousand percent I believe that this entire community believes all children should be provided a quality education but the truth is, this redistricting amounts to no more than shuffling kids to improve our statistics. In no way does it actually address the heart of the problem which is that Howard County has a poverty issue and schools who are underperforming for a multitude of reason. Redistricting is not going to fix this. Dr. Martirano cannot argue that we are shuffling for better education if in the next breath he is going to say all our schools are equal in level of education. That is absolutely incorrect or this wouldn't be an issue. It's contradictory and to me speaks to the fact that we are refusing to address that certain schools do need more help and do require additional resources. That's a big shame HCPSS for not wanting to actually fix things. It's easier to bury the problem in a spreadsheet and count us heros for making it look like we've actually done something to improve the poverty issue.

I will not stand for a proposal that impacts thousands of students lives and not for the better. I won't allow anyone on this e-mail to make a reckless decision that hurts communities and students futures because you do want to put in the hard work to actually help those kids struggling. Nope for you it's simply easier to spread the peas out on the plate to look like you've actually made an impact and that is unacceptable. Howard County has to acknowledge the need to pour resources into helping the students in the schools

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geographical sense rather than forcing our children up in the wee hours of the morning only to return late and forego things that allow children to grow themselves such as sports, music programs, dance lesson.

They are only children for so long before they will be thrust into the real adult world where they are faced with debt, work obligations and adult struggles of their own. Please don't rob them of hours to be children because of an ill devised redistricting plan which takes a minimum of 2 hours if not more from their days on bus rides. Remember that at present you are now talking to adults who currently can and high school seniors who will be able to vote in the next election. This will show them where their leaders stand on promises and values in community. Beyond that, many of our children will be able to remember this well into the point they can vote. With the fact another High School will be added in 2023, I think it is more advisable to take a geographical and logical approach to current needs to relieve overcrowding in schools while thinking future forward on how Howard County can alleviate overcrowding without adversely impacting student and parent lives.

I sincerely hope you will consider the vast opposition to this plan and truly instead invest in making a better choice for communities and students with your final proposal.

--

Sincerely,  
Amanda Clifton

9/23/2019

proposed redistricting

Reply all | Delete | Junk | ...



## proposed redistricting



Linda Rockford <lrock52@hotmail.com>

Tue 8/27, 2:37 PM

Hester, Katie Fry Senator

Reply all |

Priority

You replied on 9/13/2019 12:57 PM.

Good morning one and all; as a tax payer and VERY concerned citizen of Howard County I feel compelled to encourage each of you to completely and unequivocally reject the proposed school changes that are to be voted on at the upcoming board meeting. Very simply, forced integration has never, and will never achieve the desired outcome of improved student achievement. It was attempted in Detroit in the 70's with disastrous results; it has been attempted in other school districts and counties in previous years, also with unsuccessful results. Why??? Because shuffling students around, forcing them to leave their home schools has NEVER and WILL NEVER prove a successful method of integration. This proposal targets areas made up of families who have worked hard, saved, and struggled to purchase homes in particular areas so that their children can attend a particular school, and they have EVERY RIGHT to make these sacrifices and strive for the absolute best that they can give their children. It is completely ludicrous to think that anyone has the right to arbitrarily tell these families that their children cannot attend a chosen school because there are not enough FARM families in the school, so more must be bussed in while their children are bussed out. In addition, your proposal will surely cause home values in some areas to decline, putting undue stress and financial burdens on families who have made conscious choices to live, work, and school their children in a particular area. At the same time, homeowners whose children might now be bussed to higher performing schools will most assuredly see an increase in their home property values as a result. This is so very wrong on every level!! As a result of this, it is inevitable that some will be in favor of this redistricting but for all the wrong reasons.....not because it will benefit students, but because it will benefit homeowners. In a perfect world there would be total equity for all people; unfortunately,, we do not, nor will we ever, live in a perfect world. To penalize people for striving and succeeding is nothing short of unethical and immoral.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. I urge all off you to search your consciences and dig deeply into your souls in order to make the right decision.

Respectfully,  
Linda Rockford

9/23/2019

proposed redistricting

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9/23/2019

Democrat Against This Redistricting Plan

Reply all | Delete Junk | ...



## Democrat Against This Redistricting Plan



andrew\_waller@verizon.net

Tue 8/27, 4:20 PM

redistricting@HCPSS.org; superintendent@hcpss.org; cball@howardcountymd.go

Reply all |

Priority

This message was sent with high importance.

You replied on 9/13/2019 12:57 PM.

I'm writing to express my disapproval of the recently proposed redistricting plan. This plan is flawed on so many levels. I won't waste your time by relisting all of the talking points as they have been spelled out already by so many online and will be reiterated at your hearings. While I'm sure good intentioned, this is far too aggressive of a shift, impacting far too many people, and - at a time when you will be turning around to redistrict high schools again in a few years when HS13 prepares to come online.

I am an original Columbian. Went to Kindergarten at Bryant Woods, first grade at Faulkner Ridge, second through 4<sup>th</sup> grade at Longfellow, 5<sup>th</sup> at Running Brook. It was a nightmare to adjust. I went to WLMS and WLHS. Our redistricting was necessary. Building was rampant and families were taking possession of new homes and schools were being opened. It made sense. Bryant Woods to Faulkner Ridge - that made logical sense. If there was over-crowding, maybe some went to Swansfield or Longfellow - but it made sense. Had it been Bryant Woods to Clarksville Elementary or Atholton Elementary - that would have been a disaster. That's what you're doing here and it will be a disaster. My childhood was hard - moving from school to school - not being able to plant firm roots in a school. You are unnecessarily creating this same exact stressor for thousands of kids and their parents when you don't have to. Your ideals are good, but your plan is not. And we all know this isn't about FARMs ratios. There are plenty of alternative options to deal with that issue. We are one of the wealthiest counties in the country.

I am a lifelong original Columbian. I am a very liberal Democrat. I voted for most of you. I appreciate that you are trying to level the playing field but IMHO your plan is misguided and will have major unintended consequences. Busing everyone all over the place is just going to create a huge hassle for families - especially those of limited resources, **serious resentment**, and most importantly the unnecessary destruction of communities that are, like it or not - geographically based. **Your plan should try to do the least amount of harm possible.** This plan will do so much harm to so many. I hope you will consider other options.

Personally, my biggest problem with the plan, as it affects me and my neighbors in polygons 1185 and 185, is that **I/we live 0.4 miles from River Hill High School.** I am even closer to Clarksville Elementary (yes I know we're staying). People in our River Hill neighborhood grow up together, play on community soccer, baseball, basketball and swim teams, participate in community Boy's & Girl's Scouts, etc. Don't send them to an elementary school together, then split them up (at their most fragile stage of personal development 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade) to be strangers so far away - and then send them even farther for high school. Everyone is going to have their own reasoning why the don't like this plan. I don't like it for a lot of reasons. But my primary displeasure with the plan has

9/23/2019

Democrat Against This Redistricting Plan

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approach start by keeping the people who live closest to the schools (within a 1-2 mile radius) at those schools. Shouldn't you try not to disrupt the natural community? I just don't get it.

You guys are going to get plenty of flack and lots of anger about this plan. A lot. I'm not sure you understand the upset it's causing. I hope you will reconsider this plan and withdraw it sooner than later – but absolutely vote against it if it somehow makes it to a vote. Again, I am a liberal Democrat . Me and my middle class Democrat friends all voted for most of you – especially those of you on the school board - but this plan is not ok with us. We elected all of you to do so many good things, and again, we appreciate what you are trying to do, but this is not the way to do it. I hope you will consider alternatives or at a minimum wait until 2022-2023 when you'll have to do this all over again.

I appreciate your time.

Sincerely,

Andrew Waller

 Reply all |  Delete Junk |  ...



## Comments on Howard County Public School System Superintendent's Attendance Area Adjustment Plan



Jennifer Funk <paulandjen2@gmail.com>

Fri 8/30, 3:20 PM

Hester, Katie Fry Senator; Kittleman, Trent Delegate; warren.miller@house.state.md. 

 Reply all | 

Priority

You replied on 9/13/2019 12:51 PM.



Action Items



We live in Howard County in Polygon 1183 and are requesting that you take action regarding Dr. Martirano's Attendance Area Adjustment Plan dated August 20, 2019 due to the numerous and serious inconsistencies with regard to both Policy 6010 and the stated goals of the proposal.

As noted in the Executive Summary, this proposal was developed with three primary goals:

- Balance capacity utilization among schools throughout HCPSS, cost effectively.
- Advance equity by addressing the distribution of students participating in the Free and Reduced price meals program (FARMs) across schools to the extent feasible.
- Plan ahead for the High School #13 redistricting by minimizing double moves as much as possible.

The redistricting announced in January along with the feasibility studies, community meetings and a survey about those studies do not align with the Superintendent's Plan. This proposal targets other issues within our school system and bares very little resemblance to the feasibility studies and the original intended purpose of relieving the overcrowding. The vote last year (and the year before) by the Board of Education (BoE) was to hold off on comprehensive redistricting until '22 when the plan has to be laid out for HS'13 attendance area changes. Furthermore, this proposal is not consistent with the guidelines of Policy 6010 and does not achieve the three primary goals as stated above.

I am requesting you consider the following facts as you address our comments to this Plan.

1. **School Attendance Area:** School Attendance area and geographic proximity is a consideration of Policy 6010. The proposed redistricting of Polygon 1183 would increase the distance my children would travel to get to/from school. This will likely result in longer morning commuting times for my children to get to school and reduced sleep, which is already a concern for my family.

Many families that qualify for FARM benefits rely on public transportation and walking to access their local school and community activities ---- the proposed redistricting plan would destroy those options for families that need them the most. Glenelg, Reservoir, River Hill, Marriotts Ridge, Centennial, and Mt Hebron high schools are not on the public bus route run by RTA. **How will redistricting hundreds of FARM students from their local walkable schools to distant schools positively impact their families when they are required to spend extra money on fuel or public transportation to stay involved in school activities & meetings?**

1. **Capacity Utilization:** Policy 6010 identifies three key aspects to school capacity which are (1) Projections [item P], (2) Target Utilization [item S] which is defined as enrollment between 90% and 110% utilization of program capacity and (3) Utilization [item T]. The 2019 Feasibility Study (<https://www.hcpss.org/f/schoolplanning/2019/2019-feasibility-study.pdf>) notes the following findings:

- a. River Hill High School is projected to be at 94% Projected Utilization for 2019/2020 school. This is at the lower end of the Target Utilization range.
- b. Page 33 of the Feasibility Study indicates that River Hill is within Target Utilization through the 10 year projection period of the study.

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which is currently operating within Board Policy guidelines with regard to Projections, Target Utilization and Utilization.

e. Any re-districting proposal should instead be focused on those five High Schools that are operating above Target Utilization levels (110%).  
 f. The Board of Education should support a plan that includes less disruption at schools that are operating within the guidelines of [P], [S] and [T]. For instance, since River Hill High School is operating well within the target utilization range, perhaps it should receive students from nearby schools such as Wilde Lake, Atholton or Howard, without sending 478 students out to other schools. Certainly, the Board of Education can request a plan that achieves better capacity utilization with less than 7,396 total students being relocated.

1. **Equity:** The Superintendent's presentation of this plan notes that all Howard County schools have the same curriculum, same quality teachers and similar infrastructure, similar funding etc. With that in mind, the very first sentence of the Policy Statement of HCPSS Policy 6010 is, "The Board of Education of Howard County, with the advice of the Superintendent, establishes school attendance areas to provide quality, equitable educational opportunities to all students and to balance the capacity utilization of all schools". Furthermore, "equitable" is defined in the policy statement as: Just or fair access, opportunities, and supports needed to help students, families, and staff reach their full potential by removing barriers to success that individuals face. It does not mean equal or everyone having the same things.

The Presentation of the Attendance Area Adjustment Plan dated August 20, 2019 is not consistent with the BoE Policy Statement 6010, nor does it follow the BoE's definition of achieving "equitable" educational opportunities. We request the BoE identify ways to provide additional educational resources to the students in need. Transferring students from a school with a low FARM ratio to a school with a high FARM ratio, only results in better "averages" for the schools. It does not provide any incremental educational resources or opportunities directly to the students. Additionally, trading children between schools seems destabilizing to already established kids and communities within those schools.

Development policies driven by decisions of past Howard County Councils have concentrated poverty in particular areas of the county. The schools local to these areas subsequently have higher FARM student percentages than some others in the county. This is a problem that is far above the school system and cannot be solved by redistricting ---- redistricting will only insidiously mask the problem.

**How will balancing FARM student percentages by redistricting hundreds of FARM & non-FARM students improve the education and opportunities of all or even any students of Howard County?**

FARM students and families already are low on resources and are hard-pressed for time to be involved heavily in their local schools (which negatively impacts overall academic performance). **How will redistricting hundreds of FARM students from their local walkable schools to distant schools that require unwalkable bus and commute routes improve their academic performance, access to educational opportunities, and/or overall quality of life?**

Moving low income polygons to more affluent schools has the possibility of taking families away from their most precious resource; people and community that they are established in and know.

**How much outreach has been or will be conducted to determine how this plan would affect these families? Will the BoE request a statistically valid survey be conducted with impacted Howard County citizens to ensure the "voice of the constituents" is represented in decision-making?**

In summary, we request the BoE capitalize on the taxpayer funded feasibility study already conducted and plan this out in a more thoughtful and inclusive way. Comprehensive redistricting must be planned in 2022 for the new HS'13. That gives the county and HCPSS sometime to think this out and PLAN to create a more equitable system for all.

Thank you,  
 Paul and Jen Funk

9/23/2019

Fwd: Testimony letter to oppose the new redistricting proposal from Doulgas Gartrell, Polygon# 1186

Reply all | Delete | Junk | ...

X

## Fwd: Testimony letter to oppose the new redistricting proposal from Doulgas Gartrell, Polygon# 1186



doug gartrell <douggartrell@gmail.com>

Tue 8/27, 4:25 PM

Elizabeth <ewalsh@howardcountymd.gov>; Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>

Reply all |

Priority

You replied on 9/13/2019 12:56 PM.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: doug gartrell <douggartrell@gmail.com>

Date: Tue, Aug 27, 2019 at 4:21 PM

Subject: Testimony letter to oppose the new redistricting proposal from Doulgas Gartrell, Polygon# 1186

To: <redistricting@hcpss.org>, <schoolplanning@hcpss.org>, <superintendent@hcpss.org>,

<mavis\_ellis@hcpss.org>, <kirsten\_coombs@hcpss.org>, <vicky\_cutroneo@hcpss.org>,

<christina\_delmont-small@hcpss.org>, <jennifer\_mallo@hcpss.org>, <sabina\_taj@hcpss.org>,

<chao\_wu@hcpss.org>

Dr. Martirano:

I do strongly oppose your proposal that was presented on August 22, 2019:

<https://www.baltimoresun.com/maryland/howard/cng-ho-schools-redistricting-recommendations-0822-20190822-rxprk5uf4zcqllhtmotuxg4j5i-story.html>

I strongly suggest you to fully assess the options to improve the equity in the area of needs. Please provide full supports for the schools where needs free meals, computers, books, staff, etc. To support this rationale, please use the Howard County education budget to the schools need help.

Please bring many experts (educators, scientists, psychologists, psychiatrists) opinions and rigorous study data, opinions from the Howard county communities, parents, and children. Please do provide longitudinal measures to support a new proposal.

I am a psychiatrist who knows the developmental milestone of our children. They should not suffer from this psycho-social distress. Please be wise not separating them from their friends in Clarksville Elementary School to move them to the Harpers choice middle school. It also increases commuting time by sending them far away from where they live to new schools. It increases cost living because parents have to leave their workplace early to pick up children to take them their extra-curriculum activities.

Please do not implement this new proposal. I examined your new proposal versus the 2019 feasibility study. The 2019 feasibility study is much more make sense to our communities, families, and schools

9/23/2019

Fwd: Testimony letter to oppose the new redistricting proposal from Doulgas Gartrell, Polygon# 1186

 Reply all |   Delete  Junk |  ...



Sincerely,  
Douglas Gartrell, MD  
Psychiatrist Sheppard Pratt Health System

To whom it may concern:

I grew up in Bergen County, New Jersey which has many similarities to Howard County with regards to a diverse population and a strong public school system. Our family values education and striving for excellence. That is why when we moved to Maryland in 2005 after much research and deliberation, we chose to move to Howard County due to its reputation as a diverse community with strong public schools. We have 4 kids which include a rising 9<sup>th</sup> grader, rising 7<sup>th</sup> grader and two elementary school students; therefore, we have exposure to all levels of the education process and this ill-conceived redistricting plan. We have lived in various parts of Howard County throughout the years starting in Ellicott City and then the Atholton school district and were overall satisfied with our experience. A few years ago, after careful research and planning while taking into account our children's social network cultivated over the years and their desire to be with friends who shared their interests academically, we chose to move to the River Hill district. Having lived in both areas I can say that Atholton and River Hill school districts have unique qualities that are not easily interchangeable.

This is why we are astounded and dumbfounded that the school board and superintendent with the misguided backing of a few Howard County Council members have chosen such an asymmetric and extreme approach that would decimate and implode the fabric and essence of the Atholton and River Hill communities. We are at a loss as to why the FARM metrics are even being used to justify any moves. This action implies that the school board and Council members views those families/students as somehow inferior and a liability that needs to be spread out which is insulting. What exact problem is being solved by using that metric? If a school is underperforming with regards to test scores it is a lazy and a simplistic approach to simply move a higher scoring student to an underperforming district instead of improving local assistance and resources to improve test scores and grades for underperforming students which will improve likelihood of long term success for those students and not just appease administrators obsessed with the appearance of social justice. With regards to the primary issue of overcrowding in certain districts our suggestion is to take a more balanced approach and allow students from overcrowded school districts to be transported to less crowded districts either voluntary or assigned. This may increase commute times for some students though still would be less of a disruption than involuntary imposing this sledgehammer of a policy and redistricting on several thousand students. The school system's actions should be a bridge to the time when the new high school is completed which will unload a majority of the currently overcrowded high school districts. Another more balanced approach would be to require all school districts to contribute relatively equally to the redistribution process so that more families across the county can accept buying in.

You are elected officials that are supposed to represent the entire community and not your own individual agendas. You were not given a mandate by the voters to wreak havoc on the school system in a county known for its stability. Howard County has a unique and very highly educated population and you should not pretend know what is better for all of us as if we do not understand the issues. We accept the role of government with legislative issues and changes as part of the norm including higher taxes and are more than willing to do our part. There are few issues that are more sensitive and important to individual families than making personal choices in the best interests of their children's happiness, well-being and education which you are disrupting on a mass scale. Should the school board, council members/ executive and superintendent ignore this basic tenet and disrupt so many families who are perfectly satisfied with their school districts under a misguided notion/ideology of being a savior your legacy will be tarnished. Our children are not happy with these proposed changes

as they will be adversely affected on many levels for years and they will not forget who was responsible.

I voted for a majority of the current elected officials. You should not underestimate how much this will energize and motivate your constituents to oppose your reelection at the next cycle

Sincerely,

Khalid Zirvi

August 29, 2019

To: Howard County BOE, Dr. Michael J. Martirano, Superintendent, Howard County Public School System

Cc: County Council Members, HoCo County Executive, District 9 State Senator, District 9A State Delegates

**Subject: Oppose Dr Martirano's Redistricting Proposal**

Dear Board of Education (BOE) Members and Dr. Martirano,

As a longtime resident of Howard County Maryland (residing in Polygon 176) and a parent of two young children, I am writing to express my significant concerns about the proposed impact of Dr Martirano's Attendance Area Adjustment Plan, dated August 20, 2019.

Unfortunately, the Presentation of Attendance Area Adjustment Plan, dated August 20, 2019 is **not** consistent with the guidelines of Policy 6010 and does **not** achieve the three primary goals as stated in Dr Martirano's letter. Please consider the following facts and impacts.

**School Attendance Area impacts:**

School Attendance area and geographic proximity is a consideration of Policy 6010. The proposed redistricting of Polygon 176 would more than double the distance students travel to get to school.

- Using Google Maps, Walnut Creek / Polygon 176 is 2.1 Miles from River Hill High School (RHHS). Walnut Creek / Polygon 176 is 5.8 miles from Wilde Lake High School (WLHS). Using WAZE, the commute time from Polygon 176 to Wilde Lake High School would be 3x as long as the commute to River Hill High School.
- In addition, many of the students from Polygon 176 would have to drive through River Hill High School bus and car traffic, en route to Wilde Lake High School under the August 20, 2019 proposal.
- Such long commute times would affect student's sleep, family time, extracurricular activities, and could lead to higher probability of accidents given these high school students would be new drivers on the road driving longer distances with increased traffic jams.
- Longer commute also reduces parents' engagement with the schools since they're further away and this would impact the child's education.
- Longer transportation times would lead to higher expenses for the Board of Education with zero return on investment and higher polluting emissions.
- Our family chose to go to these local schools when we moved to our current home. We treat our local schools as part of our community, which is being torn apart; choice taken away from us and all of us are feeling these impacts. This redistricting plan is disruptive of our community.

**Capacity Utilization and Disruption impacts:**

Policy 6010 identifies three key aspects to school capacity which are (1) Projections [item P], (2) Target Utilization [item S] which is defined as enrollment between 90% and 110% utilization of program capacity and (3) Utilization [item T].

The 2019 Feasibility Study (<https://www.hcpss.org/f/schoolplanning/2019/2019-feasibility-study.pdf>) notes the following findings:

1. River Hill High School is projected to be at 94% Projected Utilization for 2019/2020 school. This is at the lower end of the Target Utilization range.
2. Page 33 of the Feasibility Study indicates that River Hill is within Target Utilization through the 10-year projection period of the study.
3. Under Dr Martirano's proposal, River Hill would send 478 students to other schools and receive 741 students from other schools. This is extremely disruptive and unnecessary for a school that is currently operating within each of guidelines [P], [S] and [T] of Policy 6010.
4. The board should reject a plan which moves approximately 7,400 total students including 478 students from River Hill High School which is currently operating within Board Policy guidelines about Projections, Target Utilization and Utilization.
5. Any re-districting proposal should instead be focused on those five High Schools that are operating above Target Utilization levels (110%).
6. I believe the Board of Education should support a plan that includes less disruption at schools that are operating within the guidelines of [P], [S] and [T]. For instance, since River Hill High School is operating well within the target utilization range, perhaps it should receive students from nearby schools such as Wilde Lake, Atholton or Howard, without sending 478 students out to other schools. Certainly, the Board of Education can request a plan that achieves better capacity utilization with less than 7,396 total students being relocated.
7. Do not redistrict now if you are planning to redistrict anyway in 2 years and then too, do it in a thoughtful, non-disruptive manner. We owe stability to our children. Consider this article: "Switching Schools: Reconsidering the Relationship Between School Mobility and High School Dropout" published by the authors at JHU Dept of Sociology (Joseph Gasper, Stefanie DeLuca, Angela Estacion) - the abstract states – "Youth who switch schools are more likely to demonstrate a wide array of negative behavioral and educational outcomes, including dropping out of high school."
8. Superintendent Martirano indicated he sees no other way to solve the capacity issue other than this redistricting plan in 20-21. However, temporary classrooms (portables) have been around for a long time. What prevents us from adding more of these portables for highly utilized schools to minimize these impacts until HS13 is ready?

#### Equity:

The very first sentence of the Policy Statement of HCPSS Policy 6010 is *The Board of Education of Howard County, with the advice of the Superintendent, establishes school attendance areas to provide quality, equitable educational opportunities to all students and to balance the capacity utilization of all schools.*

Furthermore, "equitable" is defined in the policy statement as: *Just or fair access, opportunities, and supports needed to help students, families, and staff reach their full potential by removing barriers to success that individuals face. It does not mean equal or everyone having the same things.*

The Presentation of the Attendance Area Adjustment Plan dated August 20, 2019 is not consistent with the Board of Education Policy Statement 6010, nor does it follow the BoE's definition of achieving "equitable" educational opportunities. I hereby request the Board of Education identify ways to provide additional educational resources to the students in need. Transferring students from a school with a low FARM ratio to a school with a high FARM ratio, only results in better "averages" for the schools. IT DOES NOT PROVIDE ANY INCREMENTAL EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES OR OPPORTUNITES DIRECTLY TO THE STUDENTS.

In conclusion, I recommend the Board of Education reject the Presentation of Attendance Area Adjustment Plan dated August 20, 2019 due to the numerous and serious inconsistencies regarding both Policy 6010 and the stated goals of the proposal.

- The proposal would triple the commuting time of students in Polygon 176; I understand there are many other children who are affected similarly or worse county-wide.
- Many affected schools including River Hill High School are operating within the Board of Education projection, utilization and capacity guidelines and would experience a total student transfer of over 1,000 children inclusive of students being sent and received. Boundary adjustments should be focused on schools operating over capacity or projected to be over capacity based on the 2019 Feasibility study.
- The proposal does not provide additional resources directly and LOCALLY to students in need, it simply provides more consistent FARM ratios across schools. Children do not need consistent FARM ratios; they need additional education resources provided directly to their OWN schools.
- Shuffling students across schools with longer commute times do not improve scores - they increase stress and hardship for families.

Thank you,

Raj Tuliani

Concerned parent

 Reply all |  Delete |  Junk |  ...



## Howard County School Redistricting Concern



Christopher Sajewicz <csajewicz@gmail.com>

Fri 8/30, 8:29 AM

mavis\_ellis@hcpss.org; kirsten\_coombs@hcpss.org; vicky\_cutroneo@hcpss.org; chri+2 more

 Reply all | 

Priority

You replied on 9/13/2019 12:52 PM.

Dear Board of Education Members,

We are writing on behalf of residents of 176 who are concerned about the proposed impact of Dr Martirano's Presentation of the Attendance Area Adjustment Plan, dated August 20, 2019. As noted in the Executive Summary on Page 4, this proposal was developed with three primary goals as excerpted below:

*The driving priorities for this process:*

1. *Balance capacity utilization among schools throughout HCPSS, cost effectively.*
2. *Advance equity by addressing the distribution of students participating in the Free and Reduced price meals program (FARMs) across schools to the extent feasible.*
3. *Plan ahead for the High School #13 redistricting by minimizing double moves as much as possible.*

We have also studied and respect the published policies which the Board of Education utilizes in making decisions with regard to school attendance areas, specifically Policy 6010 (<https://www.hcpss.org/policies/6000/6010-school-attendance-areas/>):

Unfortunately, the Presentation of Attendance Area Adjustment Plan, dated August 20, 2019 is not consistent with the guidelines of Policy 6010 and does not achieve the three primary goals as stated in Dr Martirano's letter. Please consider the following facts.

### School Attendance Area:

School Attendance area and geographic proximity is a consideration of Policy 6010. The proposed redistricting of Polygon 176 would more than double the distance students travel to get to school.

- Using Google Maps, Walnut Creek / Polygon 176 is 2.1 Miles from River Hill High School (RHHS). Walnut Creek / Polygon 176 is 5.8 miles from Wilde Lake High School (WLHS).
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- In addition, many of the students from Polygon 176 would have to drive through River Hill High School bus and car traffic, en-route to Wilde Lake High School under the August 20, 2019 proposal.

### Capacity Utilization:

Policy 6010 identifies three key aspects to school capacity which are (1) Projections [item P], (2) Target Utilization [item S] which is defined as enrollment between 90% and 110% utilization of program capacity and (3) Utilization [item T].

The 2019 Feasibility Study (<https://www.hcpss.org/f/schoolplanning/2019/2019-feasibility-study.pdf>) notes the following findings:

Sugato Bhattacharjee

Polygon Number 176

Board of Education (BOE)

Howard County Public School System (HCPSS)

10910 Clarksville Pike

Ellicott City, MD 21042

**Subject: Recommended Attendance Area Adjustment Plan as Presented to the BOE on August 22, 2019**

**Dear Members of the Board:**

I write to voice my significant concern and strong opposition to the subject attendance area adjustment plan as it pertains to the proposed reassignment of high school students from River Hill High School (RHHS) to Wilde Lake High School (WLHS).

The subject plan has significant shortcomings in relation to the following ...

- a) **ACADEMIC OPPORTUNITY AND EXCELLENCE** – the plan does nothing in reference to raising or improving education standards that HCPSS is known for which remains the primary rationale for numerous parents and families who chose to reside here. Personally speaking as someone who relocated to Howard County from out-of-state a few years ago with a would-be-kindergartener and a strong desire to experience RHHS trading for a daily one-way one-hour commute to work, the sheer magnitude and turbulence of this proposed reassignment of students are extremely disheartening since it splinters the fabric of the community surrounding the excellence of RHHS.
- b) **CAPACITY UTILIZATION** – Even at 98% base for 2020-2021, RHHS remains under capacity and can clearly absorb students from other high schools, as needed, without requiring reassignment of student from RHHS.
- c) **PROXIMITY AND TRANSPORTATION** – For students walking to and commuting from Polygon 176 to RHHS as well as for those residing in communities around WLHS, the plan does them a huge disservice with up to 4X increase in transportation time from home to school and back with associated increase in transportation cost that will impact families and HCPSS. Reduced community engagement and participation supporting school activities will inherently follow.
- d) **EQUITY** – the plan loudly attempts to make an argument about fairness but completely fails to address the deficiencies of this proposal that ends up with inequity for a vast majority of students. Indeed, the central underpinnings of this plan appear to be the distribution of students participating in the Free and Reduced price meals program (FARMs) which is a

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✕

2. Page 33 of the Feasibility Study indicates that River Hill is within Target Utilization through the 10 year projection period of the study.
3. Under Dr Martirano's proposal, River Hill would send 478 students to other schools and receive 741 students from other schools. This is extremely disruptive and unnecessary for a school that is currently operating within each of guidelines [P], [S] and [T] of Policy 6010.
4. We believe the board should reject a plan which moves approximately 7,400 total students including 478 students from River Hill High School which is currently operating within Board Policy guidelines with regard to Projections, Target Utilization and Utilization.
5. We believe any re-districting proposal should instead be focused on those five High Schools that are operating above Target Utilization levels (110%).
6. We believe the Board of Education should support a plan that includes less disruption at schools that are operating within the guidelines of [P], [S] and [T]. For instance, since River Hill High School is operating well within the target utilization range, perhaps it should receive students from nearby schools such as Wilde Lake, Atholton or Howard, without sending 478 students out to other schools. Certainly, the Board of Education can request a plan that achieves better capacity utilization with less than 7,396 total students being relocated.

#### Equity:

The very first sentence of the Policy Statement of HCPSS Policy 6010 is *The Board of Education of Howard County, with the advice of the Superintendent, establishes school attendance areas to provide quality, equitable educational opportunities to all students and to balance the capacity utilization of all schools.*

Furthermore, "equitable" is defined in the policy statement as: *Just or fair access, opportunities, and supports needed to help students, families, and staff reach their full potential by removing barriers to success that individuals face. It does not mean equal or everyone having the same things.*

The Presentation of the Attendance Area Adjustment Plan dated August 20, 2019 is not consistent with the Board of Education Policy Statement 6010, nor does it follow the BoE's definition of achieving "equitable" educational opportunities. We hereby request the Board of Education identify ways to provide additional educational resources to the students in need. Transferring students from a school with a low FARM ratio to a school with a high FARM ratio, only results in better "averages" for the schools. IT DOES NOT PROVIDE ANY INCREMENTAL EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES OR OPPORTUNITES DIRECTLY TO THE STUDENTS.

In conclusion, we recommend the Board of Education reject the Presentation of Attendance Area Adjustment Plan dated August 20, 2019 due to the numerous and serious inconsistencies with regard to both Policy 6010 and the stated goals of the proposal.

- The proposal would triple the commuting time of students in Polygon 176
- Many affected schools including River Hill High School are operating within the Board of Education projection, utilization and capacity guidelines and would experience a total student transfer of over 1,000 children inclusive of students being sent and received. Boundary adjustments should be focused on schools operating over capacity or projected to be over capacity based on the 2019 Feasibility study.
- The proposal does not provide additional resources directly to students in need, it simply provides more consistent FARM ratios across schools. Children do not need consistent FARM ratios, they need additional education resources provided directly to their schools.

Thank you,

Christopher Sajewicz  
12217 Hayland Farm Way  
Ellicott City, MD 21231  
Cell: (516) 819-0456

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## Please don't ask Kids to scarify



Senthil Kumar Ranganathan <senjoy@gmail.com>

Sun 9/1, 12:49 PM

mavis\_ellis@hcpss.org; kirsten\_coombs@hcpss.org; vicky\_cutroneo@hcpss.org; +19 more ▾

📧 Reply all | ▾

Priority

You replied on 9/13/2019 11:59 AM.



Action Items



Dear Dr., Martirano,

I hope you are doing well. Thanks to you and your team to constantly working to improve our county education and environment to benefit our families and kids.

I am writing to you to share my opinion about a recent proposal on school redistricting. It's really unfortunate to be at the current situation and surprises me that we have to deal this issue in one of the best county in our nation. I also feel somewhat shame, that we (county officials and parents) end up using kids' education as a bargaining tool.

My concerns is, We are encouraging and promoting something like second child syndrome, Your proposal is similar to the syndrome effect, few kids are more prone to receiving privileges, while the others in the family (county) is more likely to receive indulgences, they no longer has their status as the baby and is left with no clear role in the family, or a feeling of being "left out". A typical parent wouldn't show unbalanced love between their children. Your proposal is like stealing peacefulness, opportunity to learn and bright future from one set of county schools kids and giving it to other set of county school kids. The biggest concern is that, this a social test which as no facts or background data to prove that the receiving kids will show progress. Let's not show progress by asking kids to scarify their quality time, friends and hard work. You can't take credit on someone donation's money, you have to spend money from your bank account to take some credit.

If balancing FARM is primary issue we are trying to resolve, where the end goal is to deliver quality of life and education equally to all kids in our county, then kids should not be part of the solution equation.

Why do I oppose your proposal?

1. Your proposal virtually distributes across county schools, here you are impacting kids across all families, you are taking away time from parents and make the kids travel longer which will also increase transportation cost. Instead build low income houses near schools that can share and provide an opportunity to move family not just moving kids. You are separating kids from their own family.
2. More people on road is more cost for county to maintain and operate, eventually you are going to disturb all businesses by increasing travel time by adding more traffic on road. This will have a direct impact on county economy which may force businesses to move out of county.
3. More traffic could cause more pollution and waste of energy which will end up in more health issues.

budgetary management exercise geared towards a lower FARMs ratio and being administered with an adhoc command economy driven approach that has proven to be highly inept all over the world. As someone who has to make commercial decisions about a profit-and-loss enterprise every day, I would think there has to a better way for budget management then a redistribution exercise that creates more problems than it solves. Challenging as well as incentivizing suppliers providing meals in the FARMs program and identifying other avenues to generate revenue for planned new schools are alternatives to the current approach.

I urge you to decide and vote against this poorly conceived recommendation for attendance area adjustment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sugato Bhattacharjee". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Sugato" being more prominent and the last name "Bhattacharjee" following in a similar style.

Sugato Bhattacharjee

Polygon Number 176

Justin Balciunas  
12449 Watkins Bridge Lane  
Clarksville, MD 21029  
Polygon #3176

Re: Oppose Martirano's Redistricting Proposal

Dear Howard County Board of Education:

Please reject Michael Martirano's outrageous redistricting proposal. This proposal has created an unprecedented level of disruption in a county otherwise known historically for stability. This plan is reminiscent of 1960s-era busing proposals and has already destabilized the school system and county as impacted residents weigh their future alternatives outside of the school system.

Our polygon (#3176) has been redistricted from River Hill to Wilde Lake. River Hill is currently under-capacity, so moving any students out of River Hill fails any "over-capacity" rationale. Similarly, our home is currently less than 2-miles from River Hill, whereas Wilde Lake is over 7 miles, therefore negating any geographic logic to this proposal. Finally, from an equity perspective, this proposal solves no underlying problems and instead redistributes children. While I fully support redistributing resources to struggling schools, I do not support redistributing students. Any equity objectives should not be a "zero-sum-game" where we choose to destroy thriving schools and communities in order to improve struggling schools and communities. We can do better.

Whether you want to admit it or not, people pick their homes based on their specific schools. Unless this proposal is rejected, you will have marginalized what has been historically one of the best school districts and counties in the country. In addition, these destabilizing actions have created significant friction for anyone who would ever consider moving to this county over the next 2-3 years. Please reverse course as soon as possible before the damage becomes permanent and vote down the ludicrous proposal. Please return this county to the stability, decency, and common sense historically associated with Howard County. This proposal is currently ripping the community apart!

Sincerely,

Justin Balciunas

Cc Calvin Ball, David Yungman, Katie Fry Hester

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early age they have to wake up at least 45 minutes before than their typical time, which will have a direct stress on the entire family. This will have conflicts/arguments and stress level will increase to the most every day for parents and kids, similar experience in evening to pick the kids from the after-school programs.

5. Evidence is mounting from sociology research that this kind of situation where parents and kids gets frustrated and exhausted every day will impact happiness and increase divorce rates and impact a good family across the county.

6. We know we are going to have new school district HS #13 in 2023, let's wait and consider solution that can serve the county people for long period. Too much of changes in short period is not healthy.

Your proposal is for Kids and they should not be part of your solution. They should be just at the receiving end getting benefits. I would strive to use this opportunity by creating awareness on qualities. Support Kids & parents to promote Volunteering service which could save cost and reduce expenses, where the cost saving could be spend on the areas to reduce FARM price. Promoting "donation" habits to increase quality of education across county.

Don't push us to move out of county or state please, this is our home and it is disturbing and takes away confidence that Howard county officials are not for public and they are more in this role for personnel gain.

Our nation has prides to have "leave no man behind" mantra and we take very step to follow that, our county is part if this great nation, how come we had a heart to even proposal a solution to impact majority of the kids to fix one issue. I am pretty sure our county officials are smarter than this proposal.

Thanks

Senthil K Ranganathan.

Parent of Two kids.

Living in Howard county from 2005.

Reply all | Delete | Junk | ...



## Opposition to Howard County Redistricting Plan



Melissa Decker <melissaldecker@gmail.com>

Mon 9/2, 6:40 PM

Hester, Katie Fry Senator

Reply all |

Priority

You replied on 9/13/2019 11:45 AM.

Dear Senator Hester,

I am the parent of a 5-year-old kindergarten student and 3-year-old twins, all who are anticipating beginning at Clarksville Elementary School. My husband and I live in Polygon 1028. We are constituents that vote in every election. We moved to Clarksville from Baltimore City in April 2018. We chose to leave the city because we were lacking a sense of community in our city neighborhood and wanted our children to develop strong bonds with our neighbors, something we both were lucky enough to experience in our own childhood towns. Similar to so many others, we chose Clarksville for the quality of the schools. But we fell in love with Clarksville for the strong sense of community and friendship among neighbors. We chose Clarksville so that our children would be able to develop long-lasting friendships within the community and attend school with their neighborhood friends.

After reading Superintendent Martinaro's proposal for redistricting, I believe that this is the wrong approach to address equity and overcrowding in Howard County schools for several reasons. First, in the proposed plan, the children in our polygon will attend Clarksville Elementary School, Harper's Choice Middle School and River Hill High School. This means our boys will develop friendships with the children in our neighborhood only to be moved across town to a new school. They will be removed from their cohort for three years and then returned to it for high school, which is extremely disruptive to their friendships, sense of connection to the community, and their relationships with educators in the Clarksville school system at critical developmental periods in their lives. Children who live within minutes of our home, but happen to fall within another polygon, will remain in Clarksville Middle with their friends, while our children will be bused fifteen minutes away. All the while, they will see former friendships grow and flourish through early adolescence, knowing that they cannot participate in them but can only observe from the outside. How will it be explained to them that their neighbor is allowed to remain with their friends but they cannot?

The development of strong social skills and interpersonal relationships is critical to a child's development. There are volumes of data to support the fact that disruptions in childhood attachment and social relationships can have long-lasting effects on mental health. The proposed redistricting plan will no doubt disrupt children's social relationships and has the potential to undermine their social development. Furthermore, school mobility has been proven to produce negative outcomes for school performance, children's self-esteem and psychological well-being. As children will need to wake even earlier to tackle a longer commute to school, they will lose precious sleep that is critical to their cognition and behavior. Data suggests that loss of even one night's sleep has detrimental effects on cognitive and behavioral functioning. With the knowledge that moving children from their home school may cause detrimental effects to children's mental health, school performance and overall quality of life, it is irresponsible to move forward with the proposed plan without a strong rationale for doing so.

The proposal proclaims to address the problems of inequity through the redistribution of children across Howard County. However, there are larger community and social issues that have contributed to poor performance and inequity among Howard County schools that will not be solved by moving polygons around on the county map. My strong recommendation to the Board is that those community and social concerns that contribute to inequity need to be addressed by providing additional resources to those schools that underperform, a solution that will address the source of inequity. It is well known that underperforming schools lack the resources, teachers, paraeducators and programs necessary to reduce the effects of poverty on academic performance. In addition, removing children from their neighborhood schools may create more problems that it has the potential to solve. Many children and parents rely on public transportation which may or may not extend to the redistricted school, creating a barrier for child and parental involvement in school and after school activities. Many of the schools with a high percentage of FARMs children have programs, outreach and resources available that provide assistance with clothing donations, social services and wrap around services that would not be available to them at a higher performing school. Has the Board considered how

9/23/2019

Opposition to Howard County Redistricting Plan

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It is my firm belief that every child deserves a quality education, no matter what race, gender or socioeconomic status, and it is clear that the Board values this as well. That is what brought us to Howard County in the first place, the focus on excellent education. But the proposed redistricting plan is not the way to achieve true equity among schools. It is simply masking the systemic problems that poverty creates. There are many other data-driven plans that could address equity without disrupting neighborhoods and friendships. Please consider the empirical evidence against moving children from their schools, as well as alternative options to addressing overcrowding in the schools in a more family and neighborhood-friendly way.

Thank you for your time and thoughtfulness in our children's education.

Sincerely,  
Melissa Decker Barone

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## Opposition to Howard County Redistricting Plan



Melissa Decker <melissaldecker@gmail.com>

Mon 9/2, 6:40 PM

Hester, Katie Fry Senator

📧 Reply all | ⌵

Priority

You replied on 9/13/2019 11:45 AM.

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Benjamin Balciunds  
Polygon 3176  
Grade 4

sep 2 2019

To: Howard County Board of Education  
RE: Oppose Dr. Martirano's Proposal

I am opposed to Dr. Martirano's Proposal

~~the~~ redistricting plan. I was ~~up~~ ~~to~~ going

to River Hill High School for high school

and this new plan has me going to a school

far away called Wild Lake High School and

I don't like going on long bus rides.

Please vote against Dr. Martirano's Proposal.

Sincerely,

Benjamin Balciunds

Polygon 3176

9/23/2019

Concerned Letter from Parent of Polygon 3176

↻ Reply all | ▾  Delete Junk | ▾ ...



## Concerned Letter from Parent of Polygon 3176



Sadrashk Kazmi <szkazmi@me.com>

Mon 9/2, 7:49 PM

redistricting@hcpss.org; mavis\_ellis@hcpss.org; kirsten\_coombs@hcpss.org; +20 more ▾

↻ Reply all | ▾

Priority

You replied on 9/13/2019 11:44 AM.



Action Items



Dear Board of Education Members,

I am writing because my family and I reside in Polygon 3176 and are deeply disturbed by the recent school-redistricting plan proposed by our superintendent Michael Martirano. Our community resides in Walnut Grove and is 2 miles away from River Hill high school. According to the new redistricting, I was troubled to hear that our kids would be going to a high school that is 9 miles away.

Now of course anyone can read all these opposing emails and think that parents are against it because it changes where they send their kids to high school. But I truly hope someone on your board focuses on the reasons *why* parents are opposing this horrible plan. Education is about placing the needs and priorities of the children first. It is what parents work so hard and make sacrifices for to make sure their children are afforded the right environment and atmosphere to excel in their lives. Despite what people may think, our community is a very much diverse community made up of Hispanic, Asian, African American, Caucasian and Southern Asian families. We take great pride in knowing that our neighborhood embodies the definition of DIVERSE. Many of us have overcome many painful hurdles and sacrifices to reach where we are at in our lives today. I personally am from a family of 7 who lived in a two bedroom apartment in NYC who grew up as a latch key kid and know personally the hardships my family faced growing up. It has led me to the point where I am in my life, and it is the driving force in providing the best atmosphere for my children. So please, first and foremost, please remove any thoughts that we are some privileged people and insensitive to others' needs. In fact, because of our varying backgrounds and stories of struggles, we come together as a community and have worked extremely hard in building not just our neighborhoods, but to continuously give the schools the support it needs to continue offering amazing after school programs. For example, I had volunteered my own free time to be a coordinator last year and run a STEM program (Jr First Lego League) at our elementary school, Triadelphia Ridge. Simultaneously, I was also assistant coach and offering whatever assistance I could to the upper level STEM program for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders, First Lego League. I want the board to understand that what makes these schools so great is not just the students that attend it, but the parents that offer their endless time and support. If you continue to redistrict, you will lose these dedicated parents in your

9/23/2019

Opposition to Howard County Redistricting Plan

 Reply all |   Delete Junk |  ...



It is my firm belief that every child deserves a quality education, no matter what race, gender or socioeconomic status, and it is clear that the Board values this as well. That is what brought us to Howard County in the first place, the focus on excellent education. But the proposed redistricting plan is not the way to achieve true equity among schools. It is simply masking the systemic problems that poverty creates. There are many other data-driven plans that could address equity without disrupting neighborhoods and friendships. Please consider the empirical evidence against moving children from their schools, as well as alternative options to addressing overcrowding in the schools in a more family and neighborhood-friendly way.

Thank you for your time and thoughtfulness in our children's education.

Sincerely,  
Melissa Decker Barone

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a joke to move to Howard County because everyone knows that wherever you move, your lives can be changed in an instant because of the district's reputation for redistricting. I had one couple tell us that they purposely avoided moving to Howard County because if they are going to spend that kind of money in a community only to lose the schools, they might as well move elsewhere and save that money to send their kids to private schools. That is not the Howard County my family came to love and enjoy living in. But sadly today, I feel that statement is becoming more and more true.

The board's plan for redistricting is not building communities, but tearing them down. It is a loss that will affect everyone, including small business owners who depend on their community for business. We cannot have a community that is fleeing to the next town because their schools were taken away from them.

And if there is no care for the effects on the communities, then please focus on what it will do to our children.

- 1. This large scale school redistricting will increase commute time and will lead to more stress, less sleep, unhealthy lifestyle, thus negatively impact student's education.**

My children's commute to Wilde Lake will be hours sitting on a bus. Apparently their need for sleep is not a priority. I feel sorry for those kids who because of this longer commute will have to wake up so much earlier in the morning, and having to adjust their medication regimens, thereby feeling much of its adverse effects while sitting in school.

- 2. Longer commute time could also worsen traffic congestion and increase the risk of car accidents, especially for inexperienced new student drivers.**

It is absurd that our neighborhood's polygon is actually adjacent to our high school yet we will be forced across town. I worry, as should the board, that due to the long distance to Wilde Lake, the increased number of inexperienced high school students that will be driving on the road to get to and from school. Just the stress of getting to school on time can cause horrifying incidences to happen.

- 3. This large scale school redistricting will reduce parent's engagement in the school programs and against BOE's commitment to promote family and community involvement. It will also reduce student's participation in after school activities.**

cannot stress enough how important it is to realize that the school will be losing out big time in parents' involvement and participation. Not to mention how the long drive will prevent my children from participating in many of these after school activities which is not only important for college resumes, but most importantly for character building.

As someone who has volunteered their time to the schools, I know for a fact this change will prevent me from offering my time as I did before because quite frankly the distance is a hindrance. Let's not take for granted the time parents offer to their schools. It is not as if we have nothing else to do and hence are volunteering in school. We juggle family life, work life and even our social life around to make the time

Reply all | Delete | Junk | ...



inaccessible for my community. That is truly a disservice to our children.

**4. Superintendent Martirano's redistricting proposal does not maintain contiguous communities or neighborhoods (Policy 6010 IV.B2 b.).**

As a community, we already feel we are being torn apart. As I stated earlier in my email, River Hill high school's great reputation is not without the fact of the great communities that have supported it for so many years. Many communities have no relationship with their neighboring schools. But I can say with utmost certainty that Walnut Grove (Polygon 3176), along with other great neighborhoods has a real-time relationship with River Hill. We don't just wait for our kids to reach high school before we start getting involved. We are involved way before that. And that too is a result of River Hill inviting its neighborhoods to be involved with the school, whether or not their child is attending yet. My children see River Hill as the next natural stage of their schooling years.

**5. This large scale school redistricting will impose additional operating costs, which violates Policy 6010 IV.B1 c. The additional operating costs could be used to improve education conditions for FARM students instead.**

We realize there is a concern for socioeconomic inequalities among various high schools districts. Instead of manipulating the numbers to falsely decrease FARM utilization, perhaps underlying issues of poverty at the schools that need it the most should be directly addressed. As our superintendent has pointed out, every school in Howard County is an excellent school. Shortcomings at each individual school due to poverty should be addressed on an individual basis.

Some thoughts include the following:

1) Before/after care should be provided to all schools. Howard County Parks and Recreation should subsidize the costs of before/after care in the schools where there is low enrollment due to poverty.

2) Opportunity for after school programs should not be precluded by lack of affordability. A "buddy" school system should be set up where a school lacking PTA funds should be paired up with a more affluent school in the county to raise and share PTA funds.

3) Utilize busing/transportation budget for subsidizing programs needed at the impoverished schools instead of wasting it on driving our kids across the county.

**6. Given the new HS #13 in Jessup and Hammond HS addition for opening in SY 2023-24, there will be another unavoidable school redistricting process in the next two or three years. Several polygons will have to be redistricted twice, which violates Policy 6010 IV.B2 c.**

The current proposal does not address the overcrowding issues and is definitely not a long-term solution. It makes no sense to disrupt communities, families and students twice, when as a strong Howard County community we can and should sit down and discuss these real issues highlighted by the BOE and come up with effective and long lasting solutions for ALL of Howard County communities.

9/23/2019

Concerned Letter from Parent of Polygon 3176

 Reply all |   Delete Junk |  ...



students around like a deck of cards.

Sincerely,

Rashk Kazmi, PharmD

(Innut Grove Resident-Polygon 3176)

August 26, 2019

Vishnu and Neelima Busireddy  
5002 Crape Myrtle Ct  
Ellicott City, MD 21042  
[vishnubusireddy@gmail.com](mailto:vishnubusireddy@gmail.com)  
[nbusireddy@gmail.com](mailto:nbusireddy@gmail.com)  
410-294-1120

To:  
[redistricting@hcpss.org](mailto:redistricting@hcpss.org)

**Howard County Board of Education Members**

Ms. Mavis Ellis [mavis\\_ellis@hcpss.org](mailto:mavis_ellis@hcpss.org)  
Ms. Kirsten Coombs [kirsten\\_coombs@hcpss.org](mailto:kirsten_coombs@hcpss.org)  
Ms. Vicky Cutroneo [vicky\\_cutroneo@hcpss.org](mailto:vicky_cutroneo@hcpss.org)  
Ms. Christina Delmont-Small [christina\\_delmont-small@hcpss.org](mailto:christina_delmont-small@hcpss.org)  
Ms. Jennifer Mallo [jennifer\\_mallo@hcpss.org](mailto:jennifer_mallo@hcpss.org)  
Ms. Sabina Taj [sabina\\_taj@hcpss.org](mailto:sabina_taj@hcpss.org)  
Mr. Chao Wu [chao\\_wu@hcpss.org](mailto:chao_wu@hcpss.org)  
[student\\_member@hcpss.org](mailto:student_member@hcpss.org), and

**Superintendent, Howard County Public School System**  
Dr. Michael J. Martirano,

Dear Board of Education (BOE) Members and Dr. Martirano,

We are parents of a 7<sup>th</sup> grader going into Folly Quarter Middle School. As longtime residents of Howard County, our intent is to stay here and raise our son in this wonderful and diverse community of ours. Based on the current school boundaries, he will be attending Folly Quarter Middle and River Hill High. We are writing to you about the proposed impact of Dr Martirano's Presentation of the Attendance Area Adjustment Plan, dated August 20, 2019. As noted in the Executive Summary on Page 4, this proposal was developed with three primary goals as excerpted below:

*The driving priorities for this process:*

- 1. Balance capacity utilization among schools throughout HCPSS, cost effectively.*
- 2. Advance equity by addressing the distribution of students participating in the Free and Reduced-price Meals program (FARMS) across schools to the extent feasible.*
- 3. Plan ahead for the High School #13 redistricting by minimizing double moves as much as possible.*

We have also studied and respect the published policies which the BOE utilizes in making decisions with regard to school attendance areas, specifically Policy 6010 (<https://www.hcpss.org/policies/6000/6010-school-attendance-areas/>):

Unfortunately, recommendations from the Presentation of Attendance Area Adjustment Plan, dated August 20, 2019 is **not** consistent with the guidelines of Policy 6010 and does **not** achieve the three primary goals as stated in Dr Martirano's letter. Please consider the following facts.

#### **School Attendance Area:**

School Attendance area and geographic proximity is a consideration of Policy 6010. The proposed redistricting of Polygon 176 (we reside in this area) would more than double the distance students travel to get to school and does not make any logical sense.

My son and other kids in the neighborhood think of River Hill High as their future high school from the time we moved to our current neighborhood more than 5 years ago from a different part of Ellicott City to be closer to our friends, and their families and to have the kids continue their bonding and brotherhood. The proposed redistricting plan is going to crush their childhood dreams by forcing upon them this unreasonable, thoughtless, and divisive redistricting plan which will not only separate kids from their friends, take the communities apart, and introduce them to the political games that the so called leaders are shoving upon the kids, families, and the community.

My son and his friends dreamt of representing the River Hill and River Hill Hawks in activities, ranging from sports to educational competitions and other school programs, not only because of its proximity to our house and go past the school whenever we have to step out of our neighborhood, but also because of seeing older kids in the neighborhood and cousins representing the school, participating and contributing in school fundraiser events, which led to these innocent young brains to create affinity and bonding to the River Hill High and make them believe and think that they will one day be attending the same school which they drive past few times every day. Our neighborhood kids also got acquainted to the school, as they go there to play tennis and other sports during summer holidays and on weekends and evenings. It is not fair to shatter the dreams of my son and other kids in this great neighborhood and across the county, by saying that "NO YOU CAN'T ATTEND YOUR LOCAL SCHOOL".

- Using Google Maps, Walnut Creek / Polygon 176 is 2.1 Miles from River Hill High School (RHHS). Walnut Creek / Polygon 176 is 5.8 miles from Wilde Lake High School (WLHS).
- Using WAZE, the commute time from Polygon 176 to Wilde Lake High School would be 3x as long as the commute to River Hill High School.
- In addition, many of the students from Polygon 176 would have to drive past the River Hill High School and through River Hill High School bus and car traffic, en-route to Wilde Lake High School under the August 20, 2019 proposal.

### Capacity Utilization:

Policy 6010 identifies three key aspects to school capacity which are (1) Projections [item P], (2) Target Utilization [item S] which is defined as enrollment between 90% and 110% utilization of program capacity and (3) Utilization [item T].

The 2019 Feasibility Study (<https://www.hcpss.org/f/schoolplanning/2019/2019-feasibility-study.pdf>) notes the following findings:

1. River Hill High School is projected to be at 94% Projected Utilization for 2019/2020 school. This is at the lower end of the Target Utilization range.
2. Page 33 of the Feasibility Study indicates that River Hill is within Target Utilization through the 10-year projection period of the study.
3. Under Dr Martirano's proposal, River Hill would send 478 students to other schools and receive 741 students from other schools. This is extremely disruptive and unnecessary for a school that is currently operating within each of guidelines [P], [S] and [T] of Policy 6010.
4. We believe the board should reject a plan which moves approximately 7,400 total students including 478 students from River Hill High School which is currently operating within Board Policy guidelines with regard to Projections, Target Utilization and Utilization.
5. We believe any re-districting proposal should instead be focused on those five High Schools that are operating above Target Utilization levels (110%).
6. We believe the Board of Education should support a plan that includes less disruption at schools that are operating within the guidelines of [P], [S] and [T]. For instance, since River Hill High School is operating well within the target utilization range, perhaps it should receive students from nearby schools such as Wilde Lake, Atholton or Howard, without sending 478 students out to other schools.

We believe it is a wonderful idea to bring students from underperforming schools to better performing adjacent schools, but moving students the other way with the specific purpose of adjusting the statistics is misguided and sets a terrible precedence. We respectfully request that the BOE request a plan that achieves better capacity utilization with less than 7,396 total students being relocated.

### Equity:

The very first sentence of the Policy Statement of HCPSS Policy 6010 is *The Board of Education of Howard County, with the advice of the Superintendent, establishes school attendance areas to provide quality, equitable educational opportunities to all students and to balance the capacity utilization of all schools.*

Furthermore, "equitable" is defined in the policy statement as: *Just or fair access, opportunities, and supports needed to help students, families, and staff reach their full potential by removing barriers to success that individuals face. It does not mean equal or everyone having the same things.*

The Presentation of the Attendance Area Adjustment Plan dated August 20, 2019 **is not** consistent with the Board of Education Policy Statement 6010, nor does it follow the BOE's definition of achieving "equitable" educational opportunities. It is quite evident that the recommendations for redistricting is a case of social engineering and purely based on race and ethnicity. There is no logic or case studies offered to show this type of social engineering will be successful. **We hereby request the BOE identify ways to provide additional educational resources, funding for schools in need, raise awareness, create plans to include parent volunteers and others to contribute their time and effort to enrich kids with activities ranging from education to recreational, author new programs to have peer to peer learning and knowledge sharing sessions which will benefit all the kids across the county, rather than adjusting the statistics to make you feel good.** Transferring students from a school with a low FARM ratio to a school with a high FARM ratio, only results in adjusting the statistics for the schools, but **DOES NOT PROVIDE ANY INCREMENTAL EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES OR OPPORTUNITES DIRECTLY TO THE STUDENTS.** Socioeconomic issues such as income equality, better employment opportunities should be addressed by our elected officials at the County and State levels.

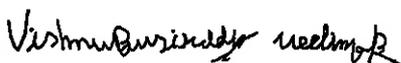
**In conclusion, we recommend the Board of Education reject the Attendance Area Adjustment Plan Recommendations dated August 20, 2019** due to the numerous and serious inconsistencies with regard to both Policy 6010 and the stated goals of the proposal.

**We recommend the BOE to be considerate and sympathetic to the magnanimous negative effect this plan will shower on the county residents and their families, to the quality of life that Howard county has been providing so far, please STOP and NOT ALLOW this dreaded Number Game to be Played with the county residents!**

- The proposal would triple the commuting time of students in Polygon 176.
- Many affected schools including River Hill High School are operating within the Board of Education projection, utilization and capacity guidelines and would experience a total student transfer of over 1,000 children inclusive of students being sent and received. Boundary adjustments should be focused on schools operating over capacity or projected to be over capacity based on the 2019 Feasibility study.
- The proposal does not provide additional resources directly to students or schools in need, it simply provides more consistent FARM ratios across schools. Children do not need consistent FARM ratios, they need additional education resources and funding provided directly to their schools.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Vishnu and Neelima Busireddy

Reply all | Delete Junk | ...



## Opposing redistrict plan. Please hear our voice



Rithvik Atluri <ratluri08@gmail.com>

Reply all |

Tue 9/3, 10:42 AM

mavis\_ellis@hcpss.org; kirsten\_coombs@hcpss.org; vicky\_cutroneo@hcpss.org; chri+1 more

Priority

You replied on 9/13/2019 11:40 AM.

Dear Board of Education Members,

I am writing on behalf of my family resident of Polygon 176 who are concerned about the proposed impact of Dr Martirano's Presentation of the Attendance Area Adjustment Plan, dated August 20, 2019. As noted in the Executive Summary on Page 4, this proposal was developed with three primary goals as excerpted below:  
The driving priorities for this process:

1. Balance capacity utilization among schools throughout HCPSS, cost effectively.
  2. Advance equity by addressing the distribution of students participating in the Free and Reduced price meals program (FARMS) across schools to the extent feasible.
  3. Plan ahead for the High School #13 redistricting by minimizing double moves as much as possible.
- We have also studied and respect the published policies which the Board of Education utilizes in making decisions with regard to school attendance areas, specifically Policy 6010 ([Unfortunately, the Presentation of Attendance Area Adjustment Plan, dated August 20, 2019 is not consistent with the guidelines of Policy 6010 and does not achieve the three primary goals as stated in Dr Martirano's letter. Please consider the following facts.](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__www.hcpss.org_policies_6000_6010-2Dschoo-2Dattendance-2Dareas_&d=DwlFaQ&c=Gp5PoQfTj9yDt8XV2x6aql0UnCZXhNkdBYbfDCIWas&r=cLpRBe2l_SB2vl8XwqlfKQhByqYIVvk7ec_p7OXQ-Gnt3wm3nfwU8I34YWvg-FME&m=JUrm17bcMLP8nwrh8_oCrWuHYCcYhbZB6dllQkweDxM&s=oGvAkug3Nslptxd9l7wnY60Urb4V1e9YOCaKwX67dkY&e=) :</a></p>
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School Attendance Area:

School Attendance area and geographic proximity is a consideration of Policy 6010. The proposed redistricting of Polygon 176 would more than double the distance students travel to get to school.

- Using Google Maps, Walnut Creek / Polygon 176 is 2.1 Miles from River Hill High School (RHHS). Walnut Creek / Polygon 176 is 5.8 miles from Wilde Lake High School (WLHS).
- Using WAZE, the commute time from Polygon 176 to Wilde Lake High School would be 3x as long as the commute to River Hill High School.
- In addition, many of the students from Polygon 176 would have to drive through River Hill High School bus and car traffic, en-route to Wilde Lake High School under the August 20, 2019 proposal.

Capacity Utilization:

Policy 6010 identifies three key aspects to school capacity which are (1) Projections [item P], (2) Target Utilization [item S] which is defined as enrollment between 90% and 110% utilization of program capacity and (3) Utilization [item T]. The 2019 Feasibility Study ([1. River Hill High School is projected to be at 94% Projected Utilization for 2019/2020 school. This is at the lower end of the Target Utilization range.](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__www.hcpss.org_f_schoolplanning_2019_2019-2Dfeasibility-2Dstudy.pdf&d=DwlFaQ&c=Gp5PoQfTj9yDt8XV2x6aql0UnCZXhNkdBYbfDCIWas&r=cLpRBe2l_SB2vl8XwqlfKQhByqYIVvk7ec_p7OXQ-Gnt3wm3nfwU8I34YWvg-FME&m=JUrm17bcMLP8nwrh8_oCrWuHYCcYhbZB6dllQkweDxM&s=HYsxAtPhAfG01QEmx_-q9dEQDG787m6DjX-Hij6pqbs&e=) :</a> notes the following findings:</p>
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9/23/2019

Oppose Redistricting Plan : Polygon 176

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## Oppose Redistricting Plan : Polygon 176



primal bhatia <primalb@gmail.com>

Tue 9/3, 10:59 AM

mavis\_ellis@hcpss.org; kirsten\_coombs@hcpss.org; vicky\_cutroneo@hcpss.org; chri+1 more 

 Reply all | 

Priority

You replied on 9/13/2019 11:33 AM.



Action Items



Dear HCPSS Board of Education Members,

I am writing this letter to express my disappointment over the proposed school redistricting plan by the School Superintendent.

This proposal puts in place a complex, more expensive and time consuming transportation plan.

Its moving lots of children from their local walkable schools to further away schools and putting parents in trouble when they have kids in two different schools in different parts of the howard county. One on the west side and other on the east side.

This proposal, by focusing on FARM numbers, is taking away opportunity away from students, rather than moving towards the goal of an equitable education to all students within Howard County. By sending children from River Hill High School to Wilde Lake High School, the affected students are losing the very opportunities on which many families relied on when they moved to this area. In addition, it also increases the commute time for students and families, from under 5 minutes to River Hill, to over 25 minutes to Wilde Lake. This increased drive time will impact after-school learning opportunities for children and take time away from families. This applies not just for students being shifted to Wilde Lake, but also those who are shifted to River Hill. If this proposal moves forward, I will have one child going to Wilde Lake and another going in the opposite direction to Folly Quarter Middle School. Instead of the two schools being closer together, I will have to limit after school activities for my children due to increased distance and increased commute time between the schools. There have to be better alternatives than uprooting existing families in the River Hill and Wilde Lake School districts. Why not add resources to the other schools and have them come up to par with River Hill, rather than breaking down what is already working at River Hill? Also, from my understanding, River Hill is under capacity, so it does not seem to make sense to move students out of this school. Again, I do not support this drastic change that will be taking away opportunities from children in Howard County.

I implore you to review the facts, implication to all HCPS students and their communities and reject Dr. Martirano's ill conceived proposal

Sincerely,  
Primal Bhatia , MD

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3. Under Dr Martirano's proposal, River Hill would send 478 students to other schools and receive 741 students from other schools. This is extremely disruptive and unnecessary for a school that is currently operating within each of guidelines [P], [S] and [T] of Policy 6010.
4. We believe the board should reject a plan which moves approximately 7,400 total students including 478 students from River Hill High School which is currently operating within Board Policy guidelines with regard to Projections, Target Utilization and Utilization.
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#### Equity:

The very first sentence of the Policy Statement of HCPSS Policy 6010 is The Board of Education of Howard County, with the advice of the Superintendent, establishes school attendance areas to provide quality, equitable educational opportunities to all students and to balance the capacity utilization of all schools.

Furthermore, "equitable" is defined in the policy statement as: Just or fair access, opportunities, and supports needed to help students, families, and staff reach their full potential by removing barriers to success that individuals face. It does not mean equal or everyone having the same things.

The Presentation of the Attendance Area Adjustment Plan dated August 20, 2019 is not consistent with the Board of Education Policy Statement 6010, nor does it follow the BoE's definition of achieving "equitable" educational opportunities. We hereby request the Board of Education identify ways to provide additional educational resources to the students in need. Transferring students from a school with a low FARM ratio to a school with a high FARM ratio, only results in better "averages" for the schools. IT DOES NOT PROVIDE ANY INCREMENTAL EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES OR OPPORTUNITES DIRECTLY TO THE STUDENTS.

In conclusion, we recommend the Board of Education reject the Presentation of Attendance Area Adjustment Plan dated August 20, 2019 due to the numerous and serious inconsistencies with regard to both Policy 6010 and the stated goals of the proposal:

- The proposal would triple the commuting time of students in Polygon 176
- Many affected schools including River Hill High School are operating within the Board of Education projection, utilization and capacity guidelines and would experience a total student transfer of over 1,000 children inclusive of students being sent and received. Boundary adjustments should be focused on schools operating over capacity or projected to be over capacity based on the 2019 Feasibility study.
- The proposal does not provide additional resources directly to students in need, it simply provides more consistent FARM ratios across schools. Children do not need consistent FARM ratios, they need additional education resources provided directly to their schools.

Thanks

9/23/2019

Oppose Current Redistricting Proposal for 2020 HOCO

 Reply all |  Delete Junk | 



## Oppose Current Redistricting Proposal for 2020 HOCO



Ligeia Zeruto <ligeiazeruto@gmail.com>

Tue 9/3, 10:57 AM

boe@hcpss.org; chao\_wu@hcpss.org; christina\_delmont-small@hcpss.org; +19 more

 Reply all | 

Priority

You replied on 9/13/2019 11:34 AM.

 | Action Items



Good Morning on another beautiful first day of school in Howard County!

I vehemently oppose the current redistricting proposal based on lack of quantitative data or a full representation of the will of the people of the county.

A quick research of the public outreach surveys, hearings and emails sent tell us that less than 2% of the county returned any information to the BOE or a third party study design group. The outreach for public opinion was poor and yielded incomplete canvassing of the county.

I fear that this proposal has created a division in this county that now has undertones of race based on skin color. I have a lot of concern about how people are being bucketed into race and socioeconomic stratification and this is now being transferred to our children.

Releasing this unfounded and poorly researched proposal (where are the ROI studies or forecasts for the courses of action mentioned? What I see is woefully incomplete).

And lastly, how will all the additional transportation be paid for to bus our friends to the 21st closest school (as an example)? Which parts of HCPSS enrichment activities will be cut to pay for transport?

Concerned parent-  
Ligeia Zeruto  
#2176

9/23/2019

Opposition to the Howard County redistricting plan

Reply all | Delete Junk | ...



## Opposition to the Howard County redistricting plan



Michael Wallace <mwallace\_2002@yahoo.com>

Tue 9/3, 11:05 AM

mavis\_ellis@hcpss.org; kirsten\_coombs@hcpss.org; vicky\_cutroneo@hcpss.org; Chr+2 more

Reply all |

Priority

You replied on 9/13/2019 11:30 AM.

I'm writing this letter in opposition to the proposed Howard County redistricting plan.

I will be moving to the area next spring and have several concerns over the proposed plan.

1. My children will be living approximately 5 minutes to the local high school but in the proposed plan will be having to travel approximately 30 minutes to school. It will obviously affect their "out the door" time and will therefore cut down on sleep time at the most important time in their lives for sleep.
2. The plan only looks at the number of FARM students and the percentages of those students at each school. It does nothing to help those students out. Having more non-FARM students will not help the FARM students become better students, and if anything, might give them ill-feeling towards the new students, or make themselves feel worse for causing this change.
3. What happens in a couple of years when the new school opens? Does this happen again? I'm not sure why this couldn't have been delayed until the new school opens.
4. Overcrowding and under-utilized schools was not even addressed.

I'm hoping this decision can be delayed until more information is reviewed and a decision is not made strictly based on the percentages of FARM students.

Thank for your consideration,

Michael Wallace

9/23/2019

RedistrictProposal: Doesn't make sense

Reply all | Delete Junk | ...

X

## RedistrictProposal: Doesn't make sense



Neetu Gupta <neetu\_gupta@hotmail.com>

Tue 9/3, 11:26 AM

mavis\_ellis@hcpss.org; kirsten\_coombs@hcpss.org; vicky\_cutroneo@hcpss.org; + 18 more

Reply all |

Priority

You replied on 9/12/2019 2:36 PM.

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**From:** Neetu Gupta <neetu\_gupta@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, September 2, 2019 10:00:02 AM  
**To:** Rajeev Gupta <rajbusi1@yahoo.com>  
**Subject:** Fw: Redistricting Proposal: Doesn't make sense

Dear Dr. Martirano,

I hope you are doing well. This email is with regard to your proposal for the school redistricting in Howard County. I reviewed the materials in detail and I would like to express my concerns that are very grave in nature in my opinion.

have a rising senior and I have seen over the past three years that high school is no joke. Due to the activities in and out of the school with the high school curriculum, I have seen sleep deprivation in high school kids. And if you slap another 25 minutes to their commute on top of what they have, you will be adding way too much stress. You know how important it is to have a good sleep for the development of the brain. You know that there are so many issues related to the sleep deprivation especially in the teenagers. And it's not that only kids that are going from our area to another is going to face the issue but it's the same from the other areas too.

I have a rising freshman in the high school, as a parent, I want him to experience the same school and play on the same team that he has been working hard to join. By uprooting him from his immediate community, you are taking away not only the opportunity for him to experience the same environment that his older sibling has experienced but also failing the child to succeed.

I believe that all kids should have an opportunity to grow. The kids are not weeds don't pluck them. Provide them with the best environment with resources and help them blossom. As you know schools are kids driven. That motivation comes from the elders like the teachers and mentors around them who know their environment. If you think that pulling few kids from one area will help the other kids with their grades and motivation, then it's a wrong thought. The kids going from one setting to another can't relate to that. Instead of understanding there will be misunderstandings and resentment between the groups. You will create more segregation than integration.

9/23/2019

RedistrictProposal: Doesn't make sense

 Reply all |   Delete Junk |  ...



resources. You need to have a better communication as the school system superintendent.

The working parents can't pick up and drop off the kids for the after school activities. And it goes both ways. Just like the jump start kids couldn't stay back after school for the activities and that harmed their social interactions with the other students.

All in all the proposal is not practical from any stand point. I stand against this proposal.

Thanks,  
Neetu Gupta

 Reply all |  Delete Junk |  ...



## Oppose Redistricting Plan - Polygon 1181



Sunia A. Lessing <suniaa@yahoo.com>

Tue 9/3, 11:28 AM

mavis\_ellis@hcpss.org; kirsten\_coombs@hcpss.org; vicky\_cutroneo@hcpss.org; chri+6 more ✓

 Reply all | 

Priority

You replied on 9/12/2019 2:35 PM.

Good Morning,

Dear BOE members, council members, state senators and representatives of our school system,

This email is in regards to the proposed redistricting plan by Dr. Martirano. Whereas I appreciate the need for redistricting, the current plan is a blatant disregard for our children for who they are, and that is CHILDREN, not polygons, or statistics!

By your definition;

**Equitable – Just or fair access, opportunities, and supports needed to help students, families, and staff reach their full potential by removing barriers to success that individuals face. It does not mean equal or everyone having the same things.**

According to this plan, 2/3 of my children will be displaced from our neighborhood of mostly farmland and sent to a Columbia school 6 miles away. My high schooler would have to leave the house at 6am. She has social anxiety and it took a YEAR for us to get her comfortable to perform at her potential. She considers herself a "loner", and shy. A change to the magnitude of what you are proposing is going to disrupt her basic needs of community, friendships, and comfort, not to mention her academics in the crucial junior year.

Her current HS is RHHS. It is currently at under utilization. According to your considerations for redistricting, **Facility Utilization - Where reasonable, school attendance area utilization should stay within the target utilization for as long a period of time as possible is considered to be the NUMBER ONE factor!**

For your NUMBER 2 factor, you are talking about

Community Stability. Where reasonable, school attendance areas should promote a sense of community in both the geographic place (e.g., neighborhood or place in which a student lives) and the promotion of a student from each school level through the consideration of:

- a. Feeds that encourage keeping students together from one school to the next.  
For example, avoiding feeds of less than 15% at the receiving school.

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✕

As mentioned above, our polygon is comprised of mostly farmland, with another family having a child in elementary school. We rely on neighbors for rides from after school activities who live relatively close to us. Our friendships have been already established by reaching out to neighborhoods near us, and establishing TRUST with other parents, whether they are in high school or middle school. We help each other out by babysitting for each other because of school proximity and drives that are directly to the schools. You are disrupting our contiguous communities, and you are relocating my child away from every other one of her friends!!! How is this possible!?? I am heartbroken and outraged at the same time! My heart is shattered for all of these kids who will have to adapt in one of their most challenging years in high school.

Now, to the point of equity mentioned above. If equity is defined at JUST and FAIR ACCESS, then transfer the students from Wilde Lake to RHHS, or GHS, where the schools are under capacity. Disrupt 216 kids, not 7000!!!! What is wrong with your logic? How can you justify the impact you are having on this entire beautiful county by destroying it? What are your projected outcomes? What historical studies were analyzed to show that improvement is obtained by just simply shuffling our kids around? How did that work out for when Centennial kids moved to Wilde Lake?

It is NOT your job to adjust for socioeconomic status by dehumanizing my kids, turning them into a percentage and moving them! First of all, they will not participate in ANY after school activities. I'd rather have them in club sports near our home, where it is easy for us to drive to and manage our work schedule.

Second, have you thought for ONE second the destruction you'd create for the Wilde Lake kids? Let me give you an example:

I immigrated from Romania at a high school age. I started in a Chicago Public School in 9th grade, in ESOL classes, Algebra 1 and all the other required classes. My English was basically sign language. I had a strong Romanian community that was instrumental of surviving the adjustment period. My friends in different classrooms, a Romanian teacher, the after school activities with said friends. I was shy and afraid to talk in English. Because of their strong support I finished as a Salutatorian of that school. I attribute that to my classmates, my teacher, and my parents. My parents had no clue what PTA was, or that I had to play volleyball after school so I can get into college! And I was taking public transportation to school to and from my HUD housing in Chicago.

I attended the University of Chicago on scholarship, and finished it in three years. The transition from my community to U of C was HELL! It looks amazing on paper! Brand new immigrant, finishes top of the class, gets into a Top 10 US school with an acceptance rate of 8%, and finished in 3 years!! Woohooo, right?? Not so fast! I hit a brick wall!! I could barely cope with the amount of work, and had to completely redo my study habits. I was floating between depression, anxiety and fear of letting my parents down. I lived on campus, but they knew that something was off. They would call me every day to make sure I was ok. I got out in three years because I could not stand being there for one more second! And no, it is not the school's fault. It is the transition that you are proposing, of taking kids out of their Title 1 school that allows for smaller class sizes, for their supportive environment and friends, and transferring them to a highly competitive school where they may hit a brick wall.

9/23/2019

Howard county Redistricting 2020-2021: polygon 176

Reply all | Delete | Junk | ...



## Howard county Redistricting 2020-2021: polygon 176



srujana ailneni <sailneni@gmail.com>

Tue 9/3, 11:28 AM

mavis\_ellis@hcpss.org; kirsten\_coombs@hcpss.org; vicky\_cutroneo@hcpss.org; chri+2 more

Reply all |

Priority

You replied on 9/12/2019 2:31 PM.

Dear Board of Education Members,

I am writing to express my concern with Dr.Maritrano's redistricting proposal. Our family moved to Howard County in 2005 specifically to foster our children's educational opportunities. We moved in to the Walnut Creek community in 2014 so that my children could attend Triadelphia Ridge Elementary School, Folly Quarter Middle School, and River Hill High School. In the proposal, our Polygon 176 is slated to be redistricted to Wilde Lake High School.

My older daughter will next week be a sophomore at River Hill High and was continued to be accepted into Varsity Team last week. She has received Scholar Athlete award last year based on her **HARDWORK** only.

The current proposal would be disruptive in many ways but foremost the current proposal would increase my daughter's commute of 1.8 miles and approximately 8 minutes with traffic to 4.1 miles which could take well over 25 minutes with traffic. I am the only parent who is working 35 minutes away to my work as compared to my husband who is an hour plus away and in order to pickup my daughter from her after school activities, I will need to take 50 minutes out of my daily work schedule for the round-trip commute, and make up the time in the evening. Additionally, she plays in the Volleyball Travel Team and with the current proposal she cant make it to the practice on weekdays due to the long commute which makes it practically not possible for our family. This is very upsetting and please **STOP** this redistricting proposal.

Furthermore, the benefits of this massive redistribution of 7396 students is incremental, apparently FARM student rates will generally decrease by a small percentage. My family and my community remain very committed to educational opportunities for all Howard County students but this is not the method to achieve equitable goals.

I am also very upset with the lack of transparency in the process of the redistricting proposals. Instead of giving significant lead time, the Superintendent ignored expensive third-party studies and came up with his own proposal. The very short comment period before the final vote in November give community members little lead time to understand the process and voice our opinions. Finally, River Hill is currently under capacity, why would we move our neighborhoods out and bus them away when more students could be brought to River Hill?

Reply all | ▾ Delete Junk | ▾ ...

X

does not allow for public transportation to these schools, yet. Look for example at how JumpStart worked out, the good and the bad. Let the kids and the parents make the choice if they want to move. Each school is a representative of their community. People love to work, shop and send their kids to schools in their own communities. Provide the necessary support for those kids, but don't uproot them from their comfort zone unless they want to! My parents were supportive even on their minimum wage salaries. Their presence was always known, as well as their expectations. That does not require money. I am now in a comfortable career, serving our veterans at the VA Hospital. I give back to those who afforded me the freedoms of the USA, rather than private practice. Your proposal have brought out those who call me "grossly privileged" and that my kids' high school needs more "diversity". I have worked for my privilege from ZERO! It is infuriating to hear people who already had an advantage that I did not have when I came here: know ENGLISH. My parents came with two suitcases as their belongings and have not made one excuse for my brother and I as far as school was concerned. We both have doctorate degrees. So for someone to completely dismiss my parents, my work and what I choose to have for my kids is enraging. When anyone chooses to walk in my shoes, and escape communism and make it on nothing, that's when they criticize my choices about where I live and send my kids to school.

I sincerely hope that you will re-evaluate your options and give strong consideration to voucher programs, choice programs or magnet programs. Right now, this debate is tearing this county apart in the name of race, privilege and poverty. Stop the madness.

Sincerely,  
Sunia Lessing  
Mom to three girls in polygon 1181

*Sunia A. Lessing, DDS, MS*

*Baltimore VA Medical Center*

*Dental Clinic*

*10 N. Greene St. Room 2D163*

*Baltimore, MD 21201*

*443-310-2323*

September 3, 2019

To whom it may concern in the redistricting process,

My name is Danny Liang and I oppose the proposal for the redistricting process. There are many reasons which are highlighted by my neighbors and the organizations who oppose the plan. Some of my main reasons are: bussing concerns, sending kids to distant schools, the need for re-districting again in 2-3 years after the new high school is built, and that the plan does not clearly improve education for all. I feel it is masking inadequacies by balancing "numbers", i.e. FARM, which I also feel does not properly represents educational needs in each schools.

Please reconsider and do not vote this plan into place. I trust you will find a better solution. We all deserve it.

Sincerely,

Danny Liang  
5111 Holly Creek Lane  
Clarksville, MD 21029

Polygon 3176

9/23/2019

Howard county Redistricting 2020-2021: polygon 176

 Reply all |  Delete    Junk | 

✕

community and will not accomplish the stated goals the Superintendent proposed.

Sincerely,  
*Srujana Chikyala*

Sent from my iPhone

 Reply all |  Delete Junk |  ...



## Opposing Redistricting Polygon# 176



ayesha naseem <ayeshoo7@yahoo.com>

Thu 9/5, 1:09 PM ..

mavis\_ellis@hcpss.org; kristen\_coombs@hcpss.org; vicky\_cutroneo@hcpss.org; chri+2 more 

 Reply all | 

Priority

You replied on 9/12/2019 2:21 PM.

 | Action Items



Respected BOE and Representatives,

I am a mom of a River Hill High School sophomore and a 4th grader at Triadelphia Ridge Elementary School. I am writing to oppose this redistricting plan of the superintendent .

We have been a community member of this school district for the past 12 years ,this community is like family to us. Not only our children ,but we have built a lot of friendly ties in the community. With this plan it uproots us as a family affecting our children who have developed strong bonds of friendship since early childhood. I am by no means a psychologist or a psychiatrist to state facts or studies ,but being a mother of three(my oldest graduated from river hill in the year 2019) I can state for a fact it will tear apart any sense of belonging if my child was to be uprooted from river hill high school .He plays on the JV Soccer team and that team is his brotherhood ,one he cannot imagine being taken away from . Getting an option to play on the varsity team might not be available to him .He has a great sense of pride to be a HaWk.

MY 10th grader will be a rising junior and thats a critical year for these kids .A lot of blood and sweat goes into preparing for colleges as you all know ,standardized testings, college recommendations, all will all be affected by being in a new environment and not having the backing of the teachers and counselors that they have known for 3 years.

The extra commute times will wreak havoc for these high schoolers ,going from a short commute to spending all this extra time on bus rides .It will not only take away from their sleep ,which often results in more irritated children with a much lower productivity. It is hazardous to be commuting for that long.

Growing up we were always told if there is a problem that needs to be fixed ,it should be nipped in the bud. I sincerely believe that shaking up 7500 kids is not the solution to fix the FARM issue. I am not against equality ,its ethically the right thing to do ,but these communities need to be uplifted at the root level and not when you have a mature tree. More resources can be pumped into these communities to change them for the better .River hill is below capacity so taking on new kids should be a suggestion rather than busing out kids that already have deep roots in the school.

With due respect ,it seems inhumane to do this to the kids .We sincerely hope the board will reconsider this redistricting and come up with an alternative plan .

sincerely ,  
Ayesha Naseem

9/23/2019

Opposing Redistricting Polygon# 176

Reply all | Delete Junk | ...



## Opposing Redistricting Polygon# 176



ayesha naseem <ayeshoo7@yahoo.com>

Thu 9/5, 1:09 PM

mavis\_ellis@hcpss.org; kristen\_coombs@hcpss.org; vicky\_cutroneo@hcpss.org; chri+2 more

Reply all |

Priority

You replied on 9/12/2019 2:21 PM.



Action Items



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sincerely ,  
Ayesha Naseem

9/23/2019

Howard County School redistricting

📧 Reply all | ▾ 🗑 Delete Junk | ▾ ...



## Howard County School redistricting



Jennifer Johnson <jjinmdus@gmail.com>

Wed 9/4, 3:29 PM

Kittleman, Trent Delegate; Miller, Warren Delegate; Hester, Katie Fry Senator ▾

📧 Reply all | ▾

Priority

You replied on 9/12/2019 2:22 PM.

Dear Lawmakers....

I live in Clarksville, MD in the Twelve Trees Neighborhood. I'm sure you've heard we are among many now proposed to be redistricted from River Hill HS to Wilde Lake HS. Unfortunately, when the Superintendent made his recommendations, he apparently thought our neighborhood had an access road to either Folly Quarter Road or Sheppard Lane (we do not.) To get to Wilde Lake from my house, you have to travel 10.1 miles and it usually takes about 20-25 minutes (with no bus stops and making all 13 lights.) A bus trip with student pickup stops during the early morning hours will be at least an hour to 1.5. I've written to the school board about this and was told by a member that they were not aware that our area, Polygon 1200, had no access out other than going down Route 32 to Route 108.

Wilde Lake HS is the 7th furthest high school from our neighborhood. I think you would agree that this amount of bus time for any student is unreasonable...aside from the other arguments that there will be absolutely no community for these students since this school is so far away.

I hope you can talk to the Superintendent and school board on our behalf and ask that they stop this plan from going through.

Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Johnson

443-799-4668

9/23/2019

Re: Oppose Redistricting plan - Polygon 176

Reply all | Delete Junk | ...

X

## Re: Oppose Redistricting plan - Polygon 176



Bharati Balani <bharatisb@yahoo.com>

Tue 9/3, 10:56 AM

student\_member@hcpss.org; boe@hcpss.org; superintendent@hcpss.org; calvinbal

Reply all |

Priority

You replied on 9/12/2019 2:23 PM.

Dear HCPSS Board of Education Member,  
The Superintendent's redistricting proposal:

1. Puts in place a complex, over-engineered, expensive transportation program.
2. Moves thousands of children irresponsibly. The negative impact on individual family members is many more thousands when considering parents, siblings, etc.
3. Does not fundamentally fix overcrowding with 21 schools still above the 110% capacity.
4. Adds substantially to children's commute times. In many cases, commutes times will triple moving from three miles or less (5-15 minutes) to seven miles or more (30 - 45 minutes).
5. Does not address or incorporate student population management regarding the new HS 13 slated for 2023. Is the county planning to do this all over again in a few years?
6. Introduces a redistribution of FARMS rates. Why? This does not fix overcrowding and is an exercise in spreading out an issue not fixing it. FARM populations can be addressed or redistributed without moving non-FARM children.
7. Leads to a permanent divide between a substantial part of the Community and the Superintendent, the HCPSS, and BoE. This proposal was done "to the community", not "with or for the community".

I implore you to review the facts, implications to all Howard County Public School students and their communities, and reject Dr. Martirano's ill-conceived proposal.

Regards

Bharati Balani

Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone

Dear Board of Education Members,

We are writing on behalf of residents of Polygon 176 who are concerned about the proposed impact of Dr Martirano's Presentation of the Attendance Area Adjustment Plan, dated August 20, 2019. As noted in the Executive Summary on Page 4, this proposal was developed with three primary goals as excerpted below:

*The driving priorities for this process:*

- 1. Balance capacity utilization among schools throughout HCPSS, cost effectively.*
- 2. Advance equity by addressing the distribution of students participating in the Free and Reduced price meals program (FARMS) across schools to the extent feasible.*
- 3. Plan ahead for the High School #13 redistricting by minimizing double moves as much as possible.*

We have also studied and respect the published policies which the Board of Education utilizes in making decisions with regard to school attendance areas, specifically Policy 6010 (<https://www.hcpss.org/policies/6000/6010-school-attendance-areas/>):

Unfortunately, the Presentation of Attendance Area Adjustment Plan, dated August 20, 2019 is not consistent with the guidelines of Policy 6010 and does not achieve the three primary goals as stated in Dr Martirano's letter. Please consider the following facts.

#### School Attendance Area:

School Attendance area and geographic proximity is a consideration of Policy 6010. The proposed redistricting of Polygon 176 would more than double the distance students travel to get to school.

- Using Google Maps, Walnut Creek / Polygon 176 is 2.1 Miles from River Hill High School (RHHS). Walnut Creek / Polygon 176 is 5.8 miles from Wilde Lake High School (WLHS).
- Using WAZE, the commute time from Polygon 176 to Wilde Lake High School would be 3x as long as the commute to River Hill High School.
- In addition, many of the students from Polygon 176 would have to drive through River Hill High School bus and car traffic, en-route to Wilde Lake High School under the August 20, 2019 proposal.

#### Capacity Utilization:

Policy 6010 identifies three key aspects to school capacity which are (1) Projections [item P], (2) Target Utilization [item S] which is defined as enrollment between 90% and 110% utilization of program capacity and (3) Utilization [item T].

The 2019 Feasibility Study (<https://www.hcpss.org/f/schoolplanning/2019/2019-feasibility-study.pdf>) notes the following findings:

1. River Hill High School is projected to be at 94% Projected Utilization for 2019/2020 school. This is at the lower end of the Target Utilization range.
2. Page 33 of the Feasibility Study indicates that River Hill is within Target Utilization through the 10 year projection period of the study.

3. Under Dr Martirano's proposal, River Hill would send 478 students to other schools and receive 741 students from other schools. This is extremely disruptive and unnecessary for a school that is currently operating within each of guidelines [P], [S] and [T] of Policy 6010.
4. We believe the board should reject a plan which moves approximately 7,400 total students including 478 students from River Hill High School which is currently operating within Board Policy guidelines with regard to Projections, Target Utilization and Utilization.
5. We believe any re-districting proposal should instead be focused on those five High Schools that are operating above Target Utilization levels (110%).
6. We believe the Board of Education should support a plan that includes less disruption at schools that are operating within the guidelines of [P], [S] and [T]. For instance, since River Hill High School is operating well within the target utilization range, perhaps it should receive students from nearby schools such as Wilde Lake, Atholton or Howard, without sending 478 students out to other schools. Certainly, the Board of Education can request a plan that achieves better capacity utilization with less than 7,396 total students being relocated.

**Equity:**

The very first sentence of the Policy Statement of HCPSS Policy 6010 is *The Board of Education of Howard County, with the advice of the Superintendent, establishes school attendance areas to provide quality, equitable educational opportunities to all students and to balance the capacity utilization of all schools.*

Furthermore, "equitable" is defined in the policy statement as: *Just or fair access, opportunities, and supports needed to help students, families, and staff reach their full potential by removing barriers to success that individuals face. It does not mean equal or everyone having the same things.*

The Presentation of the Attendance Area Adjustment Plan dated August 20, 2019 **is not** consistent with the Board of Education Policy Statement 6010, nor does it follow the BoE's definition of achieving "equitable" educational opportunities. We hereby request the Board of Education identify ways to provide additional educational resources to the students in need. Transferring students from a school with a low FARM ratio to a school with a high FARM ratio, only results in better "averages" for the schools. IT DOES NOT PROVIDE ANY INCREMENTAL EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES OR OPPORTUNITES DIRECTLY TO THE STUDENTS.

In conclusion, we recommend the Board of Education reject the Presentation of Attendance Area Adjustment Plan dated August 20, 2019 due to the numerous and serious inconsistencies with regard to both Policy-6010 and the stated goals of the proposal.

- The proposal would triple the commuting time of students in Polygon 176
- Many affected schools including River Hill High School are operating within the Board of Education projection, utilization and capacity guidelines and would experience a total student transfer of over 1,000 children inclusive of students being sent and received. Boundary adjustments should be focused on schools operating over capacity or projected to be over capacity based on the 2019 Feasibility study.

- **The proposal does not provide additional resources directly to students in need, it simply provides more consistent FARM ratios across schools. Children do not need consistent FARM ratios, they need additional education resources provided directly to their schools.**

**Thank you,**

**Rajneet Sawhney,**

**Polygon 176**

9/23/2019

Forced bussing is not the answer. But magnet programs can offer much more!

Reply all | Delete Junk | ...



Forced bussing is not the answer. But magnet programs can offer much more!



qianlee2011@gmail.com

Fri 9/6, 10:17 AM

mavis\_ellis@hcpss.org; kirsten\_coombs@hcpss.org; vicky\_cutroneo@hcpss.org; +18 more

Reply all |

Priority

You replied on 9/12/2019 1:57 PM.

Qian Li (polygon 176)

Before we move to Howard county we stayed at Anne Arundel county and we sent our child to a high FARM school due to their magnet program.

We loved it . Both the child and the parents are very pleased of the outcome. And I also have to share with you people that I was truly amazed by how those teachers are. The impression I get is that they are patient and they are passionate. They know their job is so important because some of the students look upon them as role model. and I begged to differ that students on Farm term are low performance students. They are just regular children like mine, like yours, like ours. The key is to offer them the right curriculum. The program can inspire them and encourage them to explore, to get motivated to learn. An art focused program, an international Baccalaureate program as good as GT but offers more humanity side knowledge, a pre med biology program... You mean it.

Once you set it up, students will follow. Parents will follow. I truly trust our community leader and our fantastic Howard county educator can tailor programs for our students. For Farm students and also for non farm students. Focus on offering options. Once parents and students are voluntarily attracted by the program they are more likely will get more involved with the new school. And our community could be a real harmony one to reach authentic equity.

Sent from my iPhone

9/23/2019

Urgent Help Needed, Howard County School Redistricting: Polygon 1200

Reply all | Delete | Junk | ...



## Urgent Help Needed, Howard County School Redistricting: Polygon 1200



James Reuster <jamesreuster@gmail.com>

Tue 9/10, 8:29 AM

Hester, Katie Fry Senator

Reply all |

Priority

You replied on 9/12/2019 1:54 PM.

Dear Senator Hester:

I am reaching out to you, as our representative, with respect to an urgent matter affecting our entire neighborhood. The Howard County Public School System is planning to split our neighborhood, sending portions of it to different high schools. Our School District Polygon, Polygon 1200, will be the only polygon within our immediate community being sent to Wilde Lake High School. All the other community connected Polygons are slated to be sent to Glenelg High School.

1. Due to road access, those of us in Polygon 1200 will be isolated from all the rest of the neighborhoods being sent to Wilde Lake High School.
  - a. There are no common roads or direct routes connecting our neighborhood to the rest of the neighborhoods slated to attend Wilde Lake High School.
2. Those of us in Polygon 1200 will occur a significant unnecessary increase in time spent on bus transportation by being sent to Wilde Lake High School.
  - a. There are no direct routes to Wilde Lake High School for us. In order to reach Wild Lake High School, we drive immediately pass River Hill High School entrance (or very near Glenelg High School) and then continue on for another 15 minutes.
3. A large portion of the community identity within Polygon 1200 will be lost.
  - a. Our sense of community will be split apart as Polygon 1200 students would attend different schools than our nearest neighbors, causing our children's existing relationships with our neighbors to become strained from significantly reduced interactions.

The simplest solution to this problem is to change the redistricting plans so that our students in Polygon 1200 attend Glenelg High School while grandfathering current Juniors and Seniors at River Hill High School. Other alternative solutions are to adopt the 2019 Feasibility Study Boundary Review recommendation or even to delay major high school redistricting until the 13<sup>th</sup> high school is finished.

Our entire neighborhood is deeply concerned about this issue. We feel unrepresented. We are a small community; therefore, our voice will not be heard. We have been meeting weekly (after work) and organizing to try to prevent this change from happening. As our representative, we need help from you and your office. I invite you to come to our next meeting, hear our concern, see how it is affecting our neighborhood, and provide any type of help you can (POC: James Reuster, jamesreuster@gmail.com; 661.492.4170). Time is of the essence as final redistricting plans will be approved in November. Any type of assistance would be greatly appreciated.

Thank-you,

James Reuster

September 30, 2019

Dear County Executive Ball and County Council Members:

I have been monitoring the various conversations, press releases and commentaries on "integration", "race" and "socioeconomics" in Howard County. As a woman of color I am angered by some of the racial implications and charged language used by some, including member of our county council.

"For decades, Howard County Public Schools have become increasingly segregated by race and socioeconomic status," Councilwoman Christiana Mercer Rigby said. "Redistricting is a civil rights issue in Howard County, and it's time to take meaningful strides toward integration in our education system."

Racial and socioeconomic segregation in this county is due to housing development of clustered pockets of low income housing. It is not due to inequalities in our education system or lack of access to education. Simply put, poverty is clustered in areas of Howard County. Directly supporting the students and parents in these clustered areas is what needs to happen.....not redistricting, redrawing polygons or busing kids all over the county. I realize CR 112 is not directly related to the current redistricting proposal however it is based on the same argument being utilized by our Superintendent which is clearly misguided.

The Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) is one of the most successful in the state and the nation. As Superintendent Michael Martirano said "all Howard County schools are excellent." Kids living in these pockets of low incoming housing have the SAME access to the SAME great education as do the kids living in a single family home.

The MAJOR difference is the child coming from low income housing perhaps may not have the same family support system at home. The schools already provide free meals and offer day care to teen mothers. Perhaps providing free before/after care, free after school programs and after school tutoring would most benefit the kids in these low income pockets whose parents cannot afford to provide these things for them.

Bussing kids around Howard County is not what they need. The impoverished kids bussed to other communities will still not be able to afford before/after care, after school programs or tutoring. These kids need to stay in their communities and thrive in an environment with the additional support from the Howard County government. Pawning off the job to the education department to redistrict, redraw polygons and shuffle FARM numbers does not fix the underlying problem of poverty. The same number of kids will need FARM whether its at their closest , most convenient high school or the one across town.

I live in perhaps the most racially diverse neighborhoods in the county. If you are not familiar, our neighborhood in Polygon 3176 is represented by a mix of African American, African, Asian, Hispanic, White and Southern Asian families. The racial implication and insinuations are frankly insulting. Socioeconomic discrepancies are not foreign to those of us living in my neighborhood. My husband and I both grew up in apartment complexes. I was a "latch key kid" without the benefit of having a stay-at-home parent, before/after care or after school programs given my parents socioeconomic status. My kids do not have access to better education based on the location or the polygon we live in. The major difference is they are surrounded and supported by a strong family unit who are able to pay for their meals, provide before/after care, after school programs and tutoring. Our kids are no different or any more special than kids in low income neighborhoods. If they can be supported by an intact family unit along with some support from the Howard County Government, the perceived issue of segregation will no longer exist.

**I urge you to reject and retract the CR 112- 2019 plan. *This is not a Civil Rights issue! This is a Social Reform Issue!* It is a wrongheaded plan which does not deal with the underlying problem of poverty. Invest in the families and kids who live in these low income housing communities!**

Sincerely,

Rajneet Sawhney

September 10, 2019

Dear County Executive Calvin Ball and County Council Members:

I have been monitoring the various conversations, press releases and commentaries on "integration", "race" and "socioeconomics" in Howard County. As a person of color, I am angered by some of the racial implications and charged language used by some, including member of our county council.

"For decades, Howard County Public Schools have become increasingly segregated by race and socioeconomic status," Councilwoman Christiana Mercer Rigby said.

"Redistricting is a civil rights issue in Howard County, and it's time to take meaningful strides toward integration in our education system."

Racial and socioeconomic segregation in this county is due to housing development of clustered pockets of low-income housing. It is not due to inequalities in our education system or lack of access to education. Simply put, poverty is clustered in areas of Howard County. Directly supporting the students and parents in these clustered areas is what needs to happen not redistricting, redrawing polygons or busing kids all over the county. I realize CR 112 is not directly related to the current redistricting proposal, however it is based on the same argument being utilized by our Superintendent which is clearly misguided.

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programs or tutoring. These kids need to stay in their communities and thrive in an environment with the additional support from the Howard County government. Pawning off the job to the education department to redistrict, redraw polygons and shuffle FARM numbers does not fix the underlying problem of poverty. The same number of kids will need FARM whether it's at their closest, most convenient high school or the one across town.

I urge you to reject and retract the CR 112- 2019 plan. **This is not a Civil Rights issue! This is a Social Reform Issue!** It is a wrongheaded plan which does not deal with the underlying problem of poverty. Invest in the families and kids who live in these low-income housing communities!

Sincerely,

*Mandeep Sawhney*

Mandeep Sawhney

Dear Board of Education Members,

Polygon 1200 will drive through 5 high school districts to our proposed WLHS (currently RHHS) over Rt. 32 and Rt. 29. Our best Google Maps route, at all times of day, takes us through proposed GHS, RHHS, Atholton, Oakland Mills, and to our destination of WLHS. Please see attached maps. Polygon 1200 would be on our 4th high school since buying our property 32 years ago, 2<sup>nd</sup> middle school (almost 3<sup>rd</sup> as we were slated for Lime Kiln,) and 3<sup>rd</sup> elementary school.

I greatly appreciate the time and effort of everyone involved in keeping our Howard County Schools one of the best in the nation and the current effort to help overcrowding in the east.

Polygon 1200 is a land island with polygon 200 (slated for GHS) with egress only to Rt. 32. Perhaps this was missed in development of the Superintendent's plan. If the Superintendent was careful to move polygon 200 to GHS, thereby avoiding 2 major highways and driving into 5 school districts, I feel he would do same for 1200. Our neighbors across 32, with egress to 108 and on our bus route, polygons (201, 1201, 1201, 1199 and more), are moved to GHS, so I think he was also thinking about highways, transportation cost/time, and the environment while maintaining contiguous areas. The plan is moving the north contiguous polygons of those going from RHHS to WLHS (182, 1182, 282, 3182, 1180, 180) from RHHS to GHS not WLHS, because the distance/time is too great to WLHS as is our distance, since we have no direct egress to Rt. 108. Our fastest travel route via Google Maps, takes polygon 1200 via Rt. 32 to 29. This includes 2 highway merges, one very dangerous merge onto 29 (short merge area); the most difficult merge my teens encountered in HoCo by their own admission. If we travel an alternate route, Rt. 32 to 108, we would travel across GHS polygons (200, 201, 1201, 1201, 1199), and pass RHHS polygons with their morning and afternoon school traffic. Since the Superintendent was careful with these polygons including their contiguous areas and travel time/distance, I feel polygon 1200 needs to be revisited and keep us with our contiguous neighbor across Rt. 32 either at RHHS or GHS if the new plan is passed.

We are 4.9 miles to RHS-1 highway, 5.7 miles to GHS-no highway, 11.9 to WLHS-2 highways, 8.7 miles-no highway to Sherwood high school in Mont. Co. which is the HS of our previous home.

In our redistrict out of CEM to TRES in 1998, the plan was for polygons 1200 and 200 combined with Sheppard Lane and Homewood Road polygons which are adjacent to us only as the crow flies; we successfully lobbied that we had no contiguous areas going with us. A new plan was developed to keep us with our contiguous neighbors across Rt. 32. The board was very interested that we would have no one to carpool with, pick up our sick kids, bus routes, for emergencies, family, community or national (9/11.) Please also consider school threats, snow days, and teenage drivers traveling Rt. 32, all the way around 108 to get to Sheppard Lane, Homewood Rd area if they stand any chance of a car pool. The Homewood/Sheppard Lane area is our dear school family and our community, but unfortunately, due to travel routes, it takes 15+ minutes to get there. Across Rt. 32 (by overpass) is our neighbor logistically. The county has just completed a wonderful overpass across 32. We can now get to our neighbors in .4 to 2 miles away (close in our rural area), without ever getting on 32. Such a great advance in the county! We can get to GHS without getting on any highway at all. It takes 1 more minute to get to GHS via Ten Oaks (11 minutes) rather than 32 and the bus could pick up students along Ten Oaks. Unfortunately, the Superintendent's plan does not realize that we are not contiguous with any area adjacent to us except 200 (slated for GHS while we are at WLHS.) It takes us 15+ minutes without rush hour on 32/108, 8+ miles from 12 Oaks Ct. to the polygons next to us. Add rush hour and it could be 25 minutes. Add RHHS school traffic and the ever growing River Hill commercial area, and we have lots of traffic and time. The Superintendent's proposal is not a contiguous neighborhood or any neighborhood for polygon 1200. Under the proposed plan, we are an isolated land island, which the school board realized during our redistrict out of CES. Our neighbors include polygon 200 where we ride our bikes and walk, and all those mentioned across 32

via the new overpass. It takes a village and due to our low density, we need the people across 32 for carpools, emergencies, socialization, and community. We need to use the new overpass that the county spent so much money on to keep our children safe and off the highway.

Other problems being a land island without neighbors:

Environmental impact and increased transportation cost on the school system and families are tremendous. My HoCo school raised son was taught to be extremely concerned about the environment. He is very disappointed with the environmental impact of this plan. Both high schoolers and parents will be driving to the school, sometimes more than once.

Carpooling? There may be no one in our island polygon on our team/activity as there are only about 20 high school students in 1200. Also, how will WLHS to RHHS students get home?

Missing the bus and finding a ride to or from school?

Special needs/sick children on the 1 hour bus ride? My son had migraines once a week after school. He would have been vomiting and writhing in pain on the 45+ minute bus ride. I had another with severe car sickness.

Rt. 32E to Rt. 29N merge? High schoolers will take the fastest route no matter what we say. They will drive for after school activities because both parents work or due to single parent households. My children paid for their own gas. With less time, part-time jobs will be difficult.

Who will drive take the 40+ minute (straight driving) round trip to help us with picking up a sick child? If we ask our closest polygon neighbor at WLHS, it would be 60+ minutes of straight driving.

45-60 extra minutes for the bus is less time than the rest of county for critical homework, physical fitness, and critical family time. Physical fitness time may be cut for study time.

5:30AM wake up? I had 2 HS students do sports and after school activities year round. 5:45AM shower, 6:25 for first bus stop, home after activities/sports. Dinner, showered again, and tried to do homework and study. How could they add 45+ minutes and traffic jams to their daily schedule? It will certainly cause them more stress. The bus is slow in our rural neighborhood with yards far apart and few students. The bus takes a long time to wind around in polygons 1200 and 200.

1 in 5 sixteen year olds have an accident within the 1<sup>st</sup> year of driving. My son had an accident on Rt. 32 at highway speeds. Let's keep these kids off 32 where people drive 70 miles per hour. They have a few miles to RHHS or GHS. GHS affords our children no major highway at all.

The #1 killer of teens is motor vehicle crashes-every mile a teen drives greatly increases the chance for an accident. All of Polygon 1200 friends will be at least 15-30 minutes, many away across major highways often at dark. In our small rural area and small number in our polygon, our friends were mostly all across 32. We had a few in 200, but they will now be at GHS. With this proposal we have no contiguous polygon.

According to Policy 610 HCPSS is concerned about Emergency Plan Operations which I greatly appreciate. My children were at TRES and CMS during 9/11, so I truly appreciate the county preparedness for emergencies. If my children were spread more miles apart, using 2 highways, it would be a disaster for a school or national emergency for me and the buses.

Snow days? All of the high schoolers on buses and in cars on country roads that ice more quickly and a 50+ minute commute on a snow day? Our children will be farther from their home on highways which could be treacherous. When school closes early, we need to get everyone home safely.

Environmental responsibility would keep us from returning to school a second time in a day. NHS meeting, doctor, school play, forgot something at home, award ceremony, back to school night, etc. 4 commutes a day would not be something these children would choose, so they may skip after school activities for sleep/homework. This limits their access to after school activities.

Parents of 1200 will be unlikely to attend much, especially in rush hour. I go to Columbia rarely and consolidate all errands for one day for environmental, cost and time reasons. My children are taught the same; we think twice before turning on air conditioning and taking extraneous trips by car.

I work in Frederick which is why I live where I do. Under this plan, I would have made my 45 minute drive home, passed home, traveled 29N in traffic, picked up my high schooler at WLHS at an after school activity, taken my younger one practice at Western Regional/Alpha Ridge, traveled home, made dinner, homework, maybe gone to PTA, back to school night.. This cannot logistically happen. I wouldn't change my younger children's activities to Columbia, because they would go to DOES and FQMS and want to be with their community. If overcrowding is in the East, why am I moving East?

The impact on children when their parents are stressed/hurried? A 2 person working family, single parent, other parent out of district has to drive to FQMS and RHHS in the morning and afternoon, impact to handicapped parents and sick parents (I have known quite a few.) We don't need our children spread long distances apart at schools.

Most importantly: I saw my 16 year old fall asleep behind the wheel after school. We had been driving less than 10 minutes. He started driving through a yard; I looked over and his eyes were closed. Luckily, I was able to rouse him and he corrected. We can't ask another 45+ minutes of these children to travel Rt. 32 and 29 along 5 high school districts. I beg you to consider the mileage these children will cover when tired. They try so hard as high schoolers and think they are invincible. If the county enacts this proposal, we are asking the polygon 1200 children to make an adult commute every day whether by bus or car. Our high schoolers are extremely tired after school. They need more sleep as evidenced by Howard County studies investigating high school later start times.

If high school later start times are enacted, our children will be traveling highways 32 and 29 in rush hour. When I told my son the plan, he said he couldn't imagine getting back to WLHS from a meet at 10 pm and having to drive himself home, then do homework. If I pick him up, I am tired too.

"Terrifying" was the word my son used to describe his feelings on driving to the mall in as a new driver. It was a big trip for my kids. Both had to use directions (looking at phone) and made wrong turns, went the wrong way on 29, etc. My son said he would not have taken 108 making it a longer trip. Our kids will all drive Rt. 32 to 29 just like their parents have always done. It's the fastest route.

Tardiness is treated harshly. If these buses are late out of 1200 due to a possible accident along their longer route, all the kids will have to go to the office to get a pass, etc. Discipline even effects their ability to be on NHHS. They are stressed about having have their high school records good for college applications. They will stay up too late to study etc.

Every child of 1200 that enters WLHS will feel like a redistrict. My son went from CES to TRES to CMS to FQMS to RHHS. Every move was like a redistrict as he bounced around in a small feed, and it was difficult. My first suffered one less move. Every child in this polygon should not have to move out of their community and make this adjustment going forward and feel like a redistrict entering high school. This is not an adjacent school district to our elementary/middle school. We meet people, do sports, activities, etc. where we live and go to elementary and middle school (DOES/FQMS.) I urge you to Google Map the travel times to the various high schools and that of WLHS for polygon 1200. Also our commutes and mileage to polygons adjacent to us who this map calls our contiguous community, 183, 1183, 2183, 176, 2176, 181, 1181, 176, 3176, which all take 15-25 minutes depending on traffic due to no egress

with creeks and woods between. This map leaves us as a land island. Any new friends will require traveling Rt. 32 and possibly 29 through several other high school territories. Then look at our commutes and mileage to our adjacent polygon 200 and across Rt. 32 to our neighbors (201, 1201, 1201, 1199.) The reason these polygon's have numbers close to 1200 and 200 is because we all go together as a neighborhood and transportation ease/cost/conservation. We are less than 1-2 miles apart and across the 32 bridge using no highway. We ride or bike and run there. We have no road connection any polygon going to WLHS other than using Rt. 32 and driving 15+ minutes.

Notice: Polygon 126 and 127 out of AHS going to RHHS under the superintendent's plan. Our buses will pass each other on Rt. 32 under the new plan. 126 and 127 have to get on 29 to get out of their neighborhood. Moving them from AHS to RHHS, as the plan suggests, they now will be on 2 highways: Rt. 29 to 32 (the opposite of 1200's drive.)

Notice: 128, 64, 129, 114, 1114, 2114 and more in River Hill; these polygons were recently redistricted out of RHHS to AHS under protest and are slated to go back to RHHS as they predicted.

Notice: 114, 1114, 2114 were also recently redistricted out of RHHS to RHS and are slated to return to RHHS. Redistricting these families was difficult; they had children attending different high schools, changing schools in high school, and now they are coming back to RHHS? High school is a difficult time, we need to be more careful with our students and not move them without great study. It doesn't seem necessary or right to move neighborhoods from RHHS to Atholton the back to RHHS. Or RHHS to Reservoir back to RHHS. There are a number of polygons in this plan being moved back to GHS from RHHS and MRHS. Just because we live in the middle of the county doesn't mean it's any easier on us to move multiple times or that we should be the solution to multiple issues.

Please do a bus trial from 1200 on the entire route to WLHS during RHHS morning rush stopping at each stop. I hope the group would take one day to try this during morning school rush before we ask it of students for years. I invite all of you to drive this with me (polygon 1200): to our adjacent (as the crow flies) polygons and to WLHS. Do we even have enough buses to accomplish this plan?

I urge you to put 1200 with 200 to GHS, for the reasons detailed, if this plan is enacted. If this plan is not enacted, keeping 1200 at RHHS would be good for the following reasons. It follows the Superintendent's recommendations and concerns for "continuous boundaries," transportation costs, and providing equity for all students. It follows Corporate Strategies LLC as a neutral facilitator producing the expensive 2019 Feasibility Study Boundary Review Map. Further redistricting could be revisited with #13 and thorough study to include transportation, contiguous areas and costs ensuring transportation routes are contiguous to the colored areas on the map. Policy 610 concerns are also addressed by HS Option #1 by having the feed policy and HCPSS Emergency Plans with students close to home which is more of a concern daily. Policy 610 HS Option #1 promotes community stability and equality for all students keeping the number of students moved down. Let's not compromise the goals of safety, health, community, education (time constraints,) access to after school activities and more for the children of polygon 1200 or any children. We need to treat all children equally. I know there are other concerns throughout the county, and I urge you to take a careful look at this plan. Thank you for taking the time to read this.

With respect and thanks,

Cathy and Mike Mantua, Polygon 1200

📧 Reply all | ▾ 🗑 Delete Junk | ▾ ...



## Please help with redistricting



Justin Balciunas <justin.balciunas@gmail.com>

Sat 8/24, 1:51 PM

Hester, Katie Fry Senator ▾

📧 Reply all | ▾

### School Redistricting

Hi Katie. Hope all is well. Hopefully you're able to lean-in and assist the Clarksville community (in particular, polygon #3176 and others) regarding this horrendous redistricting proposal that was just released. While I recognize that this is mostly a Howard County Council and School Board matter, I can't think of a more important issue affecting Clarksville currently and the long-term viability of the community. Needless to say -- but this is going to crush property values, impact the tax base, and the cohesiveness in the community. Martirano's social engineering in this matter is very destructive. Instead of focusing on delivering more resources to the schools and communities in need, he's pulling down the schools and communities that are thriving. Folks are seriously starting to think about decisions to move from existing homes, pull kids from public schools altogether, etc. The long-term damage to the community will be substantial. There seems to be a swell of grassroots support regarding the issue, but the matter likely needs several "champions" who are in elected positions and have a vested interest in getting this corrected. Please assist!

Regards,

Justin

917-885-9763

# Polygon 1200 to WLHS

12 Oaks Court

20 min  
9.3 miles

(68)  
Cedar  
Lake Park

Cedar Lake High School

Wilde Lake High School

WILDE LAKE

19 min  
7.6 miles

19 min  
7.6 miles



**Subject: Urgent Help Needed, Howard County School Redistricting: Polygon 1200**

**Dear Katie Fry Hester:**

I am reaching out to you, as our representative, with respect to an urgent matter affecting our entire neighborhood. The Howard County Public School System is planning to split our neighborhood, sending portions of it to different high schools located much further away compared to the current schools. Our School District Polygon, Polygon 1200, is the furthest from the proposed school and will be the only polygon within our immediate community being sent to Wilde Lake High School. All the other community connected Polygons to ours are slated to be sent to Glenelg High School.

- 1) Those of us in Polygon 1200 will see our children experience significant unnecessary stress with increased time spent on the bus by being sent to Wilde Lake High School instead of two high schools that are much closer to us (River Hill and Glenelg High school). There are a number of unique features of our Polygon 1200 that should be considered.
  - a. There are no common roads or direct routes for us in Polygon 1200 connecting our neighborhood to the rest of the neighborhoods slated to attend Wilde Lake High School. In order to reach Wild Lake HS, our kids will be bussed immediately pass their current River Hill High School entrance (or very near Glenelg High School) and then continue on for another 15 minutes (time without any traffic). This in effect could double our kid's current school commute time.
  - b. Because of the longer commute our high school kids will have to catch the school bus much earlier than the current 6:30am with 45 minute current travel time. Busing kids to a school further away will increase travel time to well over one hour each-way and force them to have to catch the bus much earlier than the current 6:30am. This will make our teenagers loose precious sleep time which numerous studies have shown is very important for teenagers. In fact, one study found that each additional minute of commuting correlates to a 1.3 minute loss of sleep.<sup>1</sup> To put this in perspective, redistricting Polygon 1200 students to WLHS can cause a loss of sleep of 14.3 to 39 minutes.<sup>2</sup> This loss of sleep is exacerbated by the fact that general sleep trends show inadequate sleep begins as young as age 6 and increases as children age without the additional stressor of significant commute times.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.citylab.com/life/2019/05/high-school-commute-drive-sleep-exercise-children-teens/588850/>

<sup>2</sup> Extrapolated by using additional time range of 39 and 58 over the current 28 minute commute and multiplying by 1.3.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5012907/>

- c. Increased traffic congestion will also be a serious problem because our Polygon 1200 is isolated from other communities and the shortest way to get to Wilde Lake HS would be along Route 108, which is a single lane road that is already very heavily congested. This longer school bus route to a high school much further away will only serve to further increase the traffic congestion along Route 108.
- d. Both of our high school kids are involved afterschool activities (sports, high school band, student government, etc.) and we have to commute to their school multiple times after school, to drop them off and pick them up. Accordingly, the current Redistricting Plan, which more than doubles driving distances and significantly increases commute times, can cause serious and permanent physical harm, including death, to the new teenage drivers of our Polygon 1200. The longer commute time essentially precludes some students from being able to participate in extracurricular activities and it is well proven that participation in extracurricular activities has a positive impact on high school academic achievement<sup>4</sup>; it prevents dropping out of high school<sup>5</sup> and increases the incidence of college admission<sup>6</sup> and success.<sup>7</sup> Increasing our students' school commute times to up to over two hours per day effectively limits, at best, and cuts off, at worst, their ability to participate in these important, enriching activities.
- e. Some of our teenagers are now starting to get their drivers licenses and sometimes drive themselves to school. Increasing commuting distances and reducing sleep exacerbates the risks associated with teenage driving. According to the CDC, driving accidents are the leading cause of death among teenagers. The fatal crash rate per mile driven is nearly twice as high for 16 and 17 year olds (i.e., new drivers in high school) compared with 18 and 19 year olds.<sup>8</sup>
- f. This proposed redistricting plan will significantly increase school travel distances for students such as ours, since kids will now need to be bused much further away than their current school. This in turn could significantly increase school transportation costs. In June 2019, Howard County Public School System had a nearly \$38 million dollar shortfall in its Fiscal Year 2020 Operating

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<sup>4</sup> Eccles, Jacquelynne S., and Janice Templeton. "Chapter 4: Extracurricular and other after-school activities for youth." *Review of research in education* 26.1 (2002): 113-180. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.3102/0091732X026001113>

<sup>5</sup> McNeal Jr, Ralph B. "Extracurricular activities and high school dropouts." *Sociology of education* 68.1 (1995): 62. <https://search.proquest.com/docview/216485750?accountid=11752>

<sup>6</sup> Bound, John, Brad Hershbein, and Bridget Terry Long. "Playing the admissions game: Student reactions to increasing college competition." *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 23.4 (2009): 119-46.

<sup>7</sup> Sciarra, Daniel T., Holly J. Seirup, and Elizabeth Sposato. "High School Predictors of College Persistence: The Significance of Engagement and Teacher Interaction." *Professional Counselor* 6.2 (2016): 189-202. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1114072>

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety/teen\\_drivers/teendrivers\\_factsheet.html](https://www.cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety/teen_drivers/teendrivers_factsheet.html)

Budget.<sup>9</sup> Such a shortfall resulted in, among other things, the loss of certain teaching and paraprofessional positions, as well as transfers of funds, freezing of salaries, holding open unfilled positions, and delaying technology and instructional materials investments. A more balanced school redistricting approach could minimize bus route changes leading to lower transportation costs, so that school funding and budget shortfall would not continue to adversely impact the quality of education for all our Howard County students.

- g. Money should be spent directly on underperforming schools to raise student academic achievement in the affected communities. Bussing kids to schools further away to hopefully “even out” the school test scores without addressing the true needs of underperforming students only serves to mask and hide the actual causes of the problem and does not help these individual students who need the academic help. Howard County should be investing money into schools that need the help and not into transporting kids to schools that are much further away.

2) A large portion of the community identity within Polygon 1200 will be lost.

- a. The Redistricting Plan also fails under another BOE’s Policy 6010(IV)(B)(2)(c) sub-factor for Community Stability - frequency with which any one student is reassigned.<sup>10</sup> The Redistricting Plan does not clearly identify how many double moves will be necessary with the opening of High School #13, but surely at least some will be needed.
- b. Our sense of community will be split apart as Polygon 1200 students would attend different schools than our nearest neighbors, causing our children’s existing relationships with our neighbors to become strained from significantly reduced interactions. Friendships our kids formed with other high school students will be torn apart as some kids are forced to attend a school much further away while their friends remain in their current school.

Teenagers don’t handle stress very well and when our 15 year-old daughter Natalia was told that she will have to change high schools next year because of redistricting she broke down and cried. She did not understand why this was happening and neither do we. Our younger daughter Paula just started River Hill high school this month as a 9<sup>th</sup> grader. She was very anxious about making new friends and when she found out that she would have to change high schools next year she reacted with disbelief and fear. She felt that this was very unfair for her to have to change schools and lose many of her school friends that she would no longer see or be with.

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<sup>9</sup> Howard County Public School System News Release titled “Board of Education Adopts FY 2020 Operating and Capital Budgets,” June 10, 2019, <https://news.hcpss.org/news-posts/>

<sup>10</sup> Policy 6010(IV)(B)(2)(c).

The best thing that could happen is for our two high school students to remain in River Hill high school which they are currently attending. The next simplest solution to this problem is to change the redistricting plans so that our students in Polygon 1200 attend Glenelg High School, which is also much closer, while grandfathering current juniors and seniors at River Hill High School. Districting our Polygon 1200 to feed into Glenelg HS instead of Wilde Lake HS largely eliminates the land island effect. The approximate distance and travel times from our Polygon 1200 to Polygons 208, 203, 202 and 200 (all districted to Glenelg) are approximately 2.2 miles and 5 minutes, 1.1 miles and 3 minutes, 0.6 miles and 2 minutes, and 0.4 miles and 1 minute, respectively. Allowing our students to remain in their current school would be ideal, but these are also much better alternatives to the currently proposed redistricting plan.

Our entire neighborhood is deeply concerned about this issue. We feel unrepresented. We are a small community; therefore, we fear that our voice will not be heard. As our representative, we need your help and of your office to ensure that the Howard County Board of Education carefully consider the proposed school redistricting plan while taking into account the significant stress and uncertainty this places on our children having to change schools and spend much more time on the school bus. We have been meeting weekly (after work) and organizing to try to prevent this change from happening. As our representative, we need help from you and your office. I invite you to come to our next meeting, hear our concern, see how it is affecting our neighborhood, and provide any type of help you can (POC: James Reuster, [jamesreuster@gmail.com](mailto:jamesreuster@gmail.com); 661.492.4170). Time is of the essence as final redistricting plans will be approved in November. Any type of assistance would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you for your patience and kind consideration,

Andrew and Blandyna Hlasko  
13010 Red Maple Way  
Clarksville, MD 21029  
Phone: 301-317-4135  
Polygon 1200

il.wp.com

Polygon 1200

Drives into HS districts - 2 highways



Julie Kim, M.D.

5910 Perfect Calm Court

Clarksville, MD 21029

September 3, 2019

To Whom It May Concern,

It was a pleasure seeing Superintendent Martirano at the River Hill Protest 8/27/19 and watch him engage with the crowd. Thank you for the opportunity to respond to his Superintendent's Attendance Area Adjustment Plan (see attached).

I am a concerned Clarksville Elementary School parent, resident of polygon 187, and prospective homebuyer. As a transplanted New Yorker, I was delighted to see the value placed on socioeconomic diversity. We can learn so much from people different from ourselves and there is a tendency in the suburbs to live in a homogenous bubble. I am also a child of immigrants who emphasized education and hard work to live the good life. My conception of the good life is to raise my children in a safe, healthy environment in which to grow and maximize their potential in a diverse environment. It is why I moved to Howard County, despite the cost, commute, and my own cosmopolitan tendencies.

I represent a multi-ethnic coalition opposing redistricting, as it is currently proposed. As a reviewer of clinical trials, I see the following concerns generated by the report:

- a. The report indicates (page 10/34) that Clarksville Elementary (with a maximum capacity of 543) will receive 161 students, more than tripling the proportion of Free and Reduced-Priced Meals Program (FARM) recipients from <5% to 17%. However, it will not send any out. Since this school is using all available classrooms, it appears class size and student:teacher ratios will have to increase to accommodate the proposed change.

I am concerned that Clarksville Elementary is being overly burdened if the goal is desegregation and equally distributing the FARM burden across the county. Other less ethnically diverse elementary schools (i.e., Lisbon, Bushy Park, Dayton) have larger or similar capacity but are receiving 0-47 students with minimal increase in FARM percentage (either staying at <5% or maxing at 12%). It is unclear why more FARM students aren't being transferred to those particular schools to better equalize the FARM and racial proportion across the county.

**To distribute ethnic diversity and FARM students more evenly across the county and minimize undue stress on Clarksville Elementary, please consider sending more students to other elementary schools and decrease the number of students received in Clarksville Elementary.**

- b. The report indicates (page 21/34) that test scores will decline from base-to-proposed at Clarksville Elementary by approximately 10% in PARCC-Read (from 83%-74%) and PARCC-Math (from 89%-79%). However, we are preparing our children to enter global hyper competition in the future. It appears as though the unfortunate by-product of the plan is reduced academic excellence and rigor.

I am concerned with mediocrity and teaching to the test. We must maintain a challenging academic environment. With a large influx of low-scoring students (averaging an alarming 50% below the current norm), it seems most of them may be a grade level or more behind their peers. I am concerned that advanced learners will be ignored and left to stagnate, while others are struggling to remediate the bare minimum of skills needed to pass standardized tests.

**To ensure the highest levels of academic engagement, please provide recommended strategies on how slow and advanced learners would be integrated in the same school.** For instance, will there be intensive remediation efforts prior to redistricting to ensure a smooth transition for those behind grade level? As a former SAT and TOEFL instructor, can I and other Howard County residents volunteer for Saturday tutoring of students with low scores? Since the upgrade in academic peers constitute a de facto scholarship for those who might not be able to afford to live in Clarksville, can the students selected to go be within 1 standard deviation of the current PARCC average for more effective skills transfer? Will we be able to reinstate our technology teacher full-time (whose position was reduced to half-time) next year? Will classes be tracked?

As a graduate of one of the top magnet schools in the country (e.g., Hunter College High School), I would also like to recommend designating one of the centrally located high schools into a magnet once the new high school (HS 13) is in place. Unlike traditional exam schools, if there were a quota system (i.e., top 10% from every feeder school and historically marginalized population, such as FARMS), advanced learners of all backgrounds across the county would have an opportunity to interact meaningfully. We already see a successful version of this each summer at the Howard County Gifted and Talented Summer Institute, when children all over the county congregate at Wilde Lake Middle School. In the DMV region, Fairfax and Montgomery counties have enjoyed reputable magnet high schools (i.e., Thomas Jefferson High School) that feed into top colleges and universities for some time.<sup>1,2</sup>

- c. It is of concern, as a prospective homebuyer, that many neighbors in Clarksville have dashed expectations for desirable middle and high schools after signing on mortgages for expensive homes. I am reluctant to invest more time and money in a community that does not value my contribution or respect prior commitments.

Moreover, it stinks that some board members might stand to gain from redistricting by transferring their children into the desired schools and possibly increasing their property values. Such blatant conflicts of interest and apparent abuse of public office should not be tolerated. To minimize corruption, please request that such board members be recused.

Finally, I am concerned with the tenor of the debate. Councilmembers Rigby, Jones and Jung recently publicly stated:

This socioeconomic and racial segregation in the school system is contributing to increasing achievement gaps and decreasing graduation rates for low-income students and students of

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.niche.com/k12/search/best-magnet-high-schools/s/virginia/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.niche.com/k12/search/best-magnet-high-schools/s/maryland/>

color. Historic systems have created these achievements gaps and it is incumbent on the County to introduce new systems that foster necessary change.<sup>3</sup>

It is important to acknowledge that de facto segregation is a stubborn stain that persists in our country due to the legacy of slavery since 1619. However, it appears that Councilmembers Rigby, Jones and Jung are defining segregation too narrowly. There seems to be a flawed working assumption that Asian Americans do not count as students of color or experience setbacks due to exclusion and underestimation. Please note that the report indicates (pages 26-27/34) Clarksville Elementary and Clarksville Middle are already ethnically diverse schools with over 50% students of color (e.g., Asian, African American). I am also aware that Clarksville Elementary serves a disproportionate population of disabled students. Unfortunately, the proposed plan penalizes many students of color (i.e., Asian, but also African Americans) and Whites in Clarksville with relocation to less desirable schools to remedy a wrong they did not commit.

While diversifying socioeconomically is a worthy goal, disruption and anguish for those currently in Clarksville should be minimized because we are in this together. As you may already be aware, Howard County leads the state of Maryland in public school quality.<sup>4</sup> Currently, it is uniquely poised to lead our nation in achieving intelligent integration, equal opportunity and academic excellence, which I believe are values consistent with the vision of Columbia's founders and unite us.

Let's not squander this historic opportunity and expand the pie for all. Our community can do better than fight over scraps, be divided, and repeat mistakes of the past.

Thank you for your time and attention. Feel free to contact me for any questions or comment.

All the best to you,

Julie

P.S. Please enjoy the attached photo of my son with his friends; multi-ethnic students on their first day of school at Clarksville Elementary. With the proposed plan, they would be zoned to separate middle schools.

CC: Shawna Frazier, M.B.A.                      Maria Gutierrez, M.D.                      Claudia Palmer, R.N.  
Christian Cao                                      Yinqi Zhang, Ph.D.                      Rong Guo, Ph.D.

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<sup>3</sup>[https://cc.howardcountymd.gov/Portals/0/Documents/CouncilMain/Press%20Releases/2019/CMR\\_OJ\\_DJ%20Desegregation%20Press%20Release.pdf](https://cc.howardcountymd.gov/Portals/0/Documents/CouncilMain/Press%20Releases/2019/CMR_OJ_DJ%20Desegregation%20Press%20Release.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.niche.com/k12/d/howard-county-public-schools-md/>



**BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HOWARD COUNTY  
MEETING AGENDA ITEM**

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**TITLE:** Presentation of the Attendance Area Adjustment Plan **DATE:** August 20, 2019

**PRESENTER(S):** Michael J. Martirano, Ed. D., Superintendent

**Strategic Call To Action Alignment:** This process supports the Strategic Call to Action (SCTA) by providing operations and practices that are responsive, transparent, fiscally responsible and accountable.

---

**OVERVIEW:**

This document contains comprehensive attendance area adjustments recommended for SY 2020/21. The Superintendent's recommendation follows the presentation of options from the June 2019 Feasibility Study, outreach to community members through online and paper surveys, and review by the Attendance Area Committee. This boundary review process conforms with Policy 6010 School Attendance Areas.

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**RECOMMENDATION/FUTURE DIRECTION:**

Following a series of public hearings and work sessions beginning on September 17, 2019, the Board is scheduled to approve the SY 2020–2021 attendance area adjustments on November 21, 2019.

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**SUBMITTED BY:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Renée M. Kamen  
Manager, School Planning

**APPROVAL/CONCURRENCE:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Michael J. Martirano, Ed. D.  
Superintendent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Karalee Turner-Little  
Deputy Superintendent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Scott W. Washington  
Acting Chief Operating Officer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Daniel Lubeley  
Acting Director Capital  
Planning  
and Construction



# COOPERATIVE STRATEGIES

COMPLETE FINANCIAL & DEMOGRAPHIC PLANNING FOR EDUCATION

## HOWARD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM SUPERINTENDENT'S ATTENDANCE AREA ADJUSTMENT PLAN

AUGUST 20, 2019

**PREPARED FOR:**

**Howard County Public School System**

10910 Clarksville Pike

Ellicott City, MD 21042

T 410.313.6600

**PREPARED BY:**

**Cooperative Strategies**

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**Appendix A: Community Input Sessions Survey Results**

**Appendix B: Attendance Area Boundary Review Survey Results**

**Appendix C: Alternative Boundary Scenarios Survey Results**

## INTRODUCTION

This document contains a description of the attendance area adjustment process and the Superintendent's recommendation for SY 2020-21 attendance area adjustments. As of this writing, no decisions have been made on any attendance area boundary changes. The Board of Education (Board) is the decision-making body for changes to school attendance areas. The Board's approval of attendance area adjustments is scheduled for November 21, 2019. Opportunity to provide public testimony to the Board begins after the presentation of this report to the Board on August 20, 2019.

The attendance area process includes the study of projected enrollment data, attendance area adjustment scenario testing, public participation, and the assessment of scenarios against the policy standards listed in Policy 6010 School Attendance Areas. The capital budget and attendance area adjustment processes work together aiming to address the long-range planning issues identified in the annual feasibility study. The 2019 Feasibility Study was presented to the Board of Education on June 13, 2019.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document contains comprehensive recommendations for elementary, middle, and high school attendance areas. Information collected through the public processes were considered in the development of the recommendations and can be found in the appendices.

The driving priorities for this process:

1. Balance capacity utilization among schools throughout HCPSS, cost effectively.
2. Advance equity by addressing the distribution of students participating in the Free and Reduced-price meals program (FARMS) across schools to the extent feasible.
3. Plan ahead for the High School #13 redistricting by minimizing double moves as much as possible.

The plan uses as guiding principles all of the priorities expressed by the Attendance Area Committee (AAC) and community members, consideration of Policy 6010 standards, including transportation times and costs, our fiscal obligations to our county through effective use of existing school resources, our desire to keep school boundaries contiguous, and maintain neighborhood schools and walkable distances for as many students as possible. This proposal differs significantly from the Feasibility Study recommendations and moves the District forward notably in balancing capacity utilization across schools. Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) could move even further toward parity when reviewing school boundaries prior to the opening of new High School #13.

This plan marks a turning point in how HCPSS looks at attendance area adjustments. Previous redistricting processes focused more narrowly on capacity utilization and other factors such as socio-economics took a back seat. This proposal is in alignment with the HCPSS Strategic Call to Action, leading with equity as the driver to provide all students with full access and opportunity to receive the best educational services and supports.

For SY 2020-21, this proposal moves more schools with target for utilization (90% - 110%) than if no changes were made. The number of elementary schools within in target would improve from 22 to 28, middle schools from 14 to 15 and high schools from six to ten. This provides a total improvement from 42 to 53 schools. The schools below target utilization (<90%) decrease from 11 to five and the schools above target (>110%) also decrease from 21 to 16. Additionally, the proposal advances equity by making progress in addressing FARM student distribution across many schools. Through this proposal, the number of elementary schools with FARM rates above 50 percent is cut in half from 12 to six and no elementary school will be above 55 percent. This plan brings all middle schools to under 46 percent FARMS and 11 closer to the county average. This plan brings high schools' FARM percentages from a high of 47 percent to below 43 percent and reduces the top three high schools by at least four percent. Ten high schools will move closer to the county average.

A final decision by the Board is scheduled on November 21, 2019, and would take effect at the start of the 2020-21 school year.

## **DATA**

The following is a description of the types of data used in this report. Please note the recommendation may indicate no change of demographic data for one or more of the schools. A school's geography may not be impacted by the scenario's boundary changes or the boundary change minimally affects the specific measure so the resulting percentage remains the same.

### **Free and Reduced-Priced Meals Program (FARM):**

The data shows the percentage of population participating in the Free and Reduced-Priced Meals Program (FARM) living in each school's attendance area before and after the proposed redistricting plan. These percentages are calculated using official SY 2018-19 enrollment data and Official October 2018 FARM participation reporting data. Geographic assignment is used and records are aggregated by current and proposed attendance areas. These numbers are for planning purposes and may not exactly match other reported numbers due to differences in timing and methodology. In adherence with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), which restricts access to student records, values  $\leq 5\%$  have been replaced with " $\leq 5\%$ " and values  $\geq 95\%$  have been replaced with " $\geq 95\%$ ".

### **Testing:**

Testing data for Elementary and Middle Schools is comprised of Spring 2018 test takers in grades 3-8 with the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) Assessments English or PARCC Math score. Testing data for High Schools is comprised of Fall 2018 test takers in grades 9-11 with a PSAT score. The data shown here may not match other reported data due to differences in timing and calculation methodology. In adherence with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), which restricts access to student records, values  $\leq 5\%$  have been replaced with " $\leq 5\%$ " and values  $\geq 95\%$  have been replaced with " $\geq 95\%$ ".

### **English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL):**

The data shows the percentage of students receiving English Second Language support living in each schools' attendance area before and after each boundary option. These percentages are calculated from Fall 2018 student data using geographic assignment aggregated by current and proposed attendance areas. These numbers may not exactly match other reported numbers due to differences in timing and methodology. In adherence with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), which restricts access to student records, values  $\leq 5\%$  have been replaced with " $\leq 5\%$ " and values  $\geq 95\%$  have been replaced with " $\geq 95\%$ ".

## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND INPUT

Community input remains an important part of the attendance area adjustment process. In response to feedback from the 2017 boundary adjustment process, several changes were implemented. In an effort to streamline the process and allow more time for Board discussion and deliberation, the scope of the AAC has changed. For example, the AAC did not develop their own proposal nor review alternative scenarios submitted by community members. This group reviewed the feasibility study and provide feedback directly to the superintendent. Other process improvements occurred as well, and included using electronic correspondence, adjusting the meeting format to allow interactive discussion between community members, and utilizing a new survey solely for collecting community created alternative attendance area options. Staff is committed to studying further improvements.

For a number of years, staff has considered the number of email messages received as a positive indication of outreach. Online surveys and paper surveys have been used to collect the majority of feedback for the Superintendent and HCPSS staff. It also provides a more efficient way to easily remove identifying information and share results with the committee and the community via our website.

### Community Input Sessions:

Four community input sessions were held in July. The format included a short presentation and then offered residents the opportunity to speak in small groups with other community members. The community input sessions were intended to provide a satisfying and meaningful opportunity for the discussion of ideas and to provide input to the Superintendent. The groups were tasked with completing a survey together. In total, over 800 participants attended and 113 group responses were collected; all of these responses can be found in Appendix A. The following shows the locations, dates, and number of group responses from each of the community input sessions.

Location	Date	Group Responses	Approximate Attendance
Oakland Mills HS	July 10 <sup>th</sup>	45	340
Long Reach HS	July 13 <sup>th</sup>	10	70
Atholton HS	July 16 <sup>th</sup>	30	200
River Hill HS	July 18 <sup>th</sup>	28	190

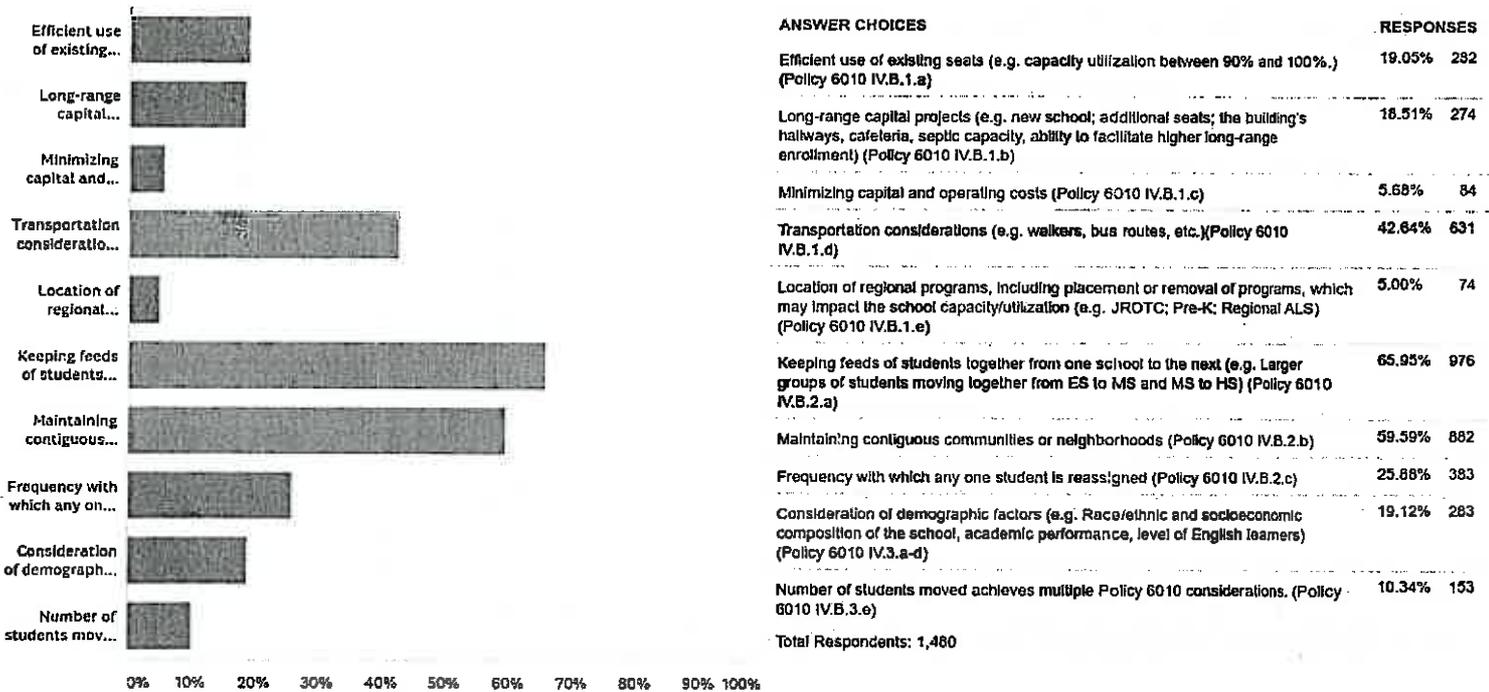
## Attendance Area Boundary Review Survey

The online survey accepted feedback from June 14 through August 1, and 2,176 responses were received. The majority of respondents prioritized limiting student travel times, maintaining walkable distances, and boundary continuity.

The charts below illustrates the responses to question five from the Attendance Area Boundary Review Survey. This question asked respondents to prioritize the criteria in Policy 6010. For more information on the Attendance Area Boundary Review Survey, see Appendix B.

**Q5: The standards listed in Policy 6010 are shown below. Select up to three (3) of the standards you believe are MOST important for consideration during the Boundary Review Process.**

Answered: 1,480 Skipped: 698



### **Alternative Boundary Scenarios**

The Alternative Boundary Scenarios Survey accepted feedback from June 14 through August 1, and in total, 276 responses were submitted. From those responses, 64 scenarios submitted by community members were able to be analyzed. The remaining scenarios did not contain any polygon information to analyze, or were blank. For more details and information on these scenarios, see Appendix C.

## SUPERINTENDENT RECOMMENDED ATTENDANCE AREA ADJUSTMENTS

The Superintendent's proposal includes boundary changes at all three levels. The proposed plan addresses the following:

1. Balance capacity utilization among schools throughout HCPSS, cost effectively.
2. Advance equity by addressing the distribution of students participating in the Free and Reduced-price meals program (FARMS) across schools to the extent feasible.
3. Plan ahead for the High School #13 redistricting by minimizing double moves as much as possible.

The table below shows the total number of students that are proposed to be reassigned in order to achieve these goals.

Students Reassigned	
Elementary	3,194
Middle	1,351
High	2,851
Total Reassigned	7,396

The following pages show tables and maps describing this recommendation in greater detail. They include the following data:

- Specific Geographic Recommendations
- Utilization & FARMS
- Sending & Receiving by School
- Walkers Reassigned
- Test Scores
- ESOL Participation
- Race / Ethnicity
- Maps of Recommended Adjustments

## Specific Geographic Recommendations - Elementary

Sending	Receiving	Appx. # of Students	Polygons Proposed for Reassignment
Atholton ES	Guilford ES	46	16, 1014, 1016
Bellows Spring ES	Waterloo ES	117	269, 1076, 1269
Bollman Bridge ES	Guilford ES	38	25
Bryant Woods ES	Clemens Crossing ES	20	5133
Bryant Woods ES	Longfellow ES	85	268, 1268
Clemens Crossing ES	Swansfield ES	111	66, 134, 1066, 1134, 2134
Cradlerock ES	Atholton ES	70	54, 2054
Cradlerock ES	Jeffers Hill ES	<10	45, 1045
Dayton Oaks ES	Bushy Park ES	47	2205
Deep Run ES	Jeffers Hill ES	15	78
Ducketts Lane ES	Deep Run ES	130	266, 1033
Ducketts Lane ES	Hanover Hills ES	108	1266
Elkridge ES	Ducketts Lane ES	252	36, 42, 43, 1043
Elkridge ES	Rockburn ES	<10	5041
Fulton ES	Laurel Woods ES	140	256, 1256
Hollifield Station ES	Veterans ES	117	105, 1105, 1308
Jeffers Hill ES	Phelps Luck ES	23	261, 1261
Longfellow ES	Bryant Woods ES	32	144, 1144
Manor Woods ES	Triadelphia Ridge ES	74	157, 1157
Phelps Luck ES	Waterloo ES	213	69, 70, 1069, 2069, 3069, 4069, 5069
Pointers Run ES	Dayton Oaks ES	17	1192
Pointers Run ES	Swansfield ES	153	64, 129, 1064, 1129
Running Brook ES	Bryant Woods ES	20	204, 1204
Running Brook ES	Thunder Hill ES	58	1146
St Johns Lane ES	Manor Woods ES	118	159, 1159
Stevens Forest ES	Thunder Hill ES	102	96
Swansfield ES	Clarksville ES	161	135, 1135, 1174, 2135, 2174
Swansfield ES	Longfellow ES	36	3138
Talbott Springs ES	Stevens Forest ES	126	1059, 2059, 3059
Thunder Hill ES	Talbott Springs ES	120	65, 151, 1065, 2065, 2151
Triadelphia Ridge ES	Bushy Park ES	129	209, 210, 1210, 1218, 1222, 2210
Veterans ES	Worthington ES	51	101
Waterloo ES	Phelps Luck ES	258	98, 100, 277, 1074, 1098, 1100, 2074
Waterloo ES	Worthington ES	18	74
Waverly ES	West Friendship ES	40	166, 1166, 2166
West Friendship ES	Bushy Park ES	78	231, 232, 1231
West Friendship ES	Triadelphia Ridge ES	63	171, 178, 179, 1178, 1179

**Specific Geographic Recommendations - Middle School**

Sending	Receiving	Appx. # of Students	Polygons Proposed for Reassignment
Burleigh Manor MS	Mount View MS	107	157, 303, 1157, 1171, 1303
Clarksville MS	Harpers Choice MS	207	28, 185, 186, 1028, 1185, 1186, 2028
Dunloggin MS	Oakland Mills MS	34	111, 1111, 2111
Elkridge Landing MS	Bonnie Branch MS	57	92, 1091, 2091, 5041
Elkridge Landing MS	Thomas Viaduct MS	51	36
Ellicott Mills MS	Bonnie Branch MS	16	2074
Ellicott Mills MS	Oakland Mills MS	44	65, 1065, 2065
Hammond MS	Lake Elkhorn MS	127	13, 14, 15, 57, 1057, 2057
Harpers Choice MS	Clarksville MS	87	135, 174, 1135, 1174, 2135, 2174
Harpers Choice MS	Wilde Lake MS	62	53, 143, 144, 1144, 2053
Lake Elkhorn MS	Hammond MS	154	48, 49, 50, 1048, 1050, 2050, 3048
Mayfield Woods MS	Bonnie Branch MS	<10	277
Mayfield Woods MS	Lake Elkhorn MS	<10	78, 3071
Mount View MS	Burleigh Manor MS	53	168, 1168
Mount View MS	Glenwood MS	42	231, 232, 1231
Oakland Mills MS	Lake Elkhorn MS	48	56, 1056, 2056, 3056
Patapsco MS	Burleigh Manor MS	62	159, 1159
Patuxent Valley MS	Thomas Viaduct MS	23	25
Thomas Viaduct MS	Elkridge Landing MS	117	37, 1037, 2043
Wilde Lake MS	Oakland Mills MS	27	1146
Wilde Lake MS	Harpers Choice MS	17	1268, 2204

### Specific Geographic Recommendations - High School

Sending	Receiving	Appx. # of Students	Polygons Proposed for Reassignment
Atholton HS	River Hill HS	513	64, 117, 118, 120, 123, 126, 127, 128, 129, 190, 296, 1064, 1117, 1120, 1123, 1128, 1129, 1190, 1296
Atholton HS	Wilde Lake HS	97	2133, 3133, 4133
Centennial HS	Marriotts Ridge HS	231	97, 154, 214, 1154, 2154
Hammond HS	Atholton HS	215	48, 50, 57, 270, 273, 1048, 1050, 1057, 2050, 2057, 3048
Howard HS	Long Reach HS	233	44, 86, 87, 299, 1086, 1087, 1299, 2087, 3087, 4087
Long Reach HS	Hammond HS	119	33, 266, 1033
Long Reach HS	Oakland Mills HS	192	35, 78, 79, 80, 1035, 1080, 1082, 2035, 3035, 3071, 4035
Marriotts Ridge HS	Glenelg HS	57	231, 232, 1231
Mt Hebron HS	Centennial HS	85	308, 1308, 2308
Mt Hebron HS	Marriotts Ridge HS	82	159, 1159
Oakland Mills HS	Atholton HS	256	49, 52, 54, 58, 1054, 1058, 2054
Reservoir HS	River Hill HS	96	114, 122, 125, 1114, 1115, 1125, 2114, 3115
River Hill HS	Glenelg HS	202	180, 182, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 1176, 1180, 1182, 1199, 1201, 1202, 2182, 3182
River Hill HS	Wilde Lake HS	276	176, 181, 183, 1181, 1183, 1185, 1200, 2176, 2183, 3176
Wilde Lake HS	Oakland Mills HS	65	111, 1111, 1146, 2111
Wilde Lake HS	River Hill HS	132	135, 174, 1135, 1174, 2135, 2174

## Utilization and FARM - Elementary School

Supt. Proposal - Elementary			Projected Utilization			Students Receiving Free and Reduced Price Meals (FARM)			Regional Programs
Elementary School	Capacity	Impacted by Future Capital Project	BASE (2020-21)	2020-21	2024-25	Base	Proposed	Change	
Atholton ES	424		109%	114%	111%	15%	25%	10%	Pre-K, Preschool, MINC
Bellows Spring ES	726		106%	88%	101%	17%	18%	1%	Pre-K, Preschool, MINC, ITP, ES PL
Bollman Bridge ES	666	⊗	103%	97%	108%	51%	51%	0%	Title I, Pre-K, Preschool, MINC
Bryant Woods ES	361	⊗	125%	108%	118%	50%	48%	-2%	Title I, Full-day Pre-K
Bushy Park ES	725		82%	117%	109%	<5	<5		Pre-K, Preschool, ALS
Centennial Lane ES	647		111%	111%	115%	6%	6%	0%	
Clarksville ES	543		70%	98%	95%	<5	17%		ALS
Clemens Crossing ES	521	⊗	105%	85%	97%	13%	10%	-3%	
Cradlerock ES	398		116%	96%	99%	55%	51%	-4%	Title I, Pre-K, Preschool
Dayton Oaks ES	700		95%	91%	108%	<5	5%		Pre-K, Preschool, MINC, ITP, ES PL
Deep Run ES	750		91%	106%	121%	55%	53%	-2%	Title I, Pre-K, Preschool, MINC
Ducketts Lane ES	650		88%	90%	91%	55%	49%	-6%	Title I, Pre-K, Preschool, MINC
Elkridge ES	760		118%	83%	89%	33%	32%	-1%	Pre-K
Forest Ridge ES	713	⊗	95%	95%	104%	34%	34%	0%	
Fulton ES	826	⊗	122%	105%	112%	5%	5%	0%	Regional ED
Gorman Crossing ES	735	⊗	112%	112%	117%	18%	18%	0%	Pre-K, Preschool, MINC
Guilford ES	465		79%	96%	97%	46%	43%	-3%	Title I, Pre-K
Hammond ES	653		95%	95%	107%	25%	25%	0%	
Hanover Hills ES	810		89%	103%	101%	33%	37%	4%	Pre-K, Preschool, MINC, Regional ED
Hollifield Station ES	732		126%	110%	104%	24%	24%	0%	
Ilchester ES	584		102%	102%	110%	<5	<5		Pre-K, Preschool, MINC, ES PL
Jeffers Hill ES	421		98%	98%	93%	36%	34%	-2%	
Manor Woods ES	609		91%	115%	113%	61%	49%	-12%	Title I, Full-day Pre-K
Northfield ES	527		92%	92%	99%	12%	12%	0%	
Longfellow ES	512		86%	104%	112%	51%	52%	1%	Title I, Pre-K, Preschool, MINC
Manor Woods ES	681	⊗	92%	99%	100%	8%	8%	0%	
Northfield ES	700		108%	108%	118%	11%	11%	0%	
Phelps Luck ES	597		95%	103%	101%	63%	36%	-27%	Title I, Full-day Pre-K
Pointers Run ES	744		124%	99%	108%	<5	<5		Pre-K, Preschool, MINC, ES PL, ALS
Rockburn ES	584		102%	102%	110%	6%	6%	0%	Pre-K, Preschool, MINC, ALS
Running Brook ES	515	⊗	91%	75%	94%	52%	51%	-1%	Title I, Full-day Pre-K, Preschool, MINC
St Johns Lane ES	612		119%	99%	108%	9%	10%	1%	
Stevens Forest ES	380		109%	112%	112%	68%	54%	-14%	Title I, Full-day Pre-K
Swansfield ES	694		79%	95%	105%	61%	44%	-17%	Title I, Pre-K
Talbott Springs ES	377	⊗	123%	121%	108%	50%	46%	-4%	Title I, Full-day Pre-K
Thunder Hill ES	509		100%	111%	108%	21%	37%	16%	Regional ED
Triadelphia Ridge ES	606		89%	92%	95%	<5	<5		ITP
Veterans ES	799		103%	112%	109%	21%	22%	1%	ITP, Pre-K, Preschool, MINC
Waterloo ES	603		91%	105%	104%	24%	44%	20%	Pre-K, Regional ED, Preschool, MINC
Waverly ES	788	⊗	112%	106%	110%	<5	<5		Pre-K, ALS, Preschool, MINC, ES PL
West Friendship ES	414	⊗	103%	79%	98%	6%	6%	0%	
Worthington ES	515		89%	102%	107%	5%	6%	1%	Pre-K, Preschool, MINC

\*\*\* Yellow highlight indicates current Title I school

Countywide ES FARM

27%

## Utilization and FARM - Middle & High School

Supt. Proposal - Middle School			Projected Utilization			Students Receiving Free and Reduced Price Meals (FARM)			Regional Programs
Middle School	Capacity	Impacted by Future Capital Project	BASE (2020-21)	2020-21	2024-25	Base	Proposed	Change	
Bonnie Branch MS	701		99%	111%	112%	32%	30%	-2%	
Burleigh Manor MS	779		103%	102%	101%	11%	11%	0%	
Clarksville MS	643		109%	95%	95%	<5	13%		
Dunloggin MS	565	⊗	115%	111%	116%	19%	19%	0%	
Elkridge Landing MS	779		96%	101%	116%	21%	27%	6%	ALS
Ellicott Mills MS	701		130%	121%	117%	11%	11%	0%	Regional ED
Folly Quarter MS	662		102%	102%	98%	<5	<5		
Glenwood MS	545		98%	106%	101%	8%	7%	-1%	
Hammond MS	604		116%	108%	111%	19%	30%	11%	
Harpers Choice MS	506		97%	108%	100%	52%	34%	-18%	
Lake Elkhorn MS	643		86%	103%	101%	53%	41%	-12%	
Lime Kiln MS	721		94%	94%	103%	<5	<5		ALS
Mayfield Woods MS	798		106%	104%	104%	44%	44%	0%	
Mount View MS	798		106%	107%	119%	<5	<5		
Murray Hill MS	662		121%	121%	128%	38%	38%	0%	Regional ED
Oakland Mills MS	506	⊗	99%	108%	109%	48%	45%	-3%	
Patapsco MS	643	⊗	121%	113%	128%	17%	18%	1%	
Patuxent Valley MS	760		94%	91%	87%	38%	37%	-1%	
Thomas Viaduct MS	701		107%	96%	99%	45%	42%	-3%	
Wilde Lake MS	721		91%	93%	102%	47%	45%	-2%	
<i>Countywide MS FARM</i>						26%			

Supt. Proposal - High School			Projected Utilization			Students Receiving Free and Reduced Price Meals (FARM)			Regional Programs
	Capacity	Impacted by Future Capital Project	BASE (2020-21)	2020-21	2024-25	Base	Proposed	Change	
Atholton HS	1,460		102%	96%	100%	10%	25%	15%	
Centennial HS	1,360	⊗	120%	111%	117%	11%	12%	1%	
Glenalg HS	1,420		82%	102%	105%	<5	<5		
Hammond HS	1,220	⊗	116%	108%	126%	40%	39%	-1%	Regional ED
Howard HS	1,420	⊗	136%	119%	125%	14%	15%	1%	
Long Reach HS	1,488	⊗	114%	107%	130%	47%	42%	-5%	
Marriotts Ridge HS	1,615		95%	110%	119%	5%	8%	3%	
Mt Hebron HS	1,400		117%	104%	112%	16%	14%	-2%	Regional ED
Oakland Mills HS	1,400	⊗	96%	96%	100%	45%	41%	-4%	ALS
Reservoir HS	1,551		109%	104%	117%	26%	28%	2%	Regional ED
River Hill HS	1,488		98%	109%	104%	<5	5%		
Wilde Lake HS	1,424		95%	110%	108%	46%	38%	-8%	
<i>Countywide HS FARM</i>						22%			



**Sending and Receiving Matrix - Middle School**

**Receiving Middle School**

Sending Middle School

	Bonnie Branch MS	Burleigh Manor MS	Clarksville MS	Dunloggin MS	Elkridge Landing MS	Ellicott Mills MS	Folly Quarter MS	Glenwood MS	Hammond MS	Harpers Choice MS	Lake Elkhorn MS	Lime Kiln MS	Mayfield Woods MS	Mount View MS	Murray Hill MS	Oakland Mills MS	Patapsco MS	Patuxent Valley MS	Thomas Viaduct MS	Wilde Lake MS	Total Sending		
Bonnie Branch MS																						0	
Burleigh Manor MS														107									107
Clarksville MS										207													207
Dunloggin MS																34							34
Elkridge Landing MS	57																		51				108
Ellicott Mills MS	16															44							60
Folly Quarter MS																							
Glenwood MS																							
Hammond MS											127												127
Harpers Choice MS			87																		62		149
Lake Elkhorn MS									154														154
Lime Kiln MS																							0
Mayfield Woods MS	<10										<10												
Mount View MS		53						42															95
Murray Hill MS																							0
Oakland Mills MS											48												48
Patapsco MS		62																					62
Patuxent Valley MS																				23			23
Thomas Viaduct MS					117																		117
Wilde Lake MS										17						27							44
<b>Total Receiving</b>		115	87	0	117	0	0	42	154	224		0	0	107	0	105	0	0	74	62			

**Sending and Receiving Matrix - High School**

**Receiving High School**

**Sending High School**

	Atholton HS	Centennial HS	Gleneig HS	Hammond HS	Howard HS	Long Reach HS	Marriotts Ridge HS	Mt Hebron HS	Oakland Mills HS	Reservoir HS	River Hill HS	Wilde Lake HS	Total Sending
Atholton HS											513	97	610
Centennial HS							231						231
Gleneig HS													0
Hammond HS	215												215
Howard HS						233							233
Long Reach HS				119					192				311
Marriotts Ridge HS			57										57
Mt Hebron HS		85					82						167
Oakland Mills HS	256												256
Reservoir HS											96		96
River Hill HS			202									276	478
Wilde Lake HS									65		132		197
<b>Total Receiving</b>	<b>471</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>741</b>	<b>373</b>	

## Walkers Reassigned

The following is a count of walkers that are proposed to be reassigned. Please note that these numbers reflect the entire polygon enrollment when only a portion or fraction of the students residing in the polygon may actually reside in the walk zone. Walk zones for schools impacted by boundary adjustments will be re-evaluated following adoption of boundaries by the Board.

Schools	Students	Note
<i>Elementary</i>		
Bryant Woods ES -> Longfellow ES	85	Some may be able to walk to Longfellow ES
Cradlerock ES -> Atholton ES	70	Not all were walkers to Cradlerock ES
Longfellow ES -> Bryant Woods ES	16	
Stevens Forest ES -> Thunder Hill ES	102	
Swansfield ES -> Longfellow ES	36	
Thunder Hill ES -> Talbott Springs ES	120	
<i>Middle</i>		
Harpers Choice MS -> Wilde Lake MS	22	
Wilde Lake MS -> Harpers Choice MS	17	These may be potentially eligible to walk to Harpers Choice MS
<i>High</i>		
Long Reach HS -> Oakland Mills HS	24	
Mt. Hebron HS -> Mariotts Ridge HS	82	Not all were walkers to Mt. Hebron HS

Feed Percentages - Middle from Elementary

Middle School

Elementary School

	Bonnie Branch MS	Burleigh Manor MS	Clarksville MS	Dunloggin MS	Elkridge Landing MS	Ellicott Mills MS	Folly Quarter MS	Glenwood MS	Hammond MS	Harpers Choice MS	Lake Elkhorn MS	Lime Kiln MS	Mayfield Woods MS	Mount View MS	Murray Hill MS	Oakland Mills MS	Patapsco MS	Patuxent Valley MS	Thomas Viaduct MS	Wilde Lake MS	
Atholton ES											35.7%										
Bellows Spring ES													25.2%							11.3%	
Bollman Bridge ES																		47.2%			
Bryant Woods ES																					29.1%
Bushy Park ES							33.3%	52.2%													
Centennial Lane ES		55.6%																			
Clarksville ES			33.9%							36.6%											
Clemens Crossing ES																					23.1%
Cradlerock ES											31.1%										
Dayton Oaks ES							27.7%					30.4%									
Deep Run ES													41.8%							11.1%	
Ducketts Lane ES					28.0%															8.3%	
Elkridge ES					45.4%																
Forest Ridge ES																					
Fulton ES									15.2%			48.4%									
Gorman Crossing ES															54.3%						
Gulford ES									29.2%											13.4%	
Hammond ES									55.6%												
Hanover Hills ES																					55.8%
Hollfield Station ES																	52.3%				
Ilchester ES	43.1%																				
Jeffers Hill ES											25.1%		10.3%								
Laurel Woods ES												10.6%			45.7%						
Lisbon ES								47.8%													
Longfellow ES										34.9%											7.7%
Manor Woods ES		29.0%													23.0%						
Northfield ES		15.3%		47.2%																	
Phelps Luck ES	29.8%					15.8%															
Pointers Run ES			51.6%									10.6%									
Rockburn ES	10.7%				26.7%																
Running Brook ES																					29.1%
St Johns Lane ES				12.3%																35.2%	
Stevens Forest ES																					
Swansfield ES			14.5%							28.5%						38.7%					
Talbott Springs ES											8.0%					30.4%					11.1%
Thunder Hill ES						16.9%										30.9%					
Triadelphia Ridge ES							38.9%							10.5%							
Veterans ES				40.5%		25.6%															
Waterloo ES	16.4%												22.7%								
Waverly ES														43.7%			12.5%				
West Friendship ES														22.9%							
Worthington ES						41.7%															

Feed Percentages - High from Middle

High School

Middle School

	Atholton HS	Centennial HS	Gleneig HS	Hammond HS	Howard HS	Long Reach HS	Marrlots Ridge HS	Mt Hebron HS	Oakland Mills HS	Reservoir HS	River Hill HS	Wilde Lake HS
Bonnie Branch MS					46.9%	11.8%						
Burleigh Manor MS		40.4%					30.0%					
Clarksville MS											58.4%	
Dunloggin MS		31.6%						13.3%				7.8%
Elkridge Landing MS					34.2%	30.2%						
Ellicott Mills MS		28.0%			16.0%			24.0%				
Folly Quarter MS			45.5%									17.0%
Glenwood MS			54.5%									
Hammond MS	29.4%			15.9%						12.3%		
Harpers Choice MS											18.1%	33.4%
Lake Elkhorn MS	19.2%			8.8%					33.4%			
Lime Kiln MS										28.7%	23.5%	
Mayfield Woods MS						46.2%			6.3%			
Mount View MS							70.0%					
Murray Hill MS	23.3%									44.5%		
Oakland Mills MS					2.9%				52.2%			
Patapsco MS								62.7%				
Patuxent Valley MS				47.0%						14.5%		
Thomas Viaduct MS				28.4%		11.7%			8.2%			
Wilde Lake MS	28.1%											41.8%

**Test Scores - Elementary**

Supt. Proposal - Elementary Reading	PARCC-Read		PARCC-Math	
	Base	Proposed	Base	Proposed
Atholton ES	47%	43%	58%	51%
Bellows Spring ES	63%	61%	59%	58%
Boliman Bridge ES	29%	29%	32%	32%
Bryant Woods ES	37%	41%	45%	47%
Bushy Park ES	76%	76%	74%	76%
Centennial Lane ES	75%	75%	82%	82%
Clarksville ES	83%	74%	89%	79%
Clemens Crossing ES	66%	69%	63%	65%
Cradlerock ES	35%	35%	26%	28%
Dayton Oaks ES	69%	66%	77%	75%
Deep Run ES	37%	40%	40%	41%
Ducketts Lane ES	41%	36%	40%	36%
Elkridge ES	44%	47%	47%	49%
Forest Ridge ES	53%	53%	50%	50%
Fulton ES	70%	69%	77%	76%
Gorman Crossing ES	53%	53%	59%	59%
Guilford ES	38%	39%	36%	36%
Hammond ES	52%	52%	60%	60%
Hanover Hills ES	43%	43%	47%	47%
Hollifield Station ES	54%	54%	56%	57%
Ilchester ES	84%	84%	77%	77%
Jeffers Hill ES	43%	46%	35%	38%
Laurel Woods ES	37%	43%	37%	45%
Lisbon ES	67%	67%	57%	57%
Longfellow ES	50%	45%	50%	46%
Manor Woods ES	68%	68%	72%	72%
Northfield ES	62%	62%	65%	65%
Phelps Luck ES	36%	55%	35%	59%
Pointers Run ES	72%	71%	82%	81%
Rockburn ES	65%	65%	70%	70%
Running Brook ES	32%	32%	34%	35%
St Johns Lane ES	63%	61%	64%	62%
Stevens Forest ES	33%	41%	30%	38%
Swansfield ES	29%	42%	34%	48%
Talbott Springs ES	53%	64%	46%	57%
Thunder Hill ES	62%	46%	63%	47%
Triadelphia Ridge ES	71%	70%	80%	77%
Veterans ES	55%	54%	59%	57%
Waterloo ES	65%	48%	66%	42%
Waverly ES	76%	77%	79%	80%
West Friendship ES	70%	72%	66%	69%
Worthington ES	68%	69%	72%	74%

**Test Scores - Middle & High School**

Supt. Proposal - Middle School	PARCC-Read		PARCC-Math		
	Reading	Base	Proposed	Base	Proposed
Bonnie Branch MS		49%	51%	49%	50%
Burleigh Manor MS		76%	74%	74%	73%
Clarksville MS		84%	73%	84%	71%
Dunloggin MS		63%	63%	59%	59%
Elkridge Landing MS		57%	53%	44%	40%
Ellicott Mills MS		65%	65%	66%	66%
Folly Quarter MS		69%	69%	76%	76%
Glenwood MS		63%	64%	60%	61%
Hammond MS		62%	55%	55%	47%
Harpers Choice MS		30%	52%	28%	52%
Lake Elkhorn MS		35%	43%	27%	37%
Lime Kiln MS		72%	72%	70%	70%
Mayfield Woods MS		43%	43%	37%	37%
Mount View MS		76%	77%	77%	78%
Murray Hill MS		47%	47%	41%	41%
Oakland Mills MS		38%	38%	34%	35%
Patapsco MS		57%	57%	64%	63%
Patuxent Valley MS		44%	44%	37%	37%
Thomas Viaduct MS		38%	40%	29%	31%
Wilde Lake MS		44%	44%	35%	37%

Supt. Proposal - High School	PSAT-Read		PSAT-Math	
	Base	Proposed	Base	Proposed
Atholton HS	73%	60%	57%	41%
Centennial HS	79%	78%	69%	66%
Glenelg HS	76%	76%	62%	63%
Hammond HS	46%	47%	27%	28%
Howard HS	67%	65%	47%	46%
Long Reach HS	49%	52%	29%	32%
Marriotts Ridge HS	81%	80%	69%	69%
Mt Hebron HS	69%	70%	57%	60%
Oakland Mills HS	47%	49%	26%	29%
Reservoir HS	58%	57%	43%	43%
River Hill HS	82%	76%	73%	64%
Wilde Lake HS	45%	52%	27%	36%

**EL Participation - Elementary School**

School	% EL Participation	
	Base	Proposed
Atholton ES	<=5%	<=5%
Bellows Spring ES	9%	8%
Bollman Bridge ES	14%	13%
Bryant Woods ES	<=5%	<=5%
Bushy Park ES	<=5%	<=5%
Centennial Lane ES	6%	6%
Clarksville ES	6%	6%
Clemens Crossing ES	<=5%	<=5%
Cradlerock ES	8%	8%
Dayton Oaks ES	<=5%	<=5%
Deep Run ES	23%	20%
Ducketts Lane ES	16%	15%
Elkridge ES	6%	6%
Forest Ridge ES	9%	9%
Fulton ES	6%	6%
Gorman Crossing ES	7%	7%
Guilford ES	7%	7%
Hammond ES	6%	6%
Hanover Hills ES	11%	11%
Hollifield Station ES	13%	15%
Ilchester ES	<=5%	<=5%
Jeffers Hill ES	9%	9%
Laurel Woods ES	13%	11%
Lisbon ES	<=5%	<=5%
Longfellow ES	<=5%	<=5%
Manor Woods ES	8%	6%
Northfield ES	<=5%	<=5%
Phelps Luck ES	17%	9%
Pointers Run ES	<=5%	<=5%
Rockburn ES	<=5%	<=5%
Running Brook ES	6%	<=5%
St Johns Lane ES	<=5%	6%
Stevens Forest ES	20%	13%
Swansfield ES	8%	6%
Talbott Springs ES	12%	12%
Thunder Hill ES	6%	11%
Triadelphia Ridge ES	<=5%	<=5%
Veterans ES	10%	9%
Waterloo ES	8%	16%
Waverly ES	<=5%	<=5%
West Friendship ES	<=5%	<=5%
Worthington ES	<=5%	<=5%
<b>Countywide Average</b>		<b>7%</b>

**EL Participation - Middle & High School**

School	% EL Participation	
	Base	Proposed
Bonnie Branch MS	6%	<=5%
Burleigh Manor MS	<=5%	<=5%
Clarksville MS	<=5%	<=5%
Dunloggin MS	<=5%	<=5%
Elkridge Landing MS	<=5%	<=5%
Ellicott Mills MS	<=5%	<=5%
Folly Quarter MS	<=5%	<=5%
Glenwood MS	<=5%	<=5%
Hammond MS	<=5%	<=5%
Harpers Choice MS	<=5%	<=5%
Lake Elkhorn MS	<=5%	<=5%
Lime Kiln MS	<=5%	<=5%
Mayfield Woods MS	<=5%	<=5%
Mount View MS	<=5%	<=5%
Murray Hill MS	<=5%	<=5%
Oakland Mills MS	<=5%	<=5%
Patapsco MS	<=5%	<=5%
Patuxent Valley MS	<=5%	<=5%
Thomas Viaduct MS	6%	<=5%
Wilde Lake MS	<=5%	<=5%
<b>Countywide Average</b>		<b>&lt;=5%</b>

School	% EL Participation	
	Base	Proposed
Atholton HS	<=5%	<=5%
Centennial HS	<=5%	<=5%
Glenelg HS	<=5%	<=5%
Hammond HS	<=5%	<=5%
Howard HS	<=5%	<=5%
Long Reach HS	6%	6%
Marriotts Ridge HS	<=5%	<=5%
Mt Hebron HS	<=5%	<=5%
Oakland Mills HS	<=5%	<=5%
Reservoir HS	<=5%	<=5%
River Hill HS	<=5%	<=5%
Wilde Lake HS	<=5%	<=5%
<b>Countywide Average</b>		<b>&lt;=5%</b>

## Race / Ethnicity - Elementary School

Elementary School	American Indian or Alaska Native		Asian		Black or African American		Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander		Hispanic		Two or more		White	
	Base	Proposed	Base	Proposed	Base	Proposed	Base	Proposed	Base	Proposed	Base	Proposed	Base	Proposed
Atholton ES	<=5%	<=5%	8%	8%	21%	29%	<=5%	<=5%	10%	10%	9%	7%	52%	45%
Bellows Spring ES	<=5%	<=5%	30%	30%	25%	26%	<=5%	<=5%	11%	10%	6%	7%	27%	27%
Bollman Bridge ES	<=5%	<=5%	8%	7%	38%	40%	<=5%	<=5%	23%	23%	6%	7%	23%	23%
Bryant Woods ES	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	55%	51%	<=5%	<=5%	12%	14%	9%	10%	20%	22%
Bushy Park ES	<=5%	<=5%	14%	18%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	72%	69%
Centennial Lane ES	<=5%	<=5%	50%	50%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	7%	7%	33%	33%
Clarksville ES	<=5%	<=5%	56%	42%	8%	23%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	27%	24%
Clemens Crossing ES	<=5%	<=5%	15%	16%	17%	16%	<=5%	<=5%	9%	10%	11%	9%	48%	48%
Cradlerock ES	<=5%	<=5%	7%	8%	48%	42%	<=5%	<=5%	16%	17%	8%	9%	21%	23%
Dayton Oaks ES	<=5%	<=5%	20%	19%	10%	10%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	6%	6%	59%	59%
Deep Run ES	<=5%	<=5%	14%	15%	15%	21%	<=5%	<=5%	40%	35%	<=5%	<=5%	24%	22%
Ducketts Lane ES	<=5%	<=5%	13%	12%	39%	29%	<=5%	<=5%	21%	22%	<=5%	<=5%	22%	31%
Elkridge ES	<=5%	<=5%	18%	19%	27%	25%	<=5%	<=5%	8%	7%	7%	8%	40%	41%
Forest Ridge ES	<=5%	<=5%	23%	23%	35%	35%	<=5%	<=5%	14%	14%	7%	7%	21%	21%
Fulton ES	<=5%	<=5%	31%	32%	14%	14%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	10%	9%	41%	40%
Gorman Crossing ES	<=5%	<=5%	29%	29%	33%	33%	<=5%	<=5%	11%	11%	7%	7%	20%	20%
Guilford ES	<=5%	<=5%	16%	15%	47%	42%	<=5%	<=5%	12%	12%	7%	7%	19%	23%
Hammond ES	<=5%	<=5%	13%	13%	29%	29%	<=5%	<=5%	12%	12%	8%	8%	37%	37%
Hanover Hills ES	<=5%	<=5%	25%	24%	38%	42%	<=5%	<=5%	15%	13%	<=5%	<=5%	16%	15%
Hollifield Station ES	<=5%	<=5%	45%	46%	15%	13%	<=5%	<=5%	12%	12%	<=5%	<=5%	25%	25%
Ilchester ES	<=5%	<=5%	27%	27%	6%	6%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	6%	6%	58%	58%
Jeffers Hill ES	<=5%	<=5%	12%	13%	38%	40%	<=5%	<=5%	20%	18%	9%	9%	20%	20%
Laurel Woods ES	<=5%	<=5%	11%	13%	52%	45%	<=5%	<=5%	25%	21%	6%	7%	7%	14%
Lisbon ES	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	8%	8%	7%	7%	79%	79%
Longfellow ES	<=5%	<=5%	10%	9%	33%	38%	<=5%	<=5%	23%	22%	11%	10%	23%	20%
Manor Woods ES	<=5%	<=5%	47%	41%	9%	8%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	6%	<=5%	<=5%	35%	41%
Northfield ES	<=5%	<=5%	27%	27%	9%	9%	<=5%	<=5%	6%	6%	9%	9%	48%	48%
Phelps Luck ES	<=5%	<=5%	6%	16%	38%	25%	<=5%	<=5%	30%	16%	9%	9%	17%	34%
Pointers Run ES	<=5%	<=5%	33%	34%	9%	10%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	6%	49%	46%
Rockburn ES	<=5%	<=5%	19%	19%	13%	13%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	7%	7%	55%	55%
Running Brook ES	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	57%	59%	<=5%	<=5%	12%	8%	8%	7%	18%	21%
St Johns Lane ES	<=5%	<=5%	35%	40%	13%	14%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	43%	38%
Stevens Forest ES	<=5%	<=5%	6%	7%	40%	39%	<=5%	<=5%	29%	23%	10%	10%	14%	21%
Swansfield ES	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	10%	55%	39%	<=5%	<=5%	18%	12%	7%	8%	15%	31%
Talbott Springs ES	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	40%	35%	<=5%	<=5%	25%	22%	7%	8%	24%	29%
Thunder Hill ES	<=5%	<=5%	19%	15%	27%	34%	<=5%	<=5%	8%	17%	9%	9%	37%	25%
Triadelphia Ridge ES	<=5%	<=5%	29%	31%	8%	9%	<=5%	<=5%	7%	6%	9%	8%	47%	45%
Veterans ES	<=5%	<=5%	52%	51%	14%	16%	<=5%	<=5%	7%	7%	<=5%	<=5%	25%	23%
Waterloo ES	<=5%	<=5%	23%	16%	29%	39%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	19%	7%	6%	36%	19%
Waverly ES	<=5%	<=5%	49%	51%	7%	7%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	37%	36%
West Friendship ES	<=5%	<=5%	22%	21%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	6%	7%	65%	63%
Worthington ES	<=5%	<=5%	39%	38%	7%	6%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	6%	6%	44%	44%
<b>Countywide Average</b>	<=5%		22%		25%		<=5%		12%		7%		34%	

### Race / Ethnicity - Middle & High School

Middle School	American Indian or Alaska Native		Asian		Black or African American		Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander		Hispanic		Two or more		White	
	Base	Proposed	Base	Proposed	Base	Proposed	Base	Proposed	Base	Proposed	Base	Proposed	Base	Proposed
Bonnie Branch MS	<=5%	<=5%	16%	16%	26%	26%	<=5%	<=5%	15%	15%	7%	6%	35%	37%
Burleigh Manor MS	<=5%	<=5%	48%	44%	12%	12%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	6%	6%	29%	34%
Clarksville MS	<=5%	<=5%	40%	31%	6%	17%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	6%	<=5%	<=5%	45%	41%
Dunloggin MS	<=5%	<=5%	33%	34%	16%	15%	<=5%	<=5%	8%	8%	<=5%	<=5%	39%	38%
Elkridge Landing MS	<=5%	<=5%	17%	16%	23%	24%	<=5%	<=5%	8%	10%	6%	6%	46%	43%
Ellicott Mills MS	<=5%	<=5%	32%	34%	14%	15%	<=5%	<=5%	6%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	43%	41%
Folly Quarter MS	<=5%	<=5%	27%	27%	6%	6%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	57%	57%
Glenwood MS	<=5%	<=5%	8%	9%	6%	6%	<=5%	<=5%	7%	8%	<=5%	<=5%	75%	73%
Hammond MS	<=5%	<=5%	12%	13%	26%	38%	<=5%	<=5%	8%	9%	8%	7%	45%	33%
Harpers Choice MS	<=5%	<=5%	8%	24%	50%	34%	<=5%	<=5%	16%	11%	8%	7%	18%	24%
Lake Elkhorn MS	<=5%	<=5%	10%	8%	51%	38%	<=5%	<=5%	18%	16%	7%	9%	14%	28%
Lime Kiln MS	<=5%	<=5%	28%	28%	12%	12%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	6%	6%	50%	50%
Mayfield Woods MS	<=5%	<=5%	13%	13%	29%	29%	<=5%	<=5%	25%	25%	<=5%	<=5%	28%	27%
Mount View MS	<=5%	<=5%	36%	39%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	6%	<=5%	49%	47%
Murray Hill MS	<=5%	<=5%	17%	17%	45%	45%	<=5%	<=5%	21%	21%	<=5%	<=5%	13%	13%
Oakland Mills MS	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	6%	37%	36%	<=5%	<=5%	21%	20%	10%	10%	27%	29%
Patapsco MS	<=5%	<=5%	33%	35%	11%	12%	<=5%	<=5%	9%	10%	<=5%	<=5%	43%	40%
Patuxent Valley MS	<=5%	<=5%	17%	16%	38%	39%	<=5%	<=5%	18%	18%	6%	6%	21%	21%
Thomas Viaduct MS	<=5%	<=5%	14%	17%	45%	46%	<=5%	<=5%	18%	16%	<=5%	<=5%	18%	17%
Wilde Lake MS	<=5%	<=5%	8%	7%	47%	44%	<=5%	<=5%	11%	11%	9%	8%	25%	27%
Countywide Average	<=5%	<=5%	21%	21%	25%	25%	<=5%	<=5%	12%	12%	6%	6%	36%	36%

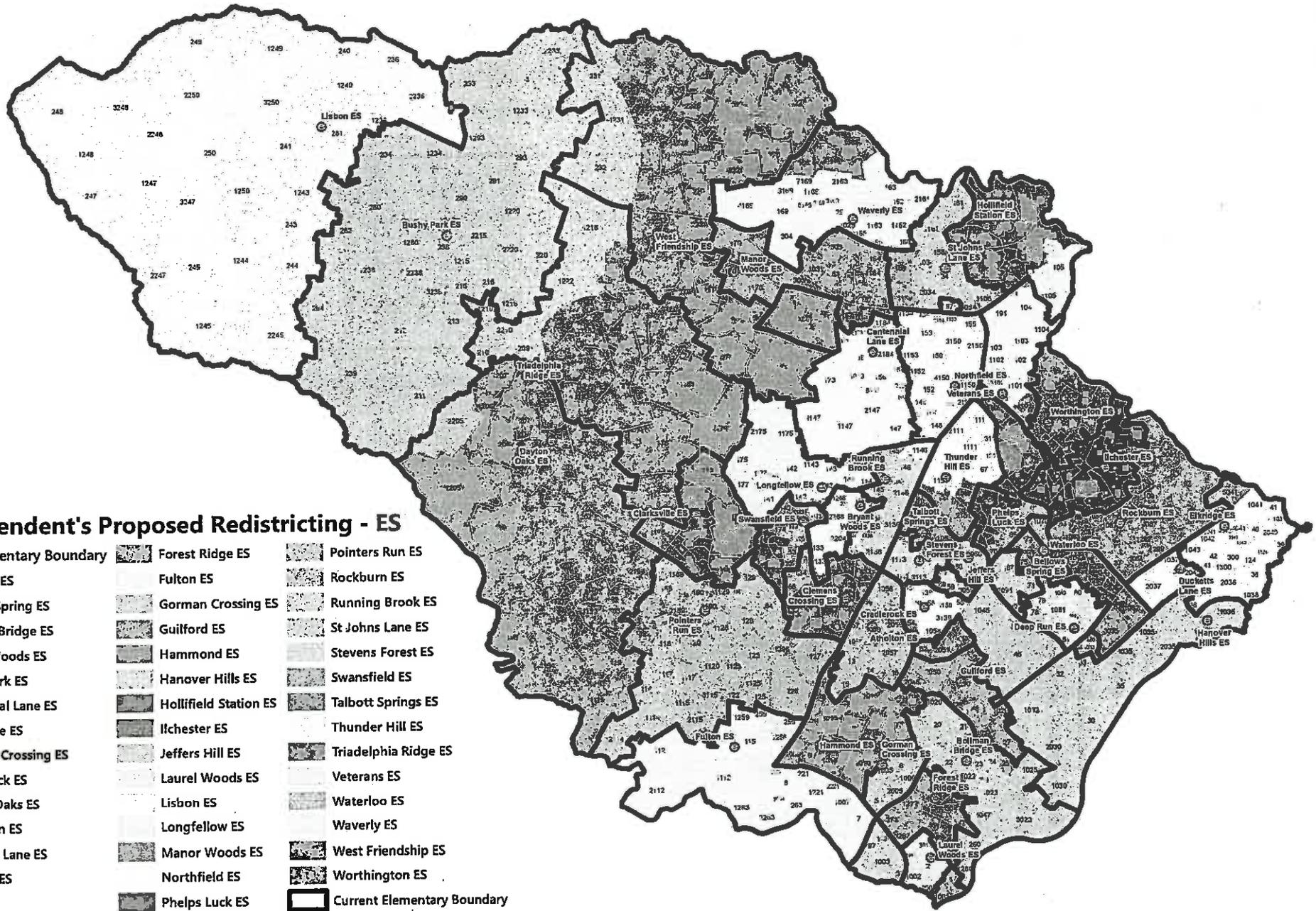
High School	American Indian or Alaska Native		Asian		Black or African American		Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander		Hispanic		Two or more		White	
	Base	Proposed	Base	Proposed	Base	Proposed	Base	Proposed	Base	Proposed	Base	Proposed	Base	Proposed
Atholton HS	<=5%	<=5%	20%	14%	24%	39%	<=5%	<=5%	8%	10%	6%	7%	42%	28%
Centennial HS	<=5%	<=5%	40%	36%	9%	10%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	6%	6%	6%	40%	41%
Glenelg HS	<=5%	<=5%	11%	13%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	76%	74%
Hammond HS	<=5%	<=5%	10%	11%	42%	42%	<=5%	<=5%	16%	16%	7%	6%	26%	24%
Howard HS	<=5%	<=5%	17%	18%	21%	23%	<=5%	<=5%	7%	7%	7%	7%	47%	44%
Long Reach HS	<=5%	<=5%	14%	13%	35%	29%	<=5%	<=5%	20%	19%	6%	7%	24%	32%
Marriotts Ridge HS	<=5%	<=5%	35%	37%	10%	10%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	48%	45%
Mt Hebron HS	<=5%	<=5%	31%	32%	15%	13%	<=5%	<=5%	8%	8%	<=5%	<=5%	42%	41%
Oakland Mills HS	<=5%	<=5%	7%	9%	46%	41%	<=5%	<=5%	20%	19%	8%	7%	20%	25%
Reservoir HS	<=5%	<=5%	16%	16%	32%	34%	<=5%	<=5%	15%	16%	7%	7%	28%	27%
River Hill HS	<=5%	<=5%	34%	29%	7%	11%	<=5%	<=5%	<=5%	6%	7%	6%	48%	48%
Wilde Lake HS	<=5%	<=5%	7%	12%	45%	40%	<=5%	<=5%	13%	12%	7%	8%	26%	28%
Countywide Average	<=5%	<=5%	20%	20%	24%	24%	<=5%	<=5%	10%	10%	6%	6%	39%	39%

## **MAPS**

The following maps contain the proposed plans for the attendance area adjustment recommendations. This proposal is not Board approved. Any changes to the attendance areas will be approved by the Board in November 2019 would take effect at the beginning the 2020-21 school year. Plans for future years would also require Board of Education approval in the fall of the year before they are to take effect.

## Superintendent's Proposed Redistricting - ES

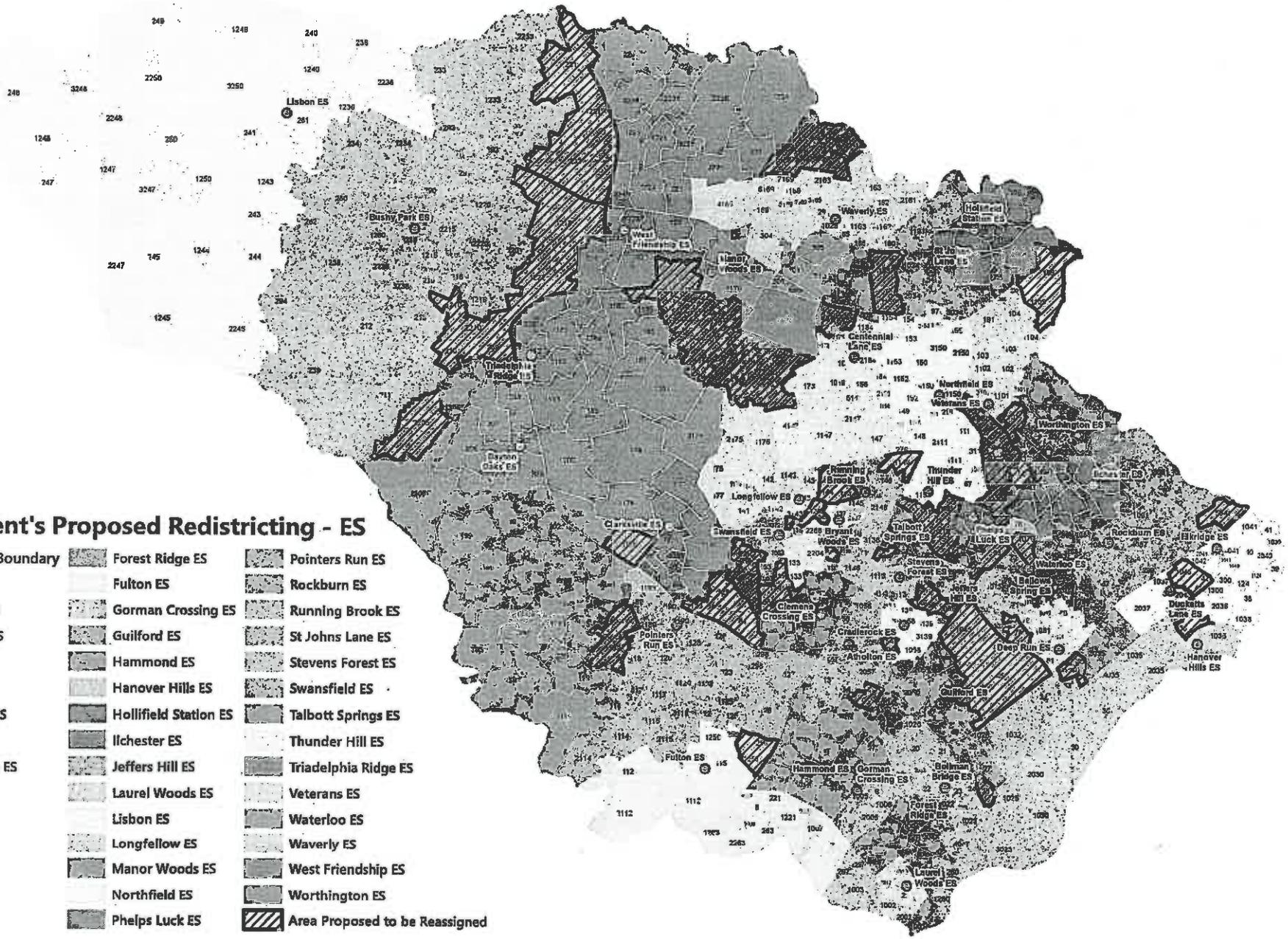
Proposed Elementary Boundary		Forest Ridge ES		Pointers Run ES	
	Atholton ES		Fulton ES		Rockburn ES
	Bellows Spring ES		Gorman Crossing ES		Running Brook ES
	Bollman Bridge ES		Guilford ES		St Johns Lane ES
	Bryant Woods ES		Hammond ES		Stevens Forest ES
	Bushy Park ES		Hanover Hills ES		Swansfield ES
	Centennial Lane ES		Hollifield Station ES		Talbot Springs ES
	Clarksville ES		Ilchester ES		Thunder Hill ES
	Clemens Crossing ES		Jeffers Hill ES		Triadelphia Ridge ES
	Cradlerock ES		Laurel Woods ES		Veterans ES
	Dayton Oaks ES		Lisbon ES		Waterloo ES
	Deep Run ES		Longfellow ES		Waverly ES
	Ducketts Lane ES		Manor Woods ES		West Friendship ES
	Elkridge ES		Northfield ES		Worthington ES
		Phelps Luck ES		Current Elementary Boundary	



# Superintendent's Proposed Redistricting - ES

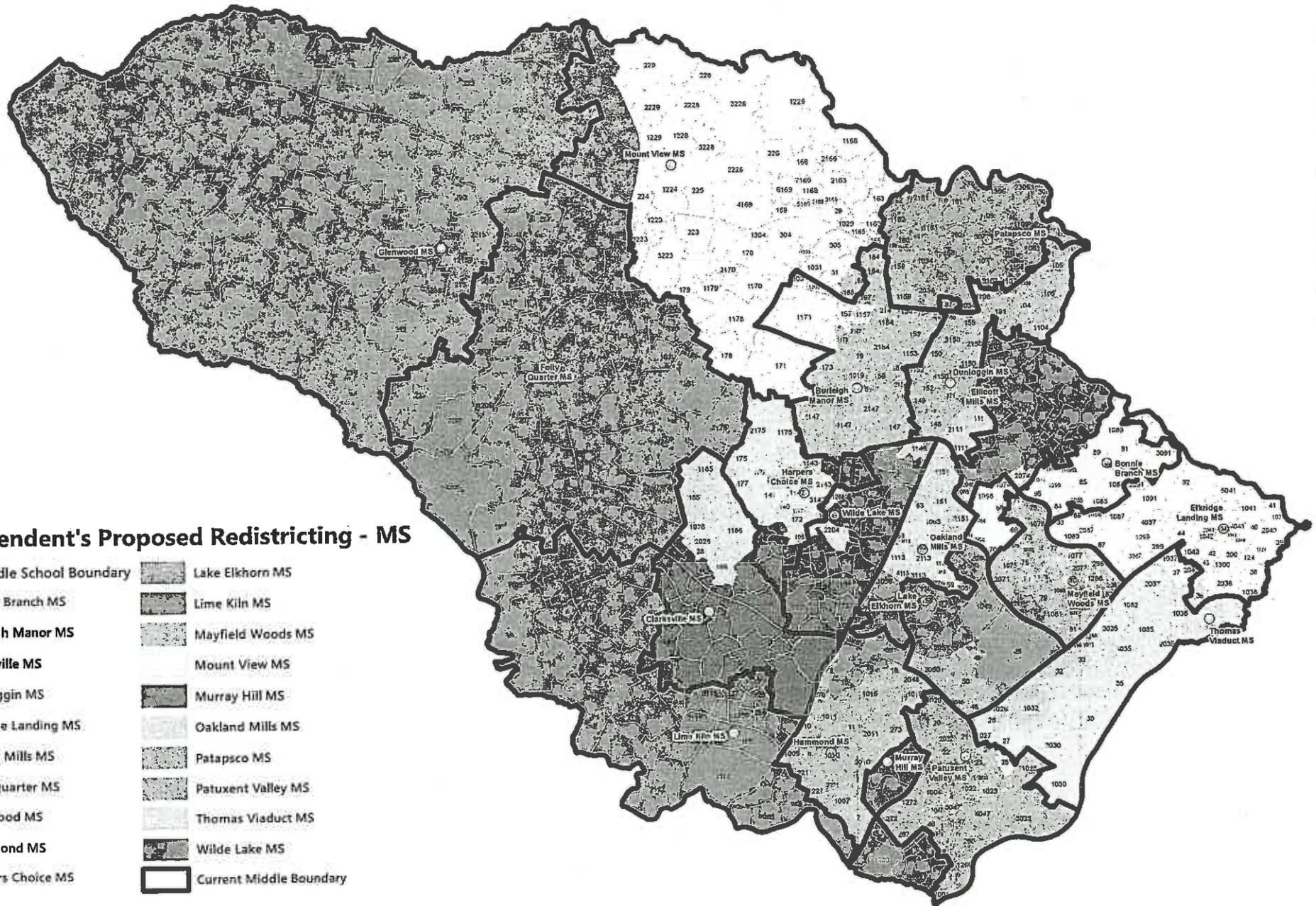
## Proposed Elementary Boundary

- |  |                     |  |                                |
|--|---------------------|--|--------------------------------|
|  | Forest Ridge ES     |  | Pointers Run ES                |
|  | Atholton ES         |  | Rockburn ES                    |
|  | Bellows Spring ES   |  | Running Brook ES               |
|  | Bollman Bridge ES   |  | St Johns Lane ES               |
|  | Bryant Woods ES     |  | Stevens Forest ES              |
|  | Bushy Park ES       |  | Swansfield ES                  |
|  | Centennial Lane ES  |  | Talbott Springs ES             |
|  | Clarksville ES      |  | Thunder Hill ES                |
|  | Clemens Crossing ES |  | Triadelphia Ridge ES           |
|  | Cradlerock ES       |  | Veterans ES                    |
|  | Dayton Oaks ES      |  | Waterloo ES                    |
|  | Deep Run ES         |  | Waverly ES                     |
|  | Ducketts Lane ES    |  | West Friendship ES             |
|  | Elkridge ES         |  | Worthington ES                 |
|  |                     |  | Phelps Luck ES                 |
|  |                     |  | Area Proposed to be Reassigned |



# Superintendent's Proposed Redistricting - MS

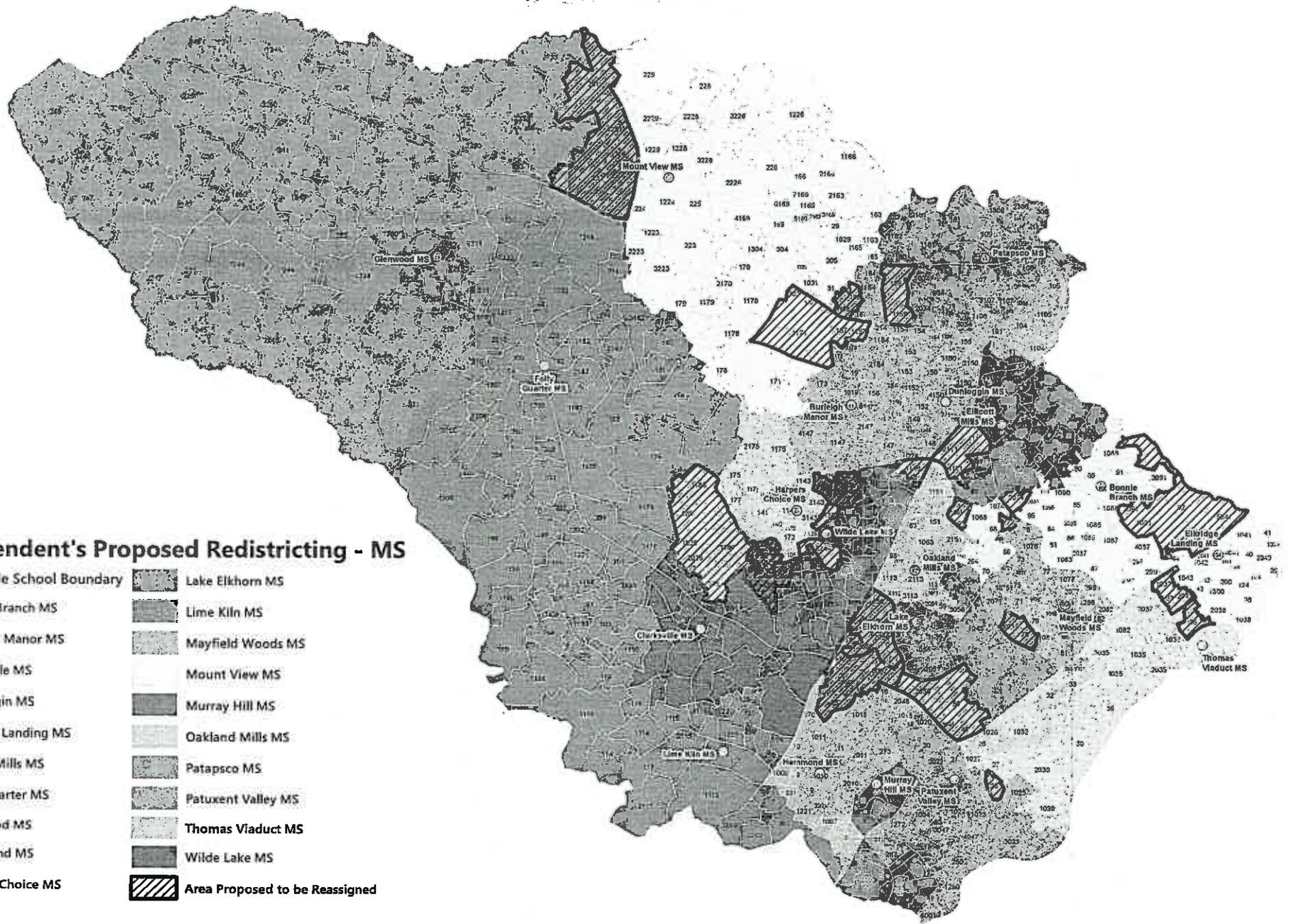
- |   |   |
|---|---|
| Proposed Middle School Boundary   |  Lake Elkhorn MS           |
|  Bonnie Branch MS      |  Lime Kiln MS              |
|  Burleigh Manor MS   |  Mayfield Woods MS       |
|  Clarksville MS      |  Mount View MS           |
|  Dunloggin MS        |  Murray Hill MS          |
|  Elkridge Landing MS |  Oakland Mills MS        |
|  Ellicott Mills MS   |  Patapsco MS             |
|  Folly Quarter MS    |  Patuxent Valley MS      |
|  Glenwood MS         |  Thomas Viaduct MS       |
|  Hammond MS          |  Wilde Lake MS           |
|  Harpers Choice MS   |  Current Middle Boundary |



# Superintendent's Proposed Redistricting - MS

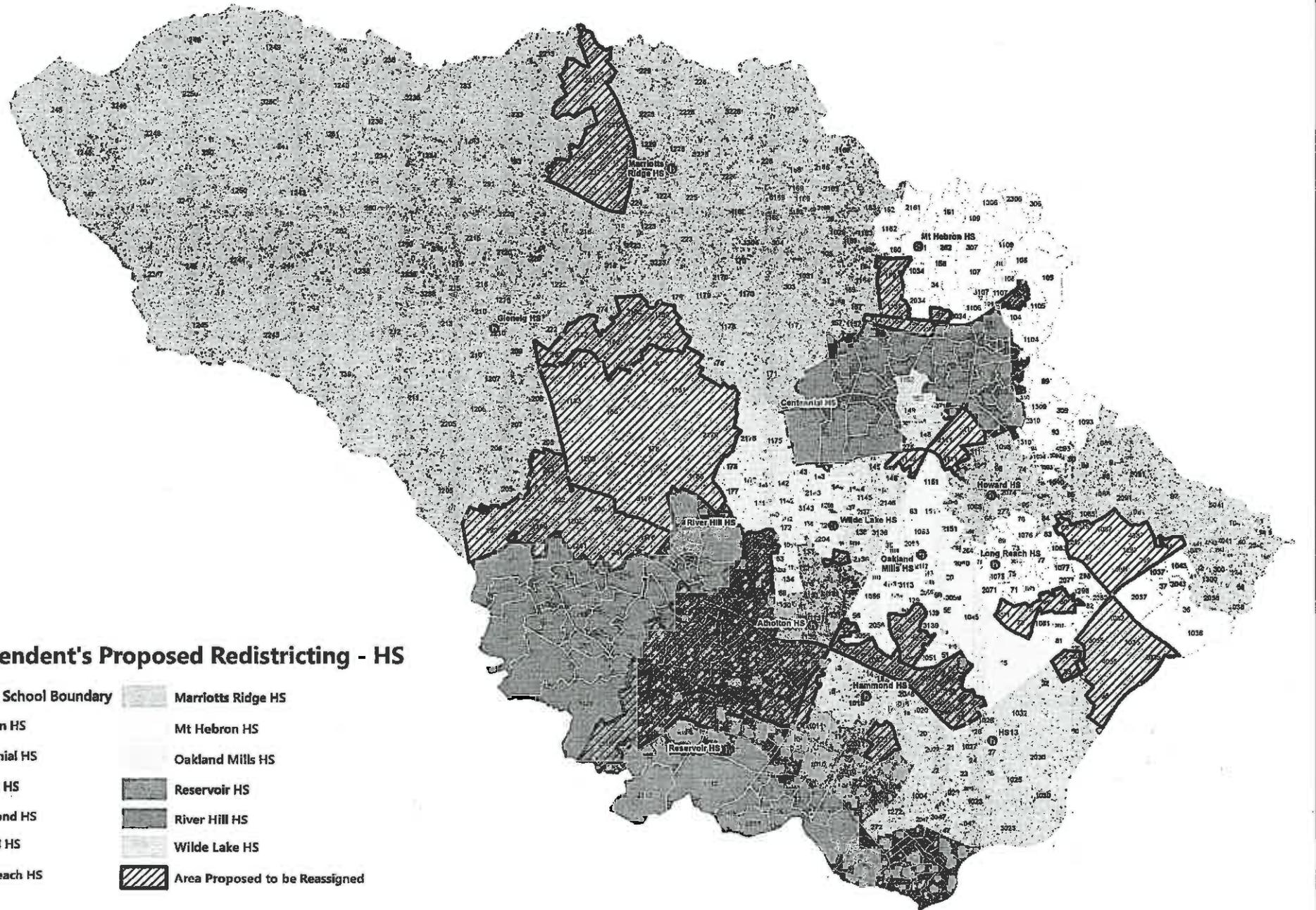
- Proposed Middle School Boundary
- Bonnie Branch MS
  - Burleigh Manor MS
  - Clarksville MS
  - Dunloggin MS
  - Elkridge Landing MS
  - Ellicott Mills MS
  - Folly Quarter MS
  - Glenwood MS
  - Hammond MS
  - Harpers Choice MS
  - Lake Elkhorn MS
  - Lime Kiln MS
  - Mayfield Woods MS
  - Mount View MS
  - Murray Hill MS
  - Oakland Mills MS
  - Patapsco MS
  - Patuxent Valley MS
  - Thomas Viaduct MS
  - Wilde Lake MS

 Area Proposed to be Reassigned





## Superintendent's Proposed Redistricting - HS



September 1, 2019

To: Howard County BOE, Dr. Michael J. Martirano, Superintendent, Howard County Public School System

Cc: County Council Members, HoCo County Executive, District 9 State Senator, District 9A State Delegates

**Subject: Oppose Dr Martirano's Redistricting Proposal**

Dear Board of Education (BOE) Members and Dr. Martirano,

As a longtime resident of Howard County Maryland (residing in Polygon 176) and a parent of two young children, I am writing to express my significant concerns about the impact of Dr Martirano's Attendance Area Adjustment Plan, dated August 20, 2019.

**Consider these facts:**

1. Neighborhoods in a 1-mile radius from River Hill High school will have students going to 3 different high schools!
2. Atholton sending 610 students out and receiving 471 students for a total turnover of 1081 students!!
3. Atholton and Oakland Mills High school boundaries gets split in multiple sections and separating communities.
1. River Hill is an under-capacity school (projected to be at 94% Projected Utilization for 2019/2020 school. This is at the lower end of the Target Utilization range); the proposal wants to move 478 students out and bring in 741 students in that is a net gain of 229 students. The total turnover of students will be 1229 students!! That is a rate of over 80% of the school total capacity. This is the highest turnover school in the county as proposed!!! This is extremely disruptive and unnecessary for a school.
4. The polygons that they propose to move from River Hill to Wilde Lake live about 1.5-3.5miles away from River Hill.
5. The proposal will TRIPLE the distance to about 6-9 miles away and increase commute times in the morning and for after school activities.
6. The overall FARM rate of River Hill will increase from less than 5% to 5%.
7. The Proposal mentions to move 513 students from Atholton to River Hill.
8. The polygons that they propose to move live farther away to River Hill than communities closer to River Hill High School. Also, the FARM rates of Atholton are less than 10%.

**Here's how my children and family will be impacted:**

1. My children from Polygon 176 would have to drive through River Hill High School bus and car traffic, en route to Wilde Lake High School.
2. Their commute would triple (as compared to River Hill High School).
3. Such long commute times would affect their sleep (at least 2 hours of sleep deprivation daily), family time reduced, and could lead to higher probability of accidents given that high school students would be new drivers on the road driving longer distances with increased traffic jams.

4. Longer commute also reduces parents' engagement with the schools since they're further away and this would impact the childrens' education.
5. Longer transportation times would lead to higher expenses for the Board of Education with zero return on investment and higher polluting emissions. These are our tax dollars that are being wasted instead of being spent on appropriate educational resources.
6. Given the impact on my schedule, I may not be able to pick up my kids in time after their extracurricular activities so those activities may have to be cut down, affecting their education and all-round development.
7. Our family chose to go to these local schools (like River Hill High) when we moved to our current home. We treat our local schools as part of our community, which is being torn apart. Our friendships affected (since local children will now be sent to 3 different high schools); so, the choice taken away from us and all of us are feeling these impacts. This redistricting plan is disruptive of our community.

**Also:**

1. Any re-districting proposal should instead be focused on those five High Schools that are operating above Target Utilization levels (110%).
2. Transferring students from a school with a low FARM ratio to a school with a high FARM ratio, only results in better "averages" for the schools. IT DOES NOT PROVIDE ANY INCREMENTAL EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES OR OPPORTUNITES DIRECTLY TO THE STUDENTS.
3. Shuffling students across schools with longer commute times do not improve scores - they increase stress and hardship for families.

**Let us discuss some alternative scenarios including:**

1. River Hill High School could receive students from nearby schools such as Wilde Lake, Atholton or Howard, without sending 478 students out to other schools. There should be a way to improve capacity utilization and reduce the 7,396 students being disrupted.
2. Postpone redistricting until 2022 (for HS13) by using additional temporary classrooms. Allow time to plan the move in a non-disruptive manner. We owe stability to our kids.
  - a. Consider this article: "Switching Schools: Reconsidering the Relationship Between School Mobility and High School Dropout" published by JHU Dept of Sociology (Joseph Gasper, Stefanie DeLuca, Angela Estacion) – per the abstract– "Youth who switch schools are more likely to demonstrate a wide array of negative behavioral and educational outcomes, including dropping out of high school."
3. Do not redistrict at all. Consider creating a system where underperforming students would be given a choice where to attend school (within a certain radius); motivate such students to attend local schools with the capacity and capability. Add resources (teachers/specialists) and therefore improve scores by directly targeting underperforming students, adding resources and boost test scores. Title 1 schools already offer such resources for economically challenged students. We should focus on underperforming students for true education equity.

Thank you,

Raj Tuliani (Very concerned parent)

Reply all | Delete Junk | ...



(No subject)



Senthil Kumar Ranganathan &lt;senjoy@gmail.com&gt;

Sun 9/1, 12:48 PM

mavis\_ellis@hcpss.org; kirsten\_coombs@hcpss.org; vicky\_cutroneo@hcpss.org; chri+2 more

Reply all |

School Redistricting



Action Items



Dear Dr., Martirano,

I hope you are doing well. Thanks to you and your team to constantly working to improve our county education and environment to benefit our families and kids.

I am writing to you to share my opinion about a recent proposal on school redistricting. It's really unfortunate to be at the current situation and surprises me that we have to deal this issue in one of the best county in our nation. I also feel somewhat shame, that we (county officials and parents) end up using kids' education as a bargaining tool.

My concerns is, We are encouraging and promoting something like second child syndrome, Your proposal is similar to the syndrome effect, few kids are more prone to receiving privileges, while the others in the family (county) is more likely to receive indulgences, they no longer has their status as the baby and is left with no clear role in the family, or a feeling of being "left out". A typical parent wouldn't show unbalanced love between their children. Your proposal is like stealing peacefulness, opportunity to learn and bright future from one set of county schools kids and giving it to other set of county school kids. The biggest concern is that, this a social test which as no facts or background data to prove that the receiving kids will show progress. Let's not show progress by asking kids to scarify their quality time, friends and hard work. You can't take credit on someone donation's money, you have to spend money from your bank account to take some credit.

If balancing FARM is primary issue we are trying to resolve, where the end goal is to deliver quality of life and education equally to all kids in our county, then kids should not be part of the solution equation.

Why do I oppose your proposal?

1. Your proposal virtually distributes across county schools, here you are impacting kids across all families, you are taking away time from parents and make the kids travel longer which will also increase transportation cost. Instead build low income houses near schools that can share and provide an opportunity to move family not just moving kids. You are separating kids from their own family.
2. More people on road is more cost for county to maintain and operate, eventually you are going to disturb all businesses by increasing travel time by adding more traffic on road. This will have a direct impact on county economy which may force businesses to move out of county.
3. More traffic could cause more pollution and waste of energy which will end up in more health issues.
4. Families in your county will be frustrated and exhausted every day. Your proposal will have a direct impact on Kids on a daily basis, kids health -less sleep, more stress. Imagine every day at this early age they have to wake up at least 45 minutes before than their typical time, which will have a

🔄 Reply all | ▾ 🗑 Delete Junk | ▾ ...



school programs.

5. Evidence is mounting from sociology research that this kind of situation where parents and kids gets frustrated and exhausted every day will impact happiness and increase divorce rates and impact a good family across the county.

6. We know we are going to have new school district HS #13 in 2023, let's wait and consider solution that can serve the county people for long period. Too much of changes in short period is not healthy.

Your proposal is for Kids and they should not be part of your solution. They should be just at the receiving end getting benefits. I would strive to use this opportunity by creating awareness on qualities. Support Kids & parents to promote Volunteering service which could save cost and reduce expenses, where the cost saving could be spend on the areas to reduce FARM price. Promoting "donation" habits to increase quality of education across county.

Don't push us to move out of county or state please, this is our home and it is disturbing and takes away confidence that Howard county officials are not for public and they are more in this role for personnel gain.

Our nation has prides to have "leave no man behind" mantra and we take very step to follow that, our county is part if this great nation, how come we had a heart to even proposal a solution to impact majority of the kids to fix one issue. I am pretty sure our county officials are smarter than this proposal.

Thanks

Senthil K Ranganathan.

Parent of Two kids.

Living in Howard county from 2005.

Dear Members of BOE, Dr. Martirano, Mr. Ball, and Council Members,

We are Hong Zhou and Xiaomin Lin, from Polygon 3176. We have lived in Howard County since 1998. We have 2 sons, one is a graduate from Cedar Lane School, and the other an incoming junior at River Hill HS. The redistricting plan won't affect our boys, but we are still writing to you to voice our opposition to this plan.

The first stated goal of the redistricting is to balance capacity utilization, alleviate crowding. Our home school River Hill HS is under capacity, and the distance from our neighborhood to River Hill HS is 4.2 miles. Common sense would dictate no base to move our kids to any other school but to keep them in River Hill HS. But to everyone's surprise, instead of simply proposing moving in more students to RHHS, the redistricting plan calls to move out 478 RHHS students (202 RHHS students to Glenelg HS, 276 RHHS students to Wilde Lake HS), move in 741 students from other schools (96 students from Reservoir HS, 132 students from Wilde Lake, 513 students from Atholton HS) for the mere net increase of 263 students. Instead of affecting 263 students/families, this nonsensical plan is to disrupt the life of 1219 students/families, involving total 58 polygons. Anyone can see this plan is not solving the problem of crowding or under capacity, but creating more problems such as wasting precious resources on busing, dramatically increasing commute time and stress on students and families of our neighborhood.

The basic concept for school districting is the close proximity from home to school, and it should be the guiding principle for redistricting as well. Keeping our kids from Polygon 3176 in River Hill HS is the only sensible solution.

The second stated goal of the redistricting is to advance equity by addressing FARM distribution. FARM rate indicates students' household financial situation. By averaging out FARM rates in each school, it only achieves the appearance of equal household financial situation in each school; it does not help out students who use FARM program in any meaningful way. Programs like FARM actually help out these students. BOE should try to find real solutions like FARM program to help these students. For example, creating free after-school programs for students who uses FARM program, setting up funds for these students to use for certain academic enrichment programs, etc. If addressing FARM distribution can contribute equity, then it only means that HCPSS allocates fewer resources to schools with higher FARM rate. If that is the case, then we as residents of Howard County would demand an investigation of HCPSS budgeting process and financial data, and demand equity in resources allocation among all HCPSS schools.

Furthermore, using FARM rate as one criterion for achieving equity among schools is misconstrued at best. We value education because we think good education is the only way for personal advancement in society. That means one can overcome his/her circumstance by doing well in school. That means family resources do not determine one's education and success. Using FARM rate in each school as an indicator for equity basically sends out the opposite message.

We are for equity, but do not think addressing FARM distribution through redistricting is the way to go. Using FARM data to allocate school resources might make more sense. Therefore, we oppose your plan to move our kids based on this.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> stated goal of this redistricting is to prepare for new high school#13. We ask whether you foresee another round of redistricting when high school#13 opens. If your answer is yes, then you should postpone this round of massive redistricting. Instead, you should take the time to come up with a less disruptive redistricting plan to be implemented at the opening of high school#13.

We moved from Baltimore County to Howard County in 1998. One reason was that so our elder son could attend Cedar Lane School, the old Cedar Lane School in Harper's Choice Village. Another reason is to reduce Hong's commute time. These are the 2 most common reasons for families to decide where to live, good schools for kids and less commute time for parents. We hope you agree families have this right to make this decision and their decisions should be honored and respected. Your redistricting plan seems to take away this right from families. We hope you understand you do not have the authority to do so. As school system officials, your goal should be to improve every school, to provide same opportunity to each kid, to create an environment that kids from all backgrounds can thrive. We don't see meaningful gains in your very disruptive redistricting plan. We oppose it strongly.

We encourage you to read all the communications from residents regarding this redistricting plan, to organize more community gatherings/hearings in every part of Howard County to hear out families. We hope you will come to a sensible conclusion which is to abandon this redistricting plan.

Best Regards,

Hong Zhou and Xiaomin Lin

# My Two Cents

A DEEPER DIVE BY MAHNOOR R.

Hello, my name is Mahnoor Rao. I'm 13 yrs old, and am going to 8th grade this year. I hope that you decide to not redistrict, because I am being torn away from all of my friends, and my new highschool is ½ an hour away by car, and by bus even longer. I would have to wake up at 5 am or even earlier. Additionally, I wanted to follow in the footsteps of my family and go to riverhill and join debate, astronomy club, delta scholars, and Future Doctors of America. I live in polygon 176, which is only 3 minutes away from Riverhill, and Wilde Lake is almost 25 minutes away from my house, many of the clubs I want to join are not available there. I would not have as many academic opportunities if I were to go to River Hill High School.

I understand your concerns regarding socioeconomic and racial disparities in HCPSS. You state that, "four Howard County Public School System high schools with percentages of students who participate in the Free and Reduced Meal (FARM) program that are at or above 40 percent, nearly twice the countywide average of 22 percent" and that 5 other schools are at 1/2 or less than the county average, from what I understand, you should provide subsidised and cheaper property throughout the whole of Howard County, rather than shuffling up its students like a deck of cards.

In the RESOLUTION NO. 112 - 2019 you express concerns in graduation disparities based on race and participation in the FARMs program in relation to access and equity in the school system. However, in Howard County Public School System's report, Equity: Responding to 5 Performance and Opportunity Gaps in HCPSS (June 2019), it states, "differences in graduation outcomes might be predicted earlier in a student's career. Specifically, student attendance, academic performance, access to a well-rounded curriculum, and discipline/behavior data have all been found to correlate with graduation rates" so it is more likely that many of these schools with higher populations of hispanic students, FARMs

students, and african american students or students of african descent ,'black', (all of these groups which you stated were lagging in graduation rates) require more and better resources, and funding.

Before moving students around to different schools, you should work on bringing all howard county schools up to the same level and standard. You will find that without improvement even with the redistricting, the students in these schools will continue to have lower graduation rates, standardized testing scores, and grades, regardless of race or financial position. As stated in, "Education Gap between Rich and Poor is Growing Wider." *New York Times (Online)*, 22 Sep 2015, policy prescriptions go beyond improving teachers and curriculums, or investing in bringing struggling students up to speed. They include helping parents, too: teaching them best practices in parenting, raising their pay and helping them with the overlapping demands of work and family", you need to focus on helping the community that all these children live in.

Many of these neighborhoods can be crime ridden and have substance abuse which can be a devastating consequence or influence on students preventing them from academic success. Student success runs much deeper and farther than just the walls of a school, but into students' communities, and families. "Exposure to extremes of violence and neglect, inconsistent and unreliable care, and unloving adults can be so stressful for children that their developmental potential is compromised or distorted. The results of such exposure can range from stunted emotional and intellectual development to death" (Addressing the African American Achievement Gap: Three Leading Educators Issue a Call to Action) many underperforming students face stress outside of school, it is important that as a community we work to provide resources and help to every individual. Academic problems can often be a reflection of stressors from outside environments, like home life, community, relationships, and media, as stated in foster edu's *3 Ways Stress Negatively Affects Student Performance* " when a student is stressed and preoccupied, it takes over their ability to focus during lectures or studying. Stress may even cause students to drop out of school or drop classes. The 2010 American College Health Association National College Health Assessment reported more than

25 percent of students say that stress lowered their grades or ability to finish a course.”

Moreover, after the completion of the new highschool being built, the county will once again have to redistrict, and have to go through this process once more. Redistricting places another stress upon students. The fear of being separated from friends, community, and the chance to no longer follow in their sibling's footsteps and legacy.

Now be it resolved that Howard County works on providing schools with more resources (especially those in which graduation rates, test scores, and grades are lacking), and to bringing all Howard County Schools onto the same standard. Additionally howard county should focus on communities and provide parents and students with resources. Crime rate and substance abuse should be focused on and eliminated, as they can have negative impacts on youth, not only academically but emotionally.

August 29, 2019

To: Howard County BOE, Dr. Michael J. Martirano, Superintendent, Howard County Public School System

Cc: County Council Members, HoCo County Executive, District 9 State Senator, District 9A State Delegates

**Subject: Oppose Dr Martirano's Redistricting Proposal**

Dear Board of Education (BOE) Members and Dr. Martirano,

As a longtime resident of Howard County Maryland (residing in Polygon 176) and a parent of two young children, I am writing to express my significant concerns about the proposed impact of Dr Martirano's Attendance Area Adjustment Plan, dated August 20, 2019.

Unfortunately, the Presentation of Attendance Area Adjustment Plan, dated August 20, 2019 is **not** consistent with the guidelines of Policy 6010 and does **not** achieve the three primary goals as stated in Dr Martirano's letter. Please consider the following facts and impacts.

**School Attendance Area impacts:**

School Attendance area and geographic proximity is a consideration of Policy 6010. The proposed redistricting of Polygon 176 would more than double the distance students travel to get to school.

- Using Google Maps, Walnut Creek / Polygon 176 is 2.1 Miles from River Hill High School (RHHS). Walnut Creek / Polygon 176 is 5.8 miles from Wilde Lake High School (WLHS). Using WAZE, the commute time from Polygon 176 to Wilde Lake High School would be 3x as long as the commute to River Hill High School.
- In addition, many of the students from Polygon 176 would have to drive through River Hill High School bus and car traffic, en route to Wilde Lake High School under the August 20, 2019 proposal.
- Such long commute times would affect student's sleep, family time, extracurricular activities, and could lead to higher probability of accidents given these high school students would be new drivers on the road driving longer distances with increased traffic jams.
- Longer commute also reduces parents' engagement with the schools since they're further away and this would impact the child's education.
- Longer transportation times would lead to higher expenses for the Board of Education with zero return on investment and higher polluting emissions.
- Our family chose to go to these local schools when we moved to our current home. We treat our local schools as part of our community, which is being torn apart; choice taken away from us and all of us are feeling these impacts. This redistricting plan is disruptive of our community.

**Capacity Utilization and Disruption impacts:**

Policy 6010 identifies three key aspects to school capacity which are (1) Projections [item P], (2) Target Utilization [item S] which is defined as enrollment between 90% and 110% utilization of program capacity and (3) Utilization [item T].

The 2019 Feasibility Study (<https://www.hcpss.org/f/schoolplanning/2019/2019-feasibility-study.pdf>) notes the following findings:

1. River Hill High School is projected to be at 94% Projected Utilization for 2019/2020 school. This is at the lower end of the Target Utilization range.
2. Page 33 of the Feasibility Study indicates that River Hill is within Target Utilization through the 10-year projection period of the study.
3. Under Dr Martirano's proposal, River Hill would send 478 students to other schools and receive 741 students from other schools. This is extremely disruptive and unnecessary for a school that is currently operating within each of guidelines [P], [S] and [T] of Policy 6010.
4. The board should reject a plan which moves approximately 7,400 total students including 478 students from River Hill High School which is currently operating within Board Policy guidelines about Projections, Target Utilization and Utilization.
5. Any re-districting proposal should instead be focused on those five High Schools that are operating above Target Utilization levels (110%).
6. I believe the Board of Education should support a plan that includes less disruption at schools that are operating within the guidelines of [P], [S] and [T]. For instance, since River Hill High School is operating well within the target utilization range, perhaps it should receive students from nearby schools such as Wilde Lake, Atholton or Howard, without sending 478 students out to other schools. Certainly, the Board of Education can request a plan that achieves better capacity utilization with less than 7,396 total students being relocated.
7. Do not redistrict now if you are planning to redistrict anyway in 2 years and then too, do it in a thoughtful, non-disruptive manner. We owe stability to our children. Consider this article: "Switching Schools: Reconsidering the Relationship Between School Mobility and High School Dropout" published by the authors at JHU Dept of Sociology (Joseph Gasper, Stefanie DeLuca, Angela Estacion) - the abstract states – "Youth who switch schools are more likely to demonstrate a wide array of negative behavioral and educational outcomes, including dropping out of high school."
8. Superintendent Martirano indicated he sees no other way to solve the capacity issue other than this redistricting plan in 20-21. However, temporary classrooms (portables) have been around for a long time. What prevents us from adding more of these portables for highly utilized schools to minimize these impacts until HS13 is ready?

#### Equity:

The very first sentence of the Policy Statement of HCPSS Policy 6010 is *The Board of Education of Howard County, with the advice of the Superintendent, establishes school attendance areas to provide quality, equitable educational opportunities to all students and to balance the capacity utilization of all schools.*

Furthermore, "equitable" is defined in the policy statement as: *Just or fair access, opportunities, and supports needed to help students, families, and staff reach their full potential by removing barriers to success that individuals face. It does not mean equal or everyone having the same things.*

The Presentation of the Attendance Area Adjustment Plan dated August 20, 2019 is not consistent with the Board of Education Policy Statement 6010, nor does it follow the BoE's definition of achieving "equitable" educational opportunities. I hereby request the Board of Education identify ways to provide additional educational resources to the students in need. Transferring students from a school with a low FARM ratio to a school with a high FARM ratio, only results in better "averages" for the schools. IT DOES NOT PROVIDE ANY INCREMENTAL EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES OR OPPORTUNITES DIRECTLY TO THE STUDENTS.

In conclusion, I recommend the Board of Education reject the Presentation of Attendance Area Adjustment Plan dated August 20, 2019 due to the numerous and serious inconsistencies regarding both Policy 6010 and the stated goals of the proposal.

- The proposal would triple the commuting time of students in Polygon 176; I understand there are many other children who are affected similarly or worse county-wide.
- Many affected schools including River Hill High School are operating within the Board of Education projection, utilization and capacity guidelines and would experience a total student transfer of over 1,000 children inclusive of students being sent and received. Boundary adjustments should be focused on schools operating over capacity or projected to be over capacity based on the 2019 Feasibility study.
- The proposal does not provide additional resources directly and LOCALLY to students in need, it simply provides more consistent FARM ratios across schools. Children do not need consistent FARM ratios; they need additional education resources provided directly to their OWN schools.
- Shuffling students across schools with longer commute times do not improve scores - they increase stress and hardship for families.

Thank you,

Raj Tuliani

Concerned parent

Reply all | Delete | Junk | ...



## HCPSS Redistricting



Mj Monck <mjmonck@gmail.com>

Wed 8/28, 5:02 PM

Hester, Katie Fry Senator; Lam, Clarence Senator; Guzzone, Guy Senator; +7 more

Reply all |

### School Redistricting

I was pleased to see Dr. Martirano's plan for redistricting titled "Equity in Action," as I am one of the planners for the upcoming Indivisible HoCo Education Conversation "Equity in Redistricting" planned for September 4th.

I am hoping, as Democrats, you would agree that equity is an essential element to our ideals and that you will lend your support to this plan. I'm sure there will be adjustments made as the Board of Education hears from the community, but the overarching theme of equity must prevail. I would be sorry to hear of anyone working against this plan or using any other influence to undermine it.

Marijane Monck

 Reply all | 
 Delete
  Junk | 




## Concerns regarding the proposed redistricting plan for Howard County



Mahesh Zarkar <mzarkar@gmail.com>

Tue 8/27, 7:04 PM

Mahesh Zarkar <mzarkar@gmail.com> 

 Reply all | 

School Redistricting

You replied on 9/13/2019 12:56 PM.

Hi,

I hope you are doing well. This email is with regard to the proposal for the school redistricting in Howard County. I reviewed the materials in detail and I would like to express my concerns that are very grave in nature in my opinion.

At a broad level, this proposal

1. Leads to longer commutes to kids and again this impacts children's education as longer commute leads to less sleep and more stress
2. Reduces parent's engagements in the school programs and that is detrimental to the school, community and more importantly children's education. This is going against HCPSS BOE's commitment to promoting family's and community's involvement in school programs
3. Only distributes the FARM rate and not actually reduces it and that means the socioeconomic inequalities will be hidden or appear softened rather than truly addressing to reduce it
4. Significantly different from the original studies and comes after the open comment period

Now to the details.

Longer commutes lead to more stress, less sleep and unhealthy lifestyle

It is a widely acknowledged and accepted fact that longer commute leads to less sleep, less exercise and more stress – eventually an unhealthy lifestyle. A simple google search on this topic will establish this fact (sample

one: <https://www.citylab.com/life/2019/05/high-school-commute-drive-sleep-exercisechildren-teens/588850/>)

In our situation, the proposed school is about 8 miles (assuming the shortest route, and the actual route may be different considering pick-ups from other neighborhoods) from our house and we are looking at least 45 mins commute (one-way) considering the pickup stops. Only god knows how long this would take during inclement weather conditions and high traffic days. I am sure many people have this concern. Have you considered this at all in your plan? Because I do not see any reference to how this plan proposes to handle this. I sincerely request you to abandon this plan and not to pass the unnecessary burden and stress to the children and let them focus on their studies.

Reduction of Family Engagement in school activities:

One of the main reasons for the overall success of the Howard County education is the

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Reference: <https://www.hcpss.org/parents/involvement/>

Adopted by the National PTA Board of Directors

"Countless studies have shown that children who receive consistent, loving attention from their parents perform better in school and lead happier lives than those who don't. Parents are children's most important teachers, role models, and guides. They have a responsibility to stay involved with their children in positive ways, through school, family activities and daily conversation."

Joan Dykstra, National PTA President, 1996-97 and Howard County Parent

As per the proposal that is put forward, the commute time has almost tripled to the high school (River Hill to Wild Lake). Like many parents, we uprooted our family to this beautiful Howard County across the country, changed jobs, and bought a house in a community that is closer to school so that we can be involved in school activities. This proposal is literally robbing that opportunity to get involved in their school programs, volunteering activities, mentoring, PTA, etc from many parents across the Howard county. In our family, as both of us need to work to meet our ends meet, and given the school is much farther from our home and job, it severely restricts us from participating in the school programs if this proposal goes through. Many of many friends share the same sentiment across the county.

Advance Equity:

I believe all of us wants to achieve equity and personally, I love a vision built on equity – but that means the kids and the communities must get the right level of support and resources needed.

Reference: <https://www.hcpss.org/policies/6000/6010-school-attendance-areas/>

(Equitable – Just or fair access, opportunities, and supports needed to help students, families, and staff reach their full potential by removing barriers to success that individuals face. It does not mean equal or everyone having the same things.)

This proposal only addresses the distribution of the FARM rate rather than truly addressing the real problem. How do we guarantee that just moving kids to different school will address their needs? As per your comments, all schools are great schools in Howard County and I certainly believe that. If all schools are great schools, then how do we really achieve equity just by changing schools? Managing the FARM rate will actually hide the problem or address the symptoms at best rather than addressing the problem and in no way, guarantees achieving the equity and in the process, this proposal penalizes the children by giving them bigger commute time.

I urge to consider scrapping this plan and develop a new plan that provides the right level of support and resources to the neediest kids rather than doing this experiment at the children's expense.

Timeline, Strategy and Process:

All of us understand that we need to follow the due process and the established strategy. However, there is a huge glare when we look at the final proposal against the proposed strategy in the feasibility study published in June'19.

Reference: <https://www.hcpss.org/f/schoolplanning/2019/2019-feasibility-study.pdf>

(Page 32(High School Strategy): Continue to construct the New HS #13 in Jessup and Hammond HS addition for opening in SY 2023-24. The boundary process to open HS #13 would occur in Summer 2022, for implementation in SY 2023-24.

Boundary scenarios for SY 2020-21, included in this document, considered utilizing

9/23/2019

Concerns regarding the proposed redistricting plan for Howard County

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longer term, after the opening of HS #13. Boundaries will be reevaluated for the opening of HS #13, but attempts to alleviate crowding and small feeds to Long Reach HS from Elkridge Landing MS are considered for the interim.)

We are more than happy to welcome additional students to utilize the available capacity in schools such as River Hill, however, I do not see any rationale to move the kids out of River Hill. Besides, this strategy nowhere specifies or even hints this large-scale change in the upcoming proposal. This proposal has come and left with little time for the public to review and react.

In light of the above concerns, I sincerely request your support in scrapping this plan completely and build a new plan that addresses equity concerns but also considering the inputs from the community and without penalizing the children and communities.

Sincerely,

Mahesh Zarkar

A concerned father and a community member

 Reply all |  Delete Junk |  ...



## Oppose Redistricting Plan – Polygon - 176



Shyam Balani <shyam.balani@bizitconsultants.com>

Tue 9/3, 11:02 AM

mavis\_ellis@hcpss.org; kirsten\_coombs@hcpss.org; vicky\_cutroneo@hcpss.org; chri ✓

 Reply all | 

School Redistricting

You replied on 9/13/2019 11:31 AM.

Dear HCPSS Board of Education Member,

The Superintendent's redistricting proposal:

1. Puts in place a complex, over-engineered, expensive transportation program.
2. Moves thousands of children irresponsibly. The negative impact on individual family members is many more thousands when considering parents, siblings, etc.
3. Does not fundamentally fix overcrowding with 21 schools still above the 110% capacity.
4. Adds substantially to children's commute times. In many cases, commutes times will triple moving from three miles or less (5-15 minutes) to seven miles or more (30 - 45 minutes).
5. Does not address or incorporate student population management regarding the new HS 13 slated for 2023. Is the county planning to do this all over again in a few years?
6. Introduces a redistribution of FARMS rates. Why? This does nor fix overcrowding and is an exercise in spreading out an issue not fixing it. FARM populations can be addressed or redistributed without moving non-FARM children.
7. Leads to a permanent divide between a substantial part of the Community and the Superintendent, the HCPSS, and BoE. This proposal was done "to the community", not "with or for the community".

I implore you to review the facts, implications to all Howard County Public School students and their communities, and reject Dr. Martirano's ill-conceived proposal.

**Shyam K Balani**  
**President**  
 BizIT Consultants Inc.  
 Cell: 1-253-678-4503  
 Work: 1-443-873-1493  
 Email: [shyam.balani@bizitconsultants.com](mailto:shyam.balani@bizitconsultants.com)

9/23/2019

Oppose Redistricting Plan - Polygon - 176

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-----  
Columbia, MD 21046  
USA

Reply all | Delete Junk | ...



## Oppose Redistricting Plan – Polygon -176



Sunil Komathi &lt;sunilkom@gmail.com&gt;

Tue 9/3, 11:02 AM

mavis\_ellis@hcpss.org; kirsten\_coombs@hcpss.org; vicky\_cutroneo@hcpss.org; chri+1 more

Reply all |

School Redistricting

You replied on 9/13/2019 11:32 AM.

Dear HCPSS Board of Education Member,  
The Superintendent's redistricting proposal:

1. Puts in place a complex, over-engineered, expensive transportation program.
2. Moves thousands of children irresponsibly. The negative impact on individual family members is many more thousands when considering parents, siblings, etc.
3. Does not fundamentally fix overcrowding with 21 schools still above the 110% capacity.
4. Adds substantially to children's commute times. In many cases, commutes times will triple moving from three miles or less (5-15 minutes) to seven miles or more (30 - 45 minutes).
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I implore you to review the facts, implications to all Howard County Public School students and their communities, and reject Dr. Martirano's ill-conceived proposal.

Thanks

9/23/2019

Smitha Kuppalli, Opposing redistricting plan: polygon 176

☰ Reply all | ▾ Delete Junk | ▾ ...

✕

## Smitha Kuppalli, Opposing redistricting plan: polygon 176



Smitha Kuppalli <ssgowda@gmail.com>

Tue 9/3, 11:00 AM

kirsten\_coombs@hcpss.org; vicky\_cutroneo@hcpss.org; christina\_delmont-small@h

☰ Reply all | ▾

School Redistricting

You replied on 9/13/2019 11:32 AM.

Dear HCPSS Board of Education Member,

Regarding the proposed redistricting plan, I am opposing this measure due to the below:

1. Puts in place a complex, over-engineered, expensive transportation program.
2. Moves thousands of children irresponsibly. The negative impact on individual family members is many more thousands when considering parents, siblings, etc.
3. Does not fundamentally fix overcrowding with 21 schools still above the 110% capacity.
4. Adds substantially to children's commute times. In many cases, commutes times will triple moving from three miles or less (5-15 minutes) to seven miles or more (30 - 45 minutes).
5. Does not address or incorporate student population management regarding the new HS 13 slated for 2023. Is the county planning to do this all over again in a few years?
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I implore you to review the facts, implications to all Howard County Public School students and their communities, and reject Dr. Martirano's ill-conceived proposal.

Smitha Kuppalli

Polygon 176

Reply all | Delete | Junk | ...



## Oppose Redistricting Plan – Polygon - 176



Sriman Sista &lt;sistasriman@gmail.com&gt;

Tue 9/3, 10:54 AM

mavis\_ellis@hcpss.org; kirsten\_coombs@hcpss.org; vicky\_cutroneo@hcpss.org; chri+2 more

Reply all |

## School Redistricting

You replied on 9/13/2019 11:34 AM.

Dear HCPSS Board of Education Member,  
The Superintendent's redistricting proposal:

1. Puts in place a complex, over-engineered, expensive busing / transportation program.
2. Moves thousands of children irresponsibly. The negative impact on individual family members is many more thousands when considering parents, siblings, etc.
3. Does not fundamentally fix overcrowding with 21 schools still above the 110% capacity.
4. Adds substantially to children's commute times. In many cases, commutes times will triple moving from three miles or less (5-15 minutes) to seven miles or more (20-30 minutes).
5. Does not address or incorporate student population management regarding the new Jessup HS school slated for 2023. Is the county planning to do this all over again in a few years?
6. Introduces a redistribution of FARMS rates. Why? This does not fix overcrowding and is an exercise in spreading out an issue not fixing it. FARM populations can be addressed or redistributed without moving non-FARM children.
7. Leads to a permanent divide between a substantial part of the Community and the Superintendent, the HCPSS, and BoE. This proposal was done "to the community", **not** "with or for the community".

I implore you to review the facts, implications to all Howard County Public School students and their communities, and reject Dr. Martirano's ill-conceived proposal.

Reply all | Delete | Junk | ...



# Oppose Redistricting Plan – Polygon 1183



Siddeswar Ambarkar <siddeswar.ambarkar@gmail.com>

Reply all |

Tue 9/3, 10:53 AM

mavis\_ellis@hcpss.org; kirsten\_coombs@hcpss.org; vicky\_cutroneo@hcpss.org; chri+2 more

School Redistricting

You replied on 9/13/2019 11:34 AM.

Dear HCPSS Board of Education Member,

The Superintendent's redistricting proposal:

1. Puts in place a complex, over-engineered, expensive transportation program.
2. Moves thousands of children irresponsibly. The negative impact on individual family members is many more thousands when considering parents, siblings, etc.
3. Does not fundamentally fix overcrowding with 21 schools still above the 110% capacity.
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5. Does not address or incorporate student population management regarding the new HS 13 slated for 2023. Is the county planning to do this all over again in a few years?
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7. Leads to a permanent divide between a substantial part of the Community and the Superintendent, the HCPSS, and BoE. This proposal was done "to the community", **not** "with or for the community".

I implore you to review the facts, implications to all Howard County Public School students and their communities, and reject Dr. Martirano's ill-conceived proposal.

Thanks,

Siddeswar

#####  
 Siddeswar Ambarkar  
 Cell : 301 263 4845  
 Home : 240 477 7200  
 #####

📧 Reply all | ▾ 🗑 Delete Junk | ▾ ...



## Oppose Redistricting Plan – Polygon - 176



Krishna Veeramachaneni <kveeramachaneni@gmail.com>

📧 Reply all | ▾

Tue 9/3, 10:51 AM

mavis\_ellis@hcpss.org; kirsten\_coombs@hcpss.org; vicky\_cutroneo@hcpss.org; chri+2 more ▾

School Redistricting

You replied on 9/13/2019 11:39 AM.

Dear HCPSS Board of Education Member,  
The Superintendent's redistricting proposal:

1. Puts in place a complex, over-engineered, expensive busing / transportation program.
2. Moves thousands of children irresponsibly. The negative impact on individual family members is many more thousands when considering parents, siblings, etc.
3. Does not fundamentally fix overcrowding with 21 schools still above the 110% capacity.
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I implore you to review the facts, implications to all Howard County Public School students and their communities, and reject Dr. Martirano's ill-conceived proposal.

 Reply all |  Delete Junk | 



## Fwd: Oppose Redistricting Plan – 183



Baskar Swaminathan <[itsbaskar@gmail.com](mailto:itsbaskar@gmail.com)>

Tue 9/3, 10:50 AM

CalvinBall@howardcountymd.gov; ojones@howardcountymd.gov; djung@howardc ✎

 Reply all | 

School Redistricting

You replied on 9/13/2019 11:39 AM.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Baskar Swaminathan <[itsbaskar@gmail.com](mailto:itsbaskar@gmail.com)>

Date: Tue, Sep 3, 2019 at 10:22 AM

Subject: Oppose Redistricting Plan – 183

To: <[mavis\\_ellis@hcpss.org](mailto:mavis_ellis@hcpss.org)>, <[kirsten\\_coombs@hcpss.org](mailto:kirsten_coombs@hcpss.org)>, <[vicky\\_cutroneo@hcpss.org](mailto:vicky_cutroneo@hcpss.org)>, <[christina\\_delmont-small@hcpss.org](mailto:christina_delmont-small@hcpss.org)>, <[jennifer\\_mallo@hcpss.org](mailto:jennifer_mallo@hcpss.org)>, <[sabina\\_taj@hcpss.org](mailto:sabina_taj@hcpss.org)>, <[chao\\_wu@hcpss.org](mailto:chao_wu@hcpss.org)>

Dear HCPSS Board of Education Member,  
The Superintendent's redistricting proposal:

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7. Leads to a permanent divide between a substantial part of the Community and the Superintendent, the HCPSS, and BoE. This proposal was done "to the community", not "with or for the community".

I implore you to review the facts, implications to all Howard County Public School students and their communities, and reject Dr. Martirano's ill-conceived proposal.

Thanks

📧 Reply all | ▾ 🗑 Delete Junk | ▾ ...



## Oppose Redistricting Plan – Polygon - 176



Subba R <subba.sista@gmail.com>

Tue 9/3, 10:49 AM

mavis\_ellis@hcpss.org; kirsten\_coombs@hcpss.org; vicky\_cutroneo@hcpss.org; chri+2 more ▾

📧 Reply all | ▾

School Redistricting

You replied on 9/13/2019 11:39 AM.

Dear HCPSS Board of Education Member,  
The Superintendent's redistricting proposal:

1. Puts in place a complex, over-engineered, expensive busing / transportation program.
2. Moves thousands of children irresponsibly. The negative impact on individual family members is many more thousands when considering parents, siblings, etc.
3. Does not fundamentally fix overcrowding with 21 schools still above the 110% capacity.
4. Adds substantially to children's commute times. In many cases, commutes times will triple moving from three miles or less (5-15 minutes) to seven miles or more (20-30 minutes).
5. Does not address or incorporate student population management regarding the new Jessup HS school slated for 2023. Is the county planning to do this all over again in a few years?
6. Introduces a redistribution of FARMS rates. Why? This does not fix overcrowding and is an exercise in spreading out an issue not fixing it. FARM populations can be addressed or redistributed without moving non-FARM children.
7. Leads to a permanent divide between a substantial part of the Community and the Superintendent, the HCPSS, and BoE. This proposal was done "to the community", not "with or for the community".

I implore you to review the facts, implications to all Howard County Public School students and their communities, and reject Dr. Martirano's ill-conceived proposal.

9/23/2019

Oppose Redistricting Plan – Polygon 176

Reply all | Delete | Junk | ...



## Oppose Redistricting Plan – Polygon 176



Shekhar <sahushekhar@yahoo.com>

Tue 9/3, 10:48 AM

mavis\_ellis@hcpss.org; kirsten\_coombs@hcpss.org; vicky\_cutroneo@hcpss.org; chri+2 more

Reply all |

School Redistricting

You replied on 9/13/2019 11:40 AM.

**Dear HCPSS Board of Education Member,**

The Superintendent's redistricting proposal:

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I implore you to review the facts, implications to all Howard County Public School students and their communities, and reject Dr. Martirano's ill-conceived proposal.

Best Regards,

Shekhar Gupta  
214-476-2856 (Cell)

August 26, 2019

Vishnu and Neelima Busireddy  
5002 Crape Myrtle Ct  
Ellicott City, MD 21042  
[vishnubusireddy@gmail.com](mailto:vishnubusireddy@gmail.com)  
[nbusireddy@gmail.com](mailto:nbusireddy@gmail.com)  
410-294-1120

To:  
[redistricting@hcpss.org](mailto:redistricting@hcpss.org)

**Howard County Board of Education Members**

Ms. Mavis Ellis [mavis\\_ellis@hcpss.org](mailto:mavis_ellis@hcpss.org)  
Ms. Kirsten Coombs [kirsten\\_coombs@hcpss.org](mailto:kirsten_coombs@hcpss.org)  
Ms. Vicky Cutroneo [vicky\\_cutroneo@hcpss.org](mailto:vicky_cutroneo@hcpss.org)  
Ms. Christina Delmont-Small [christina\\_delmont-small@hcpss.org](mailto:christina_delmont-small@hcpss.org)  
Ms. Jennifer Mallo [jennifer\\_mallo@hcpss.org](mailto:jennifer_mallo@hcpss.org)  
Ms. Sabina Taj [sabina\\_taj@hcpss.org](mailto:sabina_taj@hcpss.org)  
Mr. Chao Wu [chao\\_wu@hcpss.org](mailto:chao_wu@hcpss.org)  
[student\\_member@hcpss.org](mailto:student_member@hcpss.org), and

**Superintendent, Howard County Public School System**  
Dr. Michael J. Martirano,

Dear Board of Education (BOE) Members and Dr. Martirano,

We are parents of a 7<sup>th</sup> grader going into Folly Quarter Middle School. As longtime residents of Howard County, our intent is to stay here and raise our son in this wonderful and diverse community of ours. Based on the current school boundaries, he will be attending Folly Quarter Middle and River Hill High. We are writing to you about the proposed impact of Dr Martirano's Presentation of the Attendance Area Adjustment Plan, dated August 20, 2019. As noted in the Executive Summary on Page 4, this proposal was developed with three primary goals as excerpted below:

*The driving priorities for this process:*

- 1. Balance capacity utilization among schools throughout HCPSS, cost effectively.*
- 2. Advance equity by addressing the distribution of students participating in the Free and Reduced-price Meals program (FARMS) across schools to the extent feasible.*
- 3. Plan ahead for the High School #13 redistricting by minimizing double moves as much as possible.*

We have also studied and respect the published policies which the BOE utilizes in making decisions with regard to school attendance areas, specifically Policy 6010 (<https://www.hcpss.org/policies/6000/6010-school-attendance-areas/>):

Unfortunately, recommendations from the Presentation of Attendance Area Adjustment Plan, dated August 20, 2019 is **not** consistent with the guidelines of Policy 6010 and does **not** achieve the three primary goals as stated in Dr Martirano's letter. Please consider the following facts.

#### **School Attendance Area:**

School Attendance area and geographic proximity is a consideration of Policy 6010. The proposed redistricting of Polygon 176 (we reside in this area) would more than double the distance students travel to get to school and does not make any logical sense.

My son and other kids in the neighborhood think of River Hill High as their future high school from the time we moved to our current neighborhood more than 5 years ago from a different part of Ellicott City to be closer to our friends, and their families and to have the kids continue their bonding and brotherhood. The proposed redistricting plan is going to crush their childhood dreams by forcing upon them this unreasonable, thoughtless, and divisive redistricting plan which will not only separate kids from their friends, take the communities apart, and introduce them to the political games that the so called leaders are shoving upon the kids, families, and the community.

My son and his friends dreamt of representing the River Hill and River Hill Hawks in activities, ranging from sports to educational competitions and other school programs, not only because of its proximity to our house and go past the school whenever we have to step out of our neighborhood, but also because of seeing older kids in the neighborhood and cousins representing the school, participating and contributing in school fundraiser events, which led to these innocent young brains to create affinity and bonding to the River Hill High and make them believe and think that they will one day be attending the same school which they drive past few times every day. Our neighborhood kids also got acquainted to the school, as they go there to play tennis and other sports during summer holidays and on weekends and evenings. It is not fair to shatter the dreams of my son and other kids in this great neighborhood and across the county, by saying that "NO YOU CAN'T ATTEND YOUR LOCAL SCHOOL".

- Using Google Maps, Walnut Creek / Polygon 176 is 2.1 Miles from River Hill High School (RHHS). Walnut Creek / Polygon 176 is 5.8 miles from Wilde Lake High School (WLHS).
- Using WAZE, the commute time from Polygon 176 to Wilde Lake High School would be 3x as long as the commute to River Hill High School.
- In addition, many of the students from Polygon 176 would have to drive past the River Hill High School and through River Hill High School bus and car traffic, en-route to Wilde Lake High School under the August 20, 2019 proposal.

### **Capacity Utilization:**

Policy 6010 identifies three key aspects to school capacity which are (1) Projections [item P], (2) Target Utilization [item S] which is defined as enrollment between 90% and 110% utilization of program capacity and (3) Utilization [item T].

The 2019 Feasibility Study (<https://www.hcpss.org/f/schoolplanning/2019/2019-feasibility-study.pdf>) notes the following findings:

1. River Hill High School is projected to be at 94% Projected Utilization for 2019/2020 school. This is at the lower end of the Target Utilization range.
2. **Page 33 of the Feasibility Study indicates that River Hill is within Target Utilization through the 10-year projection period of the study.**
3. **Under Dr Martirano's proposal, River Hill would send 478 students to other schools and receive 741 students from other schools. This is extremely disruptive and unnecessary for a school that is currently operating within each of guidelines [P], [S] and [T] of Policy 6010.**
4. **We believe the board should reject a plan which moves approximately 7,400 total students including 478 students from River Hill High School which is currently operating within Board Policy guidelines with regard to Projections, Target Utilization and Utilization.**
5. **We believe any re-districting proposal should instead be focused on those five High Schools that are operating above Target Utilization levels (110%).**
6. **We believe the Board of Education should support a plan that includes less disruption at schools that are operating within the guidelines of [P], [S] and [T]. For instance, since River Hill High School is operating well within the target utilization range, perhaps it should receive students from nearby schools such as Wilde Lake, Atholton or Howard, without sending 478 students out to other schools.**

**We believe it is a wonderful idea to bring students from underperforming schools to better performing adjacent schools, but moving students the other way with the specific purpose of adjusting the statistics is misguided and sets a terrible precedence. We respectfully request that the BOE request a plan that achieves better capacity utilization with less than 7,396 total students being relocated.**

### **Equity:**

The very first sentence of the Policy Statement of HCPSS Policy 6010 is *The Board of Education of Howard County, with the advice of the Superintendent, establishes school attendance areas to provide quality, equitable educational opportunities to all students and to balance the capacity utilization of all schools.*

Furthermore, "equitable" is defined in the policy statement as: *Just or fair access, opportunities, and supports needed to help students, families, and staff reach their full potential by removing barriers to success that individuals face. It does not mean equal or everyone having the same things.*

The Presentation of the Attendance Area Adjustment Plan dated August 20, 2019 **is not** consistent with the Board of Education Policy Statement 6010, nor does it follow the BOE's definition of achieving "equitable" educational opportunities. It is quite evident that the recommendations for redistricting is a case of social engineering and purely based on race and ethnicity. There is no logic or case studies offered to show this type of social engineering will be successful. **We hereby request the BOE identify ways to provide additional educational resources, funding for schools in need, raise awareness, create plans to include parent volunteers and others to contribute their time and effort to enrich kids with activities ranging from education to recreational, author new programs to have peer to peer learning and knowledge sharing sessions which will benefit all the kids across the county, rather than adjusting the statistics to make you feel good.** Transferring students from a school with a low FARM ratio to a school with a high FARM ratio, only results in adjusting the statistics for the schools, but **DOES NOT PROVIDE ANY INCREMENTAL EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES OR OPPORTUNITES DIRECTLY TO THE STUDENTS.** Socioeconomic issues such as income equality, better employment opportunities should be addressed by our elected officials at the County and State levels.

**In conclusion, we recommend the Board of Education reject the Attendance Area Adjustment Plan Recommendations dated August 20, 2019** due to the numerous and serious inconsistencies with regard to both Policy 6010 and the stated goals of the proposal.

**We recommend the BOE to be considerate and sympathetic** to the magnanimous negative effect this plan will shower on the county residents and their families, to the quality of life that Howard county has been providing so far, please **STOP and NOT ALLOW this dreaded Number Game** to be Played with the county residents!

- The proposal would triple the commuting time of students in Polygon 176.
- Many affected schools including River Hill High School are operating within the Board of Education projection, utilization and capacity guidelines and would experience a total student transfer of over 1,000 children inclusive of students being sent and received. Boundary adjustments should be focused on schools operating over capacity or projected to be over capacity based on the 2019 Feasibility study.
- The proposal does not provide additional resources directly to students or schools in need, it simply provides more consistent FARM ratios across schools. Children do not need consistent FARM ratios, they need additional education resources and funding provided directly to their schools.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Vishnu and Neelima Busireddy

---

**Jeannette Balciunas**

12449 Watkins Bridge Lane  
Clarksville, Maryland 21029  
Polygon #3176

2 September 2019

To: Howard County, Board of Education

RE: Oppose Martirano's Proposal

I am opposed to the recent redistricting plan proposed by Dr. Martirano. This proposal is outrageous - uprooting over 7,000 students and disrupting their routines at school, at home, and within their community.

My family moved to Polygon 3176 in HoCo for several reasons, family, work and the close proximity of River Hill HS to our home.

Under the new plan my children will be relocated from a high school that is 2 miles away to one that is 7.3 miles away. That bus ride changes from a 10-15 minute bus commute to over 30-45 minute bus commute and includes passing our current districted high school. These times are approximate and potentially could be even longer with rush hour traffic. My children will also be at risk for increased sleep deprivation given the earlier times they will need to get ready for school in the morning in addition to completing their daily chores/activities at home in the evening. This puts them at risk for decreased academic performance citing the longer bus routes and times to and from school. Their extracurricular activities will be impacted as well as their time spent socializing with family and friends in our community. In turn, these changes will lead to increased stress on my children and my family and decrease their academic performance even further.

Please vote against Dr. Martirano's redistricting proposal.

Sincerely,

Jeannette Balciunas

Polygon 3176

September 3, 2019

Re: Opposition to the Superintendent's Redistricting Plan

Dear Board of Education Members,

My name is Priti Bajaj and I am a current resident of Howard County (Polygon 176). I am writing to express my concerns regarding the redistricting plan put forth by Dr. Martirano.

As a mother of three, the redistricting of polygon 176 would more than double the distance my children would have to travel to get to school. It would also triple their commute time on the bus. This extended commute would not only be costly to the Howard County school system, it would also be detrimental to the growth of our children. As a pediatrician, I know the effects that a longer commute ride can have on children. There are various studies that have been published that describe the association between longer commute rides and less sleep, less exercise, less involvement in extracurricular activities, worse academic achievement, and increased stress in children. Children with longer commute rides are also less likely to be socially integrated in their school community. Thus, with the drastic increase in commute times, this redistricting plan would be causing devastating harm to all of the children of Howard County.

As a pediatrician, I also know the negative effects that switching schools can have on children. Studies have demonstrated that youth who switch schools are more likely to demonstrate negative behavior and educational outcomes. With preparations in place for High School #13 to be built in 2023, it is important that this massive relocation of 7,396 students be postponed in order to limit the number of switches these Howard County students will have to make in the future.

In regards to River Hill specifically, currently, River Hill High School is projected to be at 94% projected utilization for the 2019/2020 school year. This is at the lower end of the target utilization range.

Therefore, it seems contradictory that under Dr. Martirano's plan, River Hill would send 478 of its own students to other schools and receive 741 students from other schools. This is extremely disruptive and unnecessary for a school that is currently at the lower end of the target utilization range. Instead, it would make more sense for a school like River Hill to receive students from nearby schools, such as Wilde Lake or Atholton, without sending 478 students out to other schools.

Finally, transferring students from schools with lower FARM ratios to schools with higher FARM ratios only results in more equal FARM percentages on paper for the schools. It does not actually help students in need. It is important that the Howard County Board of Education focus on providing direct resources and educational opportunities for schools/children in need, instead of shuffling students around for better averages on paper. This will not solve the problem of helping children in need.

After carefully analyzing Dr. Martirano's plan, I reject his proposed redistricting plan and encourage the Howard County Board of Education to carefully reevaluate this plan for the benefit of all of the children of Howard County. The fate and well being of our children are in your hands. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Priti Kaur Bajaj, MD  
Polygon 176

September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2019

Dear Board of Education Members,

I am writing as a concerned Howard County resident (Polygon 182) and parent about the proposed impact of Dr. Martirano's Presentation of the Attendance Area Adjustment Plan, dated August 20, 2019. This latest redistricting plan put forth by Dr. Martirano's Proposal Fails to Meet Policy 6010 Standards and does not achieve the three primary goals as stated in his letter. The arbitrary movement of 7,300 students is just absurd. I could go into all the specifics of this, but many of my fellow citizens who oppose this latest proposal have done so in a very articulate manner.

Howard county has needed a plan for the last 30 years... When I graduated from Oakland Mills in 1989, Howard High School was overcrowded and here we are 30 years later and it's operating at 135% of capacity. The County Government, Zoning, and Board of Education have all failed the great citizens of this county. We are in the top 5 of the richest counties in the country and we can't figure out how to get our children educated with the least amount of stress to them. The county government and zoning have failed us in letting communities get built, that do nothing but fill the tax coffers. There has not been much care put into infrastructure, schools and affordable housing over the last 30 years. This has led us to where we are today. We can't fix the past or the present but must come up with a plan to help everyone to fix the future.

So, with that said, I am here to offer a solution. One that would let all high school students finish out their career at their given school if they can get transportation to school. No student should have to switch High Schools once they have started. All kids should be grandfathered in, not just rising Seniors. High School is hard enough let alone moving students to different schools to satisfy some political number crunching. Let's remember that these high school students are in their most impressionable and least stable phase of their precious lives. We are here to nurture them to become the best they possibly can. Not treat them as a Polygon that can moved at whim.

My proposed solution to the overcrowding is not building a new high school and moving thousands of kids around to fit into the new 13 districts, but rather take that money and build additions to the 4 most overcrowded high schools in the county. This plan involves moving only 6 polygons and 274 students or 1.5% of high school kids. Howard, Hebron, Centennial and Hammond would be the schools getting the additions. Howard's addition would increase the size by 600 students and the other 3 schools would have their sizes increased by 350 students. The cost of the new school at \$130.7 million for 287,000 square feet at 1650 students breaks down to the just below the national average (180 sqft) of 174 square feet per student at a cost of \$455 per square foot (well above the national average of \$235 per square foot). So, if we were to use that cost for the additions being built, Howard's addition of 600 students would cost \$47.5 million and the other 3 school additions with 350 students would be \$27.7 million each. This equals the cost of the new school with the additional capacity of 1650 students in the county. Coupled with the 6 polygon moves, puts all schools at 97% or less of capacity. Polygon 133 would move 77 students from Atholton to Wilde Lake. Polygons 46,2046 and 3046 would move 92 students from Reservoir to Hammond. Polygons 33 and 81 would move 105 students from Long Reach to Oakland Milles. See the chart below.

School	Capacity	Students	% Full	ADD	New Capacity	% Full	Cost	New Enr	% Full	RD1	RD2	RD3
Atholton	1460	1499	103%		1460	103%		1422	97%	-77		
Centennial	1360	1564	115%	350	1710	91%	\$ 27,724,242	1564	91%			
Glennelg	1420	1198	84%		1420	84%		1198	84%			
Hammond	1220	1342	110%	350	1570	85%	\$ 27,724,242	1434	91%		92	
Howard	1420	1888	133%	600	2020	93%	\$ 47,527,273	1888	93%			
Long Reach	1488	1525	102%		1488	102%		1420	95%			-105
Marriotts Ridge	1615	1421	88%		1615	88%		1421	88%			
Mt Hebron	1400	1636	117%	350	1750	93%	\$ 27,724,242	1636	93%			
OM	1400	1181	84%		1400	84%		1286	92%			105
Reservoir	1551	1571	101%		1551	101%		1479	95%		-92	
River Hill	1488	1377	93%		1488	93%		1377	93%			
Wilde Lake	1424	1268	89%		1424	89%		1345	94%	77		
	17246	17470	101%		18896	92%	\$ 130,700,000	17470	92%			

Now if I can do this in a few hours of my time, I think that the Department of Education should be able to come up with this sort of plan given all the information they gathered in the last Feasibility Study that cost the tax payers \$35 million and we still do not have a solution. It's time for our elected and appointed officials to think outside the box and come up with a plan that works. If schools need more resources, we need to get them the resource, not move polygons around to make the numbers look better. I don't have the time for middle and elementary schools, so I apologize, but I am sure that we could come up with similar plans for those as well.

There's only one way to lose weight and get in shape, and that's to put the work in. There's no magic pill, just plain old fashion hard work. That's what this county needs to get back to. If the elected and appointed officials can't get this done, they need to be removed from office and put in some minds that can get it done. There should be no excuse for Howard County not to be able to tackle this issue and put it to rest.

So please vote NO to this proposal and spend the time and resources to come up with a viable solution.

Thanks.

Kevin Hartz

📧 Reply all | ▾ 🗑 Delete Junk | ▾ ...



## Oppose Redistricting Plan – Polygon 176



Jyoti Gupta <jyotigupta2409@yahoo.com>

Tue 9/3, 2:26 PM

mavis\_ellis@hcpss.org; kirsten\_coombs@hcpss.org; vicky\_cutroneo@hcpss.org; chri+2 more ▾

📧 Reply all | ▾

School Redistricting

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4. Adds substantially to children's commute times. In many cases, commutes times will triple moving from three miles or less (5-15 minutes) to seven miles or more (30 - 45 minutes).
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I implore you to review the facts, implications to all Howard County Public School students and their communities and reject Dr. Martirano's ill-conceived proposal.

Thanks

Jyoti Gupta

214-843-5576(Cell)

9/23/2019

Oppose Redistricting Plan – Polygon - 176

☞ Reply all | ▾ 🗑 Delete Junk | ▾ ⋮

✕

## Oppose Redistricting Plan – Polygon - 176



Shyam Balani <shyam.balani@bizitconsultants.com>

Tue 9/3, 12:28 PM

mavis\_ellis@hcpss.org; kirsten\_coombs@hcpss.org; vicky\_cutroneo@hcpss.org; + 17 more ▾

☞ Reply all | ▾

School Redistricting

You replied on 9/12/2019 2:26 PM.

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**Shyam K Balani**

12198 Hayland Farm Way

Ellicott City

MD 21042

9/23/2019

Oppose Redistricting Plan – Polygon 1183

Reply all | Delete | Junk | ...

X

## Oppose Redistricting Plan – Polygon 1183



Jennifer Funk <paulandjen2@gmail.com>

Tue 9/3, 11:22 AM

mavis\_ellis@hcpss.org; kirsten\_coombs@hcpss.org; vicky\_cutroneo@hcpss.org; chri+2 more

Reply all |

School Redistricting

You forwarded this message on 9/12/2019 2:38 PM

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I implore you to review the facts, implications to all Howard County Public School students and their communities, and reject Dr. Martirano's ill-conceived proposal.

Thank you,  
Paul and Jen Funk

Dear Board of Education Member:

9/3/2019

I am writing to you as a concerned parent and citizen of Howard County. I am truly concerned about the school redistricting plan that Superintendent Martirano and the County Council have recently proposed. I have over 10 years of teaching as a college professor and have been on both sides of the classroom my entire life. As an educator myself, I believe that equity in education is extremely important. Also, as a minority and a female who has worked primarily in a white, male-dominated engineering profession, I truly appreciate a racially diverse environment.

Growing up in the US as a child of immigrant parents I had my first job as a newspaper delivery girl when I was in elementary school and rode my bike around the neighborhood to deliver papers. I did not have the privilege of attending before and after care programs. I did not participate in summer camps or many after school activities. This is not because they were not available, rather it was because there wasn't public transportation; there wasn't an after school late drop off bus; my parents were unable to get off work early to pick me up; and honestly, the programs were too expensive for my family to afford. My elementary, middle and high schools were only a couple of miles from my home, however, still too far and not safe for me to walk or bike by myself. My parents worked long hours and most days I only saw my dad at 6am for breakfast and then again in the evening after 7pm. If I did have the opportunity to participate in any activities, I cannot imagine a scenario where he would have been able to attend games, performances, or concerts. While these are just some of the issues I had to deal with growing up, I was lucky enough to attend schools that were closest to my home.

While neither my husband nor I grew up in Howard County, we moved here since we believe in the power of public education. Both my husband and I went to public schools our entire lives, between us, we have attended some of the best and worst in this country. We had no family when we moved to Maryland and could have chosen to live closer to our work. However, we chose Howard County because it has some of the best public schools in the country while also providing a truly racially diverse community.

The superintendent has shared his plan on how to make the county more socioeconomically equitable. However, I do not believe simply shuffling students creates any real equity for any of the students. As someone who did not grow up in a privileged home, I recognize the true struggles these families face on a daily basis. His plan does nothing to alleviate the struggles and in my opinion, creates more stress for all the families that he wishes to redistribute. Instead, money needs to be allocated for the schools and families in need. Zoning laws need to be changed and developers need to be held accountable to help pay for the schools. Moving thousands of children is irresponsible and creates a negative impact on those kids and their families. Additionally, the extra stress does not even fix the overcrowding issue since 21 schools will still be above the 110% capacity. Also, this does not address the new high school 13 which is slated to open in 2023. Will the redistricting happen once again at that time? Moving children multiple times in just a few years is also extremely irresponsible and disruptive to the kids, their families, the schools (sports programs, choir, orchestra, band, etc.), and the community.

As an extra side note, substantially increasing children's commute times and in many cases tripling the time they will spend on the bus will only take away from their sleep and learning. Not to mention the extra traffic in Howard County and adding to greatly to the expense of transportation. Again, this money can be used to actually help support the students and their families rather than giving it to the bus companies.

I recognize that redistricting is necessary to alleviate the stress of overcrowded schools but doing it at the cost of breaking communities apart is absolutely ridiculous. Presently, I live within 2 miles of River Hill High School in Polygon 3176. We can hear the band and the crowds cheering during football games from my home. My children were in elementary and preschool when they first cheered on the River Hill Hawks at a football game. We go to the games not because we know anyone on the team nor do any of my children play football, but rather because it is part of our community. This is what makes communities! It is supporting each other and our neighbor's children, even if we don't know them. Proximity to the school is the only reason we are able to attend the games and support the team. Additionally, because of proximity, my children have participated in sports booster camps at River Hill High School run by the high school coaches. As a family, we have attended the River Hill High School orchestra concerts, attended plays by their theater students and enjoyed the Hawks talent shows. Currently, the superintendent's plan has my children getting on a bus, driving directly past their neighborhood high school to attend a school much further away from home.

I urge you to review the facts, implications to all Howard County Public School students, their families, and the communities, and reject Dr. Martirano's ill-conceived proposal.

Thank you for your time and attention to this extremely important matter.

Sincerely,  
Sarangi Parikh  
Polygon 3176

9/23/2019

The morning schedule....Against the redistricting.

Reply all | Delete Junk | ...



## The morning schedule....Against the redistricting.



qianlee2011@gmail.com

Tue 9/3, 11:12 AM

mavis\_ellis@hcpss.org; kirsten\_coombs@hcpss.org; vicky\_cutroneo@hcpss.org; chri+1 more

Reply all |

School Redistricting

You forwarded this message on 9/12/2019 2:42 PM

Qian Li (polygon 176)

Today is the first day of new school year and I know if my children are still adjusting from summer vacation I can drive them to their middle school and high school in the morning if they need more time to rest(especially in the morning). But what am I going to do for next year? Our current river hill high school is only 2miles away but the proposed redistricting will be sending one of my child to Wilde Lake high which is 7 miles away from our house and 10 miles away from our middle school(folly quarter). My husband has a lot of business trips as he works hard to provide the family so I need to handle the children all by myself in the morning most of the time.

Please stop the long commute proposal.

Let students have more sleep time and attend our neighborhood high school.

Regards,

Qian Li

Sent from my iPhone

9/23/2019

Hello

 Reply all |  Delete Junk | 



Hello



Anya V <anya.voru@gmail.com>

Tue 9/3, 11:11 AM

mavis\_ellis@hcpss.org; kirsten\_coombs@hcpss.org; vicky\_cutroneo@hcpss.org; chri+2 more 

 Reply all | 

School Redistricting

You replied on 9/12/2019 2:48 PM.

Dear Board of Education Members,

I am writing on behalf of my family resident of Polygon 176 who are concerned about the proposed impact of Dr Martirano's Presentation of the Attendance Area Adjustment Plan, dated August 20, 2019. As noted in the Executive Summary on Page 4, this proposal was developed with three primary goals as excerpted below:

The driving priorities for this process:

1. Balance capacity utilization among schools throughout HCPSS, cost effectively.
2. Advance equity by addressing the distribution of students participating in the Free and Reduced price meals program (FARMS) across schools to the extent feasible.
3. Plan ahead for the High School #13 redistricting by minimizing double moves as much as possible.

We have also studied and respect the published policies which the Board of Education utilizes in making decisions with regard to school attendance areas, specifically Policy 6010

(<https://www.hcpss.org/policies/6000/6010-school-attendance-areas/>):

Unfortunately, the Presentation of Attendance Area Adjustment Plan, dated August 20, 2019 is not consistent with the guidelines of Policy 6010 and does not achieve the three primary goals as stated in Dr Martirano's letter. Please consider the following facts.

School Attendance Area:

School Attendance area and geographic proximity is a consideration of Policy 6010. The proposed redistricting of Polygon 176 would more than double the distance students travel to get to school.

- Using Google Maps, Walnut Creek / Polygon 176 is 2.1 Miles from River Hill High School (RHHS). Walnut Creek / Polygon 176 is 5.8 miles from Wilde Lake High School (WLHS).

- Using WAZE, the commute time from Polygon 176 to Wilde Lake High School would be 3x as long as the commute to River Hill High School.

- In addition, many of the students from Polygon 176 would have to drive through River Hill High School bus and car traffic, en-route to Wilde Lake High School under the August 20, 2019 proposal.

Capacity Utilization:

Policy 6010 identifies three key aspects to school capacity which are (1) Projections [item P], (2) Target Utilization [item S] which is defined as enrollment between 90% and 110% utilization of program capacity and (3) Utilization [item T].

The 2019 Feasibility Study (<https://www.hcpss.org/f/schoolplanning/2019/2019-feasibility-study.pdf>) notes the following findings:

1. River Hill High School is projected to be at 94% Projected Utilization for 2019/2020 school. This is at the lower end of the Target Utilization range.

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3. Under Dr Martirano's proposal, River Hill would send 478 students to other schools and receive 741 students from other schools. This is extremely disruptive and unnecessary for a school that is currently operating within each of guidelines [P], [S] and [T] of Policy 6010.
4. We believe the board should reject a plan which moves approximately 7,400 total students including 478 students from River Hill High School which is currently operating within Board Policy guidelines with regard to Projections, Target Utilization and Utilization.
5. We believe any re-districting proposal should instead be focused on those five High Schools that are operating above Target Utilization levels (110%).
6. We believe the Board of Education should support a plan that includes less disruption at schools that are operating within the guidelines of [P], [S] and [T]. For instance, since River Hill High School is operating well within the target utilization range, perhaps it should receive students from nearby schools such as Wilde Lake, Atholton or Howard, without sending 478 students out to other schools. Certainly, the Board of Education can request a plan that achieves better capacity utilization with less than 7,396 total students being relocated.

#### Equity:

The very first sentence of the Policy Statement of HCPSS Policy 6010 is The Board of Education of Howard County, with the advice of the Superintendent, establishes school attendance areas to provide quality, equitable educational opportunities to all students and to balance the capacity utilization of all schools. Furthermore, "equitable" is defined in the policy statement as: Just or fair access, opportunities, and supports needed to help students, families, and staff reach their full potential by removing barriers to success that individuals face. It does not mean equal or everyone having the same things.

The Presentation of the Attendance Area Adjustment Plan dated August 20, 2019 is not consistent with the Board of Education Policy Statement 6010, nor does it follow the BoE's definition of achieving "equitable" educational opportunities. We hereby request the Board of Education identify ways to provide additional educational resources to the students in need. Transferring students from a school with a low FARM ratio to a school with a high FARM ratio, only results in better "averages" for the schools. IT DOES NOT PROVIDE ANY INCREMENTAL EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES OR OPPORTUNITES DIRECTLY TO THE STUDENTS.

In conclusion, we recommend the Board of Education reject the Presentation of Attendance Area Adjustment Plan dated August 20, 2019 due to the numerous and serious inconsistencies with regard to both Policy 6010 and the stated goals of the proposal.

- The proposal would triple the commuting time of students in Polygon 176
- Many affected schools including River Hill High School are operating within the Board of Education projection, utilization and capacity guidelines and would experience a total student transfer of over 1,000 children inclusive of students being sent and received. Boundary adjustments should be focused on schools operating over capacity or projected to be over capacity based on the 2019 Feasibility study.
- The proposal does not provide additional resources directly to students in need, it simply provides more consistent FARM ratios across schools. Children do not need consistent FARM ratios, they need additional education resources provided directly to their schools.

--

Regards,  
Anya.V

✉ Reply all | ▾ 🗑 Delete Junk | ▾ ⋮



## Oppose Redistricting Plan - Ploygon 176



Anjali Riya <pnjabi16@gmail.com>

Tue 9/3, 11:08 AM

mavis\_ellis@hcpss.org; kirsten\_coombs@hcpss.org; vicky\_cutroneo@hcpss.org; chri+3 more ▾

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School Redistricting

You replied on 9/12/2019 2:54 PM.

**Dear HCPSS Board of Education Members,** I am writing as a concerned Howard County resident (Polygon 176) and parent about the proposed impact of Dr Martirano's Presentation of the Attendance Area Adjustment Plan, dated August 20, 2019.

The Superintendent's redistricting proposal:

1. Puts in place a complex, over-engineered, expensive transportation program.
2. Moves thousands of children irresponsibly. The negative impact on individual family members is many more thousands when considering parents, siblings, etc.
3. Does not fundamentally fix overcrowding with 21 schools still above the 110% capacity.
4. Adds substantially to children's commute times. In many cases, commutes times will triple moving from three miles or less (5-15 minutes) to seven miles or more (30 - 45 minutes).
5. Does not address or incorporate student population management regarding the new HS 13 slated for 2023. Is the county planning to do this all over again in a few years?
6. Introduces a redistribution of FARMS rates. Why? This does nor fix overcrowding and is an exercise in spreading out an issue not fixing it. FARM populations can be addressed or redistributed without moving non-FARM children.
7. Leads to a permanent divide between a substantial part of the Community and the Superintendent, the HCPSS, and BoE. This proposal was done "to the community", not "with or for the community".

**I implore you to review the facts, implications to all Howard County Public School students and their communities, and reject Dr. Martirano's ill-conceived proposal.**

As noted in the Executive Summary on Page 4, this proposal was developed with three primary goals as excerpted below:

The driving priorities for this process:

1. *Balance capacity utilization among schools throughout HCPSS, cost effectively.*
2. *Advance equity by addressing the distribution of students participating in the Free and Reduced price meals program (FARMS) across schools to the extent feasible.*

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X

We have also studied and respect the published policies which the Board of Education utilizes in making decisions with regard to school attendance areas, specifically Policy 6010 (<https://www.hcpss.org/policies/6000/6010-schoolattendance-areas/>):

Unfortunately, the Presentation of Attendance Area Adjustment Plan, dated August 20, 2019 is not consistent with the guidelines of Policy 6010 and does not achieve the three primary goals as stated in Dr Martirano's letter. Please consider the following facts.

**School Attendance Area:** School Attendance area and geographic proximity is a consideration of Policy 6010. The proposed redistricting of Polygon 176 would more than double the distance students travel to get to school.

- Using Google Maps, Walnut Creek / Polygon 176 is 2.1 Miles from River Hill High School (RHHS). Walnut Creek / Polygon 176 is 5.8 miles from Wilde Lake High School (WLHS).

- Using WAZE, the commute time from Polygon 176 to Wilde Lake High School would be 3x as long as the commute to River Hill High School.

- In addition, many of the students from Polygon 176 would have to drive through River Hill High School bus and car traffic, in-route to Wilde Lake High School under the August 20, 2019 proposal. This additional driving distance will be costly for the school system and potentially dangerous for children.

**Capacity Utilization:** Policy 6010 identifies three key aspects to school capacity which are (1) Projections [item P], (2) Target Utilization [item S] which is defined as enrollment between 90% and 110% utilization of program capacity and (3) Utilization [item T].

The 2019 Feasibility Study

(<https://www.hcpss.org/f/schoolplanning/2019/2019-feasibility-study.pdf>) notes the following findings:

1. River Hill High School is projected to be at 94% Projected Utilization for 2019/2020 school. This is at the lower end of the Target Utilization range.
2. Page 33 of the Feasibility Study indicates that River Hill is within Target Utilization through the 10-year projection period of the study.
3. Under Dr Martirano's proposal, River Hill would send 478 students to other schools and receive 741 students from other schools. This is extremely disruptive and unnecessary for a school that is currently operating within each of guidelines [P], [S] and [T] of Policy 6010.
4. The board should reject a plan which moves approximately 7,400 total students including 478 students from River Hill High School which is currently operating within Board Policy guidelines regarding Projections, Target Utilization and Utilization.
5. Any re-districting proposal should instead be focused on those five High Schools that are operating above Target Utilization levels (110%).
6. I believe the Board of Education should support a plan that includes less disruption at schools that are operating within the guidelines of [P], [S] and [T]. For instance, since River Hill High School is operating well within the target utilization range, perhaps it should receive students from nearby schools such as Wilde Lake, Atholton or Howard, without sending 478 students out to other schools. Certainly, the Board of Education can request a plan that achieves better capacity utilization with less than 7,396 total students being relocated.

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✕

establishes school attendance areas to provide quality, equitable educational opportunities to all students and to balance the capacity utilization of all schools.

Furthermore, "equitable" is defined in the policy statement as: Just or fair access, opportunities, and supports needed to help students, families, and staff reach their full potential by removing barriers to success that individuals face. It does not mean equal or everyone having the same things.

The Presentation of the Attendance Area Adjustment Plan dated August 20, 2019 is not consistent with the Board of Education Policy Statement 6010, nor does it follow the BoE's definition of achieving "equitable" educational opportunities. We hereby request the Board of Education identify ways to provide additional educational resources to the students in need. Transferring students from a school with a low FARM ratio to a school with a high FARM ratio, only results in better "averages" for the schools. IT DOES NOT PROVIDE ANY INCREMENTAL EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES OR OPPORTUNITES DIRECTLY TO THE STUDENTS.

In conclusion, I recommend the Board of Education reject the Presentation of Attendance Area Adjustment Plan dated August 20, 2019 due to the numerous and serious inconsistencies regarding both Policy 6010 and the stated goals of the proposal.

- The proposal would triple the commuting time of students in Polygon 176
- Many affected schools including River Hill High School are operating within the Board of Education projection, utilization and capacity guidelines and would experience a total student transfer of over 1,000 children inclusive of students being sent and received. Boundary adjustments should be focused on schools operating over capacity or projected to be over capacity based on the 2019 Feasibility study.
- The aspect of this proposal intended to create "equity" does not provide additional resources directly to students in need. Children do not need consistent FARM ratios; they need additional education resources provided directly to their schools and classrooms.

Thank you,

**Anjali Lal**

**5021 Lindera Ct., Ellicott City, MD, 20142**

**Howard County Resident**

9/23/2019

Oppose Redistricting Plan - Polygon 1176

Reply all | Delete | Junk | ...

X

## Oppose Redistricting Plan - Polygon 1176



Marissa Josiah <marissajosiah@gmail.com>

Tue 9/3, 11:07 AM

mavis\_ellis@hcpss.org; kirsten\_coombs@hcpss.org; vicky\_cutroneo@hcpss.org; chri+1 more

Reply all |

School Redistricting

You replied on 9/12/2019 2:56 PM.

Dear HCPSS Board of Education Member,

The Superintendent's redistricting proposal:

1. Puts in place a complex, over-engineered, expensive transportation program.
2. Moves thousands of children irresponsibly. The negative impact on individual family members is many more thousands when considering parents, siblings, etc.
3. Does not fundamentally fix overcrowding with 21 schools still above the 110% capacity.
4. Adds substantially to children's commute times. In many cases, commutes times will triple moving from three miles or less (5-15 minutes) to seven miles or more (30 - 45 minutes).
5. Does not address or incorporate student population management regarding the new HS 13 slated for 2023. Is the county planning to do this all over again in a few years?
6. Introduces a redistribution of FARMS rates. Why? This does not fix overcrowding and is an exercise in spreading out an issue not fixing it. FARM populations can be addressed or redistributed without moving non-FARM children.
7. Leads to a permanent divide between a substantial part of the Community and the Superintendent, the HCPSS, and BoE. This proposal was done "to the community", not "with or for the community".

I implore you to review the facts, implications to all Howard County Public School students and their communities, and reject Dr. Martirano's ill-conceived proposal.

Julie Kim, M.D.

5910 Perfect Calm Court

Clarksville, MD 21029

September 3, 2019

To Whom It May Concern,

It was a pleasure seeing Superintendent Martirano at the River Hill Protest 8/27/19 and watch him engage with the crowd. Thank you for the opportunity to respond to his Superintendent's Attendance Area Adjustment Plan (see attached).

I am a concerned Clarksville Elementary School parent, resident of polygon 187, and prospective homebuyer. As a transplanted New Yorker, I was delighted to see the value placed on socioeconomic diversity. We can learn so much from people different from ourselves and there is a tendency in the suburbs to live in a homogenous bubble. I am also a child of immigrants who emphasized education and hard work to live the good life. My conception of the good life is to raise my children in a safe, healthy, diverse environment in which to grow and maximize their potential. It is why I moved to Howard County, despite the cost, commute, and my own cosmopolitan tendencies.

I represent a multi-ethnic coalition of public school parents opposing redistricting, as it is currently proposed. As a clinical trial reviewer, I see the following concerns generated by the report:

- a. The report indicates (page 10/34) that Clarksville Elementary (with a maximum capacity of 543) will receive 161 students, more than tripling the proportion of Free and Reduced-Priced Meals Program (FARM) recipients from <5% to 17%. However, it will not send any out. Since this school is using all available classrooms, it appears class size and student:teacher ratios will have to increase to accommodate the proposed change. The physical plant is already strained; the cafeteria doubles as an auditorium and different grades take shifts for lunch because its capacity is limited.

I am concerned that Clarksville Elementary is being overly burdened if the goal is desegregation and equally distributing the FARM burden across the county. Other less ethnically diverse elementary schools (i.e., Lisbon, Bushy Park, Dayton) have larger or similar capacity but are receiving 0-47 students with minimal increase in FARM percentage (either staying at <5% or maxing at 12%). It is unclear why more FARM students aren't being transferred to those particular schools to better equalize the FARM and racial proportion across the county.

**To distribute ethnic diversity and FARM students more evenly across the county and minimize undue stress on Clarksville Elementary, please consider sending more students to other elementary schools and decrease the number of students received in Clarksville Elementary.**

- b. The report indicates (page 21/34) that test scores will decline from base-to-proposed at Clarksville Elementary by approximately 10% in PARCC-Read (from 83%-74%) and PARCC-Math (from 89%-79%). However, we are preparing our children to enter global hyper competition in

the future. It appears as though the unfortunate by-product of the plan is reduced academic excellence and rigor.

I am concerned with mediocrity and teaching to the test. We must maintain a challenging academic environment. With a large influx of low-scoring students (averaging an alarming 50% below the current norm), it seems most of them may be a grade level or more behind their peers. I am concerned that advanced learners will be ignored and left to stagnate, while others are struggling to remediate the bare minimum of skills needed to pass standardized tests.

**To ensure the highest levels of academic engagement, please provide recommended strategies on how slow and advanced learners would be integrated in the same school.** For instance, will there be intensive remediation efforts prior to redistricting to ensure a smooth transition for those behind grade level? As a former SAT and TOEFL instructor, can I and other Howard County residents volunteer for Saturday tutoring of students with failing test scores? Since the upgrade in academic peers constitute a de facto scholarship for those who might not be able to afford to live in Clarksville, can the students selected to go be FARM students within 1 standard deviation of the current PARCC average to permit more effective skills transfer? Will we be able to reinstate our technology teacher full-time (whose position was reduced to half-time) next year? Will classes be tracked?

As a graduate of one of the top magnet schools in the country (e.g., Hunter College High School), I would also like to recommend designating one of the centrally located high schools into a magnet once the new high school (HS 13) is in place. Unlike traditional exam schools, if there were a quota system (i.e., top 10% from every feeder school and historically marginalized population, such as FARMS), advanced learners of all backgrounds across the county would have an opportunity to interact meaningfully. We already see a successful version of this each summer at the Howard County Gifted and Talented Summer Institute, when children all over the county congregate at Wilde Lake Middle School. In the DMV region, Fairfax and Montgomery counties have enjoyed reputable magnet high schools (i.e., Thomas Jefferson High School) that feed into top colleges and universities for some time.<sup>1,2</sup>

- c. It is of concern, as a prospective homebuyer, that many neighbors in Clarksville have dashed expectations for desirable middle and high schools after signing on mortgages for expensive homes. I am reluctant to invest more time and money in a community that does not value my contribution or respect prior commitments.

**Moreover, it stinks that some board members might stand to gain from redistricting by transferring their children into the desired schools and possibly increasing their property values. Such blatant conflicts of interest and apparent abuse of public office should not be tolerated. To minimize corruption, please request that such board members be recused.**

Finally, I am concerned with the tenor of the debate. Councilmembers Rigby, Jones and Jung recently publicly stated:

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.niche.com/k12/search/best-magnet-high-schools/s/virginia/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.niche.com/k12/search/best-magnet-high-schools/s/maryland/>

This socioeconomic and racial segregation in the school system is contributing to increasing achievement gaps and decreasing graduation rates for low-income students and students of color. Historic systems have created these achievements gaps [SIC] and it is incumbent on the County to introduce new systems that foster necessary change.<sup>3</sup>

It is important to acknowledge that de facto segregation is a stubborn stain that persists in our country due to the legacy of slavery since 1619. However, it appears that Councilmembers Rigby, Jones and Jung are defining segregation too narrowly. There seems to be a flawed working assumption that Asian Americans do not count as students of color or experience setbacks due to exclusion and underestimation. Please note that the report indicates (pages 26-27/34) Clarksville Elementary and Clarksville Middle are already ethnically diverse schools with over 50% students of color (e.g., Asian American, African American, Latino). I am also aware that Clarksville Elementary serves a disproportionate population of disabled students. Unfortunately, the proposed plan penalizes many students of color (i.e., Asian Americans, African Americans, Latinos) and Whites in Clarksville with relocation to less desirable schools to remedy a wrong they did not commit.

While diversifying socioeconomically is a worthy goal, disruption and anguish for those currently in Clarksville should be minimized because we are in this together. As you may already be aware, Howard County leads the state of Maryland in public school quality.<sup>4</sup> Currently, it is uniquely poised to lead our nation in achieving intelligent integration, equal opportunity and academic excellence, which I believe are values consistent with Columbia's founders and unite us.

Let's not squander this historic opportunity and expand the pie for all. Our community can do better than fight over scraps, be divided, and repeat mistakes of the past.

Thank you for your time and attention. Feel free to contact me for any questions or comment.

All the best to you,

Julie

P.S. Please see the attached photo of my son with his friends; multi-ethnic students on their first day of school at Clarksville Elementary. With the proposed plan, they would be zoned to separate middle schools.

CC: Shawna Frazier, M.B.A.

María Gutierrez, M.D.

Claudia Palmer, R.N.

Christian Cao

Yinqi Zhang, Ph.D.

Rong Guo, Ph.D.

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<sup>3</sup>[https://cc.howardcountymd.gov/Portals/0/Documents/CouncilMain/Press%20Releases/2019/CMR\\_OJ\\_DJ%20Desegregation%20Press%20Release.pdf](https://cc.howardcountymd.gov/Portals/0/Documents/CouncilMain/Press%20Releases/2019/CMR_OJ_DJ%20Desegregation%20Press%20Release.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.niche.com/k12/d/howard-county-public-schools-md/>

Maria J. Gutierrez, M.D., M.H.S.  
5896 Indian Summer Drive  
Clarksville, MD, 21029

September 3, 2019

Dear Dr. Martirano,

Thank you for your constant efforts to improve our children's education in Howard County. I am a resident of the River Hill community. Our family would be redistricted under the proposed Attendance Area Adjustment Plan and I share the concerns of other parents in our neighborhood (outlined in Mrs. Yinqi Zhang and Mrs. Julie Kim's letters). I also wanted to mention a few additional points that I hope are considered during upcoming discussions.

First, as families at Clarksville Elementary School (CES) and neighbors of River Hill, we build friendships and community ties due in large part to interactions at our elementary school where we are a diverse and engaged community. As a result, our kids benefit from this environment inside and outside the classroom. Dividing CES graduates between Clarksville and Harper's Choice Middle Schools would disturb our neighborhood dynamics. I invite you to please find solutions that do not disrupt the healthy social dynamics of naturally-established communities.

Second, please consider that uprooting students from their childhood friends and community during pre-adolescence exposes them to adolescent health problems. The middle school years (puberty and early adolescence) are a period of special vulnerability to mental health issues (e.g. depression, suicide), substance abuse and other dysfunctional behaviors. Risk factors for these problems include low neighborhood attachment, **transitions and mobility** and low commitment to school. On the other hand, protective factors include strong attachments to school, community and positive peers. Therefore, is it really necessary to disjoint well-functioning pre-teens at CES from many of their neighbors and childhood friends during this vulnerable time?

Having fun and spending the adolescence years in their community and with childhood friends "vaccinates" our kids against these problems and yields many other positive outcomes. Please take into account the special developmental characteristics of our children's growing minds when redrawing school boundaries.

There is also a risk of decline in parental involvement and community disengagement if our students are forced to attend schools away from their community and friends. In an era of strong advocacy to decrease funding and find alternatives to public education, the fragmentation of parental support and disengagement from our schools may debilitate our public school system for years to come. Please consider this potential unintended outcome of your plan before implementing changes that lack community support.

Finally, while trying to foster integration among our students is commendable, redistributing the demographics of our schools as proposed would disjoint communities like ours where minority children (like my family) and students from very different backgrounds have established friendships and feel that they fit-in. Preserving bounds and community attachment is a very effective way to foster the development of your minority and disadvantaged students. Please do not dislodge them from communities where they have been successfully assimilated.

In summary, unfortunately, I cannot support your plan in its current form as it divides my community and it is unnecessarily burdensome for children in my neighborhood and my family. Nonetheless, I am confident that meaningful alternatives exist. Consider enlisting us, your

September 13, 2019

To: Howard County BOE, Dr. Michael J. Martirano, Superintendent, Howard County Public School System

Cc: County Council Members, HoCo County Executive, District 9 State Senator, District 9A State Delegates

**Subject: Oppose Dr Martirano's Redistricting Proposal**

Dear Board of Education (BOE) Members and Dr. Martirano,

As a longtime resident of Howard County Maryland (residing in Polygon 176) and a parent of two young children, I am writing to express my significant concerns about the impact of Dr Martirano's Attendance Area Adjustment Plan, dated August 20, 2019.

**Consider these facts:**

1. Neighborhoods in a 1-mile radius from River Hill High school will have students going to 3 different high schools!
2. Atholton sending 610 students out and receiving 471 students for a total turnover of 1081 students!!
3. Atholton and Oakland Mills High school boundaries gets split in multiple sections and separating communities.  
River Hill is an under-capacity school (projected to be at 94% Projected Utilization for 2019/2020 school. This is at the lower end of the Target Utilization range); the proposal wants to move 478 students out and bring in 741 students in that is a net gain of 229 students. The total turnover of students will be 1229 students!! That is a rate of over 80% of the school total capacity. This is the highest turnover school in the county as proposed!!! This is extremely disruptive and unnecessary for a school.
4. The polygons that they propose to move from River Hill to Wilde Lake live about 1.5-3.5miles away from River Hill.
5. The proposal will TRIPLE the distance to about 6-9 miles away and increase commute times in the morning and for after school activities.
6. The overall FARM rate of River Hill will increase from less than 5% to 5%.
7. The Proposal mentions to move 513 students from Atholton to River Hill.
8. The polygons that they propose to move live farther away to River Hill than communities closer to River Hill High School. Also, the FARM rates of Atholton are less than 10%.

**Here's how my children and family will be impacted:**

1. My children from Polygon 176 would have to drive through River Hill High School bus and car traffic, en route to Wilde Lake High School.
2. Their commute would triple (as compared to River Hill High School).
3. Such long commute times would affect their sleep (at least 2 hours of sleep deprivation daily), family time reduced, and could lead to higher probability of accidents given that high school students would be new drivers on the road driving longer distances with increased traffic jams.

4. Longer commute also reduces parents' engagement with the schools since they're further away and this would impact the childrens' education.
5. Longer transportation times would lead to higher expenses for the Board of Education with zero return on investment and higher polluting emissions. These are our tax dollars that are being wasted instead of being spent on appropriate educational resources.
6. Given the impact on my schedule, I may not be able to pick up my kids in time after their extracurricular activities so those activities may have to be cut down, affecting their education and all-round development.
7. Our family chose to go to these local schools (like River Hill High) when we moved to our current home. We treat our local schools as part of our community, which is being torn apart. Our friendships affected (since local children will now be sent to 3 different high schools); so, the choice taken away from us and all of us are feeling these impacts. This redistricting plan is disruptive of our community.

**Also:**

1. Any re-districting proposal should instead be focused on those five High Schools that are operating above Target Utilization levels (110%).
2. Transferring students from a school with a low FARM ratio to a school with a high FARM ratio, only results in better "averages" for the schools. IT DOES NOT PROVIDE ANY INCREMENTAL EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES OR OPPORTUNITES DIRECTLY TO THE STUDENTS.
3. Shuffling students across schools with longer commute times do not improve scores - they increase stress and hardship for families.

**Let us discuss some alternative scenarios including:**

1. River Hill High School could receive students from nearby schools such as Wilde Lake, Atholton or Howard, without sending 478 students out to other schools. There should be a way to improve capacity utilization and reduce the 7,396 students being disrupted.
2. Postpone redistricting until 2022 (for HS13) by using additional temporary classrooms. Allow time to plan the move in a non-disruptive manner. We owe stability to our kids.
  - a. Consider this article: "Switching Schools: Reconsidering the Relationship Between School Mobility and High School Dropout" published by JHU Dept of Sociology (Joseph Gasper, Stefanie DeLuca, Angela Estacion) – per the abstract– "Youth who switch schools are more likely to demonstrate a wide array of negative behavioral and educational outcomes, including dropping out of high school."
3. Do not redistrict at all. Consider creating a system where underperforming students would be given a choice where to attend school (within a certain radius); motivate such students to attend local schools with the capacity and capability. Add resources (teachers/specialists) and therefore improve scores by directly targeting underperforming students, adding resources and boost test scores. Title 1 schools already offer such resources for economically challenged students. We should focus on underperforming students for true education equity.

Thank you,

Reena Tuliani (Very concerned parent)

September 18, 2019

Dear Council Members,

I commend Councilmembers Rigby, Jones and Jung for starting the conversation on improving public schools. It is important to acknowledge that de facto segregation is a stubborn stain that persists in our country due to the legacy of slavery since 1619. Thanks to the efforts of courageous Americans before us, we no longer have de jure segregation since 1954. What the Council resolution should also acknowledge is increased immigration from Asia since 1965.<sup>1</sup>

I am part of a community of multi-ethnic parents in Clarksville. I have served as Chair of Cub Scout Pack 737 and I currently volunteer at a megachurch in Fulton to minister to children of single parents from all over the county. I regret to inform you that Resolution CR112-2019 ignores Asian Americans. At last count, Howard County was comprised of 19% Asian Americans.<sup>2</sup> Clarksville Elementary School is 56% Asian and 27% White. However, your resolution (page 1) defines school segregation when schools are <40% White. Does Clarksville Elementary need to import more Whites? It is absurd when its test scores are the highest in the county, and possibly state. Middle-class white students described in the resolution (page 3) are the minority here.

With all due respect, it appears that segregation and diversity is being defined too narrowly. There seems to be a flawed working assumption that Asian Americans do not count as students of color or experience setbacks due to exclusion and underestimation.

I ask the Council to carefully consider the effect of forcing high-performing *Asian American* students to lower performing schools. Opportunities to excel should be available to all and we should beware of closing the achievement gap by bringing the top end of the curve down. These are the future inventors and innovators that will propel our economy in the 21<sup>st</sup> century when American dominance is not what it used to be and artificial intelligence threatens to disrupt human employment.

At the current time, it is clear the Superintendent is not ready with a plan suitable for all. Under his proposal, Clarksville Elementary School would be cut in half for middle school and high school. Right when our kids enter adolescence, the public school system would kick out our cub scout chief, den leaders, room parents, PTA moms, and even a board of education member. It appears that most of my son's ethnically diverse friends (i.e., African Americans, Latinos, Vietnamese, Chinese and Indians) would be forced to attend lower opportunity schools. If it takes a village to raise a child, our village is being broken up, which does not make sense.

---

<sup>1</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Immigration\\_and\\_Nationality\\_Act\\_of\\_1965](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Immigration_and_Nationality_Act_of_1965)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.baltimoresun.com/maryland/howard/howard-magazine/bs-mg-ho-diversity-data-20190109-story.html>

Even more puzzling is hearing politicians preach diversity and equity to the middle class, when we see party leadership choosing to live in upper class enclaves that are >90% white and sending *its* children to wealthy private schools where Asians are scarce.<sup>3,4</sup>

What I love about Clarksville though, is that it is not provincial and stuck in the past. Parents here are incredibly solution- and future- oriented. I request that the Council resolution be revised to *partner with parents and speak out against coercive redistricting*. I would like to ask the Council to consider alternatives to the superintendent's proposal:

- If they wish to go, how about sending FARM students to the less ethnically diverse Western county schools?
- Where is the intensive remediation urgently needed for students who do not appear to be performing at grade level?
- If they wish to go, can top-scoring FARM students be tracked to higher scoring schools for more efficient skills transfer, integration and upward mobility?
- Finally, to stay competitive academically, I recommend a county-wide magnet high school in District 4 which feeds from the top 10% of each middle school and historically marginalized population (i.e., FARM).

As you may already be aware, Howard County leads the state of Maryland in public school quality.<sup>5</sup> Can Clarksville parents count on you to keep it that way, hear our voices and revise CR112-2019?

Thank you for your time and attention.

All the best to you,

Julie Kim, M.D.

---

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.usa.com/school-district-2507380-population-and-races.htm>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.usaschoolinfo.com/school/sidwell-friends-school-washington-district-of-columbia.114701/enrollment>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.niche.com/k12/d/howard-county-public-schools-md/>

9/23/2019

Polygon 1256 CONSTITUENT EMAIL

Reply all | Delete | Junk | ...

X

## Polygon 1256 CONSTITUENT EMAIL



Josh Mathieu <josh.m.mathieu@gmail.com>

Reply all |

Fri 9/13, 2:51 PM

djung@howardcountymd.gov; ccwilliams@howardcountymd.gov; ggick@howardcc+2 more

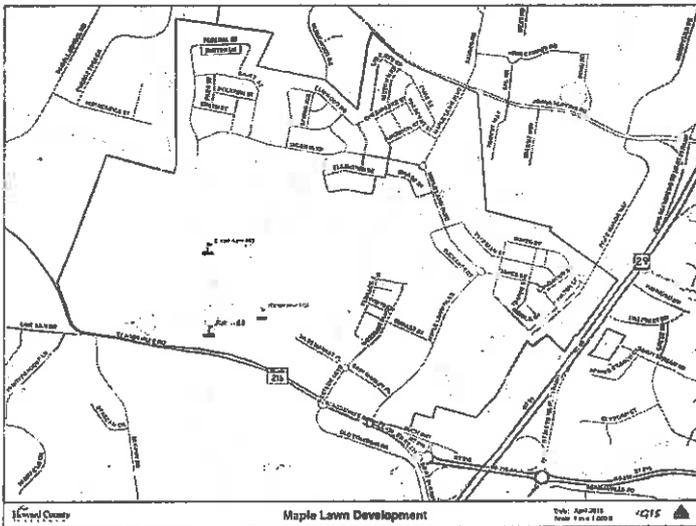
School Redistricting

Dear Elected Official,

I am writing today as a constituent that is very concerned with the current redistricting draft plan that divides the tight knit Maple Lawn community in Fulton. The suggested movement of students from Polygon 1256 is an anomaly within the current plan. After looking at the images and context below, I have to believe you'll understand and agree why the Maple Lawn community believes that the current recommendation is an oversight.

1) The below image is a map highlighting the Maple Lawn Community on a Howard County website. Maple Lawn is a thoughtfully planned community that the county participated in and documented. Also, Fulton Elementary, Lime Kiln Middle and Reservoir High are all located within the boundaries of the community. One community. One school.

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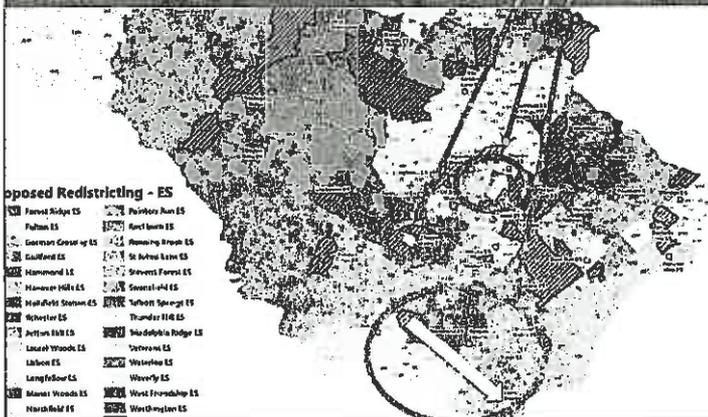


2) The below image is a map highlighting the three proposed "islands" within the county in the current draft plan. Only one polygon within the Maple Lawn community has been isolated; Polygon 1256. The other Polygons within Maple Lawn will continue to attend Fulton Elementary school based off the current draft plan. The "Polygon 1256 island" is represented by the LONGEST arrow at the bottom of the map; an egregious anomaly within the plan. This long arrow highlights where the Maple Lawn students from Polygon 1256 would be sent under the current draft plan. To further highlight this anomaly; there are (8) Elementary Schools closer in driving time than Laurel Woods Elementary; where the current draft plan has students from Polygon 1256 being sent... with Fulton Elementary being the closest in terms of driving time.

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### One of Three Proposed "Islands"



3) Another concern with this proposal is the impact on our representation for county council, and in future elections for board of education representatives, since they will be selected by district in the future. Our current home district is District 4; however, under the Superintendent's plan our children would be attending a school in District 3. This scenario creates an obvious disconnect between those we elect for District 4 to represent our community and who is elected for District 3, who may not consider the concerns of those who live outside District 3, but attend one of its schools.

I believe it's obvious to see why the Maple Lawn community believes that our community has been overlooked in the current draft plan. Whether you are a BOE member or an elected official in the community; you have the ability to right this wrong by voting or influencing this process.

Please do not divide the Maple Lawn community.

#onecommunityoneschool

Josh Mathieu

9/23/2019

Howard County School redistricting

Reply all | Delete | Junk | ...

X

## Howard County School redistricting



Jennifer Johnson <jjinmdus@gmail.com>

Reply all |

Wed 9/4, 3:29 PM

Kittleman, Trent Delegate; Miller, Warren Delegate; Hester, Katie Fry Senator

Priority

You replied on 9/12/2019 2:22 PM.

Dear Lawmakers....

I live in Clarksville, MD in the Twelve Trees Neighborhood. I'm sure you've heard we are among many now proposed to be redistricted from River Hill HS to Wilde Lake HS. Unfortunately, when the Superintendent made his recommendations, he apparently thought our neighborhood had an access road to either Folly Quarter Road or Sheppard Lane (we do not.) To get to Wilde Lake from my house, you have to travel 10.1 miles and it usually takes about 20-25 minutes (with no bus stops and making all 13 lights.) A bus trip with student pickup stops during the early morning hours will be at least an hour to 1.5. I've written to the school board about this and was told by a member that they were not aware that our area, Polygon 1200, had no access out other than going down Route 32 to Route 108.

Wilde Lake HS is the 7th furthest high school from our neighborhood. I think you would agree that this amount of bus time for any student is unreasonable...aside from the other arguments that there will be absolutely no community for these students since this school is so far away.

I hope you can talk to the Superintendent and school board on our behalf and ask that they stop this plan from going through.

Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Johnson

443-799-4668

Reply all | Delete | Junk | ...



## Howard County Constituent (Maple Lawn - Polygon 1256) Email



Kelly O'Connell Hayes <kellyohayes@gmail.com>

Wed 9/11, 8:56 PM

Hester, Katie Fry Senator; assistance@vanhollen.senate.gov; Atterbeary, Vanessa De

Reply all |

School Redistricting



Action Items



Good evening,

As the congressional delegation representing Maryland and Howard County, I am confident that you have heard from numerous Howard County residents about redistricting. I do not want to take much of your time, but please, regardless of equity concerns (which I do not intend to debate) I implore you to use whatever influence you have on the Howard County Board of Education to ensure that Maple Lawn does not become a divided community. The move of Maple Lawn's Polygon 1256 -- only one of four polygons in Maple Lawn -- is truly an anomaly. Polygon 1256 is one of only a few "islands" in the redistricting plan that literally splits the Maple Lawn neighborhood into 2 separate school districts (see below). But, also importantly, it splits the Laurel Woods ES community into 2 separated geographic districts. In that regard, the children of Polygon 1256 will not only be isolated from their neighborhood, but they will be isolated from the Laurel Woods community as well. Moreover, moving the Polygon 1256 children from Fulton ES, which is currently at 120% capacity, to Laurel Woods ES will simply move them from one overcapacity school to another, as Laurel Woods would go from being under capacity to 115% overcapacity. Please, regardless of equity considerations, the proposal as to Polygon 1256 is simply too illogical and does a disservice to both the Polygon 1256 children as well as the Laurel Woods community. I do not know what, if any, influence you have over the Howard County Board of Education, but I ask only that you do whatever you can to address this anomaly. My community is also happy to meet with you at any time to discuss our proposed alternatives. Thank you for your time.

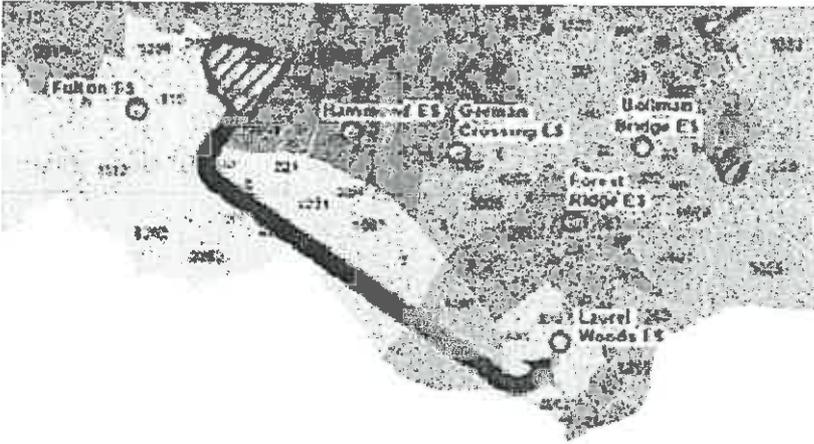
Respectfully,  
Kelly Hayes

9/23/2019

Howard County Constituent (Maple Lawn - Polygon 1256) Email

Reply all | Delete | Junk | ...

X



Respectfully,  
Kelly Hayes  
Polygon 1256

9/23/2019

School Redistricting

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## School Redistricting



Rene Carter <[rcarter1000@comcast.net](mailto:rcarter1000@comcast.net)>  
Wed 9/11, 12:54 PM  
Hester, Katie Fry Senator 

 Reply all | 

School Redistricting

You forwarded this message on 9/12/2019 1:52 PM

I do NOT support this and hope that you will vote NO. Redistricting will fracture communities and children will suffer from the commute times.

Thank you,

Rene Carter

Region 1

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## Re: Subject: Urgent Help Needed, Howard County School Redistricting: Polygon. 1200



Hester, Katie Fry Senator

Thu 9/12, 1:54 PM

Zatkowski, Jennifer &lt;Jennifer.Zatkowski@fnf.com&gt; ▾

☰ Reply all | ▾

Sent Items

Dear Ms. Zatkowski,

Thank you for contacting my office about the Howard County Public School System's boundary review process. Over the past few weeks, I have received many emails on this topic.

The school redistricting process has generated a lot of uncertainty and tension for families and communities within our district. As a mother myself, I know how disruptive changes to schools and our children's routines can be.

In response to your concerns, my staff and I are actively compiling your correspondence and reaching out to members of the Board of Education to communicate these concerns directly to them. I will be encouraging the Board to take these concerns seriously, to examine all of the data they have available, and to minimize the disruption and impact that boundary changes will have on our students. While I cannot vote on or amend school boundaries, my role in this process is to be an advocate for you.

I'd like to reassure you that school redistricting is a process that begins with the Superintendent but eventually concludes with the Board of Education. The Superintendent's proposal is a recommendation and it is ultimately up to the Board to make and approve any boundary change decisions. Now that a proposal has been put forward by the Superintendent, the Board can begin the important task of convening public hearings.

Because this proposal is likely to be amended before any final vote of the Board of Education, your voices will be important as the Board begins its public hearings next week. These hearings will be held on:

- Tuesday, September 17, 7 P.M.
  - Families currently zoned for Centennial HS, Howard HS, Mt. Hebron HS, Oakland Mills HS
- Tuesday, September 24, 7 P.M.
  - Families currently zoned for Atholton HS, Hammond HS, Long Reach HS, Wilde Lake HS
- Thursday, September 26, 7 P.M.
  - Families currently zoned for Glenelg HS, Marriotts Ridge HS, Reservoir HS, River Hill HS

In addition, the school board will be receiving written testimony from August 21st through 4:30pm on November 19th. You can visit the [HCPSS Boundary Review Process website](#) to find any additional information on the Board of Education's public work sessions, documents, and a more detailed timeline of this process.

I appreciate your willingness to reach out to my office, and I assure you that I will continue to serve as an advocate for our students, schools, and community.

Sincerely,

Senator Katie Fry Hester  
District 9  
Howard and Carroll Counties  
410-841-3671

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**From:** Zatkowski, Jennifer <Jennifer.Zatkowski@fnf.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, September 9, 2019 4:04:26 PM  
**To:** Hester, Katie Fry Senator  
**Subject:** Subject: Urgent Help Needed, Howard County School Redistricting: Polygon 1200

Katie Fry Hester (D) MD State Senate District 9: [katiefry.hester@senate.state.md.us](mailto:katiefry.hester@senate.state.md.us)  
Warren Miller (R) MD State House District 9a: [warren.miller@house.state.md.us](mailto:warren.miller@house.state.md.us)  
Trent Kittleman (R) MD State House District 9a: [trent.kittleman@house.state.md.us](mailto:trent.kittleman@house.state.md.us)  
David Yungmann (R) Council District 5: [dyungmann@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:dyungmann@howardcountymd.gov)  
Calvin Ball (D) County Executive: [cball@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:cball@howardcountymd.gov)

Dear Senator Hester:

I am reaching out to you as our representative with respect to an urgent matter affecting our entire neighborhood. The Howard County Public School System is planning to split our neighborhood, sending portions of it to different high schools. The proposed redistricting is nothing more than a Forced Busing Program, shown to be unsuccessful in multiple communities across the country in the 1970's, and doubtful to be any more successful in our community today. Our School District Polygon, Polygon 1200, will be the only polygon within our immediate community being sent to Wilde Lake High School. All the other Polygons in our neighborhood are slated to be sent to other high schools.

Our entire neighborhood is deeply concerned about this issue. Most of us specifically relocated into our community so that our children could be brought up in a more relaxed, quiet, rural environment. The proposed Forced Busing Program is counter to the desires of our families, sending our children across county and back into the densely populated environment we actively strove to leave.

There are also fundamental logistical issues associated with the proposed plan:

- 1) Due to road access, those of us in Polygon 1200 will be isolated from all the rest of the neighborhoods being sent to Wilde Lake High School. Polygon DOES NOT connect to Sheppard Lane. The street dead-ends to Howard County Property – specifically, the Waste Water Treatment Facility.
- 2) Those of us in Polygon 1200 will incur a significant unnecessary increase in time spent on bus transportation by being sent across Columbia to Wilde Lake High School.
- 3) A large portion of our community identity will be lost because all neighborhoods directly connected to ours will be sent to other high schools.

We feel under represented. We are a small community and fear our voice will not be heard. Polygon 1200 has been meeting weekly (after work) and organizing to try to prevent this change from happening. I invite you to come to our next meeting, hear our concern, see how it is affecting our neighborhood, and provide any type of help you can (POC: James Reuster, [jamesreuster@gmail.com](mailto:jamesreuster@gmail.com); 661.492.4170). Time is of the essence as final redistricting plans will be approved in November. As our representative, we ask for help from you and your office.

Thank-you,

Jennifer Zatkowski  
12707 Chapel Chase Drive  
Clarksville, MD 21029  
Phone: 410-531-2494 (home)/ 202-277-8938 (cell)

Jennifer Zatkowski, Esq.  
Commercial Counsel  
Chicago Title Insurance Company  
Fidelity National Title Insurance Company  
Commonwealth Land Title Insurance Company  
9891 Broken Land Parkway  
Suite 300  
Columbia, Maryland 21046

9/23/2019

Re: Subject: Urgent Help Needed, Howard County School Redistricting: Polygon 1200

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# Urgent Help Needed, Howard County School Redistricting: Polygon 1200



Andrew Hlasko <andrewhlasko@gmail.com>

Fri 9/6, 9:06 AM

Hester, Katie Fry Senator

Reply all |

School Redistricting

Polygon1200a-splitting... 26 KB

Show all 1 attachments (26 KB) Download

Dear Katie Fry Hester:

I am reaching out to you, as our representative, with respect to an urgent matter affecting our entire neighborhood. The Howard County Public School System is planning to split our neighborhood, sending portions of it to different high schools located much further away compared to the current schools. Our School District Polygon, Polygon 1200, is the furthest from the proposed school and will be the only polygon within our immediate community being sent to Wilde Lake High School. All the other community connected Polygons to ours are slated to be sent to Glenelg High School.

1) Those of us in Polygon 1200 will see our children experience significant unnecessary stress with increased time spent on the bus by being sent to Wilde Lake High School instead of two high schools that are much closer to us (River Hill and Glenelg High school). There are a number of unique features of our Polygon 1200 that should be considered.

a. There are no common roads or direct routes for us in Polygon 1200 connecting our neighborhood to the rest of the neighborhoods slated to attend Wilde Lake High School. In order to reach Wild Lake HS, our kids will be bussed immediately pass their current River Hill High School entrance (or very near Glenelg High School) and then continue on for another 15 minutes (time without any traffic). This in effect could double our kid's current school commute time.

b. Because of the longer commute our high school kids will have to catch the school bus much earlier than the current 6:30am with a 45 minute current travel time. Busing kids to a school further away will increase travel time to well over one hour each-way and force them to have to catch the bus much earlier than the current 6:30am. This will make our teenagers loose precious sleep time which numerous studies have shown is very important for teenagers. In fact, one study found that each additional minute of commuting correlates to a 1.3 minute loss of sleep.<sup>[1]</sup> To put this in perspective, redistricting Polygon 1200 students to

WLHS can cause a loss of sleep of 14.3 to 39 minutes.<sup>[2]</sup> This loss of sleep is exacerbated by the fact that general sleep trends show inadequate sleep begins as young as age 6 and increases as children age without the additional stressor of significant commute times.<sup>[3]</sup>

c. Increased traffic congestion will also be a serious problem because our Polygon 1200 is isolated from other communities and the shortest way to get to Wilde Lake HS would be along Route 108, which is a single lane road that is already very heavily congested. This longer school bus route to a high school much further away will only serve to further increase the traffic congestion along Route 108.

d. Both of our high school kids are involved afterschool activities (sports, high school band, student government, etc.) and we have to commute to their school multiple times after school, to drop them off and pick them up. Accordingly, the current Redistricting Plan, which

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Polygon 1200. The longer commute time essentially precludes some students from being able to participate in extracurricular activities and it is well proven that participation in

extracurricular activities has a positive impact on high school academic achievement<sup>[4]</sup>; it prevents dropping out of high school<sup>[5]</sup> and increases the incidence of college admission<sup>[6]</sup>

and success.<sup>[7]</sup> Increasing our students' school commute times to up to over two hours per day effectively limits, at best, and cuts off, at worst, their ability to participate in these important, enriching activities.

e. Some of our teenagers are now starting to get their drivers licenses and sometimes drive themselves to school. Increasing commuting distances and reducing sleep exacerbates the risks associated with teenage driving. According to the CDC, driving accidents are the leading cause of death among teenagers. The fatal crash rate per mile driven is nearly twice as high for 16 and 17 year olds (i.e., new drivers in high school) compared with 18 and 19 year olds.<sup>[8]</sup>

f. The proposed redistricting plan will significantly increase school travel distances for students such as ours, since kids will now need to be bused much further away than their current school. This in turn could significantly increase school transportation costs. In June 2019, Howard County Public School System had a nearly \$38 million dollar shortfall in its Fiscal Year 2020 Operating Budget.<sup>[9]</sup> Such a shortfall resulted in, among other things, the loss of certain teaching and paraprofessional positions, as well as transfers of funds, freezing of salaries, holding open unfilled positions, and delaying technology and instructional materials investments. A more balanced school redistricting approach could minimize bus route changes leading to lower transportation costs, so that school funding and budget shortfall would not continue to adversely impact the quality of education for all our Howard County students.

g. Money should be spent directly on under-performing schools to raise student academic achievement in the affected communities. Busing kids to schools further away to hopefully "even out" the school test scores without addressing the true needs of under-performing students only serves to mask and hide the actual causes of the problem and does not help these individual students who need the academic help. Howard County should be investing money into schools that need the help and not into transporting kids to schools that are much further away.

2) A large portion of the community identity within Polygon 1200 will be lost.

a. The Redistricting Plan also fails under another BOE's Policy 6010(IV)(B)(2)(c) sub-factor for Community Stability – frequency with which any one student is reassigned.<sup>[10]</sup> The Redistricting Plan does not clearly identify how many double moves will be necessary with the opening of High School #13, but surely at least some will be needed.

b. Our sense of community will be split apart as Polygon 1200 students would attend different schools than our nearest neighbors, causing our children's existing relationships with our neighbors to become strained from significantly reduced interactions. Friendships our kids formed with other high school students will be torn apart as some kids are forced to attend a school much further away while their friends remain in their current school.

Teenagers don't handle stress very well and when our 15 year-old daughter Natalia was told that she will have to change high schools next year because of redistricting she broke down and cried. She did not understand why this was happening and neither do we. Our younger daughter Paula just started River Hill high school this month as a 9<sup>th</sup> grader. She was very anxious about making new friends and when she found out that she would have to change high schools next year she reacted with disbelief and fear. She felt that this was very unfair for her to have to change schools and loose many of her school friends that she would no longer see or be with.

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plans so that our students in Polygon 1200 attend Glenelg High School, which is also much closer, while grandfathering current juniors and seniors at River Hill High School. Districting our Polygon 1200 to feed into Glenelg HS instead of Wilde Lake HS largely eliminates the land island effect. The approximate distance and travel times from our Polygon 1200 to Polygons 208, 203, 202 and 200 (all districted to Glenelg) are approximately 2.2 miles and 5 minutes, 1.1 miles and 3 minutes, 0.6 miles and 2 minutes, and 0.4 miles and 1 minute, respectively. Allowing our students to remain in their current school would be ideal, but these are also much better alternatives to the currently proposed redistricting plan.

Our entire neighborhood is deeply concerned about this issue. We feel unrepresented. We are a small community; therefore, we fear that our voice will not be heard. As our representative, we need your help and of your office to ensure that the Howard County Board of Education carefully consider the proposed school redistricting plan while taking into account the significant stress and uncertainty this places on our children having to change schools and spend much more time on the school bus. We have been meeting weekly (after work) and organizing to try to prevent this change from happening. As our representative, we need help from you and your office. I invite you to come to our next meeting, hear our concern, see how it is affecting our neighborhood, and provide any type of help you can (POC: James Reuster, [jamesreuster@gmail.com](mailto:jamesreuster@gmail.com); 661.492.4170). Time is of the essence as final redistricting plans will be approved in November. Any type of assistance would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you for your patience and kind consideration,

Andrew and Blandyna Hlasko  
 13010 Red Maple Way  
 Clarksville, MD 21029  
 Phone: 301-317-4135  
 Polygon 1200

[1] <https://www.citylab.com/life/2019/05/high-school-commute-drive-sleep-exercise-children-teens/588850/>

[2] Extrapolated by using additional time range of 39 and 58 over the current 28 minute commute and multiplying by 1.3.

[3] <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5012907/>

[4] Eccles, Jacquelynne S., and Janice Templeton. "Chapter 4: Extracurricular and other after-school activities for youth." *Review of research in education* 26.1 (2002): 113-180. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.3102/0091732X026001113>

[5] McNeal Jr, Ralph B. "Extracurricular activities and high school dropouts." *Sociology of education* 68.1 (1995): 62. <https://search.proquest.com/docview/216485750?accountid=11752>

[6] Bound, John, Brad Hershbein, and Bridget Terry Long. "Playing the admissions game: Student reactions to increasing college competition." *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 23.4 (2009): 119-46.

[7] Sciarra, Daniel T., Holly J. Seirup, and Elizabeth Sposato. "High School Predictors of College Persistence: The Significance of Engagement and Teacher Interaction." *Professional Counselor* 6.2 (2016): 189-202. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1114072>

[8] [https://www.cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety/teen\\_drivers/teendrivers\\_factsheet.html](https://www.cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety/teen_drivers/teendrivers_factsheet.html)

[9] Howard County Public School System News Release titled "Board of Education Adopts FY 2020 Operating and Capital Budgets," June 10, 2019, <https://news.hcpss.org/news-posts/>

[10] Policy 6010(IV)(B)(2)(c).

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## Equity in Redistricting



Mj Monck &lt;mjmonck@gmail.com&gt;

Thu 9/5, 2:28 PM

Lam, Clarence Senator; Hester, Katie Fry Senator; Hill, Terri Delegate; Ebersole, Eric | ▾

Reply all | ▾

School Redistricting

You replied on 9/12/2019 2:19 PM.

Thank you so much for attending the Equity in Redistricting session last night. The Education Action Team of Indivisible HoCo works to inform Howard County residents about education-related topics in the hopes that actions will be taken by the community to support and strengthen our public school system. We also hope to enlighten the population about ongoing issues surrounding readiness for school on local, state and national levels.

The attendance at last night's presentation, along with those at home who followed via livestream, speaks volumes about the importance to our community of considering equity and diversity in education decision-making.

Please feel free to reach out to any of us with further questions. We look forward to seeing you at future events:

Michele Shrum  
Laurie Chin  
Marijane Monck

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  Junk | 
  ...



## Martirano's Proposal Fails to Meet Policy 6010 Standards



Grey, Matthew <Matthew.Grey@jhuapl.edu>

Thu 9/5, 1:25 PM

superintendent@hcpss.org; ewalsh@howardcountymd.gov; ojones@howardcounty

 Reply all | 
 

School Redistricting



Action Items



**Matthew Phares Grey**  
 Polygon 28

### Martirano's Proposal Fails to Meet Policy 6010 Standards

Martirano's proposal suggests moving 7,396 students to relieve overcrowded schools and bring equity to Howard County. The improvements in both of these areas are negligible, in particular, when weighed with the thousands of students moved in drastic ways across the county. I urge the BOE to compare Martirano's plan against the standards of Policy 6010 to determine whether this proposal should even be considered.

As human beings we all have personal feelings regarding the redistricting process, overcrowded schools, and the inequitable distribution of housing in Howard County. As an elected Board of Education member, we implore you to leave your personal feelings out of this process. Instead, we ask that you represent the people of Howard County who elected you. Listen to our feedback on Martirano's proposal, the Feasibility Study Options, and your own suggestions in the coming months at your Board meetings. We additionally urge you to use Policy 6010 to weigh the positives and negatives for all options.

Policy 6010 Section IV.B outlines the three main areas of consideration that the BOE should work to address in the redistricting process. The first is facility utilization. Policy 6010 states: "Where reasonable, school attendance area utilization should stay within the target utilization for as long a period of time as possible through the consideration of: the efficient use of space, long range enrollment factors, minimizing capital and operating costs, and walkers and bus riders". Martirano's plan fails on all counts when looking at Policy 6010 standards related to Facility Utilization. It increases transportation costs, it moves walkers to bus riders on long commutes, and it does not bring a significant amount of school attendance areas to target utilization. The proposal reduces the number of elementary schools that exceed 110% capacity from 21 to 16 while leaving 5 elementary schools below 90%, which is unimpressive. In fact, according to the forecasts in Martirano's proposal more schools will be above target utilization within a few short years than we have currently. At the elementary school level, the plan will move 3,194 students resulting in a less than 5% reduction in schools that are over capacity in 1 year. At the middle school level, 1,351 students are proposed to move achieving a 0% change in the number of over capacity schools in 1 year. Martirano's proposal moves 7,396 students in an effort that fails to bring schools any meaningful change in target utilization! The moves in Martirano's proposal are not reasonable!

Second, Policy 6010 directs the board to consider community stability. Policy 6010 Section IV.C: Community Stability states: "Where reasonable, school attendance areas should promote a sense of community in both the geographic place (e.g., neighborhood or place in which a student lives) and the promotion of a student from each school level through the consideration of: keeping strong feeds from one school level to the next (less than a 15% feed is unacceptable), keeping contiguous communities or neighborhoods together, and minimizing the frequency with which any one student is reassigned." Martirano's plan fails on all counts when looking at Policy 6010 standards related to Community Stability. "Community", as defined by Policy 6010, is "a geographic place, specifically the neighborhood or place in which a student lives". Martirano's proposal tears apart communities all over Howard County, negatively affecting families across every socioeconomic level. We cannot allow this to happen! In addition, many of these moves significantly weaken the feeds from one school to the next, and in three years these same students and many of their peers will again be at risk of disruptive school changes during the next redistricting.

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promote the creation of a diverse and inclusive student body at both the sending and receiving schools. Martirano's proposal fails to adequately balance FARM data across Howard County when compared to the number of students moved. There are schools where the plan moves hundreds of students and achieves less than a 5% change in students who receive FARMs. There are overcapacity schools with low FARMs numbers that have no proposed moves of polygons to adjacent underutilized schools with high FARMs numbers. There are significant island moves that require transportation past multiple closer schools with capacity, and in some cases, unreasonable routes because of geographical barriers. Some examples include a West Friendship neighborhood being sent to Bushy Park Elementary, a Swansfield community neighborhood being sent to Clarksville Elementary, a Pointers Run community neighborhood sent to Swansfield Elementary, a Fulton Elementary community neighborhood sent to Laurel Woods Elementary, a Stevens Forest Elementary community neighborhood sent to Bryant Woods, a Clarksville Middle community neighborhood sent to Harpers Choice Middle, a Harper's Choice community neighborhood sent to Clarksville Middle, a River Hill High School community neighborhood sent to Wilde Lake High School, and pretty much all of the gerrymandered Atholton High School attendance area, which also impacts the Hammond and Oakland Mills neighborhoods.

When making moves like these, Policy 6010 IV.D specifically states that consideration should be given to "the number of students moved, taking into account the correlation between the number of students moved, the outcomes of other standards achieved in Section IV.B. (Facility Utilization) and the length of time those results are expected to be maintained." When we weigh the demographic changes in this proposal against the number of students moved, the negligible impact on facility utilization, and the short length of time these changes are expected to be maintained, Martirano's proposal fails! Only 10 out of 74 elementary, middle, and high schools see more than a 10% change in FARMs rates in Martirano's proposal. Applying an even lower criteria of 5% or greater change in FARMs rates, only 14 out of 74 schools in Howard County are affected. Negligible changes in facility utilization and negligible changes in FARMs rates at the cost of the redistricting 7,396 students does not meet the Standards for redistricting students as outlined in Policy 6010!

The bottom line is Martirano's proposal fails to meet Policy 6010 standards, and therefore the BOE should not consider the proposal during this redistricting process! The BOE must consider whether redistricting is even necessary at this time or if waiting 3 years is acceptable. If redistricting is necessary as deemed by the standards of Policy 6010, the BOE must only consider options that achieve the standards set forth in Policy 6010!

Thank you for your time,  
Matt

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## Urgent Help Needed, Howard County School Redistricting: Polygon 1200



Vivica Williams <vivicalw@gmail.com>

Wed 9/4, 8:18 AM

Hester, Katie Fry Senator ▾

📧 Reply all | ▾

School Redistricting

Dear Senator,

I am reaching out to you as our representative with respect to an urgent matter affecting our entire neighborhood. The Howard County Public School System is planning to split our neighborhood, sending portions of it to different high schools. The proposed redistricting is nothing more than a Forced Busing Program, shown to be unsuccessful in multiple communities across the country in the 1970's, and doubtful to be any more successful in our community today. Our School District Polygon, Polygon 1200, will be the only polygon within our immediate community being sent to Wilde Lake High School. All the other Polygons are slated to be sent to other high schools.

Our entire neighborhood is deeply concerned about this issue. Most of us specifically relocated into our community so that our children could be brought up in a more relaxed, quiet, rural environment. The proposed Forced Busing Program is counter to the desires of our families, sending our children across county and back into the densely populated environment we actively strove to leave.

There are also fundamental logistical issues associated with the proposed plan:

- 1) Due to road access, those of us in Polygon 1200 will be isolated from all the rest of the neighborhoods being sent to Wilde Lake High School.
- 2) Those of us in Polygon 1200 will occur a significant unnecessary increase in time spent on bus transportation by being sent across Columbia to Wilde Lake High School.
- 3) A large portion of our community identity will be lost because all neighborhoods directly connected to ours will be sent to other high schools.

We feel under represented. We are a small community and fear our voice will not be heard. Polygon 1200 has been meeting weekly (after work) and organizing to try to prevent this change from happening. I invite you to come to our next meeting, hear our concern, see how it is affecting our neighborhood, and provide any type of help you can (POC: James Reuster, [jamesreuster@gmail.com](mailto:jamesreuster@gmail.com); 661.492.4170). Time is of the essence as final redistricting plans will be approved in November. As our representative, we ask for help from you and your office.

Thank-you,

Vivica Williams and Sylvain Roy

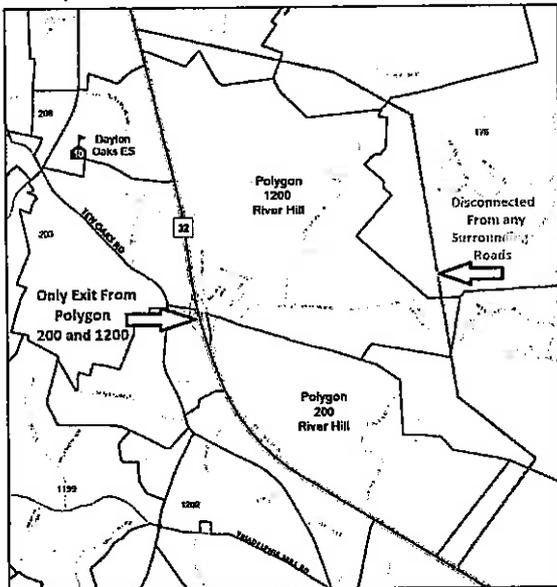
13080 Greenberry Lane  
Clarksville, MD 21029  
(443)710-5700

[redistricting@hcpss.org](mailto:redistricting@hcpss.org)

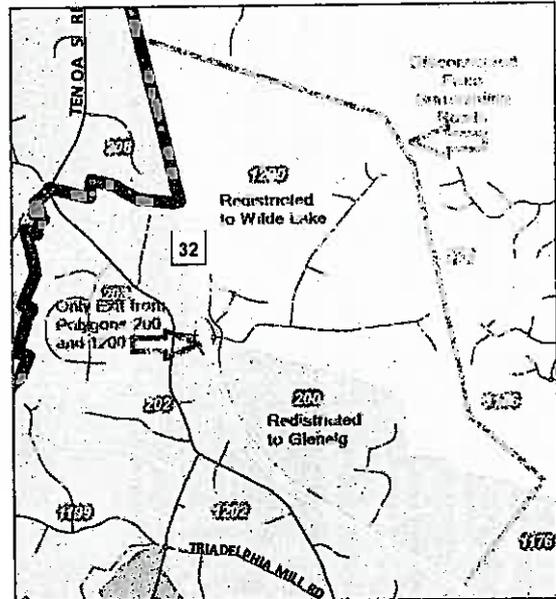
**Subject:** Vote against the proposed school redistricting plan – Polygon 1200

Dear Sir or Madam:

My name is Andrew Hlasko and I have two daughter that currently attend the River Hill High School, one in 9<sup>th</sup> grade and the other in 11<sup>th</sup> grade. My kids love their school and we love the sense of community and togetherness that I have experienced in our neighborhood. This sense of community was what James Rouse envisioned when he built Columbia and started the surrounding neighborhoods. Now my sense of stability and community has been broken with our neighborhood split in half with one part redistricted to Wilde Lake (Polygon 1200) and the other to Glenelg (Polygon 200). This despite both polygons being one neighborhood with a single shared access road to Rt. 32, both assigned to the same Elementary and Middle school except now each is being redistricted two different further away high schools!



Currently both Polygons 200 and 1200 are sent to River Hill HS and both are assigned to Dayton Oaks Elementary.



Under proposed redistricting plan our neighborhood is split in two, with Polygon 1200 to Wilde Lake and Polygon 200 to Glenelg HS, but both still sent to Dayton Oaks Elementary.

Any school redistricting that result in splitting of neighborhoods is a violation of the **BOE policy 6010 Section B.2 - Standards on Community Stability** that calls for the promotion of **contiguous communities and community stability when assigning school districts through the consideration of:**

- a) School feeds that encourage keeping students together from one school to the next – Kids in our neighborhood will still have the same Elementary and Middle schools.
- b) Keeping areas together that are made up of contiguous communities or neighborhoods – Our neighborhood is a single community with single access road but made up of two polygons that would be split into two separate high schools.

- c) Frequency with which any one student is reassigned -  
**Because my family has moved, our kids have changed schools twice within the last two years and would change for a third time under this proposed plan.**

Our Polygon 1200 is located the furthest away from Wilde Lake of any of the neighborhoods being relocated to Wilde Lake HS which is the eighth furthest away high school from Polygon 1200. Driving distances from our neighborhood to:

1. River Hill: 4.3 miles, 14 minute drive by car with no traffic - Current High School
2. Glenelg: 5 miles, 8 minute drive by car
3. Atholton: 7.8 miles, 16 minute drive by car
4. Reservoir: 8.7 miles, 20 minute drive by car
5. Centennial: 9 miles, 26 minute drive by car
6. Marriotts Ridge: 9.3 miles, 18 minute drive by car
7. Hammond: 9.7 miles, 16 minute drive by car
8. Wilde Lake: 10 miles, 22 minute drive by car - We have been redistricted to Wilde Lake!

Why is our neighborhood being split in half and part of our neighborhood assigned to one of the closest high schools to Glenelg in polygon 200 and the other part sent to the furthest away to Wilde Lake HS in polygon 1200? Today both polygons go to the same Elementary, Middle and River Hill high school. Why not let our neighborhood kids to continue going to River Hill or if redistricting must happen then both Polygons should go to the same Glenelg HS which is much closer and both high schools are considered under capacity?

Today my kids I get up around 5:50am to catch a 6:30am school bus. Their morning commute to River Hill takes around 45 minutes and if they have to go to Wilde Lake HS they would be driven past their current River Hill HS and then continue for another 15 to 20 minutes. This one-way commute could turn into an hour or more and that means time lost for studying or sleeping.

If Board of Education wants to integrate schools then allow this through a choice based program like JumpStart that integrates schools and communities through choices given to students, and not by forcing kids to change schools, miss school friends, and loose a sense of togetherness and community. Greater school integration programs like JumpStart would be ideal.

The best thing that could happen is for is for our kids to remain in a school that is closest to us. Next simplest solution is to move our Polygon 1200 to Glenelg HS which also the school for the other half of our neighborhood (Polygon 200). Glenelg is much closer and is also considered underutilized. Since there are seven high schools much closer to us compared to Wilde Lake, why make our kids travel so far away? Allowing us to remain in our current schools would be ideal, but there are also other alternatives to the currently proposed redistricting plan.

I sincerely ask you and urge you to please vote against this redistricting plan.

Best Regards,

Andrew Hlasko  
13010 Red Maple Way  
Clarksville, MD 21029  
Polygon 1200

Dear Board of Education Members:

I am writing in opposition to the Superintendent's current redistricting plan and specifically its effects on our neighborhood located within polygon 1200. As you are aware, the Superintendent's plan calls for some of our students to be redistricted from River Hill High School (RHHS) to Wilde Lake High School (WLHS), and others to Glenelg High School (GHS.) This plan, if approved, would essentially divide our community in half. A community with only one common road in and out...what many have referred to as a land island.

There are many reasons to reconsider this plan. The first in my mind and most importantly is the fragmenting of a community. Many of the students in our polygon are close friends and neighbors. They play on the same sports teams, enroll in the same academic and extra-curricular activities, and are building lifelong relationships. To divide them in schools so far apart will create a strain on those relationships. Those students won't be able to enroll in the same after school activities, and it's likely they will have trouble building lasting relationships with children from Wilde Lake's neighborhoods because of the distance. A student's life is extremely busy these days and spending extra time on a bus, getting up early to catch the same bus, will limit their ability to be involved in many enriching after school activities. The additional commute time could be over an hour each day. In addition, having a student at WLHS will limit a parent's involvement in their education. It will be harder for a parent to schedule conferences or attend meetings at the school because they will have to take additional time off work. The biggest impact of this will be the fact the Board would be going in direct violation of BOE's policy 6010 calling for contiguous communities and promotion of community stability...

**“Community Stability. Where reasonable, school attendance areas should promote a sense of community in both the geographic place (e.g., neighborhood or place in which a student lives) and the promotion of a student from each school level through the consideration of:**

- a. **Feeds that encourage keeping students together from one school to the next. For example, avoiding feeds of less than 15% at the receiving school.**
- b. **Areas that are made up of contiguous communities or neighborhoods.”**

All of my above comments would be supported by this line of thinking.

The next reason for reconsideration would be environmental and financial impacts on the county. Multiple buses would need to run near identical routes increasing fuel costs and emissions. This would lead to increased maintenance costs as well. More drivers will also be required because again the routes are nearly duplicate.

Furthermore, it is my understanding a lot of this redistricting is driven by the Superintendent's desire to balance the ratio of FARM students across the county. It doesn't make sense to adversely affect some students to achieve this. Take some of that transportation money that would be spent on additional busing and apply it to the schools in need of more FARM support. Alternatively, bus any children that need that support to another school to balance the numbers, but don't penalize other children to do it.

The Board of Education has a responsibility to provide a safe and nurturing educational environment to the best of their ability. You have a responsibility to promote well being and equity among students. Students should absolutely have the right to a quality education, and if it means they need to attend a different school then so be it. However, offering support to one group of students at the expense of another's is contradictory to this effort. Let's look at how to help the students in need of a better learning environment or help with getting a healthy meal without splitting up other communities.

In closing, I'd like to reiterate that Superintendent Michael Martirano's should be reconsidered for many reasons. The impact of his proposed redistricting will have detrimental effects on our students, community, and environment while not providing many benefits to those intended to receive them. The best option would be to leave our neighborhood and polygon 1200 at RHHS. The second best option would be to move all of our students to GHS rather than dividing them. At least bus routes would be shared, commute times would be lessened compared to WLHS, and students could thrive with their neighbors. Both RHHS and GHS are currently under-utilized so send students from over capacity schools there, but don't send our students away. I urge you to vote NO on the Superintendent's current plan.

Sincerely,

Glenn C. Bowman

Polygon 1200 resident

13060 Twelve Hills Road

Clarksville, MD 21029

09/19/19

**Dear Howard County School System Board of Education:**

The proposed Howard County Public School System redistricting plan violates Policy 6010 Standards on Community Stability – “school attendance areas should promote a sense of community and represent contiguous communities or neighborhoods.”

Our neighborhood is bound by a single entry, Linden Church Road, accessible only from Ten Oaks Road which crosses over Rt. 32 or from Rt. 32 directly. There are no other through roads through our neighborhood. HCPSS establishes our neighborhood to consist of two Polygons: Polygon 1200 (North of Linden Church Rd: Greenberry, Twelve Hills, Chapel Chase) and Polygon 200 (South of Linden Church: Broadwater Ln, Chamblis Dr).

With the Superintendents current proposal, Polygon 1200 would be sent to Wilde Lake High School, while proposing Polygon 200 be sent to Glenelg High School. All other Polygons connecting to our access road are proposed to be sent to Glenelg High School or River Hill High School. Isolating Polygon 1200 clearly violates BOE policy 6010.

**In addition to this violation:**

- 1) Polygon 1200 would be isolated from other neighborhoods sent to Wilde Lake High School.
  - a. No common roads or direct routes connect our neighborhood to those neighborhoods proposed to attend Wilde Lake High School.
- 2) Polygon 1200 would incur a significant, unnecessary increase in time spent on bus transportation by being sent to Wilde Lake High School.
  - a. There are no direct routes to Wilde Lake High School from Polygons 1200 & 200.
  - b. Currently, Polygon 1200 & 200 spend 40 minutes riding 4 miles to River Hill High
  - c. Wilde Lake is an additional 7 miles with a conservative estimate of a 90 min. ride
- 3) There are 7 High Schools closer to Polygon 1200 than Wilde Lake High School
  - a. River Hill High and Glenelg High remain under capacity and are closer
- 4) A large portion of the community identity within Polygon 1200 will be lost.
  - a. Our sense of community will be split apart as Polygon 1200 students would attend different schools than our nearest neighbors.
  - b. No other polygon from Polygon 1200's elementary would feed to WLH.
  - c. Our children's existing relationships would become strained from significantly reduced interactions.

Logically, adjustments to the redistricting proposal need to reflect that students in Polygon 1200 stay at River Hill High School (an under-capacity school) in tandem with Polygon 200. Alternatively, Polygon 1200 could join Polygon 200 by attending Glenelg High School while grandfathering current High School

students at River Hill High School. Otherwise, all redistricting should be delayed until High School 13 is open and a new feasibility study is consulted along with plausible bus routes.

Thank-you,

Michelle Reuster  
Polygon 1200  
Clarksville, MD 21029

 Reply all | 
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## Opposition to the HoCo School Redistricting



Shikha Khosla <shikha4@yahoo.com>

Wed 9/18, 8:55 PM

redistricting@hcpss.org; mavis\_ellis@hcpss.org; kirsten\_coombs@hcpss.org; vicky\_+1 more ✕

 Reply all | 
 

School Redistricting



Action Items



Hello everyone,

My family and I have been proud Howard County residents for over 6 years. We moved to the area for the great schools and community feel of the county. Our kids have made wonderful friends in elementary school who are now with them in middle school.

While we have not been impacted by this redistricting plan, we are very concerned about this experiment in socialism and the strain it will cause on children who will have to endure longer commutes, will be separated from their long time friends as well as the impact it will on communities.

### Martirano's Proposal Fails to Meet Policy 6010 Standards

Martirano's proposal suggests moving 7,396 students to relieve overcrowded schools and bring equity to Howard County. The improvements in both of these areas are negligible, in particular, when weighed with the thousands of students moved in drastic ways across the county. I urge the BOE to compare Martirano's plan against the standards of Policy 6010 to determine whether this proposal should even be considered.

As human beings we all have personal feelings regarding the redistricting process, overcrowded schools, and the inequitable distribution of housing in Howard County. As an elected Board of Education member, we implore you to leave your personal feelings out of this process. Instead, we ask that you represent the people of Howard County who elected you. Listen to our feedback on Martirano's proposal, the Feasibility Study Options, and your own suggestions in the coming months at your Board meetings. We additionally urge you to use Policy 6010 to weigh the positives and negatives for all options.

Policy 6010 Section IV.B outlines the three main areas of consideration that the BOE should work to address in the redistricting process. The first is facility utilization. Policy 6010 states: "Where reasonable, school attendance area utilization should stay within the target utilization for as long a period of time as possible through the consideration of: the efficient use of space, long range enrollment factors, minimizing capital and operating costs, and walkers and bus riders". Martirano's plan fails on all counts when looking at Policy 6010 standards related to Facility Utilization. It increases transportation costs, it moves walkers to bus riders on long commutes, and it does not bring a significant amount of school attendance areas to target utilization. The proposal reduces the number of elementary schools that exceed 110% capacity from 21 to 16 while leaving 5 elementary schools below 90%, which is unimpressive. In fact, according to the forecasts in Martirano's proposal more schools will be above target

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the middle school level, 1,351 students are proposed to move achieving a 0% change in the number of over capacity schools in 1 year. Martirano's proposal moves 7,396 students in an effort that fails to bring schools any meaningful change in target utilization! The moves in Martirano's proposal are not reasonable!

Second, Policy 6010 directs the board to consider community stability. Policy 6010 Section IV.C: Community Stability states: "Where reasonable, school attendance areas should promote a sense of community in both the geographic place (e.g., neighborhood or place in which a student lives) and the promotion of a student from each school level through the consideration of: keeping strong feeds from one school level to the next (less than a 15% feed is unacceptable), keeping contiguous communities or neighborhoods together, and minimizing the frequency with which any one student is reassigned." Martirano's plan fails on all counts when looking at Policy 6010 standards related to Community Stability. "Community", as defined by Policy 6010, is "a geographic place, specifically the neighborhood or place in which a student lives". Martirano's proposal tears apart communities all over Howard County, negatively affecting families across every socioeconomic level. We cannot allow this to happen! In addition, many of these moves significantly weaken the feeds from one school to the next, and in three years these same students and many of their peers will again be at risk of disruptive school changes during the next redistricting.

Third, Policy 6010 directs the board to consider demographic characteristics. Policy 6010 Section IV.D. Demographic Characteristics of Student Population states: "Where reasonable, school attendance areas should promote the creation of a diverse and inclusive student body at both the sending and receiving schools." Martirano's proposal fails to adequately balance FARM data across Howard County when compared to the number of students moved. There are schools where the plan moves hundreds of students and achieves less than a 5% change in students who receive FARMs. There are overcapacity schools with low FARMs numbers that have no proposed moves of polygons to adjacent underutilized schools with high FARMs numbers. There are significant island moves that require transportation past multiple closer schools with capacity, and in some cases, unreasonable routes because of geographical barriers. Some examples include a West Friendship neighborhood being sent to Bushy Park Elementary, a Swansfield community neighborhood being sent to Clarksville Elementary, a Pointers Run community neighborhood sent to Swansfield Elementary, a Fulton Elementary community neighborhood sent to Laurel Woods Elementary, a Stevens Forest Elementary community neighborhood sent to Bryant Woods, a Clarksville Middle community neighborhood sent to Harpers Choice Middle, a Harper's Choice community neighborhood sent to Clarksville Middle, a River Hill High School community neighborhood sent to Wilde Lake High School, and pretty much all of the gerrymandered Atholton High School attendance area, which also impacts the Hammond and Oakland Mills neighborhoods.

When making moves like these, Policy 6010 IV.D specifically states that consideration should be given to "the number of students moved, taking into account the correlation between the number of students moved, the outcomes of other standards achieved in Section IV.B. (Facility Utilization) and the length of time those results are expected to be maintained." When we weigh the demographic changes in this proposal against the number of students moved, the negligible impact on facility utilization, and the short length of time these changes are expected to be maintained, Martirano's proposal fails! Only 10 out of 74 elementary, middle, and high schools see more than a 10% change in FARMs rates in Martirano's proposal. Applying an even lower criteria of 5% or greater change in FARMs rates, only 14 out of 74 schools in Howard County are affected. Negligible changes in facility utilization and negligible changes in FARMs rates at the cost of the redistricting 7,396 students does not meet the Standards for redistricting

9/23/2019

Opposition to the HoCo School Redistricting

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The bottom line is Martirano's proposal fails to meet Policy 6010 standards, and therefore the BOE should not consider the proposal during this redistricting process! The BOE must consider whether redistricting is even necessary at this time or if waiting 3 years is acceptable. If redistricting is necessary as deemed by the standards of Policy 6010, the BOE must only consider options that achieve the standards set forth in Policy 6010!

Sincerely  
Shikha Khosla

Sent from my iPhone

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## Opposition to Redistricting Proposal (Polygon 1200)



Tishna Singh <tishnasingh@yahoo.com>

Tue 9/17, 10:29 PM

redistricting@hcpss.org; Kittleman, Trent Delegate; Hester, Katie Fry Senator; Miller, ✓

 Reply all | 

School Redistricting

Dear Howard County Board of Education,

I am writing in opposition of HCPSS Superintendent's proposed redistricting plan for Polygon 1200 because it does not align with the guidelines set in HCPSS Policy6010.

In order to find solutions for students faced with socio-economic challenges, it would require not just the engagement of the school system, but other agencies that have influence over housing, healthcare, food security, transportation, economic development, and so forth. Integrated solutions will likely yield to a better chance of measurable improvement, as opposed to busing a child away or busing new peers in to a school, as per this proposal.

There are many issues and possible solutions highlighted in the June 2019 Equity Report, which may contain alternatives in achieving improvements to challenges, where the redistricting proposal has gaps. Although that report may also include analytical gaps, I would urge you to review it once again in order to evaluate whether it may contain some more viable options towards improving outcomes for our county's children, and specifically those receiving FARM support.

Solutions with a full commitment to improving would require being resourced appropriately, possibly through more investment in teachers, support staff, programming, or infrastructure. What will those resources be?

The exponential increase in commute times as a result of the proposed redistricting plan are neither healthy for children nor their families. It is important for parents or caregivers to engage with their children, in order to best support them in their academic and social health. If this plan were implemented, for working parents that have children with commutes that will be taking 1.5 to 2 hours per day, like for mine in Polygon 1200, one of the costs would be a reduction in this valuable time for family support. I would have less time to ensure that I have a good understanding of my children's academic and social stability with the limitations that the proposed plan would have on my family, and I suspect that I would not be alone in this upset to family.

High school can be a vulnerable time for children in their development, so it is critical for parents and caregivers to be closely engaged daily, and where possible, to monitor and shape a healthy environment. Being deliberate and thoughtful about the potential impact of lengthy commute times would be critical to the success of any future plan.

Physical and mental health wellness should be factored into children's well-being and into the implications of this plan. I am unable to understand whether there was consideration given to these factors because there appear to be significant gaps in logic and reason. Wellness is important factor in order to cultivate an environment for a child to have academic rigor, be able to manage stress, and should be a shared responsibility for all of us towards developing our young people. Was the trade-off in planning meant to expect that our children would have to cut into times for meals or sleep? I wonder how our school system that has until now had acumen in this regard, seemed to have missed this in its analysis, which affects my children and those of the Polygon in which we live.

Extra-curricular after-school enrichment activities would not be as equitably accessible to all students, and especially doubtful for my children if redistricted. For those children not on an after-school-hours bus route, with access to public transportation, or on a walkable route, parents must arrange for transportation for their children from practices and other enrichment activities. Often, those rides are shared with parents from the same or neighboring neighborhoods - their community. The impact of this proposal would not only limit school-sponsored activities, but tutoring and other lessons/activities for which time is needed after school. For those living in Polygon 1200, there will be loss of community, significant obstacles to ride-sharing, as well as the increased distance/commute time, which would further interfere with the time needed for academic assignments. Under the proposed plan, the neighboring Polygons are either assigned to different schools, or do not have shared roads, further complicating transportation. There were options in the 2019 Feasibility Study that were more favorable for Polygon 1200 children, and would not have introduced several of the challenges to isolate half of our neighborhood.

Reply all | Delete | Junk | ...



I understand the challenges that the proposed plan is trying address and have during high school personally experienced an attempted solution to bring equitable socio-economic distribution and manage over-crowding, by attending a magnet school in Maryland.

As an alternative to forced busing, there must be more dignified and civil approaches to providing opportunity for students, cause less disruption to children and their families, and allow for choice opportunities for enrichment and academic excellence in the Howard County Schools. None of us should be satisfied in setting any goals for our children that may only strive for mediocrity or worse, nor for the sole reason that there have been past failed attempts to redistrict.

I would like to recommend that those who helped develop the Superintendent's current proposed plan, be redeployed for their time and expertise to more thoroughly evaluate the opportunities or weaknesses in magnet programming or immersion, amongst other models, to come up with innovative solutions that would provide flexibility to applicants from areas with a higher share of FARM-eligible children, or in those areas which are overcrowded. It may be helpful to look to neighboring counties and others across the country, where similar programs may exist and have achieved positive results, in order to learn from and subsequently develop the best possible options for Howard County.

Today's children receiving FARMS are not forced into segregated areas by HCPSS, as some of the undertones of the redistricting proposal and CR112, proposed by some of our County Councilmembers, suggest. FARM recipients typically reside in concentrated areas because there are other factors of daily living that are more accessible in some areas versus others, such as affordable housing, public transportation, and more opportunity for employment versus those that can be found in rural areas. So, students with or without FARMS have typically been assigned to the school that is in optimal proximity to their residence/polygon. The recent press release from Councilpersons Rigby, Jung & Jones, was disturbing to me. It reinforced the adversarial and political undertones of the issue – and solidified for me that neither the redistricting plan nor CR112 would bring value to children receiving FARMS or to those who do not.

As you listen to live testimonies and participate in work sessions, I ask that you all envision and only endorse well-informed solutions that include the goal to further enrich all children and families, and appropriately align with guidance policies. Include with that the vision of exceeding the current status of state-wide and national school rankings for which so many of you, our children, and residents of Howard County are proud. I believe that implementing the current proposal would be reckless and only capable of the opposite.

Please take time to closely examine the policy guidance of Policy6010 alongside the proposed redistricting plan, and how misaligned they are for Polygon 1200. Please do not vote in favor of the proposed redistricting plan as it is written.

Sincerely,

Tishna Dhaliwal

Reply all | Delete | Junk | ...



## Oppose Dr. Martirano's Redistricting Proposal



J Pat &lt;jpfrommaryland@gmail.com&gt;

Mon 9/16, 10:19 PM

redistricting@hcpss.org; Hester, Katie Fry Senator

Reply all |

School Redistricting

Greetings BOE,

We are residents of Polygon 1200 which is being redistricted to Wilde Lake. We are against th

1. Wilde Lake is the eighth furthest away high school from Polygon 1200.

We are 2.5 miles from River Hill (our current school).

We are 3.2 miles from Glenelg.

We are 5.5 miles from Centennial.

We are 5.9 miles from Atholton.

We are 6.6 miles from Reservoir.

We are 7.3 miles from Oakland Mills.

We are 7.5 miles from Hammond.

We are 8.3 miles from Wilde Lake.

2. The significant increase in travel time will negatively impact the students as well as the
3. This redistricting plan violates BOE's own Policy 6010 Standards on Community and represent contiguous communities or neighborhoods. Our neighborhood with its Linden Church; Greenbery, 12 Hills, Linden Chapel) sent to Wilde Lake and South of one neighborhood with a single access road that is being split in two in clear violation of community stability
4. Both River Hill and Glenelg are under capacity and located much closer to us.

Jigish Patel

Nayantara Patel

 Reply all | 
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  Junk | 




## LETTER FROM A CONCERNED HOWARD COUNTY PARENT ON HOWARD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL REDISTRICTING



Maryann Santolaja Samonte <samontem@gmail.com>

Sun 9/15, 6:19 PM

Contact@maryland.gov; redistricting@hcpss.org; superintendent@hcpss.org; dyun ✕

 Reply all | 

School Redistricting

Flag for follow up. Start by Monday, September 16, 2019. Due by Monday, September 16, 2019.

There are some in the Howard County community (most notably the Superintendent, several County Council members, and the County Executive) that subscribe to the notion that the county is segregated, and that clearly this is having an adverse effect on the education of the county's children. Their solution is to further divide communities and play musical chairs with 1 in every 7 county school children.

From the other side of the Howard County management's collective mouths, we are told at every opportunity (particularly campaign stops) that EVERY school in Howard County is a great school.

So which is it?

The only thing blatantly clear is that we, the taxpayers that all of these officials supposedly represent, are collectively confused by their mixed messaging.

If the collective political body is truly interested in equity, then the FAIR and EQUITABLE course of action is to determine what the actual situation of education in the county is. If Howard County management wants to mitigate any inequities in the system, they must first understand what level of equity they are starting from. There is only one way to do that, and it has nothing to do with FARM percentages.

Before any redistricting is enacted, the baseline must be understood by all; particularly the population that Howard County management works for and is ultimately accountable to. This includes EVERYONE, not just select segments of the population. After all, that is the basis for equity, fairness, diversity and inclusion.....isn't it?

**It's time for the Howard County Public School System budget to be independently audited.** The audit firm must be selected by an independent (preferably the Governor), and should be tasked to deliver a full report on the Howard County school system. Most importantly, the full report with supporting detail must be made available to the public. Among other things, there are two key pieces of data that must be reported:

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X

where the dollars are coming from, and who is providing them. Any demographic discriminators that will be used to determine potential changes must also be represented as discriminators in this accounting.

An accounting of the distribution of those funds across the school system, BY SCHOOL. It should be visible to all where and how these (OUR) dollars are getting spent. The budget summary that is currently made public to the taxpayers is woefully inadequate in this regard. Any demographic discriminators that will be used to determine potential changes must also be represented as discriminators in this accounting.

Along with this information, we need answers to some key questions:

Is the curriculum in high % FARM schools different than low % FARM schools?

Are the teachers in high % FARM schools less qualified?

Are the staff in high % FARM schools working off a different pay scale?

Are the opportunities in high % FARM schools somehow less?

Do extra-curricular opportunities vary across the county?

Is the grading structure different? Does a 4.0 at one high school not equal another?

Are SAT and ACT scores from certain county high schools somehow de-rated on college applications?

Do high % FARM schools have an asterisk next to them somewhere with a caveat that reads "this is not really a Howard County school"

If the answer to all of these questions is "NO", then I ask our elected officials to explicitly detail how we currently deviate from the professed HCPSS Definition of Equity:

*"Providing the access, opportunities and supports needed to help students, families and staff reach their full potential by removing barriers to success that individuals face. It does not mean equal or giving everyone the same thing."*

If the answer to any of those questions was "YES", then that would lead me to believe that there is indeed inequity in our school system. Since Howard County taxpayers are all treated equally, (ie: percentage of property taxes we pay) then this inequity can only be created by the operators of the school system themselves. If this is the case, then we should be addressing this as our collective problem, and require our elected officials to do their jobs as opposed to obfuscating the issue by gerrymandering the school districts of the constituents they are supposed to serve.

For starters, one could imagine a useful portion of the \$43M transportation budget required to bus our children past the schools in their neighborhoods could instead be utilized to directly support the teachers and the schools that demonstrate a need for it.

9/23/2019

LETTER FROM A CONCERNED HOWARD COUNTY PARENT ON HOWARD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL REDISTRICTING

 Reply all |   Delete  Junk |  ...



I live in polygon 195. My family is not directly affected by the redistricting proposal by the superintendent but many of our friends and their children are. As I read thru the proposal, there are just many red flags that went up and sounded the alarm.

--

Mary Ann Clapper  
Polygon 195

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this letter to oppose Dr. Martirano's school redistricting proposal. The proposal is based on spending more money on busing students to farther schools. My family has been in Clarksville for more than 10 years. My older daughter graduated from Clarksville Elementary and Clarksville Middle. We have been always proud to be part of the river hill community.

We live in polygon 1085 (Chapel Woods neighborhood), 0.7 mile away from CES and Riverhill Highschool. The current proposal will move us from CMS to Harpers Choice Middle School, and from Riverhill High to Wilde Lade Highschool. I think the proposal is insane.

- 1.) Proximity - we are 0.7 miles to River Hill HS, and 4.6 miles to Wilde Lake High. Our neighborhood is the closest to river hill high among all affected polygons. our neighboring Polygon #185 (Meadow Vista neighborhood) is still zoned for River Hill. Not all Affected polygons can say that they neighbor a Polygon that is zoned for RHHS. I would be willing to bet that the number of kids being affected in Chapel Woods is a fairly small portion of that 478 number. It does not make any sense to redistrict our neighborhood who goes to CES which is right next door to RHHS, to a much farther away Wilde Lake High. Instead of attending the school less than one mile away, our kids will have to take school bus to a much farther school. Right now, with 0.7 mile, my daughter has to take the school bus at 6:50 am to catch school time at 7:25 am. With FIVE times of longer distance, I cannot imagine how early she needs to get up to take school bus, and how long she will spend on the bus.
  - a. For highschoolers, sleeping is very important. Now with longer bus time, they will have to sacrifice precious sleeping time. I doubt our kids will perform well with lack of sleep.
  - b. Longer bus time will increase chance of traffic accidents and make traffic on 108 worse.
  - c. More practically, the proposal will make our afternoon pick up more difficult. Like other high schoolers, my daughter has a few after school activities. As working parents, we cannot leave work early to pick her up from her activities every day. My daughter has been asking her friends to give her a ride, or parents arrange carpools, or she walks home on 108. With the only neighborhood being taken out of RHHS, it will be really hard for us to find carpools. We do not have the luxury to quit job and stay home taking care of kids. We need our paychecks for our mortgage and to raise kids.
  - d. The county will spend a much higher budget on transportation. Two years ago, some concerned parents were complaining their kids get up too early and not get enough sleep. The school start time survey the county did never took effect because we do NOT have enough budget for more school buses. With Dr. Martirano's school redistricting proposal, where will the extra transportation money come from? Instead of using this extra money to delay high school starting time to make sure students have enough sleep, Dr. Martirano's school redistricting proposal will force students to get up early and take longer bus ride.
- 2.) Student performance - the Proposal has 478 kids moving from River Hill to other schools (Wilde Lake and Gleneig), this represents nearly 35% of the total current enrollment at the high school - a truly staggering number. High school students already spent a lot of efforts on their school activities, clubs, athletic teams. My daughter is in River hill marching band. And she put a lot of efforts on her club which she will elect to be president. With the new proposal, my daughter will have to give up what she built at RHHS and start from scratch at a new school. My daughter is

just one out of the 478 who will be taken out of RHHS. With lack of sleep, adjusting to a new environment, they will not perform well. This is not fair for high school students who will apply college soon.

- 3.) Student numbers – The reason for redistricting is to solve the overcrowd of some schools. River hill high is under capacity. Moving students out of river hill is not making any sense.
- 4.) Factor –Dr. Martirano’s school redistricting proposal is aiming for equity. With the proposal, FARM rate for river hill high school will be from less than 5% to 5%. The proposal with all this insane upheaval that will devastate the community does not even achieve the “equity” goal. It is not making sense to move students out of river hill.
- 5.) Temporay nature – with the new high school ready in 2023, there will be another major redistricting of high schools in 2 years. Stability is very important for high school students.
- 6.) Community – with the proposal, the entire pheasant ridge community will be divided into Clarksville middle and Harpers Choice middle. My neighborhood (polygon 1185) will be the only neighborhood that will not go to RH among the CES students. Our kids will no longer go to the same schools together with their friends one block away. We will be isolated from river hill community. Community cohesion and parental involvement have a much bigger impact on a school’s performance than money redistribution and attempts for social reforms.

Back in July this year, I attended the neighborhood meeting for feasibility study. The top most important factors that the vast majority of the community believes are “transportation considerations”, “keeping feeds of students together from one school to the next”, “maintaining contiguous communities or neighborhoods” and “frequency with which any one student is reassigned”. Dr. Martirano’s school redistricting proposal did NOT consider any of these factors.

We should have the right to go to school next to our neighborhood! That is why we are here, living less than one mile away from RHHS.

Thank you!

Rong Guo

Polygon 1185

Yinqi Zhang, Ph.D.

6133 Rippling Water Walk

Clarksville, MD 21029

September 3, 2019

Dear Dr. Martirano,

Thank you for reading this letter. It was my pleasure seeing you at RHHS on Aug 27. Thank you for getting out of the car and talking to the crowd.

I am a resident of Riverhill community and our family resides in polygon 188. Although my family is not redistricted under the proposal, I am writing this short letter to second all of Mrs. Julie's points in her letter to you. In addition, I hope you will consider the impact on commute time for those students who are redistricted to a school further away from home (and higher transportation cost) as well as the emotional impact on many young children who are going to be separated from their friends as a result of the current redistricting plan. My son is very sad that nearly all his friends will attend a different middle school under the proposal.

Thank you for your time!

Yinqi

Matt Slatkin  
mattslatkin@hotmail.com  
Polygon 1256

My name is Matt Slatkin. I reside in Polygon 1259, and am speaking on polygon 1256, my neighbors who live across the street from me. I teach at a Title 1 school in Montgomery County. If the County offered to bus 120 affluent students to our school causing overcrowding me and the community where I teach would say thanks but no thanks.

- I'm sorry, but bussing polygon 1256 to the 8th closest school to Maple Lawn and removing children from the school in their own neighborhood is an example of extreme ideology. This is not an example of equity. I would be remiss not to point out a clear example where HCPS is not meeting its obligation to equity. MCPS provides students an opportunity to participate on 4 competitive Sports teams and compete against other schools in Middle School at no cost. Howard County Middle Schools only offer 1 competitive Middle School Sports basketball team. The problem is the teams are run through the Howard County Youth Program!! The cost is a staggering \$400. Middle School Sports should be run through the Howard County Public Schools Athletic Department and not by a money making outside organization and the cost should be 0!! This is a clear example of inequality in Howard County's school system that should have been addressed years ago, certainly should not exist in 2019, and can easily be implemented next year.
- October is mental health awareness month. The nervousness and anxiety the children in polygon 1256 are going through is real and should be taken seriously and not scoffed at.
- As a member of my schools leadership team I can tell you that bullying is a huge problem on busses and drastically increasing bus rides will exacerbate the problem.

The following is in an email shared by a member of the AAC committee to the Maple Lawn Community. "We were asked to review the Study and

provide feedback on the scenarios included. Of note there is no mention of Fulton ES in the study, so the move was developed between the end of AAC meetings and the submission of the superintendent's plan."

Board Members, please be practical and reasonable in your decision making process.

Superintendent Dr. Martirano, I have gone through your twitter feed and I admire your passion, energy, and commitment to education. It is reassuring to see that you take time to get out to the schools and connect with the students, teachers, and parents that you serve. Respectfully, I believe if you were more familiar with Howard County you would have realized that Maple Lawn is intertwined and not included 1256 in your proposal.

It's not best educational practices to break up Maple Lawn and redistrict polygon 1256. We are one community that go to the schools that are inside of our Community.

1300 homes fill the Maple Lawn community in sort of a U shape. At the tips of the U there is literally a walking path connecting both ends of the community to the School Campuses. The School campuses are in the Middle of the planned Maple Lawn Community.

Here is the beautiful thing about the children attending Fulton Elementary and Laurel Woods Elementary. Students from both schools will go to one of the most diverse High Schools anywhere together at Reservoir High School.

- I strongly urge the school board to swiftly and unanimously remove polygon 1256 from the proposal at tomorrow's work session and stick to practical proposals that cause as little impact as possible to the students.

In Montgomery ~~the~~ Middle Schools students have the opportunity play for 4 MS sports teams and compete against

Cynthia Vaillancourt  
Katie Bennett  
11777 Farside Road  
Ellicott City, MD. 21042

Polygon 2176

About 17 years ago I watched my first Howard County redistricting process. We had only lived here a few years at that point.

And I heard the Superintendent at the time, John O'Rourke make a statement that made me feel positively ill.

That was that "no one should assume attendance at a particular school, even if you can see it from your front door".

I had seen this show before. We had lived in Wake County North Carolina for 8 years - and they were operating under the theory that they could continually "balance" demographics within their schools through an elaborate scheme of magnets, and home schools located far from neighborhoods. You could not choose your school or program by moving to a certain address --- and you had no real right of self determination for your childrens' school assignments other than private school.

The idea was that it would be possible to achieve racial and economic balance notwithstanding housing patterns or self selection. Student assignments were through an application process that could be weighted differently each year in order to account for changing demographics.

It was an extremely expensive plan, with transportation costs taking an enormous percentage of the budget, along with a enormous student assignment office. I suppose it might have been arguably worth the expense if it had actually worked.

But in reality, it was not only a misery to live with, but it led to largely foreseeable "unintended consequences". While schools had base attendance area populations, the magnet programs also housed in those buildings were highly segregated. There was significant collusion with the application process giving folks with connections opportunities that others were denied. Most of the schools were running two distinctly different schools under the same roof - but were still able to claim balance and diversity.

Over time it became clear that it was an expensive experiment that did not deliver on its promise. Several years ago there was a sea change in the tolerance the community had for being perpetually jerked around via their children, and a new board of education eventually replaced the Superintendent and ended much of the existing program.

That took about 20 years from start to finish, with an entire generation of students and families significantly divided by whether they had been able to secure a fitting assignment for their children, or not.

Self determination is an extremely important component for the health and well being of individuals and families - not only in employment, and housing, but in their children's educational environments.

My family chose to exert its right of self determination by moving out of that county.

I would dare say most of the families in Howard County live or moved here in order to exert their own self determination over their childrens' education. In almost all cases, it would be possible to live elsewhere less expensively, in a bigger or nicer home, or more conveniently in some way. But folks have chosen to live here because they have prioritized the quality of life, and largely the high quality schools.

To HCPSS great credit, most people love their schools. No matter what other folks might consider the reputation or relative prestige of their school, they don't want to leave it - certainly not as a result of ill-considered or capricious government action.

In the multiple episodes of redistricting I have lived through as a citizen, and the 3 I participated in as a member of the Board of Education, there are several things that were clear, and continue to be true.

- People love their own schools
- People value community
- People value stability
- People understand that attendance areas must change when new schools open
- People advocate for what they believe is best for their own families - but understand and accept reasonable and logical decisions, even when it is not what they would have preferred
- People in HoCo are supportive of the school system, and want it to be successful whether they have students in it or not

I have grave concerns about the Superintendent's recommended plan.

I am in full support of the Board considering demographics, including the distribution of FARM qualified students among schools, when developing attendance areas. Certainly the Board should strive to balance populations as much as reasonably possible while still being respectful of the communities and citizens of the county.

I am very concerned that 7500 students are being proposed to move, while only about 10% of them impact FARM ratios.

- that in most cases at the high school level there is minimal impact along with significant disruption
- that there are numerous examples of nonFARM populations simply being swapped with other nonFARM populations without impacting capacities or ratios

But mostly I am very concerned about the opportunity lost is the board rushes into actions that are basically temporary in nature when there must be a significant and unavoidably large and disruptive redistricting in just a couple of years.

I am very concerned that the Board not lose the opportunity to leverage the interest in the community, and instead of increasing support for the school system, undermine it at a time when it is critical that the community support the increases in funding the system needs to even maintain current programming and levels of service.

I am aware of the threats that there will be legislation or litigation around disparities or capacity utilization, or attendance areas. I am hopeful the Board will proceed based on fact and data, and reason and logic.

I would like to see the Board reevaluate past decisions to not use the state rated capacities.

I would like the Board to keep in mind that any dollars diverted to buses will likely come at the expense of additional cuts to programs and staffing.

I would like the Board to consider that the needs of students impacted by poverty will follow them to their new schools, which will necessitate adding specialized staff to the receiving schools while maintaining the staff at the sending schools as well.

I asked the County Council whether they wanted to actually do something about achievement gaps and disparities, or if they just wanted to look like they were.

I am asking you all the same question.

If just moving populations around closed achievement gaps, then it would have worked in all the places that have already tried it.

The places that are making strides are doing all the things we already know will actually work, including

- birth -k high quality childcare and parent education
- wrap around service including mental health, and guidance counselors
- health and wellness access
- consistent and long term supports in and out of the classroom

I think it is pretty clear the community does not support the recommendation on the table, but it is also clear the community is interested in making plans to address all disparities.

However, If busing to achieve true balance of FARM ratios is what this Board chooses to do, then I have developed a scenario that puts all of the High schools between 19-30% Farms (except Marriots Ridge and Glenelg), and puts everyone between 95 and 112% capacity.

But that is not the system I want in my community, and I don't think it is what the rest of the community wants either.

Wake County, and other jurisdictions that have tried various busing and relocation schemes are not a blue print for how to close achievement gaps - they are a cautionary tale.

I have a lot of confidence in this Board's ability to develop reasonable and logical attendance areas that relieve the current overcrowding issues, while being sensitive to the other criteria in policy 6010, including improving - and not worsening - FARM qualified student distribution ratios, and respectful to the communities that have invested in Howard County and entrusted their children to us.

Thank you,  
Cindy Vaillancourt

Oral Testimony – October 15, 2019

Good Evening,

My name is Dr. Marianne Engel. I live in polygon 12-56. I have already submitted a written testimony, dated September 15, 2019 that you can find at the end of this document.

I understand that the redistricting plan was triggered due to overcrowding. The focus changed after the AAC meeting in July when the AAC suddenly decided that the focus should be on socioeconomic diversity and equity instead of overcrowding. So I would like to address both overcrowding and socioeconomic diversity/equity.

**Overcrowding:**

- (1) Dr. Tanisha Burks, the Principal of Fulton Elementary School, gave a presentation on the State of Fulton Elementary School (FES) at the Parent-Teacher Association meeting on September 25, 2019. During her talk, she mentioned that the school was overcapacity. However, she explained that:
  - a. FES is a school with a high motility-rate school, meaning students enroll and withdraw often during the academic year. While there were over 1,000 students at the beginning of the academic year, she mentioned that 47 students had since left the school.
  - b. The overcrowding does not take into account the multiple trailers, available on site.
  - c. Dr. Burks also mentioned how creative the school has been in finding solutions to accommodate the influx of students. For example, they freed a computer room to make a new classroom by distributing the computers in the classrooms instead.
  - d. Dr. Burks also mentioned that there were still other rooms available if the need arises.
- (2) The way that Maple Lawn was developed needs to be mentioned. Back in 1996, according to an article by the Baltimore Sun, Greenebaum Enterprises, who eventually developed Maple Lawn (polygons 115, 259, 1256, 1259), was already making a case that schools needed to be built for the upcoming residential development in the area. Fulton Elementary was built in 1997. Shortly after, Lime Kiln Middle School and Reservoir High School were built (1999 and 2002, respectively). Maple Lawn was then developed and the first house was built in the 2004-2005 timeframe. The very community that the current proposal is about to break was very thoughtfully developed. I am not saying that Maple Lawn is a better community than any others but I will say that this community should serve as an example to address overcrowding for upcoming residential development in Howard County. This is how it should be done: build the schools first and the community second.
- (3) I am attaching two maps: current map and proposed map. Hopefully, it will be obvious that the proposed plan breaks a perfect feed and in fact, creates a new feed that does not exist anywhere else in the county.

**Socioeconomic diversity and equity:**

- (1) During the same PTA meeting mentioned earlier, Dr. Burks showed that:
  - a. FARMS students scored at about 50% while non-FARMS students score at about 70% in ELA and
  - b. FARMS students scored at about 40% while non-FARMS students score at about 70% in Math.

These statistics show that the FARMS students perform at a lower score, regardless if they belong to a high or low performing school. This also shows that other factors need to take into account. I urge the Board of Education and the Superintendent to reach out to FARM families to ask what the *real* needs are. Trying to fix a problem without understanding what the needs are is not setting the plan for success.

- (2) My personal story shows that mixing wealthier families with underprivileged families does not fix socioeconomic diversity. It might even exacerbate it. I understand this is a sample of N=1 but again,

without the Board of Education and the Superintendent reaching out to FARM families, it is difficult to have more data points.

I was born and grew up in France. My mother never graduated high school. Her partner, who also raised me, was taken out of school and put to work when he was only 12 years old. When I was growing up, most often than not, we lived paycheck to paycheck.

I benefited from the free public-school system in a small town, located far away from Paris. I was always at the top of my class until I joined students in the French capital. Students of *much* wealthier families. Students who had been well prepared for the new academic year. When we started the year, they had already covered most of the program. I had not. They received the best grades in class. I was at the bottom. I can tell you from experience, it does not feel great to feel like you are never going to succeed. At the time, I was resentful. Two classmates of the same socioeconomic background and I never mingled with the wealthier families. We felt inadequate. Back then, I also naively thought that their success was only based on their parents' finances. I did not want to mingle with them. After a dreadful year, I switched schools in Paris and received a support system that allowed me to succeed. My grades went back up as my confidence grew and I eventually earned a Physics Ph.D.

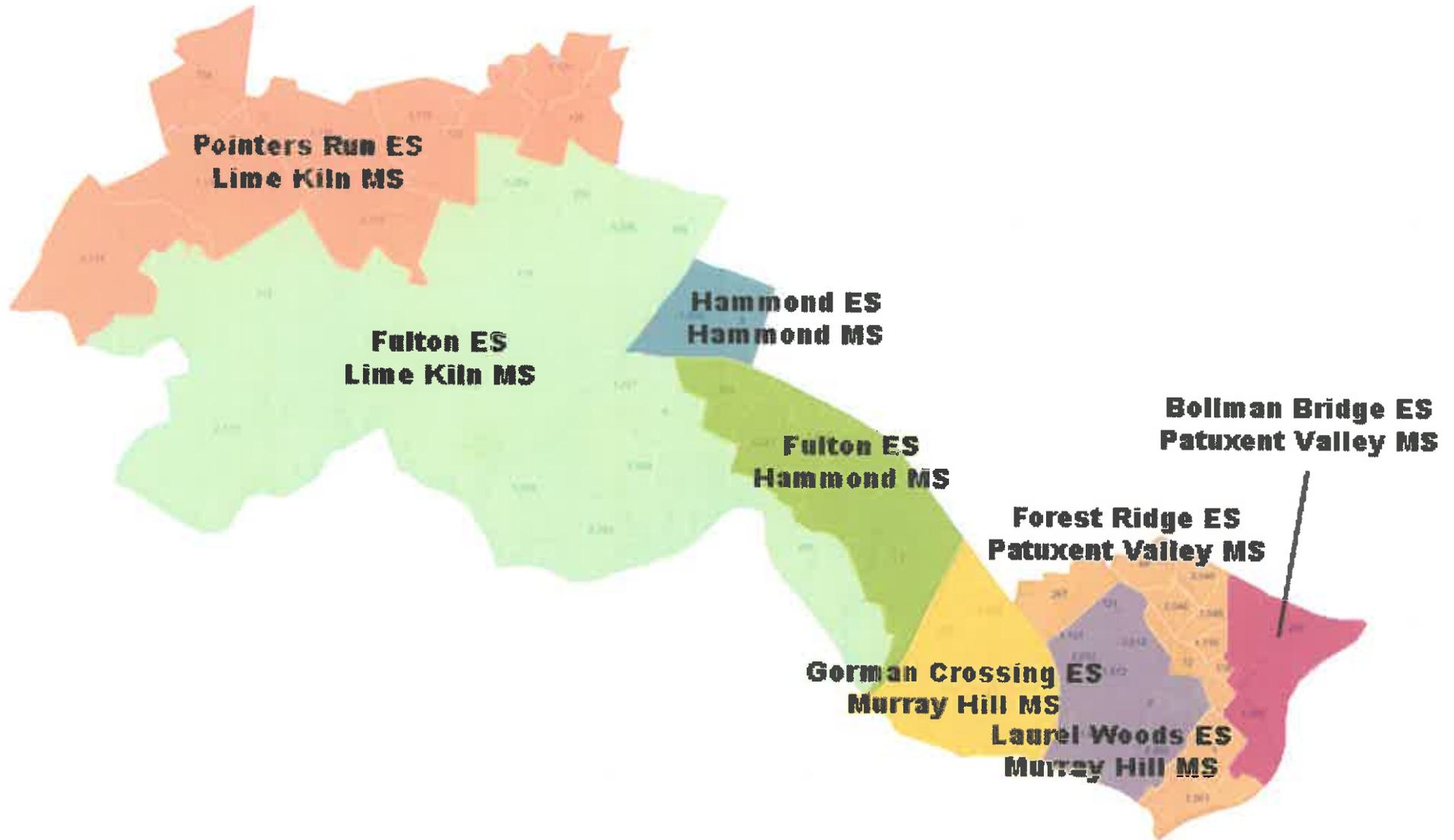
I commend the superintendent's goal to address overcrowding, socioeconomic differences, and lack of equity. But the current plan actually upsets me. While the numbers might look better *on paper*, in reality disparities will persist and might even become exacerbated. I know, I have been there. Families in need will still not have the resources they should receive. Use the money that would otherwise be spent on all the extra transportation proposed in the current plan to provide books, school supplies, free tutoring, mentoring, extracurricular activities, resources and a support system to families, and extra help to teachers and Title 1 schools.

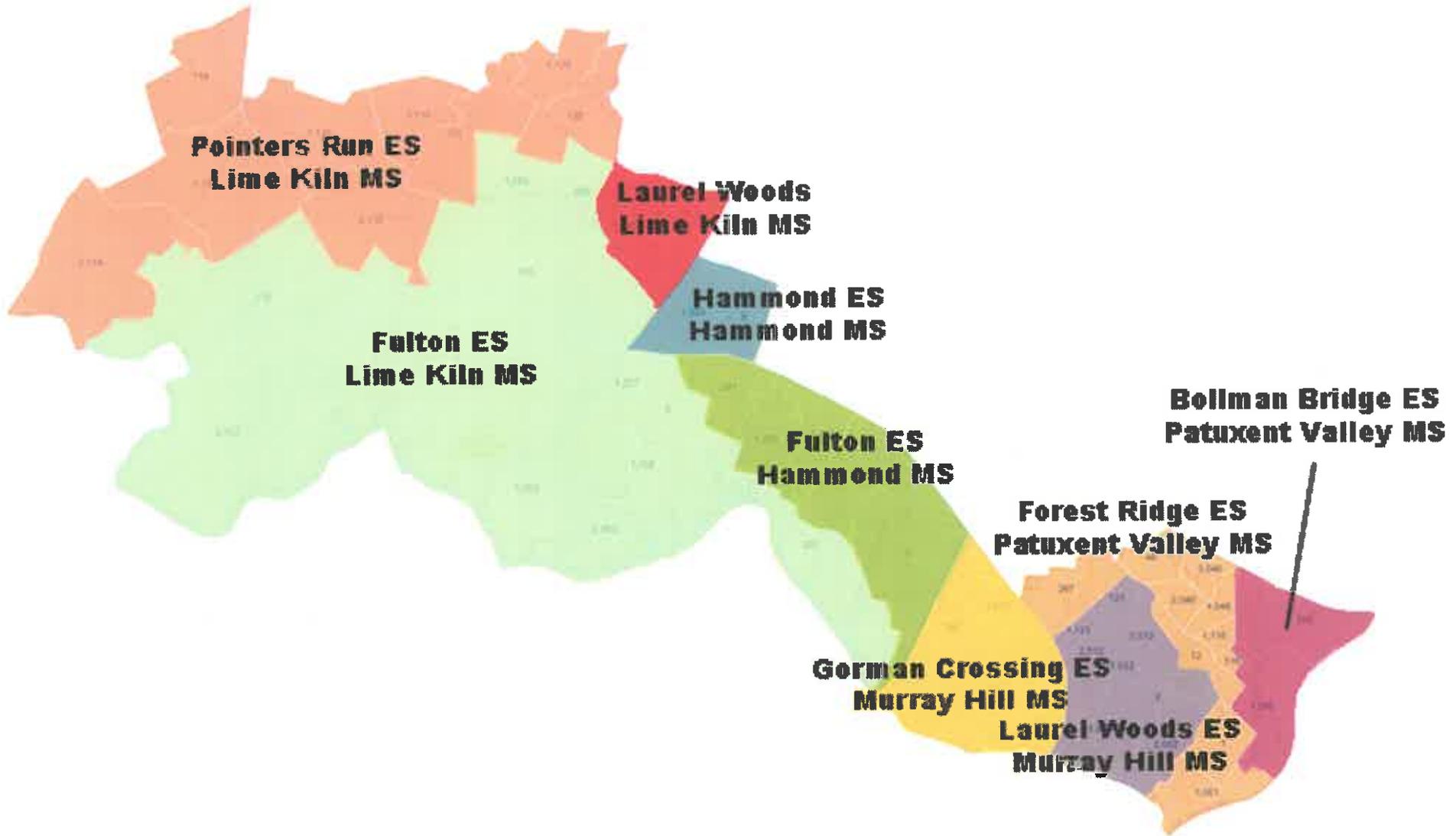
This is not the first redistricting. It's been done in the past at a much lower scale. If it had been proven successful, why have we not heard from any underprivileged families come to testify how the influx of wealthier families has been beneficial for the school? Their silence is deafening.

I have just come back from Grace Hopper Celebration, an annual conference that celebrates women in tech. This event celebrates underrepresentation, diversity and equity. Every year, I see one common theme: regardless of how anyone starts – and you do hear extremely sad stories, success happens through a role model, a support system, and/or through empowerment. Don't shuffle students. Instead, offer tools to create these opportunities. That is the key to success.

(3) Grace Hopper Celebration is a very good resource to address socioeconomic diversity and equity. I would recommend the Board of Education and the Superintendent to reach out to AnitaB.org and many resources are available.

I hope that the testimonies from Maple Lawn have shown the diversity of our community and that we are all to address the Superintendent's goals. We have tried our best to provide solutions. We hope that we can all work together in the future and find an alternative.





Dr. Marianne Engel  
7816 Tilghman Street  
Fulton, Maryland 20759  
Polygon #1256  
[do.not.redistrict.polygon.1256@gmail.com](mailto:do.not.redistrict.polygon.1256@gmail.com)  
410-929-3736

September 15, 2019

Howard County Board of Education  
10910 Clarksville Pike  
Ellicott City, Maryland 21042  
[redistricting@hcpss.org](mailto:redistricting@hcpss.org)

Dear Board Members:

My family resides in the Hillside district of Maple Lawn in Fulton (Polygon #1256) and I am writing to express my strong opposition to Superintendent Martirano's proposed redistricting plan.

The current proposal offers to redistrict Polygon 1256 from Fulton Elementary School (FES) to Laurel Woods Elementary School (LWES). I am sure that you have, by now, heard hundreds of times from other residents of Maple Lawn, how the proposal:

- completely disregards the results of the community surveys,
- splits our Maple Lawn community,
- violates several elements of the Board of Education's policy (Policy 6010 B.1.d, B.2.a, and B.2.b),
- increases the students' transportation time,
- prevents participation of the students in before and after-school programs,
- prevents participation of the parents in after-school activities, PTA meetings, volunteering at the school.

Maple Lawn is composed of five districts (Garden, Midtown West, Midtown, Hillside, and Westside). These few pictures show what the proposal would do.

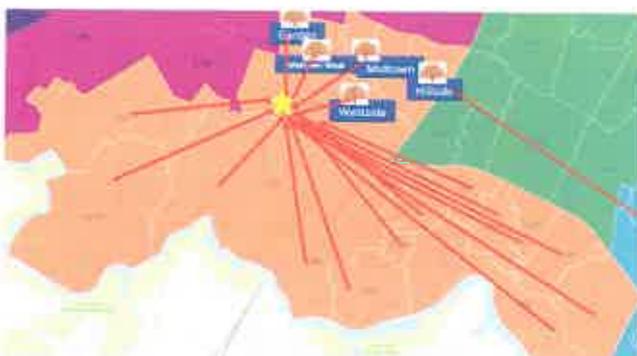


Figure 1. Hillside district cut from Maple Lawn

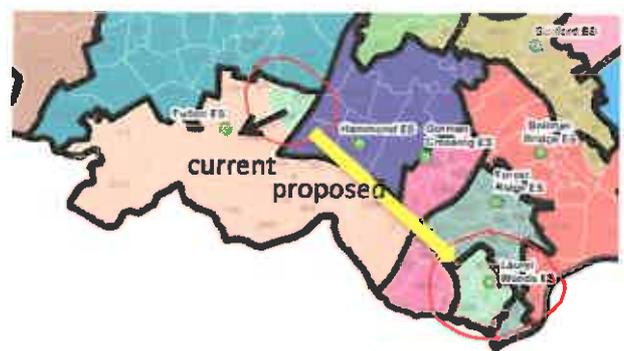


Figure 2. Hillside District of Maple Lawn sent four school districts away



Figure 3: Zoomed area in the Hillside district.

Please note that:

- 27 Howard County community surveys, which all kept Hillside at FES, were rejected in favor to an Ohio consulting firm proposal;
- Many other polygons that are currently districted to FES and much closer to LWES will continue to go to FES (Figure 1);
- Polygon #1256 will still attend Lime Kiln Middle School while other polygons closed to LWES will attend the same middle school (namely Murray Hill Middle School) as the children attending LWES;
- The proposed plan is in complete disregard of the all children involved and their mental health;
- In the surveys presented by Superintendent Martirano himself, the most important factors for parents and children are walkable distances to the school and boundary continuity. The proposed plan creates an island (Figure 2) and offers to send children who are currently only 1.1 mile away from the school (i.e., barely above the walking distance criterion) to 5 miles away (Figures 4 and 5). Accepting the Ohio consulting firm proposal that goes against the results from the surveys sent to the HoCo residents is not listening to the constituents who elected you.

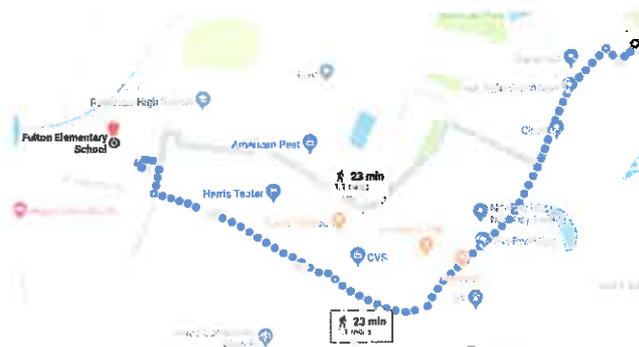


Figure 4. Distance to FES



Figure 5. Distance to LWES

Most importantly, I would like to bring to your attention on how the proposed plan by Superintendent Martirano will do a big disservice to LWES.

- (1) **LWES will become over capacity (from 91% to 122%), while FES will remain overcrowded (from 122% to 105%).** It violates Policy 6010 B.1.a. The transfer of the 140 students from polygon 1256 will therefore create two problems instead of one. It will also force LWES to quickly hire new teachers, add spaces (e.g., trailers) to accommodate the massive influx of the transferred students. This transition will happen in just a few months, contrary to FES who has become overcrowded gradually.
- (2) Teachers will have more students per class (since now LWES will be over capacity) and will to balance students from a wide spectrum of educational background, which will certainly be time-consuming and challenging. This will also create problems in the classroom since the time will have to be split to address each level independently while the rest of the class will be disengaged.
- (3) **The proposal artificially inflates numbers on paper and on paper only** instead of proposing resources and solutions to help FARM families. This is probably the part what saddens me the most. If the goal of the proposal is really to bring equity to the county, this is by far the worst solution that could be offered. My mother never graduated high school and her partner of 27 years was put to work when he was only 12 years. The Physics Ph.D. I earned is the result of a successful school system (despite its low test scores) combined with the hard work from my parents and myself. When I joined a class that was composed of much wealthier and much more highly-educated peers, inequality hit me like a brick. I felt inadequate. I thought I was not at the level of my peers and will never be. I also despised them because as a child, I thought that the only reason they were doing well in school was because of their parents' finances. Instead of being in that situation, I wish the school had provided tools (such as a computer, free textbooks, free tutoring) for me to succeed and build confidence. Seeing that the proposed solution is to add children to only change metrics on paper without concretely offering solutions to the students and their families upsets me deeply.
- (4) The money that would go towards the increased cost of transportation for the Maple Lawn students could instead be used to help families in need.
- (5) On September 6, 2019, the Baltimore Sun published quotes from Linda Leslie, PTA president of Wilde Lake High School. "The more affluent families would bring new resources and support to the school" because "they aren't working two and three jobs. They have stay-at-home parents." And they "can volunteer more and provide more cash to fund everything from sports activities to after-school programs." I know these unfunded assumptions were not aimed towards my community specifically but I can attest that most families in Maple Lawn have two full-time working parents, most who commute to Washington, DC, every day. The families who can volunteer at the school typically work nearby and can do so during their lunch breaks. Adding 30 minutes of travel to these families will simply prevent them from volunteering at the school. I would even argue that what might happen instead is that families will move out of Howard County to simply find better opportunities elsewhere.

I sincerely hope you will reconsider redistricting polygon 1256 and oppose it. It pains me that Superintendent failed to hear, understand, and address the needs of all the families and particularly to those who might become victims of his plan. Our community looks forward to presenting several alternatives that achieve more goals with less violations of Policy 6010 at our public hearing.

Sincerely,

Marianne Engel, Ph.D.

cc: Dr. Michael J. Martirano, Superintendent

**Elizabeth Puchek  
Polygon 1256  
15 October 2019**

Dr. Martirano, Board Members, you have my sympathy. You are in an extremely difficult position. You've been asked to solve a problem that you did not cause...one that you are not equipped to solve. You have not been given the resources to increase capacity, the right data to make decisions, the authority to address the root cause of inequity.

I express my sympathy because I know what it's like to be in your shoes. I have spent 10 years in the immigration sector...it's emotionally-charged and polarizing...just like this redistricting plan. I know what it's like when the public wants to be involved. Like you, I understand the complexities and have appreciation and concern for those I serve. We have a lot in common. I understand the desire to find a silver bullet that solves it all. However, we know that redistricting CANNOT solve a problem as complex and sensitive as equity. We know that the solution to easing overcapacity and improving equity has to be a layered approach...implemented in phases and resourced appropriately. One that uses many, diverse ideas. One that is informed by research and involves the community. One that uplifts everyone and does not force anyone to suffer.

Maple Lawn has analyzed data and developed alternatives. PLEASE, partner with us and others in the County. Collaborate with us to find the right, layered approach. This starts with changes to zoning and development. It layers in MORE support for students below grade-level proficiency, like tutoring and summer school programs. More layers address the needs of families through tailored solutions.

As leaders, you know the first rule of change management, "create a sense of urgency." This proposal creates urgency! For some of us, an emergency! We are paying attention and we are speaking up. You have heard from parents, physicians, researchers, data scientists, and *educators* that oppose this plan not just because it inefficiently uses resources...not just because it massages statistics to create the illusion of equity, but because it will harm our children by removing them from their communities.

Now, sympathize with me and everyone who has expressed concern with this plan. Like us, you are parents. You would move heaven and earth to protect your children and give them every available opportunity. Like us, you acknowledge that community is critical for our children. Like us, you know that moving polygons like 1256 is *illogical*. Over these five hearings, you will have heard from 31 of my Maple Lawn neighbors speaking up for only 140 affected students. That is how important our community is to us. That is how important Fulton Elementary School is to the Maple Lawn community.

Please do not approve this version of the plan; it will alienate us. You need us to make equity a reality in our schools and we need you to make the right decision for ALL of our children.

# Testimony

**Sumeet Singh**

**Resident of Polygon 3176**

I'm attaching an alternative to the Superintendent's Plan.

I started preparing this to see if there is a less disruptive option to achieve the same objectives.

Here is the outcome:

- The plan actually delivers the guideline 90-111% utilization for all schools in the county. This compared to the 75-121% in the Superintendent's Plan
- It does so by moving 4,900 students which is much less than the Superintendent's plan
- And the best part is that the plan delivers lower FARM rates as compared to the Super's Plan. The maximum FARM rate at any school in this plan is 50% which is 4% lower than the Supers. I must emphasize that Superintendent's plan is not even the best equity plan.

Bottom-line is that the plan achieves more with less disruption. I had given myself higher targets and was able to achieve that with lessor moves.

If I were to match the targets of the Superintendent's plan, I can say with confidence that it will require even lesser moves.

In the interest of time I have kept my testimony short but I have attached details on the moves and the impact.

The numbers speak for themselves.

I urge the board to re-examine the merits of the superintendent's plan and look at alternatives that can address the issues in a much more efficient manner.

Obviously this was prepared with my limited resources. There is certainly some work to be done. But I can say with confidence that the Superintendent's current plan is not a good solution to the problem it is trying to solve.

Thank you

P.S. I have intentionally kept 4 high schools with a slightly a higher i.e. 113-115% utilization. These are Long Reach, Hammond, Reservoir and Oakland Mills. This my way of planning ahead, to retain some excess populations around HS13, otherwise the Superintendent's plan that puts these schools in the 100-108% range will find it challenging to find student populations to fulfill the upcoming 1,658 capacity at HS13.

# Alternative Plan

Prepared by Sumeet Singh

Resident of Polygon 3176

## Summary

	Superintendent's Plan			Alternative Plan		
<b>Max Utilization</b>	<b>121%</b>			<b>111%</b>		
<b>Min Utilization</b>	<b>75%</b>			<b>90%</b>		
<b>Max FARMs</b>	<b>54%</b>			<b>50%</b>		
<b>Total Moves</b>	<b>7,396</b>			<b>4,927</b>		
	ES	MS	HS	ES	MS	HS
<b>Max Utilization</b>	<b>121%</b>	<b>121%</b>	<b>119%</b>	<b>111%</b>	<b>111%</b>	<b>111%</b>
<b>Min Utilization</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>90%</b>
<b>Max FARMs</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>41%</b>
<b>Total Moves</b>	<b>3,194</b>	<b>1,351</b>	<b>2,851</b>	<b>3,229</b>	<b>762</b>	<b>936</b>

### Notes:

- Replaced redacted <10 student populations with 5
- Replaced <5% FARMs percentages with 3%
- The plan was sensitive to Walker Zone polygons. To my knowledge no HS & MS Walker Zone polygons were moved. And no new small HS feeders were created. I was less careful with the Elementary planning, so there could be some exceptions there

# Elementary Schools

Elementary Schools	Size	2020	Move to	in 2020	SAAAP	Alt Plan	2020	SAAAP	Alt Plan	Polygons
					Utilization		FARMs	FARMs		
<b>Hollifield</b>										
Hollifield Station ES	732	126%	Veterans ES	117	110%	110%	24%	24%	24%	105, 1105, 1308
Veterans ES	799	103%	Thunder Hill ES	123	112%	103%	21%	22%	21%	103, 1102
Worthington ES	515	89%			102%	90%	5%	6%	6%	
Ilchester ES	584	102%			102%	102%	<5%	<5%	5%	
Waterloo ES	603	91%	Thunder Hill ES	153	105%	92%	24%	44%	43%	100, 1098, 1100
Thunder Hill ES	509	100%	Phelps Luck ES	241	111%	95%	21%	37%	11%	67, 311, 1067
Phelps Luck ES	597	95%	Talbott Springs ES	61						151, 2151
			Jeffers Hill ES	59	103%	99%	63%	36%	43%	70, 264
			Waterloo ES	156						69, 1069, 2069, 4069
Jeffers Hill ES	421	98%	Stevens Forest ES	94	98%	90%	36%	34%	49%	60, 1060
Talbott Springs ES	377	123%	Guilford ES	74	121%	110%	50%	46%	50%	52
			Stevens Forest ES	34						1059, 2059
Stevens Forest ES	380	109%	Atholton ES	136	112%	106%	68%	54%	50%	96, 113
Cradlerock ES	398	116%	Atholton ES	70	96%	99%	55%	51%	50%	54, 2054
Atholton ES	424	109%	Hammond ES	196	114%	111%	15%	25%	36%	14, 15, 1014
Hammond ES	653	95%	Guilford ES	62	95%	109%	25%	25%	22%	1017
			Bollman Bridge ES	40						18, 273, 2011
Bollman Bridge ES	666	103%			97%	110%	51%	51%	47%	
Guilford ES	465	79%			98%	108%	46%	43%	45%	
<b>St Johns Lane</b>										
St Johns Lane ES	612	119%	Northfield ES	61	99%	109%	9%	10%	11%	158, 3034
Northfield ES	700	108%	Running Brook ES	68	108%	107%	11%	11%	13%	148, 276
Centennial Lane ES	647	111%			111%	111%	6%	6%	6%	
Running Brook ES	515	91%	Clemens Crossing ES	5	75%	104%	52%	51%	48%	2136
Bryant Woods ES	361	125%	Longfellow ES	92	108%	104%	50%	48%	50%	268, 1268
Longfellow ES	512	86%			104%	111%	51%	52%	50%	
Clemens Crossing ES	521	105%	Bryant Woods ES	17	85%	90%	13%	10%	10%	3131
			Swansfield ES	197						66, 130, 134, 1066, 1134, 2134
Swansfield ES	694	79%	Clarksville ES	96	95%	91%	61%	44%	50%	135, 1135, 2135
			Longfellow ES	14						1140
Pointers Run ES	744	124%	Clarksville ES	91	99%	93%	<5%	<5%	5%	64, 2189
			Clemens Crossing ES	128						127
Clarksville ES	543	70%			98%	105%	<5%	17%	12%	
Fulton ES	826	122%	Gorman Crossing ES	109	105%	109%	5%	5%	7%	7, 1007
<b>Gorman Crossing</b>										
Gorman Crossing ES	735	112%	Forest Ridge ES	186	112%	108%	18%	18%	22%	1006, 2005
Forest Ridge ES	713	95%	Laurel Woods ES	140	95%	101%	34%	34%	32%	46, 267, 272, 1047, 1272
Laurel Woods ES	609	91%	Gorman Crossing ES	44	115%	107%	61%	49%	49%	1012
<b>Elkridge</b>										
Elkridge ES	760	118%	Ducketts Lane ES	76	83%	109%	33%	32%	33%	43, 1043
Ducketts Lane ES	650	88%			90%	99%	55%	49%	37%	
Hanover Hills ES	810	89%			103%	90%	33%	37%	35%	
Bellows Spring ES	726	106%	Deep Run ES	114	88%	90%	17%	18%	17%	82, 1298
Deep Run ES	750	91%			106%	106%	55%	53%	49%	
Rockburn ES	584	102%			102%	102%	6%	6%	8%	
<b>Mount View</b>										
Manor Woods ES	681	92%			99%	93%	8%	8%	10%	
Waverly ES	788	112%	West Friendship ES	58	105%	106%	<5%	<5%	3%	166, 1166, 2166, 4169
West Friendship ES	414	103%	Bushy Park ES	86	79%	90%	6%	6%	8%	231, 232, 1231
			Longfellow ES	19						171, 178, 1178
Bushy Park ES	725	82%			117%	93%	<5%	<5%	5%	
Lisbon ES	527	92%			92%	90%	12%	12%	13%	
Triadelphia Ridge ES	606	89%			111%	90%	<5%	<5%	5%	
Dayton Oaks ES	700	95%	Triadelphia Ridge ES	12	91%	93%	<5%	5%	6%	200
<b>Total Moves</b>				<b>3,229</b>						

## Middle Schools

Middle Schools	Size	2020	Move to..	In 2020	SAAAP	Alt Plan	2020	SAAAP	Alt Plan	Polygons
					Utilization		FARMS	FARMS		
<b>Patapsco</b>										
Patapsco MS	643	121%	Dunloggin MS	58	111%	109%	17%	18%	22%	158, 1034, 3034
Dunloggin MS	565	115%	Wilde Lake MS	82	111%	111%	19%	19%	22%	148, 276, 1148, 2148
Burleigh Manor MS	779	103%			102%	104%	11%	11%	12%	
Wilde Lake MS	721	91%	Harpers Choice MS	55	93%	99%	47%	45%	48%	66, 134, 1066, 1134, 2134
Harpers Choice MS	506	97%	Clarksville MS	49	108%	98%	52%	34%	42%	135, 1135, 2135
Clarksville MS	643	109%	Lime Kiln MS	72	95%	105%	<5%	13%	8%	18911892189
Lime Kiln MS	721	94%			94%	101%	<5%	<5%	4%	
Hammond MS	604	116%	Lake Elkhorn MS	72	108%	110%	19%	30%	25%	13, 57, 1057, 2057
Lake Elkhorn MS	643	86%	Hammond MS	46	108%	97%	53%	41%	43%	51, 1050, 1051, 2050, 2051, 2054
<b>Ellicott Mills</b>										
Ellicott Mills MS	701	130%	Oakland Mills MS	73	121%	107%	11%	11%	11%	67, 311
			Bonnie Branch MS	94						74, 98, 1098, 2074
Oakland Mills MS	506	99%	Lake Elkhorn MS	44	108%	103%	48%	45%	40%	56, 1056, 2056, 3056
Mayfield Woods MS	798	106%	Bonnie Branch MS	5	104%	104%	44%	44%	41%	277
Bonnie Branch MS	701	99%			111%	111%	32%	30%	26%	
Elkridge Landing MS	779	96%			101%	96%	21%	27%	23%	
Thomas Viaduct MS	701	107%			96%	106%	45%	42%	39%	
<b>Mount View</b>										
Mount View MS	798	106%	Glenwood MS	42	107%	101%	<5%	<5%	6%	231, 232, 1231
Glenwood MS	545	98%			106%	103%	8%	7%	9%	
Folly Quarter MS	662	102%			102%	98%	<5%	<5%	4%	
<b>Murray Hill</b>										
Murray Hill MS	662	121%	Patuxent Valley MS	70	121%	110%	38%	38%	38%	2, 2002
Patuxent Valley MS	760	94%			91%	102%	38%	37%	39%	
<b>Total Moves</b>				<b>762</b>						

## High Schools

High Schools	Size	2020	Move to..	In 2020	SAAAP	Alt Plan	2020	SAAAP	Alt Plan	Polygons
					Utilization		FARMS	FARMS		
<b>Reduce Overcrowding Hebron</b>										
Mt Hebron HS	1,400	117%	Centennial HS	117	104%	109%	16%	14%	15%	308, 1308, 2308
Marriotts Ridge HS	1,615	95%	Glenelg HS	134	110%	101%	5%	8%	10%	231, 232, 1231, 223, 1223, 2223, 3223
Glenelg HS	1,420	82%			102%	91%	<5%	<5%	6%	
<b>Reduce Overcrowding in Centennial &amp; Distribute FARMS</b>										
Centennial HS	1,360	120%	Marriotts Ridge HS	246	111%	109%	11%	12%	14%	97, 154, 214, 1154, 2154
			Wilde Lake HS	23						219, 4150
Wilde Lake HS	1,424	95%	River Hill HS	64	110%	92%	46%	38%	41%	135, 2135, 1135
River Hill HS	1,488	98%			109%	102%	<5%	5%	6%	
Atholton HS	1,460	102%			96%	101%	10%	25%	11%	
<b>Reduce Overcrowding in Howard &amp; retain some excesses around planned HS13</b>										
Howard HS	1,420	136%	Oakland Mills HS	186	119%	101%	14%	15%	14%	67, 311, 1067
			Long Reach HS	166						86, 1086, 87, 1087, 2087, 3087, 4087
Oakland Mills HS	1,400	96%	Hammond HS	80	96%	115%	45%	41%	41%	49, 51, 2051, 2054
Reservoir HS	1,551	110%			104%	115%	26%	28%	27%	
Long Reach HS	1,488	114%	Oakland Mills HS	163	107%	113%	47%	42%	40%	71, 77, 78, 79, 269, 1071, 1077, 1079, 1269, 2071, 2075, 3071, 3075
Hammond HS	1,220	116%	Reservoir HS	96	108%	114%	40%	39%	41%	3023, 4047
<b>Total</b>				<b>1,275</b>	<b>(of these 399 in grey can be avoided because of planned HS13)</b>					
Oakland Mills HS	1,400	96%	Hammond HS		96%	109%	45%	41%	45%	
Reservoir HS	1,551	110%			104%	109%	26%	28%	27%	
Long Reach HS	1,488	114%	Oakland Mills HS		107%	124%	47%	42%	38%	
Hammond HS	1,220	116%	Reservoir HS		108%	116%	40%	39%	40%	
<b>Total Moves</b>				<b>936</b>						

Q. E. D.

10/15  
#24,25  
23

# POLYGON

# \*1181

**\*marked as FARMLAND per the redistricting plans**

I am Sunia Lessing, polygon 1181.

Have you ever wondered from the hundreds of testimonies you heard these past few weeks why immigrants mention "two suitcases?". Let me explain...that is the maximum suitcases allowed on an international flight without having to pay for it. The average salaries overseas, and more specifically where I come from, is \$600/month. To put it in perspective, we cannot afford to pay for luggage. My parents came here with two suitcases, escaping a communist regime.

The anniversary of the day is 3 days from now. It had branded my memories as the day we escaped to freedom. Now, staring at this proposal and trying to make sense of it, while people are calling me racist and telling me to "chill out", I have never felt so insignificant, where my choice is being taken away from me, my parenting is criticized...all in the land of the free.

I emigrated here in high school. My English was minimal. My parents lived in a HUD subsidized housing and the school I attended is an inner city Chicago public school via public transportation. They worked 16 hr days, but their message was clear! My job was to STUDY! So, I did. I finished as a Salutatorian, with many AP classes, and finished in a Top 10 US School, and moved on to graduate school.

This is great, right? Here is the part that you did not hear:

The large community of Romanians in school helped me in my classes, including a Romanian teacher who was my guiding light through those trying years. I did not want to talk to other nationalities in the fear of looking stupid, and I have gotten plenty of up and down looks from everyone due to my accent.

In college, my support system was gone. I had a horrible time adjusting, and I did poorly in my classes. I finished that school in 3 years. No, it wasn't because of resiliency. It was hard and I did not want to be there any longer. My parents supported me, and I went on to grad school.

Your plan is doing that to our kids. Taking their support away. There are way too many challenges facing our children than to throw made up scenarios at them and see how they fare. Give kids and parents the right to choose. Your lawyer recommended that also.

You swapping children is a tyrannical way of making the numbers "match" for the sake of funding, and to "look good". You are applying communist values to one of the most diverse communities in Maryland for the sake of social justice. As a product of the "poverty" environment, I can tell you that I wasn't poor. We may have been broke, but not poor.

Meanwhile, most of the immigrants present here, are wondering where the promised freedom from tyranny has gone. And you are pushing your agenda on the shoulders of our children.

As Abraham Lincoln said, "I'm a success today because I had a friend who believed in me and I didn't have the heart to let him down."

Those of you who ardently promote this proposal, ladies and gentlemen, are no friends of mine.

# Alternative Plan

Updated with 2020 Polygon Data

**Superintendent's Attendance Area Adjustment Plan (SAAAP)** was prepared with three guiding principles: 1) To balance capacities; 2) To advance equity by distribution students participating in FARMs; and 3) To do so by planning ahead thereby minimizing double moves. While SAAAP has started a countywide ideological debate, however before we get too caught up in the tall claims it is important to pause and look at the actual numbers:

- Is this hype or is the plan actually delivering on these priorities?
- Is average 3.2% reduction in FARMs (from 40.8% to 37.6%) in 5 high FARMs schools viewed as sufficient success?
- Is the plan being able to deliver close to uniform capacity utilizations across the county?
- Is there actual advance planning so the proposed moves don't need to be undone in 2024?
- Is this a minimum disruption plan, reassigning 7,396 students today and possibly the same number again in 4 years when additional capacities are added in Talbott Spring ES, ES43, Dunloggin MS, Hammond HS and HS13?
- Are there any other plans that can deliver the same or better results with lesser disruption?
- **What if there is a plan with half the numbers of reassignments that delivers much better results?**

High School numbers is a good place to start, because they offer a summary view of what is happening:

## High Schools

**SAAAP** will end up reassigning around 6,000 high school students over 4 years (2,851 now + a similar number in 4 years with 1,858 new capacities in HS13 & Hammond), and bring down max FARMs in high schools from 47% to 42%.

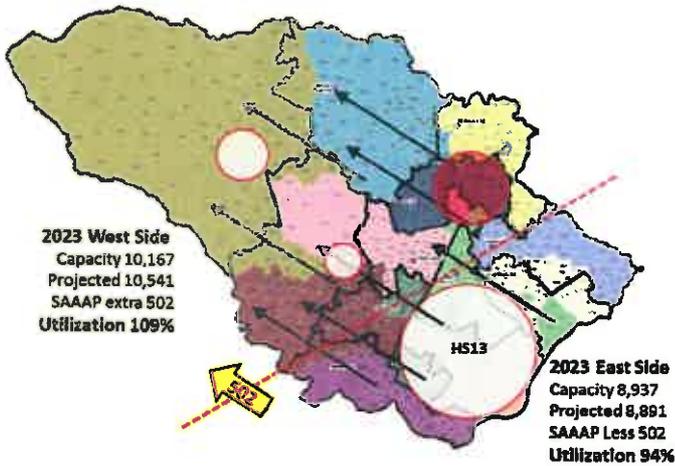
**The Alternative Plan** can potentially deliver much better results by reassigning only 3,150 high school students over the same 4 year period (1,200 now + 1,950 after HS13). Uniformly balancing the overcrowding across all high schools to a 97%-106% range, and reducing the max FARMs across high schools from 47% to 40%.

**This table summarizes the plan for High Schools:** Column (A) with only 508 moves in 2020 addresses the immediate overcrowding at Howard, Hebron & Centennial and fixes some of the FARMs balance; Column (B) with 1,499 moves in 2024, brings high schools to a max 117% utilization; and Column (C) shows better distribution of FARMs with max down to 41%, instead of 42% with SAAAP.   
 – Polygon details at the end of this report

High Schools	Size	2020	2020	2024	2024	Move to..	in 2020	2020%	Move to..	in 2024	2024%	FARMs	SAAAP	FARMs	FARMs	AltPlan
Move I - Reduce Overcrowding Hebron								(A)	(+ Growth in 2020 Polys)	(B)		in A	in B	(C)		
Mt Hebron	1,400	1,644	117%	1,791	128%	to Marriott	135	105%	to Marriott	44	115%	16%	14%	7	2	17%
Marriotts R	1,615	1,530	95%	1,661	103%			106%			114%	5%	8%			5%
Gleneig	1,420	1,164	82%	1,202	85%			82%			85%	2%	1%			2%
Move II - Reduce Overcrowding in Centennial & Distribute FARMs																
Centennial	1,360	1,634	120%	1,698	125%	to Wilde L	52	108%	to Wilde L	114	113%	11%	12%	5	3	12%
Wilde Lake	1,424	1,349	95%	1,347	95%	to River H	86	100%			100%	46%	38%	39	0	41%
River Hill	1,488	1,462	98%	1,358	91%			104%			97%	3%	1%			6%
Atholton	1,460	1,482	102%	1,537	105%			102%			105%	10%	25%			10%
Move III - Utilize HS13/Hammond Additional Capacity & Reduce Overcrowding in Howard																
Howard	1,420	1,921	136%	2,028	143%	to Oakland	141	119%	to Long R	134	117%	14%	15%	13	35	14%
						to Long R	94							6		
Oakland M	1,400	1,341	96%	1,326	95%			106%	to Long R	41	102%	45%	41%		1	41%
Long Reach	1,488	1,691	114%	2,108	142%			114%	to HS13	852	96%	47%	42%		325	41%
Hammond	1,420	1,414	116%	1,621	114%			100%	to HS13	112	106%	40%	39%		20	40%
2023 HS13	1,658										73%					36%
Reservoir	1,551	1,698	110%	1,908	123%			109%	to HS13	202	110%	26%	28%		91	26%
						<b>Total Moves</b>	<b>508</b>		<b>Total Moves</b>	<b>1,499</b>						

## So why is the Alternative Plan so much more effective than SAAAP?

This picture will help understand what is causing the difference:

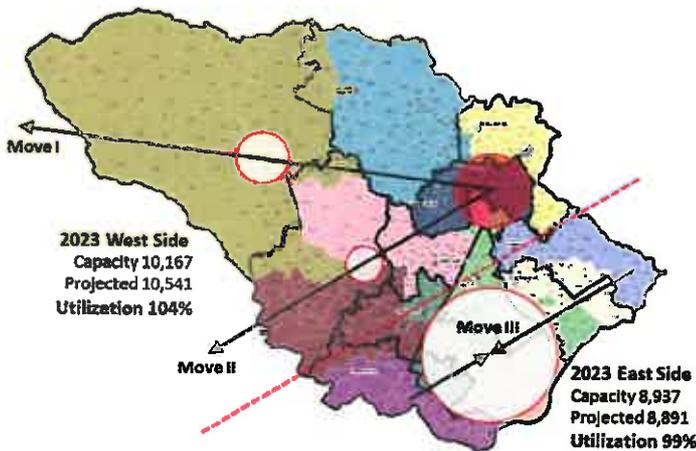


**SAAAP** is moving 2,851 high school students in a westward direction, a lot of these moves are quite unnecessary, and will need to be undone in 2024 when Hammond & HS13 create 1,858 new capacities in the east-side (represented by the big white circle).

Particularly harmful is the 502 students being moved from schools adjacent to HS13:

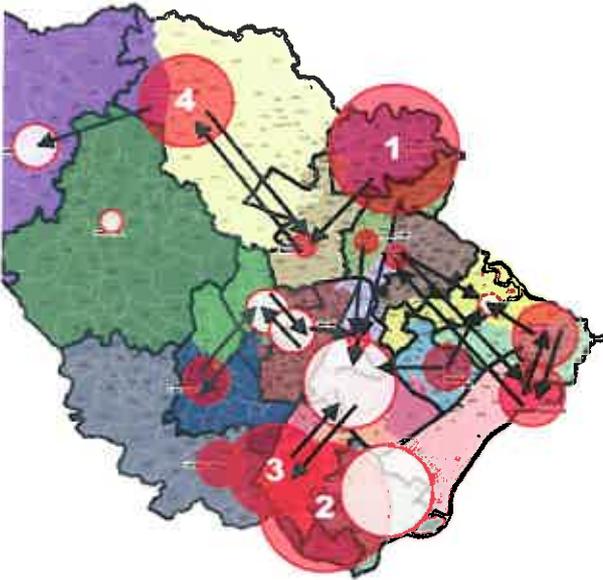
- (+) 192 from Hammond to Atholton
- (+) 256 from Oakland Mills to Atholton
- (+) 96 from Reservoir to River Hill
- (-) 65 from Wilde Lake to Oakland Mills

HS13 is well positioned to absorb all overcrowding from neighboring east-side schools of Long Reach, Oakland Mills, Hammond, Reservoir and Howard, and still have capacity for more. Moving 502 students away from HS13 will bring the average utilization of east-side schools down to 94% and the west-side to an overcrowding of average 109%.



**The Alternative Plan** directs these moves more carefully, addressing the entire east-side overcrowding in Long Reach, Oakland Mills, Hammond, Reservoir and Howard, by absorption into HS13, without any moves out-west from any of these schools. Since the only overcrowding really needing to be addressed is in Centennial and Hebron (represented by the red circle) with no new capacity is being created there, the Alternative Plan directs this overcrowding toward the little available capacity in Glenelg, Marriott's Ridge, River Hill & Wilde Lake, and also balances FARMs numbers along the way.

## Middle Schools



**SAAAP** was supposed to be guided by 3 things – overcrowding, FARMs & planning ahead. It is clear the SAAAP for middle schools completely ignored overcrowding and planning ahead, and followed only one objective – ‘do whatever it takes to balance the FARMs’.

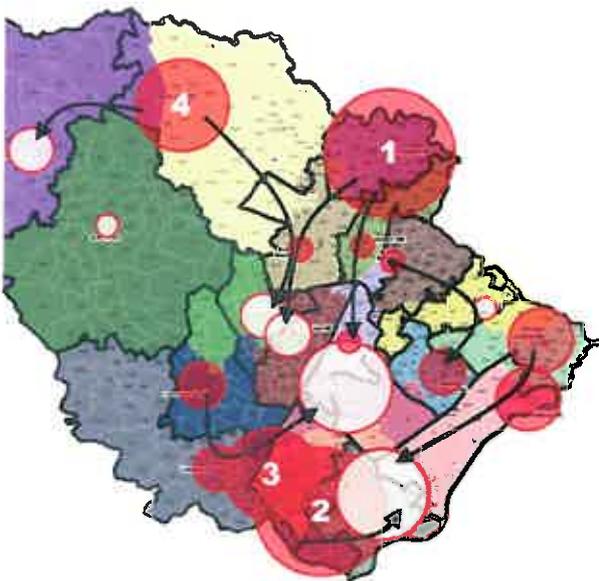
Interestingly SAAAP didn’t even do a good job for FARMs. Bringing max FARMs down from **53% to 45%** while this Alternative Plan brings down to **53% to 42%**.

Let’s take a closer look at what SAAAP did at the 4 most crowded middle schools:

Most Crowded	Size	2020	2020	2024	2024	Extra	SAAAP	2024
1 Patapsco	643	775	121%	885	138%	242	-62	128%
2 Murray H	662	799	121%	847	128%	185	0	128%
3 Hammond	604	702	116%	762	126%	158	27	131%
4 Mount V	798	842	106%	940	118%	142	54	125%

SAAAP did **ABSOLUTELY NOTHING** to reduce the overcrowding in these schools. It reassigned 62 of the potentially 242 excess students in Patapsco. It left all the potentially 185 excess students in Murray and it actually moved additional students into Hammond and Mount View. So overcrowding was certainly not a criterion.

And looking at these swaps and moves away from underutilized schools to crowded schools it is apparent there was no planning ahead.



**The Alternative Plan** once again directs moves more carefully, not doing a dingle swap and moving students away from overcrowded to underutilized schools, fixing the FARMs populations along the way.

Data for Middle Schools Alternative Plan is on the next page.

The table below summarizes the entire plan for Middle Schools: Column (A) with only 195 moves in 2020 addresses the immediate overcrowding at Patapsco & Murray and fixes some of the FARMs balance; Column (B) with 1,550 moves in 2024, brings all schools within a 95%-116% utilization range; and Column (C) shows that this results in much better distribution of FARMs with max down to 42%, instead of 45% with SAAAP.

– Polygon details at the end of this report

Middle Schools	Size	2020	2020	2024	2024	Move to..	In 2020	2020%	Move to..	In 2024	2024%	FARMs	SAAAP	AltPlan
<b>Move I - Reduce Overcrowding in Potapsco</b>								(A)			(B)			(C)
Patapsco	643	775	121%	885	138%	to Burleigh	117	119%	to Dun	100	104%	17%	18%	19%
Dunloggin	662	652	98%	676	102%			98%	to OM	100	95%	19%	19%	19%
Oakland Mills	506	500	99%	516	102%			99%	to EM	50				
									to EM	100	102%	48%	45%	42%
<b>Move II - Reduce Overcrowding in Murray Hill</b>														
Murray Hill	662	799	121%	847	128%	to Patuxent	78	109%			116%	38%	38%	35%
Patuxent	760	715	94%	682	90%			104%			114%	38%	37%	41%
<b>Move III - Reduce Overcrowding in Mount View</b>														
Mount View	798	842	106%	940	118%			106%	to Burl	100	99%	3%		3%
Burleigh Manor	779	806	103%	784	101%			103%	to Glen	50				
									to Harp	150	95%	11%	11%	9%
									to WL	110		3%		
Harpers Choice	506	490	97%	453	90%			97%			111%	52%	34%	41%
Wilde Lake	760	655	86%	730	96%			86%			96%	47%	45%	42%
Glenwood	545	532	98%	499	92%			98%			101%	8%	7%	8%
Folly Quarter	662	674	102%	649	98%			102%			98%	3%		3%
<b>Move IV - Reduce Overcrowding in Hammond</b>														
Clarksville	643	704	109%	701	109%			109%	Lime Kiln	50	101%	3%	13%	3%
Lime Kiln	701	676	96%	743	106%			96%	to Hamm	100	99%	3%		3%
Hammond	604	702	116%	762	126%			116%	to Lake E	220	106%	19%	30%	16%
Lake Elkhorn	643	555	86%	501	78%			86%			112%	53%	41%	42%
<b>Move V - Reduce Overcrowding in Elkridge &amp; Thomas Viaduct</b>														
Elkridge	779	747	96%	867	111%			96%	to Thom	100	98%	21%	27%	21%
Thomas Viaduct	701	748	107%	773	110%			107%	to Patux	60	116%	45%	42%	42%
Ellicott Mills	857	910	106%	878	102%			106%	to Bonn	100	108%	11%	11%	25%
Bonnie Branch	701	691	99%	693	99%			99%	to Mayf	110	97%	32%	30%	31%
Mayfield	798	842	106%	850	107%			106%	to Patux	50	114%	44%	44%	42%
	13,710	14,015	102%	14,429	105%	<b>Total Moves</b>	<b>195</b>		<b>Total Moves</b>	<b>1,550</b>				

# Elementary Schools

The table below summarizes the entire plan for Elementary Schools: Column (A) with only **392 moves** in 2020; Column (B) with **2,075 moves** in 2024, brings all schools a max 119% utilization; and Column (C) shows much better distribution of FARMs with max 49%, instead of 54% with SAAAP. – *Polygon details at the end of the report*

Elementary Schools	Size	2020	2020	2024	2024	Move to..	in 2020	2020%	Move to..	in 2024	2024%	FARMs	SAAAP	AltPlan
								(A)			(B)			(C)
<b>Move I - Reduce Overcrowding in Pointers Run</b>														
Pointers Run	744	925	124%	1,060	142%	to Swans	86	113%	to Swans	100	117%	3%		3%
Swansfield ES	694	547	79%	535	77%			79%			104%	61%	44%	46%
<b>Move II - Distribute Student Populations in West Schools</b>														
Dayton Oaks	675	667	99%	789	117%			99%			117%	3%	5%	3%
Triadelphia Ridge	581	542	93%	552	95%			93%			104%	3%		3%
Clarksville	543	381	70%	364	67%			79%			76%	3%	17%	3%
Bushy Park	744	597	80%	530	71%			80%			71%	3%		3%
Lisbon	527	484	92%	523	99%			92%			99%	12%	12%	12%
<b>Move III - Populate ES43</b>														
Hammond	653	618	95%	696	107%			95%	to Bollman	50	99%	25%	25%	25%
Bollman Bridge	666	683	103%	765	115%			103%	to ES43	200	100%	51%	51%	49%
Fulton	826	1,009	122%	1,070	130%	to Clarks	50	116%	to ES43	115	110%	5%	5%	5%
2026 ES43	600							0%			53%	3%		34%
<b>Move IV - Distribute FARMs populations in Laurel</b>														
Gorman Crossing	735	826	112%	861	117%			119%	to Laurel	200	90%	18%	18%	18%
Forest Ridge	713	678	95%	740	104%			95%	to Laurel		104%	34%	34%	34%
Laurel Woods	640	556	87%	550	86%			87%	to Bollman	50	109%	61%	49%	49%
<b>Move V - Reduce Overcrowding in Waverly</b>														
Waverly	788	886	112%	918	116%			112%			116%	3%		3%
Manor Woods	681	624	92%	607	89%			92%			89%	8%	8%	8%
West Friendship	414	426	103%	532	129%			103%	to Long	60	114%	6%	6%	6%
Centennial Lane	647	715	111%	741	115%			111%	to Run	50	107%	6%	6%	6%
Running Brook	515	468	91%	583	113%			91%	to Long	50	113%	52%	51%	48%
Longfellow	512	438	86%	474	93%			86%	to Bryant	50	104%	51%	52%	46%
Bryant Woods	361	451	125%	489	135%	to Athol	53	110%	to Clemens	100	108%	50%	48%	49%
Clemens Crossing	521	548	105%	620	119%			105%	to Steven	50	105%	13%	10%	19%
									to Cradel	50	119%			
Atholton	424	461	109%	444	105%			121%	to Steven	100	100%	15%	25%	31%
									to Cradel	10				
Cradlerock	398	460	116%	473	119%			116%	to Gilford	170	91%	55%	51%	49%
Guilford	465	367	79%	364	78%			79%			115%	46%	43%	47%
<b>Move VI - Reduce Overcrowding in Johns Southwards</b>														
St Johns Lane	612	726	119%	787	129%			119%	to Northf	60	119%	9%	10%	9%
Northfield	700	759	108%	824	118%			108%	to Thun	50	119%	11%	11%	11%
Thunder Hill	509	508	100%	466	92%			100%	to Talbot	10	99%	21%	37%	20%
Talbot Springs	540	465	86%	409	76%			86%			78%	50%	46%	49%
Stevens Forest	399	414	104%	435	109%	to Athol	63	88%	to Atholton	100	106%	68%	54%	49%
<b>Move VII - Reduce Overcrowding in Hollifield</b>														
Hollifield Station	732	923	126%	870	119%	to Vetrans	70	117%			109%	24%	24%	24%
Veterans	799	822	103%	801	100%			112%			109%	21%	22%	21%
Waterloo	663	548	83%	508	77%			83%			84%	24%	44%	26%
Phelps Luck	597	566	95%	584	98%	to Jeffers	70	83%			74%	63%	36%	48%
Jeffers Hill	421	413	98%	389	92%			115%			109%	36%	34%	39%
Ilchester	584	598	102%	641	110%			102%			110%	3%		3%
Worthington	515	458	89%	492	96%			89%			96%	5%	6%	5%
<b>Move VIII - Distribute Student Population Between North East Schools</b>														
Rockburn	609	593	97%	638	105%			97%			105%	6%	6%	6%
Elkridge	760	893	118%	926	122%			118%	to Duckett	200	96%	33%	32%	33%
Ducketts Lane	694	569	82%	600	86%			82%	to Hanover	50	108%	55%	49%	49%
Hanover Hills	810	723	89%	697	86%			89%			92%	33%	37%	34%
<b>Move IX - Distribute Student Population Between North East Schools</b>														
Bellows Spring	751	767	102%	867	115%			102%	to Deep R	150	95%	17%	18%	17%
Deep Run	750	682	91%	786	105%			91%	to Waterloo	50	118%	55%	53%	49%
	26,512	25,784	97%	27,000	102%	<b>Total Moves</b>	<b>392</b>		<b>Total Moves</b>	<b>2,075</b>				

## Polygon Data

Updating this plan with polygon data has further reduced the number of moves required to achieve the Utilization & FARMs objectives, as can be seen in the HS, MS and ES tables above. This is because polygons have been selectively targeted that offer the most impact to FARMs. (Provided they are adjoining to receiving schools)

Just like SAAAP, this Alternative Plan is driven entirely by Utilization & FARMs numbers. Meanwhile there is feedback on social media that such data driven plans sometimes overlook the ground realities like communities getting split; separation by the highway; poor road connectivity; distance etc. **While numbers are important, these community considerations might also be important.** The good news is that since the Alternative Plan delivers results very efficiently with minimum moves, it therefore has room to add redundant moves, or pick alternative polygons to fix things on the ground. Even by doing so it will remain much more efficient than SAAAP.

The polygons proposed to be moved by the Alternative Plan in 2020 are:

Sending	Receiving	# of Students	Polygons Proposed for Reassignment
Mt Hebron HS	Marriott's Ridge HS	135	162, 1162, 2161
Centennial HS	Wilde Lake HS	52	147
Wilde Lake HS	River Hill HS	86	135, 1174, 2135, 2174
Howard HS	Oakland Mills HS	142	65, 1065, 2065, 67, 311
Howard HS	Long Reach HS	94	78, 86, 2087, 3087
Patapsco MS	Burleigh Manor MS	117	159, 1159, 1034, 2034, 34
Murray Hill MS	Burleigh Manor MS	78	121, 1121
Pointers ES	Stansfield ES	103	64, 1129
Fulton ES	Clarksville ES	50	112, 2112
Bryant Woods ES	Atholton ES	53	1133, 4133, 5133
Stevens Forest ES	Atholton ES	60	2062
Hollifield Station ES	Veterans ES	70	105, 1105
Phelps Luck ES	Jeffers Hill ES	30	70

**The Alternative Plan is proposing 35 Polygons be moved in 2020 (HS+MS+ES) with 1,095 students, while SAAAP is proposing 287 Polygons be moved in 2020 (HS+MS+ES) moving 7,170 students**

The difference between the two numbers nothing short of shocking

### 2024 Polygons:

SAAAP offers no visibility into the moves it has planned for 2024. It only shows 2020 moves.

The Alternative plan has been fully built out to a polygon level through 2024 for High Schools. It will take 39 additional polygon moves in 2024 mostly to populate HS13 which will complete the HS Plan. That plan can be provided on request however this Alternative Plan already includes summary school level data that is indicative of the 2024 polygon data. MS and ES have not yet been built out to a polygon level, but this Alternative Plan already includes ES and MS school level data indicative of 2024 polygons, thereby already offering more insight into the 2024 plan than has been shared by SAAAP.

## Conclusion

There is no easier way to say it “SAAAP just misses the mark”. The alternate proposal clearly shows that much better outcomes can be achieved with far less disruption. There is no justification for the Board of Education to accept SAAAP.

SAAAP had 3 guiding principles: 1) Reduce Overcrowding; 2) Balance FARMs and 3) Plan ahead. This document shows that SAAAP has failed to deliver on all three. SAAAP completely ignored overcrowding, leaving that problem for another day and as a result did not even carefully plan ahead. That will mean undoing a number of the proposed moves in a 2024 when additional capacity comes available. And when it comes to FARMs...

**The big debate on Social Media is that SAAAP is pro-integration, pro-equity because FARMs balancing is really what SAAAP is all about. The facts are quite the opposite. It is the Alternative Plan that outshines SAAAP in integration with 49% max FARMs down from 68%, while SAAAP bring down FARMs only to 54%. Public testimonies are creating divisions in the community, while there’s absolutely no case for SAAAP.**

	SAAAP			Alternative Plan		
Moves	16,000 *			6,219		
2020 Polygon Moves	287			35		
Max Utilization	138%			119%		
Max FARMs	54%			49%		
	HS	MS	ES	HS	MS	ES
2020 Moves	2,815	1,351	3,194	508	195	392
2024 Moves	3,000+ *	1,500+ *	3,100+ *	1,499	1,550	2,075
Double Moves	502 To East *	1,015 Swaps	Unknown	0	0	0
Max 2020 Utilization	136%	130%	121%	119%	119%	119%
Max 2024 Utilization	138%	128%	121%	117%	112%	119%
Max FARMs	42%	45%	54%	41%	42%	49

\* Estimated since actual data is not available

SAAAP utilized consultants and took months of effort to put together. While this Alternative Plan is a quick back of the envelop calculation compiled over a few days, and then a few more for Polygon data. This quickly put together Alternative Plan does not claim to be the only right way to do it, but it has exposed serious weaknesses in SAAAP making the case for a different, much better approach. **In light of this SAAAP should be paused by the BOE while alternative plans are evaluated.**

Sumeet Singh

Resident of Polygon 3176

Dear Board Members,

Here is the proposed plan for our polygon. We represent 100% of the HS kids affected next year. Following this proposed plan, you will find the policies against which the current plan goes, and therefore would not only completely ignore the problems it tries to solve, but also goes against the many policies of the board.

## **Proposed plan for polygon 1181:**

We represent 100% of the polygon whose kids will be affected by the current proposal at this time. Our kids will be the only ones that will attend high school next year. The other (2) kids are still in elementary and middle school for next year.

1. Keep us at River Hill
  - a. With a rising junior and a freshman sibling, both of our kids will enjoy the same social circle that has been established. In addition, our oldest daughter has social anxiety, with a difficult time to adjust to changes. Given the high rate of suicides in HoCo, we are constantly watching out for the mental health of all our children. Would this plan take effect, it will introduce a lot of unnecessary stress to all of us, not just the kids.
  - b. The distance to River Hill is 3.9 miles, with one stoplight. The distance to WLHS is 5.6 miles, 10 stoplights. The avg. time for a stoplight is 2.5-3.0mins. There is a 70% increase in the time spent on the bus by the sheer miles alone. This will take us to 53 minutes on a bus. Add a minimum of 25 mins due to stoplights, we are looking at 1h:18m on the bus. This is unacceptable, especially for one of my kids with ADHD.
2. Table the redistricting for our polygon until HS 13
  - a. Our closest HS is Glenelg High, which is more difficult to access due to the construction going on on the bridge of FQ. This affects the return home for our kids
  - b. After the new high school opens, we'll be potentially open for redistricting again resulting in another period of intense stress
3. Redistrict us to GHHS
  - a. It is the closest HS to us, with the least amount of stoplights as well  
\*\*\* This presents a problem currently due to the construction on FQ on the bridge, providing only a one way access. However, the estimated time to complete it is a year.

Our polygon borders a MRHS polygon, a GHS polygon and our sister polygons of 181, 183 and 1183. Polygon 1181 consists mainly of farmland, and it is along the Folly Quarter RD and wrapping around the circle (extra traffic time)

Unless you are anticipating a later school starting time, the plan to redistrict us to WLHS is completely wrong, uninformed, and it does not help any students in any way.

No matter where you sent us, we will forever be RIVER HILL!

### **Policy 1010**

#### **I. Policy Statement**

The Board of Education is committed to providing an educational and work environment that is free from discrimination, fosters equitable opportunities, and values diversity and commonality. The Board prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, immigration status, religion, physical, mental, or educational disability, pregnancy, age, gender, gender expression, gender identity, genetic information, sexual orientation, marital status, veteran status or socioeconomic status in the educational program, including co-curricular and extra-curricular activities, and in the workplace.

The Board recognizes its responsibility to promote worth, dignity, respect, and safety and therefore prohibits discrimination through curriculum, instruction, professional development, and resource selection.

River Hill, according to 6/2019 data, is at under capacity at 92%. Overcrowding, as stated as the primary reason for this proposal, is not the issue. We have still not been given a reason why we are being moved out. If it is due to SES, first, it is against the policy 1010 to move us out due to OUR SES status as well as being discriminatory towards the families from the WL district being moved. The second part of the SES argument will be addressed later on.

**Factors of the Proposal Against Policy 6010's** sections as follows:

**Section IV B 1** Facility Utilization - Where reasonable, school attendance area utilization should stay within the target utilization for as long a period of time.

All of the factors under the facility utilization is met by RHHS, which is at 92% capacity as of this year.

**Section IV B 2** - Community Stability – The proposed feed from FQMS from RHHS is at 17%. Currently, the feed from FQMS is at 33%. Under the proposal, my daughter is losing all of her friends, as they will be going to GHS. Our polygon is surrounded by immediately adjacent polygons that will be going to Marriott's Ridge HS and Glenelg HS.

We are on farmland, and are disconnected from a neighborhood. We have built friendships in adjacent neighborhoods which will end up being redistricted. My daughter depends on rides and working on projects with friends who would be redistricted. With half of the feed being cut in half, all of those resources will be gone.

**Section IV B.3** - Demographic Characteristics of Student Population. Where reasonable, school attendance areas should promote the creation of a diverse and inclusive student body at both the sending and receiving schools through the consideration of:

a. Racial/Ethnic Composition: River Hill is 44% white, the rest being minorities. Therefore, this standard does not apply

b. The socioeconomic composition of the school population as measured by participation in the federal FARMS program.

According to multiple sources as attached to the testimony, the correlation between FARM rates and SES is inaccurate, with errors in the certification of those who are certified as qualified for Free and Reduced Lunches between 16-20%. Please see the attached references as support. More so, the data becomes even more invalid since the passing of the Community Eligibility Provision (passed in 2010), which allows for any member of a neighborhood to receive free lunches if more than 40% of the community qualifies for FARM. This is regardless of income. Therefore, your entire concept of integrating based on SES derived from federal FARM rates are completely inaccurate.

c. The academic performance of the school will be manipulated by the move of the RH students to WL to mask lower scores. However, it is not true improvement that is being achieved here, just data manipulation

d. ESOL participation in HS is not significant.

e. The number of students moved – 35% population of RHHS is being moved, which, along with the population at Atholton and Wilde Lake make it obvious that these three schools were targeted for the most disruptive, targeted move yet, with a possible less than 2% change in the metrics measured. I cannot take into consideration the change in scores, as this is purely due to change in population, not due to change in student achievement.

**Policies 1000, 1040 and 1060**

This entire plan has a potential of disrupting about 20,000 people in the county, and as proposed it has caused a lot of tension, disrespect, and vitriol that has been spewed. Attached you will find the violations of the different policies involved, as well as attached evidence.

Polygon 1181

# River Hill

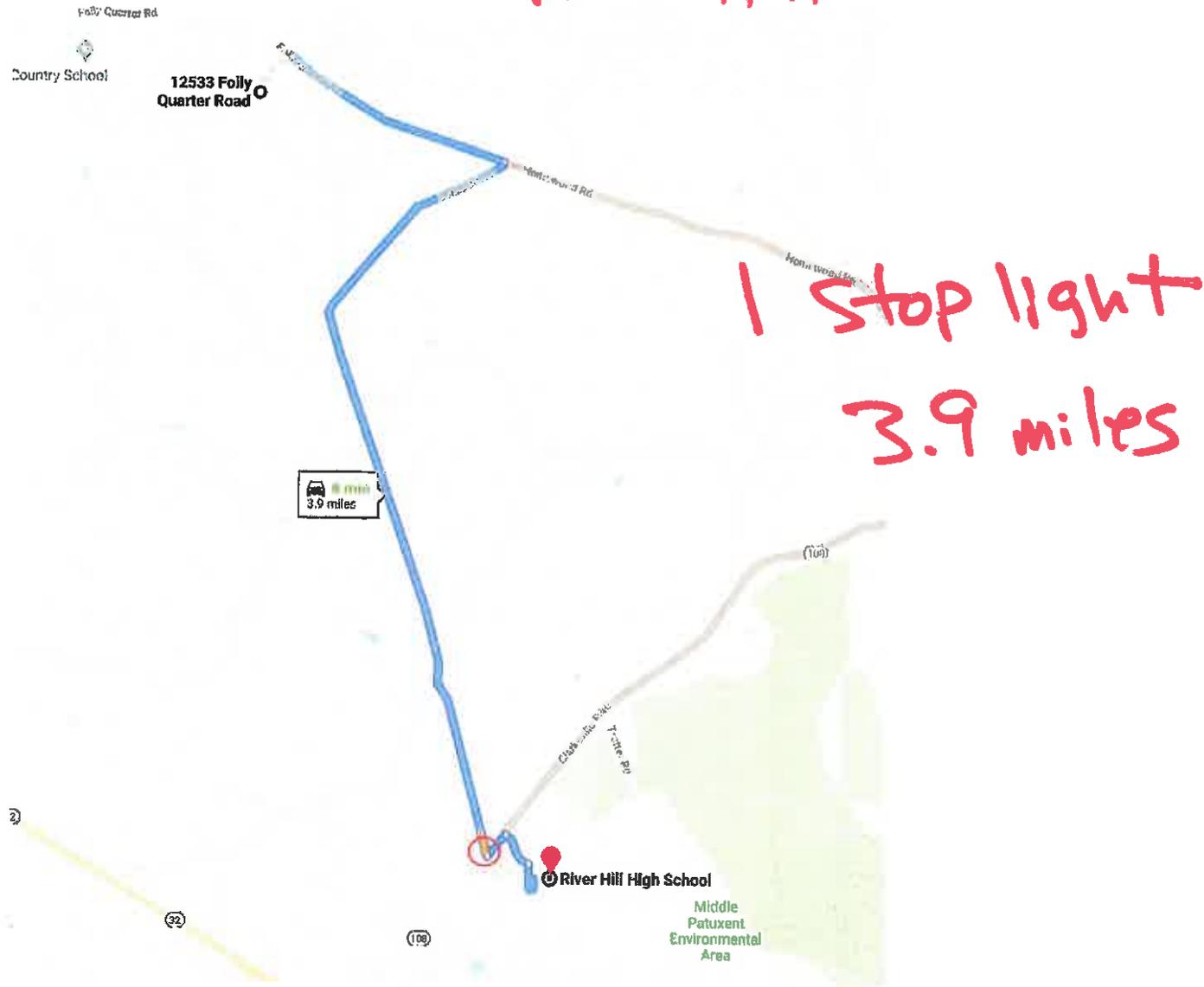


Figure 3 - 12533 Folly Quarter Rd -> River Hill High School

Notes: 1 Traffic STOP Light denoted with red circle

Polygon 1181

# Gleneig High School

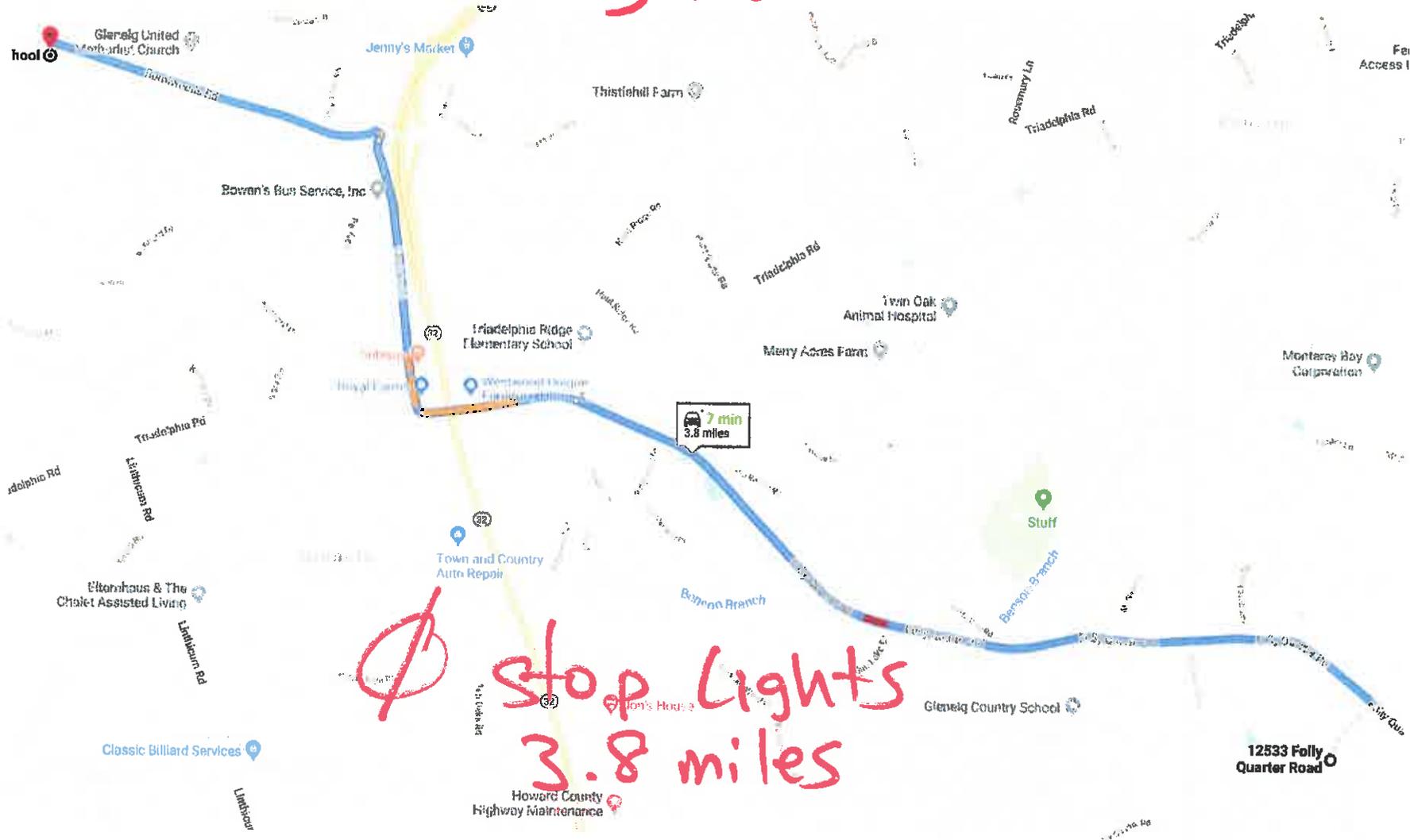


Figure 1 - 12533 Folly Quarter Rd -> Gleneig High School

Notes: No Traffic STOP Lights

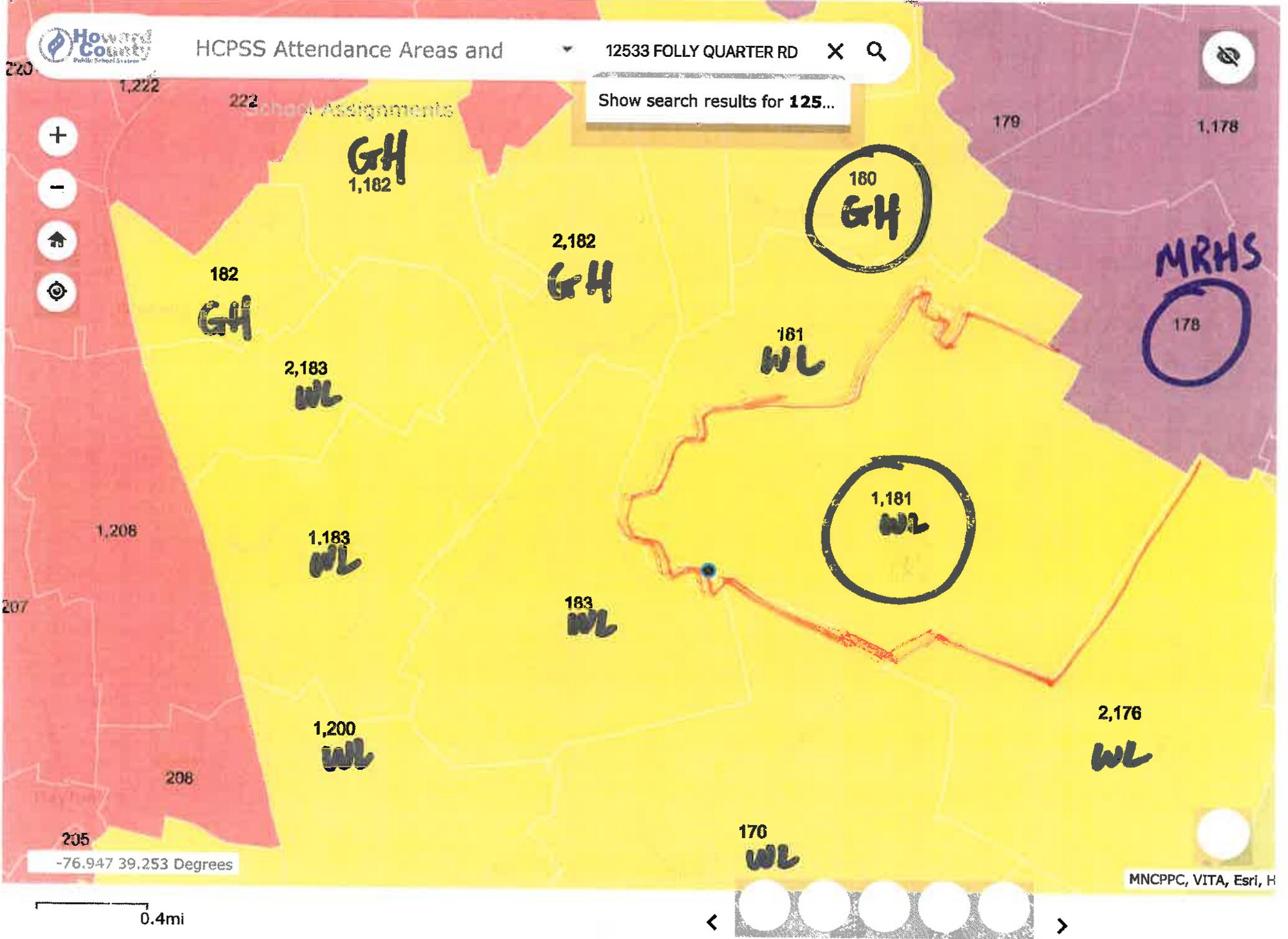
Polygon 1181

# Wilde Lake



Figure 2 - 12533 Folly Quarter Rd -> Wilde Lake High School

Notes: Ten (10) Traffic Stop Lights denoted with red circles



Policy 1060 has been already violated, as well as 1000  
If redistricting happens, Policy 1040 has potential to be  
violated

HOWARD COUNTY  
PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

BOARD OF EDUCATION

POLICY 1060  
BULLYING, CYBERBULLYING,  
HARASSMENT, OR INTIMIDATION

Effective: July 1, 2017

EVIDENCE  
ATTACHED (p.8)

## I. Policy Statement

The Board of Education is committed to providing a safe, engaging, and supportive school and work environment that values diversity and commonality. The Board is also committed to fostering a climate where individuals are valued and their safety and rights are protected. The Board prohibits acts of bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, or intimidation because they compromise the learning environment and well-being of students, employees, and community.

The Board recognizes that Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) employees must be knowledgeable regarding bullying and victimization in order to promote an environment where opportunities for bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, or intimidation do not occur.

## II. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish expectations for maintaining a safe and respectful school climate and workplace in the HCPSS where bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, and intimidation are not tolerated. This policy also provides standards for identifying and preventing bullying, cyberbullying, harassing, or intimidating behavior, as well as intervening and supporting students and employees who are exhibiting bullying, cyberbullying, harassing, or intimidating behavior or who are targets/victims of bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, or intimidation.

## III. Definitions

Within the context of this policy, the following definitions apply:

- A. Bullying – Intentional conduct, including verbal, physical, or written conduct, or an intentional electronic communication that creates a hostile educational or work environment by substantially interfering with a student's or employee's educational or employment benefits, opportunities, or performance, or with their physical or psychological well-being and is:
1. A real or perceived power imbalance; or,
  2. Repeated; or,
  3. Motivated by an actual or a perceived personal characteristic including race, national origin, immigration status, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender

identity, religion, ancestry, physical attributes, socioeconomic status, family structure, or physical or mental ability or disability; or,

4. Threatening or seriously intimidating; or,
  5. Occurs on school property, at a school activity or event, or on a school bus; or,
  6. Sent via electronic communication; or,
  7. Substantially disrupts the orderly operation of a school or workplace.
- B. Community – The society at large which includes, but is not limited to families, businesses, faith communities, government agencies, nonprofit service organizations, other organizations, and individuals.
- C. Cyberbullying – Harassment, humiliation, intimidation, and/or threats to others transmitted by means of any electronic device, including but not limited to the use of social media sites, telephones, cellular phones, computers, or tablets.
- D. Electronic Communication – A communication transmitted by means of any electronic device, including but not limited to the use of social media sites, telephones, cellular phones, computers, or tablets.
- E. Employee – Any individual employed by the HCPSS.
- F. Harassment – A sufficiently severe action or persistent, pervasive pattern of actions or statements, directed at an identifiable individual or group, that is intended to be, or which a reasonable person would perceive as, ridiculing or demeaning.
- G. Hazing – Participation in any intentional or reckless act directed against another for the purpose of initiation into, affiliation with, or maintenance of membership in an organization. Hazing is considered to be a form of bullying; hazing includes, but is not limited to, any action taken or situation created that directly or indirectly embarrasses, humiliates, harasses, ridicules, intimidates, or causes harm or mental or physical discomfort to another.
- H. Intimidation – Subjection to intentional action that seriously threatens and induces a sense of fear and/or inferiority which adversely affects one's ability to participate in or benefit from the educational or work setting.
- I. Parent – Any one of the following, recognized as the adult(s) legally responsible for the child or vulnerable adult:
1. Biological Parent – A natural parent whose parental rights have not been terminated.

2. **Adoptive Parent** – A parent who has legally adopted the student and whose parental rights have not been terminated.
  3. **Custodian** – A person or an agency appointed by the court as the legal custodian of the student and granted parental rights and responsibilities.
  4. **Guardian** – A person who has been placed by the court in charge of the affairs of the student and granted parental rights and responsibilities.
  5. **Caregiver** – An adult resident of Howard County who exercises care, custody or control over the student, but who is neither the biological parent nor legal guardian as long as the person satisfies the requirements of the Education Article §7-101(c) (Informal Kinship Care).
  6. **Foster Parent** – An adult approved to care for a child who has been placed in their home by a state agency or a licensed child placement agency as provided by the Family Law Article, §5-507.
- J. **Retaliation** – The act or process of threatening or otherwise penalizing a person for reporting an alleged violation of this policy or for participating in an investigation of an alleged violation.
- K. **School Property** – Any property owned or leased by the HCPSS or used by HCPSS for school-related activities. The concept of property extends to school activities such as field trips, use of parks and recreation facilities, proms at hotels, etc. School buses, bus stops, and facilities scheduled by the school system for student use are considered an extension of school property.
- L. **School-Related Activity** – Any school system activity, on or off school property, in which a student directly participates (e.g. school field trip, athletic event, or class/graduation activity), or an activity in which the student does not directly participate but represents the school or student body simply by being present (e.g. spectator at a school event).
- M. **Service Providers** – Individuals who provide services to the HCPSS, either through contract or volunteer service, when those services involve access to students, such as substitute teachers, mentors, chaperones, bus drivers, and individuals who participate in partnership programs.

#### **IV. Standards**

- A. The HCPSS will work to ensure that the school and workplace environments are free from incidents of bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, hazing, or intimidation. The prohibition of bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, hazing, or intimidation in schools and workplaces and reprisal and retaliation against individuals who report acts of bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, hazing, or intimidation, as well as standard

consequences for policy violations, will be a part of systemwide efforts to maintain positive school and workplace climates.

- B. The HCPSS will comply with the Maryland Safe Schools Reporting Act of 2005, as amended, which mandates the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to require all county boards of education to report incidents of bullying, harassment, or intimidation against students on public school property. Additionally, MSDE was required to create and distribute a “Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation Report Form” and Maryland’s Model Policy To Address Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation.
- C. All HCPSS schools and workplaces will follow established procedures for prevention and intervention as outlined in the implementation procedures.
- D. The prevention and intervention strategies of bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, or intimidation, will be presented to all students in pre-kindergarten through grade twelve.
- E. Employees and contract service providers will receive annual professional development on the substance of this policy. This professional development will provide prevention education, designed to model and teach positive relationship building and appropriate interpersonal communication.
- F. Students, employees, and others engaging in bullying, cyberbullying, harassment or intimidation will be subject to disciplinary and/or legal action.
- G. Bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, hazing, intimidation, or retaliation against anyone who has reported bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, hazing, intimidation, or retaliation is prohibited.
- H. Consequences for violations of this policy will be administered according to applicable school system policies (Policy 7030 Employee Conduct and Discipline, Policy 9200 Student Discipline, the HCPSS Student Code of Conduct, and all applicable state and federal laws). Prior violations of this policy will be considered when determining consequences.
- I. Bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, hazing, and intimidation data will be compiled, analyzed, and reported quarterly to the Board and the Superintendent.

## V. Responsibilities

- A. The HCPSS will provide annual professional development for employees and contract service providers on the substance of this policy. This professional development will provide prevention education, designed to model and teach positive relationship building and appropriate interpersonal communication as well as detail the process and responsibilities for bullying reporting.

- 
- B. The Superintendent/Designee will ensure that students, parents, employees, and contract service providers are notified of the provisions of this policy annually.
  - C. The Superintendent/Designee is responsible for any action taken in response to a violation of this policy.
  - D. School principals/supervisors will notify those under their supervision of the provisions of this policy.
  - E. Students, parents, employees, and service providers will report alleged incidents of bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, hazing, intimidation, and retaliation.
  - F. School principals/supervisors will ensure compliance with the Maryland Safe Schools Reporting Act of 2005, as amended, requiring all county boards of education to report incidents of bullying, harassment, or intimidation against students in public schools and to distribute a “Bullying, Harassment or Intimidation Report Form”.
  - G. The Superintendent/Designee and/or school administrators will ensure that all illegal behaviors are reported to the appropriate social service agencies, law enforcement agencies, and the MSDE.
  - H. School principals/supervisors will take immediate action to protect victims regardless of how the alleged bullying is reported.
  - I. School principals/supervisors will ensure that professional development regarding this policy occurs annually.
  - J. School principals/supervisors will implement systemwide/workplace procedures for prevention and intervention of bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, hazing, intimidation, or retaliation.
  - K. School principals, supervisors, or the Executive Director of Special Education and Student Services/designee will provide appropriate assistance to students, parents, employees, and service providers who have been affected by behavior prohibited in this policy.
  - L. The Department of Special Education and Student Services will compile and report bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, hazing, or intimidation data to the Board.
  - M. All employees will comply with the expectations for safe school environments.

#### **VI. Delegation of Authority**

The Superintendent is authorized to develop appropriate procedures for the implementation of this policy.

---

**VII. References**

- A. Legal
  - Title IX of the Educational Amendments Act of 1972
  - Annotated Code of Maryland, Criminal Law Article, §3-805 – Misuse of electronic communication or interactive computer service (“Grace’s Law”)
  - Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article, §7-424 – Reporting incidents of harassment or intimidation against students
  - Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article, §7-424.1 – Model policy prohibiting bullying, harassment and intimidation
  - COMAR 13A.01.04.03 – School Safety
  - COMAR 13A.08.01.15 – Reporting Delinquent Acts
  
- B. Other Board Policies
  - Policy 1000 Civility
  - Policy 1010 Discrimination
  - Policy 1020 Sexual Discrimination
  - Policy 1030 Child Abuse and Neglect
  - Policy 1040 Safe and Supportive Schools
  - Policy 3050 Records Management
  - Policy 7010 Personnel Records
  - Policy 7030 Employee Conduct and Discipline
  - Policy 8080 Responsible Use of Technology and Social Media
  - Policy 9020 Students’ Rights and Responsibilities
  - Policy 9050 Student Records
  - Policy 9060 Rehabilitation Act of 1973 Compliance: Section 504
  - Policy 9200 Student Discipline
  - Policy 9280 Students Charged with Community or Reportable Offenses
  - Policy 9290 Gangs, Gang Activity, and Similar Destructive or Delinquent Group Behavior
  - Policy 10000 Parent, Family, and Community Involvement
  
- C. Relevant Data Sources
  - Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation in Maryland Public Schools: A Report to the Maryland General Assembly, (March 31, 2015)
  - HCPSS Bullying, Harassment or Intimidation Reports to MSDE
  - HCPSS Suspensions for Bullying/Harassment trend data
  - Suspensions, Expulsions, and Health Related Exclusions Maryland Public Schools Annual report
  
- D. Other
  - Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation Complaint Form
  - Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation Incident School Investigation Form
  - Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation Reporting Form
  - HCPSS Student & Parent Handbook
  - HCPSS Student Code of Conduct

HCPSS Threat Management Procedures  
Maryland's Model Policy To Address Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation  
Master Agreement Between the Board of Education and the Howard County  
Administrators Association  
Master Agreement Between the Board of Education and the Howard County Education  
Association  
SRO Memorandum of Understanding

**VIII. History**

ADOPTED: June 11, 2009  
REVIEWED:  
MODIFIED: June 12, 2014  
August 14, 2014  
REVISED: June 8, 2017  
EFFECTIVE: July 1, 2017

**I. Policy Statement**

The Board of Education of Howard County is committed to providing a safe, engaging, and supportive school climate. The Board believes that fostering a school climate in which individuals are valued, and their safety and rights are protected, is essential to its mission.

All students, employees, parents, and third parties of the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) share responsibility for the health, safety, and general welfare of students and for establishing and sustaining a safe and supportive school climate. Employees bear a professional responsibility to monitor student behavior and respond accordingly to both observed and reported violations of policy.

Potential harm

**II. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to prohibit any behaviors that interfere with a safe, engaging, and supportive school climate.

**III. Definitions**

Within the context of this policy, the following definitions apply:

- A. HCPSS Student Code of Conduct – A disciplinary framework that is designed to support a safe, positive, and respectful learning environment and discipline procedures for effective learning.
- B. Parent – Any one of the following, recognized as the adult(s) legally responsible for the student:
  - 1. Biological Parent – A natural parent whose parental rights have not been terminated.
  - 2. Adoptive Parent – A person who has legally adopted the student and whose parental rights have not been terminated.
  - 3. Custodian – A person or an agency appointed by the court as the legal custodian of the student and granted parental rights and responsibilities.
  - 4. Guardian – A person who has been placed by the court in charge of the affairs of the student and granted parental rights and responsibilities.

186

6

3 weeks ago



@widelakememes

yeah ah ha ha

160

4

3 weeks ago



## I. Policy Statement

The Board of Education of Howard County is committed to modelling and fostering an environment of mutual respect and civility between and among all stakeholders including members of the Board of Education, students, school system employees, parents, service providers, and each member of the community. The Board recognizes a culture of civility is critical to the success and well-being of students employees, and community members and is a necessary first step to establishing and maintaining relationships and a culture that recognizes the worth and dignity of the individual.

## II. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set clear expectations for civil behavior between and among all Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) stakeholders to promote safe, engaging and supportive environments.

## III. Definitions

Within the context of this policy, the following definitions apply:

- A. Civility – Mutual respect and consideration reflected in language, attitudes, behaviors, and verbal, nonverbal, written and digital communications.
- B. Parent – Any one of the following, recognized as the adult(s) legally responsible for the student:
  - 1. Biological Parent – A natural parent whose parental rights have not been terminated.
  - 2. Adoptive Parent – A parent who has legally adopted the student and whose parental rights have not been terminated.
  - 3. Custodian – A person or an agency appointed by the court as the legal custodian of the student and granted parental rights and responsibilities.
  - 4. Guardian – A person who has been placed by the court in charge of the affairs of the student and granted parental rights and responsibilities.
  - 5. Caregiver – An adult resident of Howard County who exercises care, custody or control over the student, but who is neither the biological parent nor legal guardian

as long as the person satisfies the requirements of the Education Article §7-101(c) (Informal Kinship Care).

6. Foster Parent – An adult approved to care for a child who has been placed in their home by a state agency or a licensed child placement agency as provided by the Family Law Article, §5-507.
- C. School Property – Any property owned or leased by the (HCPSS) or used by HCPSS for school-related activities. The concept of property extends to school activities such as field trips, use of parks and recreation facilities, proms at hotels, etc. School buses, bus stops, and facilities scheduled by the school system for student use are considered an extension of school property.
  - D. School-Related Activity – Any school system activity, on or off school property, in which a student directly participates (e.g. field trip, athletic event, or class/graduation activity), or an activity in which the student does not directly participate, but represents the school or student body simply by being present (e.g. spectator at a school event).
  - E. Service Providers – Individuals who provide services to the HCPSS, either through contract, Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), or volunteer service, when those services involve access to students and employees, such as substitute teachers, mentors, chaperones, bus drivers, and individuals who participate in committees, advisory groups, and partnership programs.

#### IV. Standards

- A. The HCPSS school and workplace environments will reflect the expected behaviors of civility while communicating and interacting among stakeholders. These behaviors include but are not limited to:
  1. Respect and courtesy in language, demeanor, and actions
  2. Respectful and appropriate tone and volume of voice
  3. Respectful and active listening
  4. Respectful acknowledgment of individual differences
  5. Respectful acknowledgement of diversity
  6. Respect for the personal, civil, and property rights of others
  7. Respectful and courteous use of phone, public address systems, two-way radios, and any other verbal communication devices
  8. Respectful and courteous written and digital communication, including but not limited to notes, letters, email, text messages, and social media.
- B. The HCPSS school and workplace environments will be free from unacceptable behaviors including but not limited to:
  1. Rude, insulting, or demeaning language and/or actions
  2. Persistently unreasonable demands

3. Repeatedly interruptive behavior
  4. Displays of temper
  5. Threatening and/or abusive gestures and behavior.
- C. All individuals in HCPSS schools and workplaces will follow procedures for resolution as outlined in the implementation procedures.

## V. Responsibilities

- A. All individuals will behave in a civil manner while communicating and interacting with all HCPSS stakeholders.
- B. All individuals will behave in a civil manner and cooperate in resolving incidents of uncivil behavior.
- C. If individuals are unable to resolve incidents of uncivil behavior, the principal/supervisor or designee will facilitate a resolution.
- D. The Superintendent/Designee will determine whether an incident occurring on school property violates an existing Board of Education policy. The Superintendent/Designee will respond appropriately and in a timely manner to all parties.
- E. The Superintendent/Designee will provide for annual notification of this policy to students, employees, parents, and community members.

## VI. Delegation of Authority

The Superintendent is authorized to develop appropriate procedures for the implementation of this policy.

## VII. References

- A. Legal
  - The Annotated Code of Maryland, Criminal Law Article, §3-805 – Misuse of electronic communication or interactive computer service (“Grace’s Law”)
  - The Annotated Code of Maryland, Criminal Law Article, §6-409, Trespass
  - The Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article, §26-101 and §26-102, School Security
- B. Other Board Policies
  - Policy 1010 Anti-Discrimination
  - Policy 1020 Sexual Discrimination
  - Policy 1040 Safe and Supportive Schools
  - Policy 1060 Bullying, Cyberbullying, Harassment, or Intimidation
  - Policy 2030 Ombudsman
  - Policy 2040 Public Participation in Meetings of the Board

View 3 more comments



**James Howard Uhm**, the Howard County Ethics Commission has no legal authority over the Board of Education or Howard County Public School System.

Like · Reply · 5h · Edited



**Beatrice Hoffmann** 🙄 so who has the authority?

Like · Reply · 1h



**James Howard** Beatrice Hoffmann, does it matter? Nobody has articulated a suspected ethical violation, yet.

Like · Reply · 1h



**Beatrice Hoffmann** 🙄 Yes, it does matter as ethics and oversight is an important part of the democratic process and important for checks and balances. So as I am being interested and would like to be reassured that there is such a process in place: Who has the authority?

Like · Reply · 21m



**Beatrice Hoffmann** 🙄 gee... just tell me... 😊 I know you know 😊

Like · Reply · 12m



**Beatrice Hoffmann** 🙄 <https://cc.howardcountymd.gov/Zoning.../Board-of-Appeals>

CC.HOWARDCOUNTYMD.GOV

Howard County Council > Zoning / Land Use > Board of Appeals

Like · Reply · Remove Preview · 12m



**James Howard** Beatrice Hoffmann, that does not mean I know. And while I do, I am not inclined to assist in this gross abuse of the ethics process by a group of malcontented and overly entitled brats hell-bent on raising their children to be the same.

Like · Reply · 7m



**Beatrice Hoffmann** 🙄 ouch...

Like · Reply · 3m



**Dawn Millman Popp**

September 3 at 9:24 PM · 🌐



they won't I  
"look racist"

1w Like Reply



**James Howard**

**AJ Arnold**, "Hey, everyone, put your hoods back in the closet!"

1w Like Reply



**Steven Keller**

**AJ Arnold and James Howard** --- I'm going to refrain from responding to most inflammatory posts, but must call your above posts out as being particularly irresponsible, harmful and off the mark.

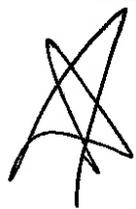
1w Like Reply



**James Howard**

**Steven Keller**, uhm, I just checked and being responsible for not hurting the feels of Howard County's precious snowflakes is not in my portfolio.

1w Like Reply



Write a reply...



HOCO school interest



Here is what I find funny (not so funny)...

Parent: \*banging on the superintendent's door\* "PAY ATTENTION TO ME!!! OUR SCHOOLS ARE IN TROUBLE! THEY ARE OVERCROWDED AND IT IS UNSAFE FOR OUR CHILDREN! ALL CHILDREN MATTER AND ALL CHILDREN DESERVE THE BEST! KEEP THEM SAFE!! DO SOMETHING NOW!"

Superintendent: \*makes a suggestion\*

Parent: "NO NO NO!!! THAT IS NO GOOD! YOU ARE A HORRIBLE PERSON FOR MAKING THESE SUGGESTIONS."

Superintendent: \*calls off redistricting and goes back to the drawing board...makes some new suggestions a year later\*

Parent: "Wait. No. SERIOUSLY. Let me be clear. I didn't mean for you to move my kid. Are you crazy? I didn't move to this street so my kid could go to a lesser school. No. No. No. Move the other kids. My kid couldn't possibly go on a bus for 15 minutes. That is unacceptable. This is for all of the OTHER children. Not my child."

Howard County. We can't even call this "1st world" problems. It is so over-the-top privileged behavior that it is kind of gross. Frankly, I can't believe a satirist hasn't picked this story up yet.



14 Comments



Like



Comment



*No DISCRIMINATION Act  
TO SOS*

**I. Policy Statement**

The Board of Education is committed to providing an educational and work environment that is free from discrimination, fosters equitable opportunities, and values diversity and commonality. The Board prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, immigration status, religion, physical, mental, or educational disability, pregnancy, age, gender, gender expression, gender identity, genetic information, sexual orientation, marital status, veteran status or socioeconomic status in the educational program, including co-curricular and extra-curricular activities, and in the workplace.

The Board recognizes its responsibility to promote worth, dignity, respect, and safety and therefore prohibits discrimination through curriculum, instruction, professional development, and resource selection.

Employees, students, and third parties share responsibility for the health, safety, and general welfare of students and for creating and ensuring an environment free from discrimination.

Employees, students, and third parties may be subject to disciplinary action or consequences for discriminatory behavior even when the behavior does not rise to the level of discrimination as defined by prevailing federal and state laws.

**II. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to establish expectations for behavior that promote a safe, supportive school and work environment and provide direction for students, employees, and third parties in recognizing and reporting discrimination in accordance with this policy and with local, state, and federal requirements.

**III. Definitions**

Within the context of this policy, the following definitions apply:

- A. **Discrimination** – Any act or omission due to an individual’s status or perceived status in a protected class that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or educational environment; or substantially interferes with an individual’s ability to work, learn, or otherwise is sufficiently serious to limit an individual’s employment opportunities, or to limit a student’s ability to participate in or benefit from the educational program.

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**IV. Standards**

- A. It is a violation of this policy for any student, employee, or third party to engage in acts of discrimination in schools, school system offices, or at school-related activities, or at school system sponsored activities.

Student, employee, or third party behavior may be severe enough to violate state and/or federal laws prohibiting discrimination in educational institutions and the workplace.

This generally occurs when:

1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of the individual's employment or educational status.
  2. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work or educational performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment, which may include online and social media.
- B. It is a violation of this policy for any student, employee, or third party to engage in retaliation with regard to allegations or complaints of discrimination.
- C. Discrimination on the basis of gender includes harassment, which is addressed in Policy 1020 Sexual Discrimination, and Title IX. Harassment, defamation, and intimidation that are not discriminatory in nature are addressed in Policy 1040 Safe and Supportive Schools, and in Policy 1060 Bullying, Cyberbullying, Harassment, or Intimidation.
- D. The HCPSS will promote the worth and dignity of all individuals through curriculum, instruction, professional development, and resource selection in accordance with state regulation.
1. The HCPSS will provide PreK-12 curricula and instructional strategies that enable students to demonstrate an understanding of and respect for living in a culturally pluralistic society.
  2. Instructional staff will use strategies that appropriately address students' identities and learning styles while providing rigorous instruction for all students to increase academic achievement.
  3. Instructional staff will be provided with curricula that:
    - a. Avoids stereotyping, discrimination, bias, and prejudice;
    - b. Reflects the diverse experiences relating to cultural groups and individuals;
    - c. Is representative of the diversity of society and assist students to demonstrate an understanding of the experiences of individuals and groups.



# Student Eligibility for a Free Lunch as an SES Measure in Education Research

Michael Harwell and Brandon LeBeau

The use of eligibility for a free lunch as a measure of a student's socioeconomic status continues to be a fixture of quantitative education research. Despite its popularity, it is unclear that education researchers are familiar with what student eligibility for a free lunch does (and does not) represent. The authors examine the National School Lunch Program, which is responsible for certifying students as eligible for a free lunch, and conclude that free lunch eligibility is a poor measure of socioeconomic status, which suffers from important deficiencies that can bias inferences. A table characterizing key strengths and weaknesses of variables used as measures of socioeconomic status is provided to facilitate comparisons.

**Keywords:** data analysis; measurements; poverty

Analyses of educational data often include student background variables as statistical controls to enhance the credibility of inferences. One of the most frequently used student variables is socioeconomic status (SES). The prominence of SES in education is due largely to its widely documented relationship with achievement, covering more than nine decades of research (e.g., Bryant, Glazer, Hansen, & Kursch, 1974; Coleman et al., 1966; Holley, 1916; Lynd & Lynd, 1929; Sirin, 2005; White, 1982). SES is frequently used as a covariate in analyses of educational data (e.g., Dauber, Alexander, & Entwisle, 1996; Lubienaki & Lubienaki, 2006; *Mathematica Policy Research*, 2008) or as a matching variable (e.g., General Accounting Office, 2003; Pentz et al., 1990) to statistically control for its effects, to increase statistical power, and to enhance causality arguments (White, 1982).

There are many definitions of SES. Three that are representative are "the social and economic life chances individuals experience" (Powers, 1982, p. 1), "differential access (realized and potential) to desired resources" (Oakes & Rossi, 2003, p. 775), and "a shorthand expression for variables that enable the placement of persons, families, households and aggregates such as statistical local areas, communities and cities in some hierarchical order, reflecting their ability to produce and consume the scarce and valued resources of society" (Hauser & Warren, 1997, p. 178). Life chances represent an individual's opportunity to obtain

the scarce and valued resources of society, which include economic, social, and cultural resources.

Following the above definitions, a student whose SES is "low" lives in a household in which the householder (e.g., biological parent, foster parent, guardian) has less income, education, occupational status (e.g., manual laborer vs. manager of a large workforce), and so forth than in the case of a student whose SES is "high." As Walpole (2003) points out, "low" SES students also tend to have less access to cultural capital (specialized or insider knowledge not taught in schools) and social capital (contacts in networks that can lead to personal or professional gains), which have been argued to be key components of a student's educational success.

An examination of the education research literature shows that a variety of variables have served as SES measures, including dwelling value neighborhood quality (Montague, 1964); ethnicity (Burkhead, Fox, & Holland, 1967); parent income (Worley & Story, 1967); teacher salaries (Raymond, 1968); parent occupation (Miner, 1968); student mobility, which is usually related to transferring in or out of a school district during the school year (Herr & Tobias, 1970); home atmosphere, which typically reflects householder support of education (Purves, 1973); teacher estimates of student's SES (Means, Means, Osborne, & Elsom, 1973); parent education (Scanfjel, 1973); number of siblings (Kerckhoff, 1975); and student eligibility for a free or reduced price lunch (FRL; Stein et al., 2008). Students certified as eligible for an FRL are distinguished from those not eligible, with the implication that eligible students have lower SES. Students who receive a free lunch and those who receive a reduced price lunch will generally not be distinguished. We focus on the use of FRL as a measure of a student's SES in education research.

## Rationale for the Current Study

An examination of the FRL variable as a measure of a student's SES in education research in the United States is timely for three related reasons. First, it is unclear that education researchers are familiar with what eligibility for an FRL does (and does not) represent. Second, the FRL variable possesses several important deficiencies that can bias inferences. Third, the continued use of FRL as a measure of SES in educational studies despite criticism of this practice (Hauser, 1994; Kurki, Boyle, & Aladjem, 2005) suggests a need to critically reexamine its use.

We argue that education researchers who use the FRL variable as a measure of SES typically do so because this information is

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easily accessible and relatively inexpensive. However, the use of FRL is difficult to defend conceptually, empirically, or methodologically. Implicit in this argument is that a researcher who carefully defines what SES represents in his or her study is unlikely to select the FRL variable as a measure of SES.

First we distinguish between poverty and the conceptualization and measurement of SES in education research. Next we examine the FRL variable and identify characteristics that can bias inferences when this variable serves as a measure of student SES. To provide a deeper understanding of this variable, we include a brief history of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP; 2008), which is responsible for determining student eligibility for an FRL, and its current operation in U.S. schools. Finally, we provide a table that facilitates comparisons among variables used as SES measures by characterizing key strengths and weaknesses.

In education research using the FRL variable, it appears that typically no distinction is drawn between students certified as eligible for a reduced price lunch (1.59 million) and those certified as eligible for a free lunch (16.1 million; NSLP, 2008). For example, analyses of data collected for federally funded education studies and reports generally make no distinction between these groups (e.g., Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study, see Martin, Mullis, & Chrostowski, 2004; National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2007).

### Poverty and SES

SES as typically described in education research differs from poverty, which is widely used in research areas such as public health and the effectiveness of social welfare programs such as the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).

In general, poverty is more narrowly defined than SES because it is almost always linked to the federal government's poverty levels, which are strictly income based. Official U.S. government poverty levels first appeared in the mid-1960s (Orshansky, 1965) and at the time reflected the price of food for a family of a given size times three.

The federal government distinguishes between *poverty thresholds*, which are used for various statistical purposes such as estimating the number of children in poverty each year, and *poverty guidelines*, which represent a simplification of the poverty thresholds and are issued by the Department of Health and Human Services to determine eligibility for many federal assistance programs. Both measures rely on household income, which includes sources such as earnings, unemployment compensation, social security, pension or retirement income, public assistance, and dividends. Households with incomes lower than the poverty guidelines are generally eligible for various federal programs such as WIC and an FRL through the NSLP.

SES, on the other hand, is widely used in education research and is often assessed with measures that vary in their connection to income, such as householder occupation and FRL eligibility. For example, Blau and Duncan (1967) described a conceptual model of the impact of householder SES on achievement, Spaeth (1976) offered a theory of how SES affects a student's cognitive development in the home, and Adler et al. (1994) described the effects of SES on health.

The importance of SES in research and policy recently led the American Psychological Association (APA) to commission a task force on SES. This task force produced a report that operationally defined the scope, nature, range, parameters, and effects of socioeconomic inequalities in the United States and recommended mechanisms and structures that would more effectively address, on an association-wide basis, the causes and the impact of socioeconomic inequality (APA, 2007b). APA also created the Office on Socioeconomic Status, which is "responsible for directing, overseeing, facilitating and promoting psychology's contribution to the understanding of SES and the lives and well-being of the poor" (APA, 2007a).

In sum, poverty is defined through the income-based poverty guidelines issued by the federal government and is widely used in research areas such as public health. SES, on the other hand, is widely used in education research and is generally defined more broadly than poverty.

May (2002) noted that good SES measures are needed in education because without them important inequalities may be overlooked or easily dismissed. However, there is significant concern over the quality of some of these measures, including the FRL variable (e.g., Entwisle & Astone, 1994; Hauser, 1994; Kurki et al., 2005). Central to these concerns is that SES itself is often poorly conceptualized by researchers, which affects the measurement of SES and the interpretation of statistical results (Haug, 1977; Hauser & Warren, 1997; Oakes & Rossi, 2003).

### The Conceptualization of SES in Education Research

Payne and Biddle (1999) stated that research studying the effects of educational funding on achievement rarely defines SES, its theoretical roots, or its relationship to achievement. Unfortunately, education research involving SES is generally subject to Payne and Biddle's criticism. In most education research studies, SES seems to be defined solely by the variable regarded as capturing this information (e.g., FRL); that is, SES is whatever the measure of SES measures. None of the educational studies or reports cited earlier provided a conceptualization of SES that explained what it represented or its expected relationship to educational outcomes of interest, raising questions about what measures of SES in these studies represent.

For example, a report analyzing charter school data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP; NCES, 2006a) provided a figure in which eligibility for an FRL appeared as a student-level variable, but the report offered no definition of SES or why the FRL variable was an appropriate measure of SES. The use of FRL status as an SES measure also regularly appears in the Nation's Report Card summaries (e.g., NCES, 2007, 2008a). Studies by Borman and Hewes (2002), Lubinski and Lubinski (2006), Molnar et al. (1999), and Secin et al. (2008) provide additional examples of this practice. Payne and Biddle's (1999) criticism also applies to educational studies using SES scales (e.g., Martin et al., 2004; NCES, 2004, 2006b, 2008c).

The lack of conceptualization is problematic for several reasons. What does SES represent in these studies? Differential access to economic resources, to social resources in the community, to social power (Rose & Pevalin, 2003), to desired education resources, or something else? If SES is treated as a construct, is it one dimensional (e.g., access to economic resources), two

dimensional (e.g., access to economic and social resources), or something more? What is its expected relationship to various educational outcomes?

A more desirable approach is to conceptualize SES by drawing on theories of SES (social class, social stratification), such as those attributed to Max Weber (Breen, 2005) and Emile Durkheim (Grusky, 2005). The SES literature devoted to theoretical models like those of Weber and Durkheim and methodologies for measuring SES is vast, and good resources include the *Encyclopedia of Social Theory* (Harrington, Marshall, & Muller, 2006), works by Nam and Powers (1983) and Wright (2002), the University of Amsterdam website (<http://www.sociosite.net/>), and the *Report of the APA Task Force on Socioeconomic Status* (APA, 2007b).

Unfortunately, education researchers who turn to this literature for guidance in conceptualizing SES will find significant disagreement on key definitions, terms, and theoretical assumptions (APA, 2007b; Campbell, 1983; Haug, 1977; Oakes & Rossi, 2003). For example, there is no widely agreed-upon definition of SES or consensus on whether SES consists of a relatively modest number of discrete classes or is best represented as a semi-continuous variable with possibly hundreds of classes.

### The Measurement of SES in Education Research

The measurement of SES has generated a significant literature devoted to developing measures consistent with particular theories, minimizing the cost and intrusiveness of these measures, and improving their psychometric properties (Cirino et al., 2002; Haug, 1977; Hauser & Warren, 1997; Nam & Powers, 1983; Oakes & Rossi, 2003). However, the lack of agreement in the SES literature on key definitions, terms, and theoretical assumptions has important ramifications for measuring student SES in education research.

In the best possible case, researchers carefully describe what SES is intended to represent in their study, for example, a student's access to economic and social resources, and then turn to the SES literature and identify a theoretical model with clearly delineated measures consistent with their conceptualization of SES. This process would help to resolve important questions about whether the measurement of student SES should be based on a construct that is unidimensional or multidimensional (Bollen, Glanville, & Stecklov, 2001) and whether SES measures should be a single item (variable) or a scale consisting of multiple items (variables; Hauser & Warren, 1997).

However, even if researchers clearly conceptualize SES, they will encounter multiple theoretical models in the SES literature that vary in their definitions of SES, underlying theoretical assumptions, and appropriate measures and that vary in their consistency with a researcher's conceptualization. This leaves education researchers in the unhappy position of having to choose among competing (possibly unsatisfactory) models or to adapt a particular model and use existing idiosyncratic measures (or develop their own) to fit their needs, and then argue that this practice produces credible inferences (Oakes & Rossi, 2003). When researchers do not carefully conceptualize SES, turning to the theoretical SES literature for guidance is unlikely to be productive.

What is needed is work connecting models of SES and strategies for measuring SES in educational contexts. A few examples

of this kind of connection have appeared, including work by Entwisle and Astone (1994) in education and Oakes and Rossi (2003) in public health. An effort to generate better measures of SES is also under way at NCES (2008b), but the extent to which this work is informed by theoretical models of SES is unclear.

### The Free Lunch Variable

#### *Eligibility for a Free or Reduced Price Lunch*

Students are certified as eligible for an FRL in one of two ways. One way relies on income information provided by a household. Students are eligible for a reduced price lunch if their household income is less than 185% of the federal poverty guidelines and for a free lunch if their household income is less than 130% of the poverty guidelines. For 2008, the official poverty guidelines for a family of four for the 48 contiguous states was an annual income of \$21,200, with Alaska and Hawaii having separate, and higher, cutoffs ("Annual Update," 2006).

Using the poverty guidelines for 2008 for the 48 contiguous states, students living in a household of four whose income is less than  $1.85 \times \$21,200 = \$39,220$  would be certified as eligible for a reduced price lunch, whereas students from households whose income is less than  $1.3 \times \$21,200 = \$27,560$  would be certified as eligible for a free lunch. Data available for the 2007–2008 school year indicate that 92% of all K–12 students in the United States had access to an FRL, which is less than 100% because school district participation is voluntary. At the end of the 2006–2007 school year, approximately 18.4 million children received an FRL, or about 60% of all school lunches served (Food and Nutrition Service [FNS], 2008).

A second avenue to eligibility is direct certification, based on whether a household receives food stamps, has foster children in the home, or participates in at least one federally funded assistance program such as WIC or TANF (FNS, 2008). Students in a direct certification household are not generally required to submit an application for free meals; rather, social service agencies work closely with schools to identify students eligible for direct certification.

#### *Prominence of the Free Lunch Variable in Education Research*

Nierman and Veak (1997) argued that the eligibility of a child for an FRL based on family income and its relation to the poverty line have led education researchers to use this variable as a measure of SES. Kurki et al. (2005) claimed that FRL is the most commonly used measure of poverty in education research but offered no evidence supporting that assertion. A review of studies of educational achievement by Harwell, Maeda, and Lee (2004) found that during the period from 1996 to 2004 approximately 20% of the articles published in the *American Educational Research Journal* and *Sociology of Education* employing an SES measure used the FRL variable. Sirin's (2005) meta-analysis of the relationship between SES and achievement for studies published between 1990 and 2000 reported that approximately 17% of the sampled studies used FRL as a measure of SES.

It is apparent that education researchers continue to use the FRL variable as a measure of SES (e.g., Alexander, Entwisle, & Olson, 2007; Liew, McTigue, Barrois, & Hughes, 2008;



**Table 1**  
**Percentage of Students Eligible for Free and Reduced Price Lunches by Race/Ethnicity**  
**for a Sample of Public Elementary and Secondary Schools for 2003–2004**

	Race/Ethnicity				
	10% or Less	11%–25%	26%–50%	51%–75%	75% or More
Total	15.00	20.60	29.10	20.30	15.00
White	20.70	27.60	33.20	14.90	3.60
Black	4.20	9.40	24.50	29.80	32.20
Hispanic	6.00	9.20	21.70	28.40	34.70
Asian/Pacific Islander	22.50	22.00	26.40	18.20	10.90
American Indian/Alaska Native	5.10	12.20	27.50	29.80	25.50

student nutrition and learning. These characteristics provide a context for examining the FRL variable.

**FRL Participants**

Surprisingly little is known about the demographics of FRL participants (ERS, 2006). Recently, national data sets such as the Survey of Income and Program Participation, the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, and the Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey (NCES, 2003–2004) have been used to generate profiles of FRL participants for the purpose of better informing researchers and program administrators.

An ERS (2006) report based on Survey of Income and Program Participation data indicated that participation rates were highest for elementary school-age students and declined each year thereafter. The participation of White, African American, and Hispanic students in the FRL program was proportionally equal, although White students, compared with African American and Hispanic students, were more likely to receive a reduced price lunch than a free lunch.

The results in Table 1 suggest that schools with more African American students tend to have more students eligible for an FRL. For example, among schools with 75% or more African American students, 32.2% were eligible for an FRL, whereas for schools with 75% or more White students this percentage was 3.6%.

Table 2 shows that the location of a school appears to be related to how many students are certified as eligible for an FRL within that school. Schools in urban areas tend to have more students eligible for an FRL, and students in schools in a suburb, smaller town, or rural area tend to have fewer students eligible.

**Characteristics of the Free Lunch Variable**

Student eligibility for an FRL has several characteristics that are important in understanding its widespread use and its deficiencies as an SES measure.

*Eligibility for an FRL is a poor measure of a student's access to economic resources.* Student eligibility for an FRL is not strictly based on federal poverty guidelines. As described above, students in a household of four are eligible for a free lunch if household income is less than  $\$21,200 \times 1.3 = \$27,560$ . Correspondingly, students are eligible for a reduced price lunch if household income is less

than  $\$21,200 \times 1.85 = \$39,220$ . Thus, eligibility for an FRL depends indirectly on federal poverty guidelines.

Hauser (1994) argued convincingly that the federal poverty guidelines are flawed and outdated, and hence variables such as FRL that are based on the guidelines are similarly flawed. Hauser also identified several problems in using the poverty guidelines as the basis of an SES measure.

Many of these problems are economic in nature and center on the failure of the guidelines to take in-kind benefits into account in determining eligibility in a way that considers the financial impact of these benefits, rather than simply triggering eligibility. Among the largest and best known in-kind benefits programs are WIC, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (food stamps), housing assistance, and Head Start. An increasingly important in-kind benefit is the Earned Income Tax Credit. In 2008, a low-income family with one child could receive a direct income tax credit up to 8% of its income, and a low-income family with two or more children could receive a credit of up to 11.5% (Internal Revenue Service, 2008).

Hauser also noted that there are other economic factors not taken into account in the federal poverty guidelines, including the cost of earning income, child care costs, geographic variation in the cost of living, direct tax payments such as payroll and income taxes, differences in health insurance coverage, and the fact that poverty guidelines have not been updated since they were created in the 1960s to account for changing consumption patterns.

Kurki et al. (2005) raised similar concerns about the FRL variable. These authors emphasized that the FRL variable does not necessarily capture relevant dimensions of poverty, for example, the effects of concentrated poverty in a neighborhood.

Students can also be directly certified as eligible for an FRL in ways that do not depend directly on household income. As noted earlier, students living in foster homes or in households that participate in federal assistance programs like WIC are automatically certified as eligible, and approximately 25% of students are certified as eligible in this way (ERS, 2003). In these cases, there is no requirement that household income be less than 130% or 185% of the poverty guidelines for a student to be eligible for an FRL.

Compounding these difficulties is compelling evidence that a significant percentage of students are incorrectly certified as eligible or not eligible. Hauser (1994) and Gleason (2008) commented that the determination of student eligibility for an FRL traditionally has placed relatively little emphasis on verification

Table 2  
 Percentage of Public Elementary Schools and Secondary Students by Percentage of Students Eligible for Free and Reduced Price Lunches and by School Location for 2003–2004

Location	10% or Less	11%–25%	26%–50%	51%–75%	75% or More
City	8.60	13.20	24.70	24.50	29.10
Suburb	25.40	25.90	25.00	14.50	9.20
Town	6.00	19.20	39.10	25.20	10.50
Rural area	11.70	22.60	36.20	21.40	8.10

of the eligibility of applicants, and there is substantial evidence supporting this assertion.

An income verification study using a nationally representative sample showed that 17% of students certified as eligible for an FRL should not have been, and 8% certified as ineligible were in fact eligible (FNS, 1990). Another study (Office of Inspector General, 1997) used data from Illinois and showed that 19% of students certified as eligible should not have been, and a 2003 audit by the General Accounting Office estimated that 21% of the sampled households were incorrectly certified as eligible or not eligible for an FRL. A study of more than 3,600 students in 21 school districts reported that 20% of the students certified as eligible for an FRL should not have been, and 7% certified as not eligible were eligible (Office of Research, Nutrition, and Analysis [ORNA], 2004). A 2005 study found that 6% to 9% of students who were declared eligible using direct certification should not have been (Mathematica Policy Research, 2005).

The most recent large certification study involved 356 schools and more than 8,000 students. The results indicated that 15.8% of the students certified as eligible for a free lunch should not have been and 6% certified as eligible for a reduced price lunch were actually eligible for a free lunch (ORNA, 2007), for a total certification error rate of 21.8%. Incorrectly certifying students as eligible appears to be more common than incorrectly certifying them as not eligible (ORNA, 2007). This study also found that most certification error originates in the eligibility information provided by households rather than in administrative error. For example, 23% of the households in the ORNA study incorrectly reported income or household size on the FRL application.

Another source of error occurs when students are certified as eligible or not eligible in an ad hoc way. A recent ERS (2008) study found that students who failed to return an FRL application or whose application was incomplete were typically categorized by local officials (e.g., the local education authority or its agent, or the school director of food services) as not eligible. In an analysis of NAEP charter school data (NCES, 2006a), students for whom no FRL information was obtained because school records were not available or the school did not offer FRLs were simply classified as not eligible. Lubienski and Lubienski (2006) also analyzed the NAEP charter school data and imputed a student's FRL status on the basis of either the reported percentage of eligible students at a school or whether a student scored above a cutoff on a home resources checklist. The fact that the financial cost of providing an FRL is low relative to the cost associated with many other federal programs also contributes to ad hoc certification error because the cost of incorrectly certifying a student as eligible is small (Hauser, 1994; ORNA, 2007).

It is also possible that certification error is increasing in the No Child Left Behind era. Students deliberately misclassified as eligible may help to raise average test scores, increasing the likelihood that a school or a key student subgroup will be classified as making adequate yearly progress.

Figure 1 shows a clear increase in the percentage of students eligible for a free lunch starting in 2001–2002. Although not conclusive, this increase is consistent with the introduction of No Child Left Behind, which was signed into law in January 2002, and with evidence that schools sometimes deliberately exclude groups of students from schoolwide testing in the hope of increasing test scores (Nichols & Berliner, 2008).

In short, available evidence suggests that researchers using FRL as a measure of SES can expect a significant percentage of students, perhaps as high as 20%, to be misclassified. The effect of misclassification is that the magnitude and nature of the relationship between an outcome variable and the FRL variable can be distorted, producing biased inferences.

For example, Stein et al. (2008) used FRL as a student-level covariate in a multilevel model of reading achievement gains in which 62% of the sample was eligible for an FRL. The resulting fixed effects slope for FRL of  $-1.41$  for Model 1 was statistically significant, meaning that, with other covariates held constant, students eligible for an FRL were expected to show a decline from pretest to posttest in reading achievement. It is not possible to know for certain what the impact of a 20% misclassification rate would be, but it is likely that the slope of  $-1.41$  would be too large or too small (i.e., is biased). For example, suppose most misclassified students were classified as eligible even though they came from households with greater access to economic resources. Plausible outcomes of this misclassification are smaller differences between those eligible and not eligible and a downward biasing of the slope of  $-1.41$  (i.e., making the slope too small).

Difficulties linked to the use of FRL as a measure of a student's access to economic resources are aggravated by measurement issues related to its dichotomous (eligible, not eligible) scaling. For example, using the 2008 poverty guidelines, a student from a household of four with an income of \$150,000 has the same FRL status as a student from a household of four with an income of \$50,000. Such a large difference in household income implies potentially important differences in access to economic resources that the FRL variable cannot capture. Along the same lines, a student from a household of four with an income of \$40,000 and a student from a household of four with an income of \$38,000 have a different FRL status. Such a modest difference in household income implies that students have similar access to economic resources yet have a different SES status.

Participation rates decline with increases in grade level. An important characteristic of the FRL variable is the decline in participation rates with increases in grade level. In general, the highest participation rates occur for elementary school students and then decline substantially for middle school and high school students. A report by the ERS (2006) provided evidence that FRL participation was greatest for the 8 to 13 age range and lowest for the 16 to 18 age range; another report found that FRL participation peaked for students 8 to 10 years old (32.8%) and declined substantially among 14- to 15-year-olds (12.5%) and 16- to 18-year-olds (13.5%; ERS, 2008). The decline in participation was overwhelmingly due to the failure of students to return application forms for FRL eligibility. There is evidence of a stigma associated with receiving an FRL among parents and middle school and high school students that may play an important role in the decline in participation (ORNA, 1994), but this has not been carefully studied.

The lower rates of student participation at all levels of K-12, but especially in middle school and high school, raise important questions about the use of FRL eligibility as a measure of SES. A related concern is the apparently common practice of certifying students who fail to return applications for FRL eligibility as not eligible (ERS, 2008). In this case, inferences from analyses involving the FRL variable would likely be biased.

*FRL status is available for every student.* FRL status is expected to be available for all students, which is important because of the potential impact of nonresponse (missing data) and nonresponse bias. Nonresponse occurs when students or households fail to provide requested information, such as household income, and nonresponse bias occurs when data are missing systematically (e.g., wealthier households are less likely to provide income information), truncating the sample and biasing inferences (Groves, 2006). However, schools certify students as eligible or not eligible for an FRL even if household income information is not available, so the FRL variable is not subject to nonresponse bias. Moreover, FRL status is typically available in an electronic form, which keeps costs down.

*There is confounding of the FRL effect.* Hauser (1994) pointed out another characteristic that is related to FRL eligibility: Comparing students eligible for an FRL and those not eligible confounds the effects of low SES and the presumably positive effects of the program itself. For example, the finding that eligible students score on average lower on a standardized mathematics test may be partly attributable to less access to economic and social resources but may also be related to receiving a free lunch. That is, students might show even poorer achievement if they did not receive a free lunch.

The above characteristics indicate that the FRL variable is consistently defined because of its link to the government's poverty guidelines, is available for every student, is nonintrusive, is simple (eligible, not eligible), and can be obtained relatively cheaply because information is taken directly from school records. These characteristics help to explain the continued popularity of this variable as a measure of SES. On the other hand, the facts that students are sometimes certified as eligible based on nonincome factors, that eligibility status will likely

show significant misclassification error, and that receiving an FRL fundamentally represents an intervention raises concerns about the validity of inferences based on this variable.

### FRL and Other Measures of SES

Indications that the FRL variable is a poor measure of SES suggest that other variables should be considered. Identifying other measures begins with a researcher providing a clear conceptualization of SES and selecting one or more variables that capture the relevant circumstances of a student's SES consistent with that conceptualization and with the purpose of the study at hand.

In many cases, the conceptualization will be characterized by a student's access to economic resources; in others, the intent may be to assess a student's access to social capital (contacts in networks that can lead to personal or professional gains) or to identify variables that generate a hierarchical ordering of households in a community.

Once a researcher has described his or her conceptualization of SES, the criteria recommended by Hauser (1994), Entwisle and Astone (1994), Oakes and Rossi (2003), and Hobbs and Vignoles (2007) can be used to identify appropriate SES measures. These criteria suggest the following for selected measures of SES:

1. SES measures should validly and reliably capture SES as conceptualized by the researcher. For example, defining SES as a student's access to economic resources should result in the use of variables known to accurately and consistently capture this information and should provide data comparable to those from other sources, that is, should provide information that is consistent across various sources. This provides evidence of convergent validity.
2. SES measures should show participation rates that are unrelated to a student's grade level.
3. SES measures should show minimal nonresponse. This is important, as nonresponse bias can produce invalid inferences.
4. SES measures should be accessible at a reasonable cost.

Also, the selected measure should not confound the relationship between SES and an educational outcome. Of course, it may not be possible for a single measure to satisfy all of these criteria (Hauser, 1994).

Measures possessing many of the above characteristics have been used in various literatures for some time, including education. These include household income, education, and occupation and variables intended to capture home resources. An impressive feature of these variables is the extensive research studying their use as measures of SES in various literatures (e.g., Cirino et al., 2002; Edwards-Hewitt & Gray, 1995; Hauser & Warren, 1997; Jones & McMillan, 2001; Nam & Powers, 1983; Rose & Pevalin, 2003). This literature makes it clear that these measures have many strengths but also some weaknesses, particularly nonresponse by households unwilling to provide information and the cost of collecting the information. These weaknesses have likely contributed to the ongoing use of FRL as a measure of SES.

**Table 3**  
**Comparing Socioeconomic Status (SES) Measures Used in Education Research**

SES Measure	Valid Indicator of Access to Economic Resources	Participation Rates Constant Across Grades	Minimal Nonresponse	Easy Access, Inexpensive
Free or reduced price lunch eligibility	Highly unlikely because of its failure to adequately capture household economic resources	No	Yes, because schools certify each student as eligible/not eligible	Highly likely
Householder income	Likely, because it adequately captures household economic resources	Likely	Somewhat likely to somewhat unlikely; depends on student/householder responses to a survey (e.g., nonresponse rate of 12%–25%)	Somewhat unlikely; depends on student/householder responses to a survey
Householder occupation	Likely because it adequately captures household economic resources	Likely	Somewhat likely to somewhat unlikely; depends on student/householder responses to a survey (e.g., 6%–25%)	Somewhat likely to somewhat unlikely; depends on student/householder responses to a survey
Number of siblings	Highly unlikely because it does not adequately capture household economic resources	Likely	Yes	Likely
Home resources checklist	Somewhat likely; depends heavily on breadth and depth of the checklist items	Likely	Somewhat likely to somewhat unlikely; depends on student/householder responses to a survey (e.g., 1%–30%)	Somewhat likely to somewhat unlikely; depends on student/householder responses to a survey

*Note.* The Valid Indicator, Participation Rates, Minimal Nonresponse, and Easy Access columns represent desirable characteristics of SES measures; each SES measure is evaluated on each characteristic. Results for householder education are approximately the same as those for householder occupation and are not reported. Examples of the use of these measures are free or reduced price lunch eligibility (Stein et al., 2008); householder income, education, and occupation (Hauser & Warren, 1997; Seyfried, 1998); number of siblings (Hanushek, 1992); and home resources (Chen, Lee, & Stevenson, 1996; Martin, Mullis, & Chrostowski, 2004). Values in parentheses represent a range of nonresponse rates based on the Education Longitudinal Survey (National Center for Education Statistics, 2004); National Educational Longitudinal Study of 1988 (Hauser & Andrews, 2007); National Household Educational Surveys Program of 2007 (National Center for Education Statistics, 2009); National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (Cole & Currie, 1994); Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (Martin et al., 2004); Chen et al. (1996); Wardle, Robb, and Johnson (2002); Van Horn, Bellis, and Snyder (2001); and Coscia et al. (2001).

Table 3 is used to facilitate comparisons of several variables used as measures of SES in education research following the recommendations of Hauser (1994), Entwisle and Astone (1994), Oakes and Rossi (2003), and Hobbs and Vignoles (2007). In examining Table 3, it is important to realize that each application of SES measures in a study reflects conditions unique to that study and that choosing a measure depends heavily on the purpose of the study (Entwisle & Astone, 1994). Accordingly, Table 3 should be viewed as providing general guidance for comparing SES measures. More extensive guidance would incorporate a broad range of factors believed to affect educational outcomes (e.g., cultural influence, concentrations of poverty) and associated measures.

*There's No Free Lunch*

The comparisons in Table 3 suggest three general conclusions. First, when nonresponse is minimal (e.g., 1%–2%) and access and cost are not major concerns, householder income, education, and occupation have much to recommend them. If these

variables are not available then a home resources checklist could be a reasonable alternative.

Second, in the presence of more significant nonresponse, the measures in Table 3, with the exception of the FRL and number of siblings variables, are likely to show nonresponse bias. For example, results from several large national studies (see Table 3) indicate that nonresponse rates for householder income ranged between 12% and 25%. Studies using a home resources measure showed even greater variation in nonresponse rates, ranging between 1% and 30%. A careful examination of the nonresponse patterns is likely to provide evidence of nonresponse bias.

Missing SES data are part of a broader missing data problem that has received a good deal of attention in various literatures, including education (e.g., Allison, 2001; Little & Rubin, 2002; Peng, Harwell, Liou, & Ehnman, 2006). The literature on missing data distinguishes between three missing data cases that are important in examining the implications of nonresponse for SES measures.

If missing SES data are missing completely at random (MCAR), the probability that an observation is missing does not

depend on the observed response or on the missing value. In this instance, inferences based on available data will not be biased, although parameter estimation and hypothesis testing may be affected by the loss of data (Little & Rubin, 2002). If missing data are missing at random (MAR), the probability that an observation is missing depends only on one or more observed covariates. Under MAR, analyzing available data produces unbiased and efficient estimates if the observed covariates are included in the analyses. Missing data that are not missing at random (NMAR) means that the probability that an observation is missing depends on the missing data.

Determining whether missing SES data are MCAR, MAR, or NMAR is frequently difficult and relies heavily on a clear understanding of the facets of a study (e.g., sampling, treatment delivery, instrumentation, and data collection). For missing SES data, MCAR seems unlikely in many cases, whereas MAR may be plausible with measures such as householder education and occupation. In cases where MCAR or MAR hold, multiple imputation can be used to estimate missing SES values (e.g., householder education) using available data, eliminating nonresponse (see Allison, 2001; Little & Rubin, 2002; Peng et al., 2006). If missing data are NMAR, as might be expected with householder income because higher income households are less likely to report this information, imputation methods are not recommended, as they lead to biased estimates and inferences.

Third, if significant nonresponse bias is expected (perhaps due partly or largely to accessibility and cost issues) the FRL variable may be the only alternative. However, a researcher opting to use FRL as an SES measure needs to recognize that FRL is a poor measure of a student's access to economic resources and to clearly identify the expected impact of deficiencies of this variable on study inferences (e.g., what is the impact on inferences if 20% of the sampled students are misclassified on the free lunch variable?).

## Conclusion

The NSLP is deeply ingrained in K–12 education in the United States. An examination of the origins of the program shows that the intent was to improve student nutrition, especially among the poorest students, which, it was reasoned, would increase student learning. Available evidence generally supports the positive albeit small impact of this program on student nutrition and learning.

An important outcome of the growth of this program has been the use of eligibility for a free lunch as a measure of a student's SES in education research. Perhaps the popularity of the free lunch variable as a measure of SES can be attributed to the use of federal poverty guidelines in determining student eligibility or the description of the free lunch variable as an indicator of economic advantage in the No Child Left Behind (2002) legislation. Or perhaps this popularity is simply due to the relatively easy access to students' free lunch status available to education researchers.

Whatever the explanation, student eligibility for a free lunch continues to be used as a measure of SES in education research, including federally funded studies and reports with important policy implications. This variable is typically used in data analyses to statistically control for the effect of SES on educational outcomes, to increase statistical power, and to enhance causality arguments. Despite its frequent use, however, the free lunch

variable possesses important deficiencies that suggest that other measures of SES should be considered.

The process of identifying other measures ideally relies on a theoretical model of SES to conceptualize this construct and select appropriate measures. Unfortunately, education researchers who turn to the SES literature for guidance will find significant disagreement on key definitions, terms, theoretical assumptions, and measurement strategies. What is needed is work that connects theoretical models of SES and strategies for measuring SES in educational contexts.

An important practice for the education researcher to adopt is to carefully describe what SES is intended to represent in his or her study, for example, a student's access to economic resources, and to provide a clear rationale for selecting a measure of SES that is consistent with the study's purpose. In cases in which nonresponse is expected to be minimal, householder income, education, or occupation have much to recommend them as measures of a student's SES.

For significant nonresponse, education researchers may be able to turn to the literature on missing data for guidance. If missing values are assumed to be MCAR or MAR, data imputation may be a plausible solution. In cases where FRL status is the only alternative, it is important for researchers to recognize that this variable is a poor measure of a student's access to economic resources. More generally, researchers need to clearly identify the expected impact of important deficiencies of any variable selected to serve as a measure of student SES on study inferences.

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# NCES Blog

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← Welcome to the NCES blog (</blogs/nces/post/welcome-to-the-nces-blog>)

### Free or reduced price lunch: A proxy for poverty? (</blogs/nces/post/free-or-reduced-price-lunch-a-proxy-for-poverty>)

📅 April 16, 2015 👤 NCES Blog Editor (</blogs/nces/author/ncesblogeditor>) 📁 FAQs (</blogs/nces/category/FAQs>), General (</blogs/nces/category/General>)

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*By Tom Snyder and Lauren Musu-Gillette*

The percentage of students receiving free or reduced price lunch is often used as a proxy measure for the percentage of students living in poverty. While the percentage of students receiving free or reduced price lunch can provide some information about relative poverty, it should not be confused with the actual percentage of students in poverty enrolled in school. In 2012, just over half of public school children were eligible for free/reduced price lunches. In contrast, the actual poverty rate of public school students was 22 percent ([http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d14/tables/dt14\\_102.70.asp](http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d14/tables/dt14_102.70.asp)). Despite the correlation between the two measures, it is important to understand that they differ in important ways and that the difference is growing (<http://www.census.gov/did/www/saipe/publications/files/CrusePowers2006asa.pdf>).

As the largest federal program for elementary and secondary schools, the National School Lunch Program (<http://nces.ed.gov/transfer.asp?location=www.fns.usda.gov/nslp/national-school-lunch-program-nslp>) provided meals to more than 31 million children each school day in 2012. All lunches provided by the National School Lunch Program are considered subsidized to some extent because meal-service programs at schools must operate as non-profit programs (<http://nces.ed.gov/transfer.asp>)

location=[www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/NSLPFactSheet.pdf](http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/NSLPFactSheet.pdf)). While all students at participating schools are eligible for regular priced lunches through the National School Lunch Program, there are multiple ways in which a child can become eligible for a free/reduced price lunch. Traditionally, family income has been used to establish eligibility for free/reduced price lunch.

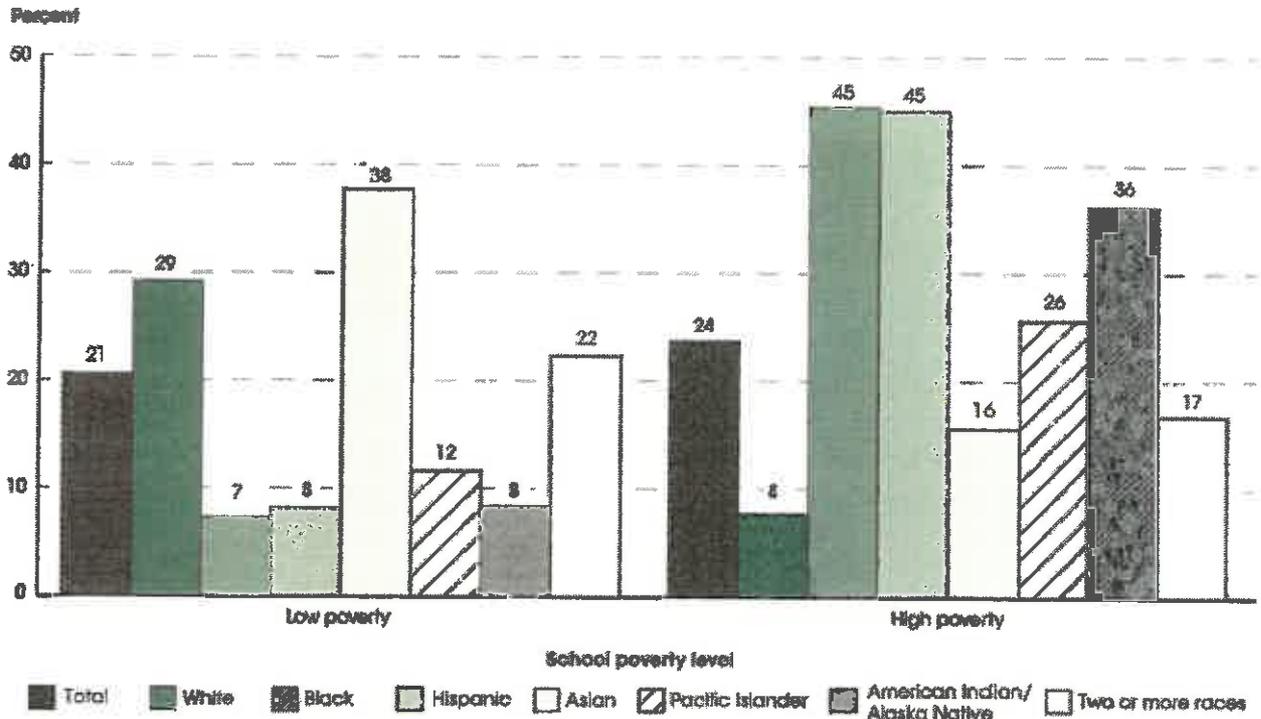
One way the percentage of students in poverty and those eligible for free/reduced price lunch differ is that many students eligible for free/reduced price lunch fall above the federal poverty threshold. A student from a household with an income at or below 130 percent of the poverty income threshold is eligible for free lunch. A student from a household with an income between 130 percent and up to 185 percent of the poverty threshold is eligible for reduced price lunch.

In addition, some groups of children such as foster children, children participating in Head Start and Migrant Education Programs, or children receiving services under the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act are eligible for free/reduced price lunch. Also, under the Community Eligibility option, some non-poor children may be included in the program if their district decides that it would be more efficient from an administrative or service delivery perspective to provide the free lunches to all children in the school (<http://nces.ed.gov/transfer.asp?location=www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/community-eligibility-provision>). Thus, the percentage of students receiving free or reduced price lunch includes all students at or below 185 percent of the poverty threshold, plus some additional non-poor children who meet other eligibility criteria, plus other students in schools and districts that have exercised the Community Eligibility option, which results in a percentage that is more than double the official poverty rate.

Despite its limitations, the free/reduced price lunch data are frequently used by education researchers as a proxy for school poverty since this count is generally available at the school level, while the poverty rate is typically not available. Because the free/reduced price lunch eligibility is derived from the federal poverty level, and therefore highly related to it, the free/reduced price lunch percentage is useful to researchers from an analytic perspective.

In reports such as the Condition of Education, NCES has characterized a school as a high poverty school when more than 75 percent of its students are eligible for a free/reduced price lunch ([http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator\\_clb.asp](http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_clb.asp)). In 2012-13, about 24 percent of students attended public schools that were classified as high poverty ([http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d13/tables/dt13\\_216.60.asp?current=yes](http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d13/tables/dt13_216.60.asp?current=yes)). Using this high poverty definition enables us to identify important differences among students: 45 percent of Black and Hispanic students attended such high poverty schools compared to 8 percent of White students.

### **Percentage of public school students in low-poverty and high-poverty schools, by race/ethnicity: School year 2012-13**



NOTE: High-poverty schools are defined as public schools where more than 75.0 percent of the students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (FRPL), and low-poverty schools are defined as public schools where 25.0 percent or less of the students are eligible for FRPL.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (COD), "Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey," 2012-13.

One of the important limitations of the free/reduced lunch count is that the change in the eligibility requirements under the Community Eligibility option has meant that more children are qualifying for free/reduced price lunches. Between 2000-01 and 2012-13, the percentage of children eligible for a free/reduced price lunch increased from 38 percent to 50 percent, an increase of 12 percentage points. In contrast, the percentage of public school children who lived in poverty increased from 17 to 23 percent, an increase of 6 percentage points.

While the free/reduced lunch percentages can serve as a useful indicator of the relative numbers of poor children, it does not substitute as a measure of the level of child poverty, nor of changes in poverty rates over time. It is also important to keep in mind that neither free/reduced price lunch eligibility nor poverty should be considered measures of socioeconomic status (SES), which measures a broader spectrum of family characteristics (e.g. parental education and occupations) that may be related to student performance. Some NCES surveys already collect SES data while others are investigating options for collecting better indicators of students' SES. These efforts will be detailed in a future blog post.

For more information on recent changes to free/reduced price lunch eligibility data in ED Facts see Free and Reduced-Price Lunch Eligibility Data in ED Facts: A White Paper on Current Status and Potential Changes (<http://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/edfacts/index.html>).

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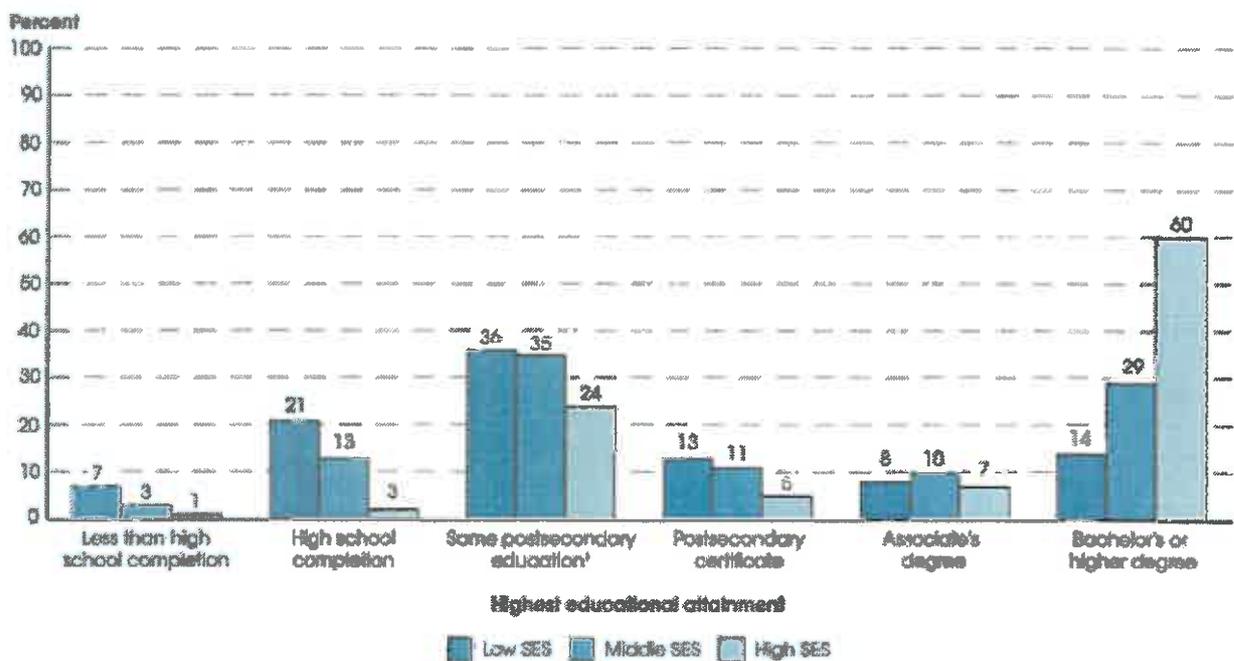
url=<http%3a%2f%2fnces.ed.gov%2fblogs%2fnces%2fpost%2fchallenges-changes-and-current-practices-for-measuring-student-socioeconomic-status>)

**By Lauren Musu-Gillette**

There is an abundance of data and research that shows a relationship between a student's socioeconomic status (SES) and their academic outcomes. For example, students from low-SES families are far more likely to drop out (<http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2015/2015066.pdf>) and far less likely to complete a bachelor's degree ([http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator\\_tva.asp](http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_tva.asp)) than their peers from middle- and high-SES families.

As we seek to better interpret and understand these and other findings related to student progress, it is important for NCES to try to collect accurate and complete measures of student SES.

### Percentage distribution of highest level of educational attainment of spring 2002 high school sophomores in 2012, by socioeconomic status (SES)



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Education Longitudinal Study of 2002 (ELS:2002), Base Year and Third Follow-up. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2014*, table 104.91 ([http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d14/tables/dt14\\_104.91.asp](http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d14/tables/dt14_104.91.asp)).

Measures of SES usually combine several different statistics, most commonly family income/wealth, parent educational attainment, and parent occupation.[1] In some surveys, NCES is able to collect data directly from parents in order to measure all these components of SES. However, in many assessments and some surveys, NCES is unable to collect this information directly from parents making it difficult to create a consistent measure of SES across the Center.

NCES staff recognizes both the importance of collecting valid and reliable SES data, and the challenges associated with doing so. For example, between 2010 and 2012, NCES convened a panel of experts in the fields of economics, education, statistics, human development, and sociology who provided information on SES, including theoretical



# Some schools much better than others at closing achievement gaps between their advantaged and disadvantaged students

David Figlio and Krzysztof Karbownik

## Executive Summary

Recent research demonstrates that the test score gap between relatively advantaged and relatively disadvantaged students is much higher in some school districts than it is in other districts. But measured school quality often varies dramatically within a school district, and therefore it is important to know whether individual schools differ in the relative success of advantaged and disadvantaged students. We make use of detailed, linked birth and school records in Florida to investigate the degree to which this is true.

We find that schools vary dramatically in the relative success of advantaged and disadvantaged students, and that different schools within the same school district differ substantially in terms of their advantaged-disadvantaged success gaps. In some schools, both advantaged and disadvantaged students fare especially well; while in other schools, both fare especially poorly; while in still others, one group does relatively well and the other group does relatively poorly. We investigate whether these differences across schools can be explained by differences in relative kindergarten readiness of advantaged and disadvantaged students, and we find that pre-school preparation is unlikely to explain the cross-school differences that we find. Moreover, we find that overall school advantage levels are unrelated to differences between the success levels of advantaged and disadvantaged students.

Our findings indicate that policymakers should pay much closer attention to the practices of individual schools rather than concentrating exclusively on policies and interventions typically enacted at the district level. Moreover, the cross-school differences in the relative success of advantaged and disadvantaged students argue for enacting school accountability policies that shine the light on the success of specific populations, rather than concentrating solely on overall schoolwide performance levels or gains.

## Introduction

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The socioeconomic differences in student performance are well-known and extensively documented.<sup>1</sup> As just one example: nationally, 13-year-old students whose parents are college graduates scored over four-fifths of a standard deviation higher on the mathematics assessment of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in 2012 than did those whose parents did not finish high school.<sup>2</sup> In science in 2015 the same gap was also over four-fifths of a standard deviation.<sup>3</sup> Likewise, the test score gap between children from rich and poor families in the United States has widened over time, and is now over a full standard deviation.<sup>4</sup>

Important new work by Reardon and his collaborators shows that not only test scores<sup>5</sup> but also racial test score gaps<sup>6</sup> vary dramatically across American school districts. In this latter paper, Reardon and coauthors report that while racial/ethnic test score gaps average around 0.6 standard deviations across all school districts, in some districts the gaps are almost nonexistent while in others they exceed 1.2 standard deviations. There are many potential explanations for this cross-district variation in achievement gaps, including racial differences in socioeconomic status, differences in racial/ethnic segregation, differences in school and neighborhood quality, and the like; and the evidence to date about what the leading causes of this variation are is descriptive, rather than causal. Nonetheless, the fact remains that in some places, racial/ethnic and socioeconomic differences are extraordinarily larger than in other places. These differences also correlate with important long-run economic outcomes as documented in a new work by Chetty and co-authors, where they find suggestive evidence that “quality of schools—as judged by outputs rather than inputs—plays a role in upward mobility.”<sup>7</sup>

But we know that there exists tremendous variation in school quality within school districts.<sup>8</sup> This variation leads us to suspect that there are some schools where relatively advantaged students do well but relatively disadvantaged students do poorly, other schools where the reverse is true, other schools where both relatively advantaged and relatively disadvantaged students do well, and still other schools where both relatively advantaged and relatively disadvantaged students do poorly. Furthermore, we posit that there exist considerable differences in these patterns across schools within the same school district. If this is true, then it suggests that policymakers should pay much closer attention to the practices of individual schools rather than concentrating exclusively on policies and

interventions typically enacted at the district level. And this would also indicate the value of introducing school accountability policies that shine the light on specific populations of students, rather than concentrating solely on overall performance levels or gains.<sup>9</sup>

In this report, we make use of remarkable student-level data combining children’s birth certificate data with their educational records that the Florida Departments of Education and Health merged for the purposes of this research agenda, and calculate school-level performance of relatively advantaged and relatively disadvantaged students.<sup>10</sup> Being able to match children’s school records to their birth certificates provides opportunities for a much more detailed measure of socioeconomic advantage or disadvantage than can be observed from school records, which typically include only eligibility for a free or reduced price lunch. We combine information on parental education levels, marital status and family structure, and poverty status at the time of birth<sup>11</sup> to construct a continuous index of socioeconomic status at the time of birth.<sup>12</sup> We investigate the degree to which schools vary in the gap between high and low socioeconomic status students, and then see whether these differences can be explained by differences in the pre-school preparation of high and low socioeconomic status students. We next explore whether schools differ in the extent to which relatively disadvantaged students catch up to relatively advantaged students (or fall farther behind), and we investigate the degree to which the differences we observe occur within school districts, and not just between these districts. We find that large school-level differences exist along all of these dimensions that are not explained by differences in the relative school preparation of advantaged and disadvantaged students, and that very substantial differences occur across schools within the same district. Therefore, we argue that school-level policies and practices must, to some degree, cause differences in the relative success of advantaged and disadvantaged students.

## *How much do schools differ in the gap between high and low socioeconomic status students?*

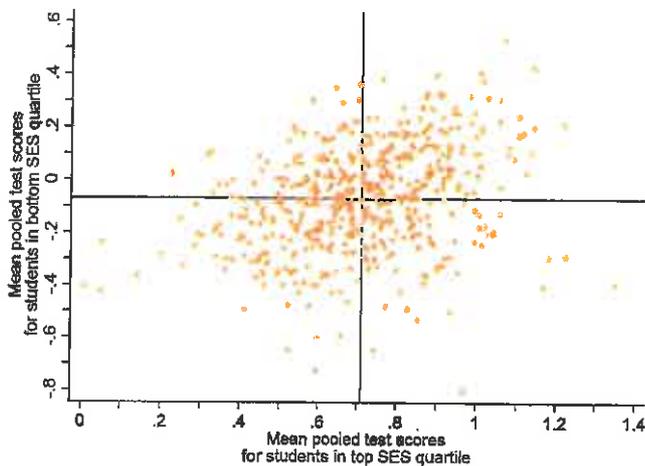
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We begin by documenting the degree to which schools differ in the gap between high and low socioeconomic students (SES). For this analysis, we restrict our attention to schools that have a reasonable degree of heterogeneity—at least three students in every birth cohort who come from all four quartiles of the

socioeconomic status distribution: 568 elementary schools in the state of Florida satisfy this heterogeneity criterion simultaneously in grades three and five.<sup>13</sup> Our outcome of interest is the third or fifth-grade score on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT)<sup>14</sup> taken in the relevant year between 1999 and 2012, which we standardize statewide at the grade and year level to have a mean of zero and standard deviation of one.

**Figure 1. School-level average test scores for students from top and bottom SES quartiles**

**A. Grade 3**



**B. Grade 5**

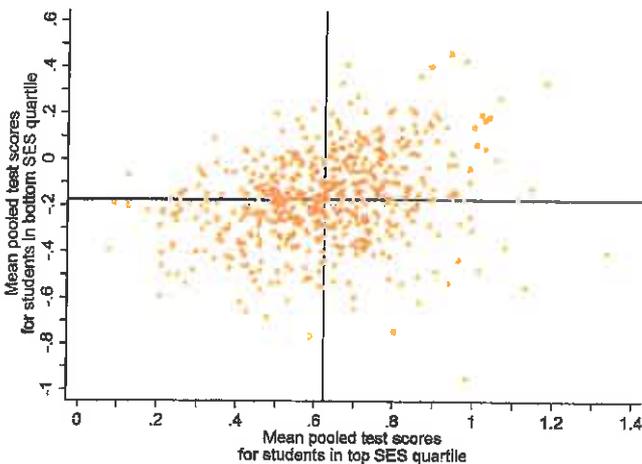


Figure 1 shows scatterplots of averaged reading and math test scores in third grade and fifth grade for students in the top quartile of the socioeconomic status distribution versus those in the bottom quartile of the socioeconomic status distribution in the same school. Each dot represents one of the 568 elementary schools in the analysis sample. The typical high-SES student in this sample scored about 0.6 to 0.7 standard

deviations above the state average (depending on grade considered), while the typical low-SES student in the sample scored about 0.1 to 0.2 standard deviations below the state average. (Low-SES students in the set of heterogeneous schools we consider are more advantaged than the population of low-SES students overall, hence their average performance is only modestly below the state average. There are also relatively homogeneous schools in Florida with both higher and lower average test scores overall that we exclude from this analysis.)

The first thing that is immediately apparent is that the correlation between the performance of high-SES students and the performance of low-SES students in the same school is positive but relatively modest (0.34 and 0.27 in third and fifth grades, respectively). The four quadrants of each graph, defined based on means of both axes, represent schools where both high-SES and low-SES students perform especially well (top right), where both perform especially poorly (bottom left), where high-SES students perform especially well but low-SES students perform especially poorly (bottom right), and where low-SES students perform especially well but high-SES students perform especially poorly (top left). There are many schools in all four quadrants of these graphs including over 200 schools that are in the off-diagonal quadrants. Among schools where low-SES students score well above average (say, better than 0.2 standard deviations above the statewide average), high-SES fifth-graders in some schools score as low as 0.6 standard deviations above the statewide average, while in other schools they score as much as 1.2 standard deviations above the statewide average. Among schools where high-SES students score well above average (say, better than one standard deviation above the statewide average), low-SES fifth-graders in some schools score as low as 0.6 standard deviations below the statewide average, while in other schools they score as high as 0.3 standard deviations above the statewide average. In other words, there are schools where low-SES students score higher than do high-SES students at numerous other schools. Furthermore, while in some cases, the SES test score gap is less than 0.3 standard deviations, in other cases the gap is well above one standard deviation.

***The potential role of family sorting***

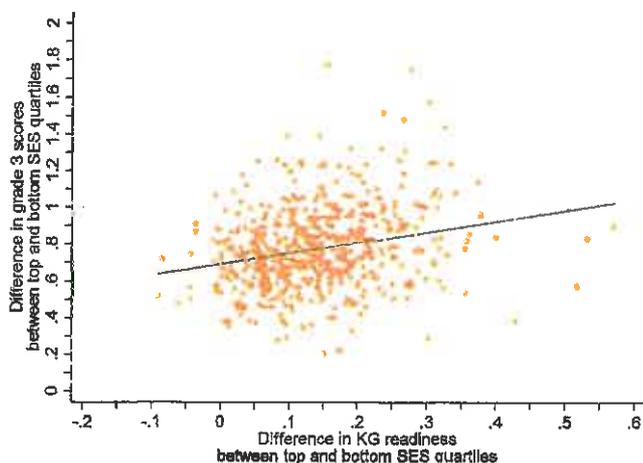
This large cross-school variation in SES performance gaps could be because they educate high-SES and

low-SES students differently, or it could be that there are major fundamental differences across schools in the relative pre-school preparation of high-SES and low-SES students. It's impossible to know for certain how much of these differences are due to each of these explanations, but the Florida administrative data allow us to take a first pass at this question. For five out of eight birth cohorts we consider, the state assessed all kindergarteners at the beginning of the school year to determine whether the students arrived at school ready for kindergarten. In general, around 80 percent of low-SES kindergarteners and around 94 percent of high-SES kindergarteners in these heterogeneous Florida schools are ready for kindergarten, according to the state.<sup>15</sup>

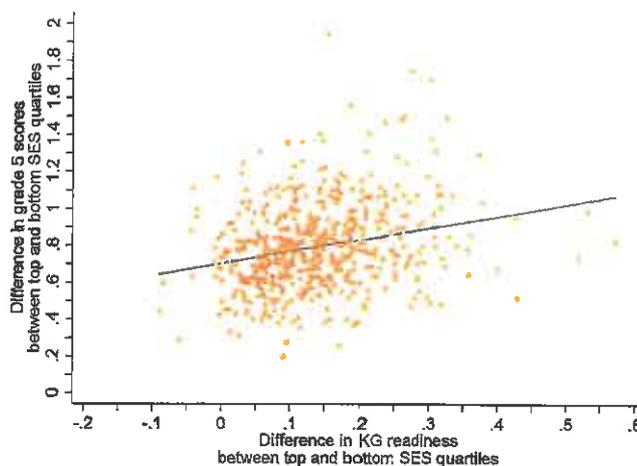
To take a first stab at this question, we rank the schools based on the gap between high-SES and low-SES kindergarten readiness rates for schools for which we also computed third and fifth grades averages.<sup>16</sup> In 537 out of 560 schools, high-SES students have higher kindergarten readiness rates than do low-SES students, and the differences between their kindergarten readiness rates are often very high. In some schools, high-SES and low-SES students enter school with nearly identical kindergarten readiness rates (or with low-SES students even having a slight advantage in the case of 18 schools). But in other schools, high-SES kindergarteners are more than 30 percentage points more likely than are low-SES kindergarteners to start school ready for kindergarten (31 schools).

**Figure 2. School-level associations between SES gaps in kindergarten readiness and test scores**

**A. Grade 3**



**B. Grade 5**



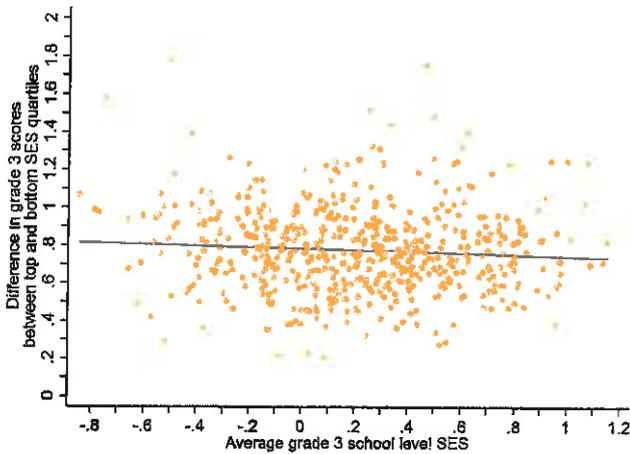
How well do these SES gaps in kindergarten readiness predict SES gaps in test scores in third or fifth grades? As can be seen in Figure 2, the schools that have larger kindergarten readiness gaps also have larger test score gaps in third and fifth grades: as the kindergarten readiness gap increases by 10 percentage points, the test score gaps increase by around 0.06 of a standard deviation. But the slopes are still far from the 45-degree line, and at every level of the kindergarten readiness gap there exists a very large variation in test score gaps. For the 20 schools with near-zero kindergarten readiness gaps, test score gaps in grades three and five range from less than two-fifths of a standard deviation to more than a full standard deviation. For the 11 schools with kindergarten readiness gaps of around 30 percentage points, test score gaps range from less than third of a standard deviation to over 1.5 standard deviations. In summary, while SES differences in readiness to start school predict SES differences in test scores a few years later, it appears to be the case that schools also vary considerably in what happens to high-SES and low-SES children between kindergarten entry and the end of elementary school.

Our analysis involves only schools with at least a reasonable degree of heterogeneity. Some of these schools have many more high-SES students than low-SES students, and some of these schools have many more low-SES students than high-SES students. Do SES test score gaps differ depending on whether the school is comparatively affluent or comparatively disadvantaged? In Figure 3, we relate the average SES level of the school to the test score gap in third or fifth grade between students in the top and bottom SES quartile. We observe that there is virtually no relationship between the relative affluence of the overall student body of the school and the SES test

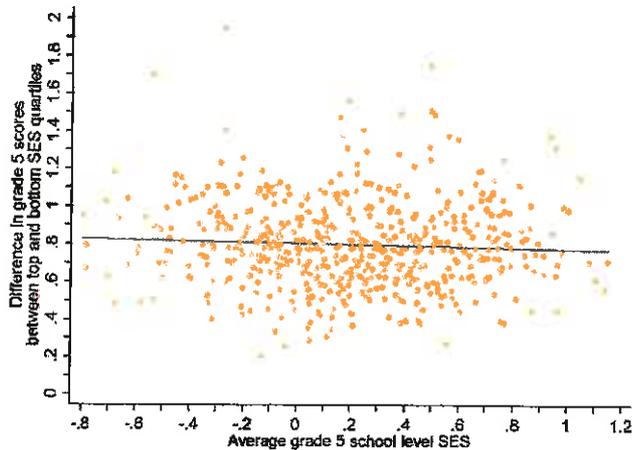
score gap in that school: schools serving primarily high-SES students and those serving primarily low-SES students have the same average SES test score gaps (around 0.8 standard deviations) in both third and fifth grades. Across the board, there exists large within-school-type variation in school-level SES test score gaps, but almost no difference across school types (stratified by average student body SES) in the SES test score gap. (We note that we've also investigated whether school-level SES is related to the SES gap in kindergarten readiness rates, and, as with test scores, there is no relationship between the SES of the overall student body of a school and the SES gap in kindergarten readiness.) Therefore, it does not appear that school SES levels per se affect the degree to which high-SES and low-SES students differ in either their academic performance or their kindergarten readiness probabilities.

**Figure 3. School-level associations between average SES of the school and the gap in test scores between top and bottom SES quartile students**

**A. Grade 3**



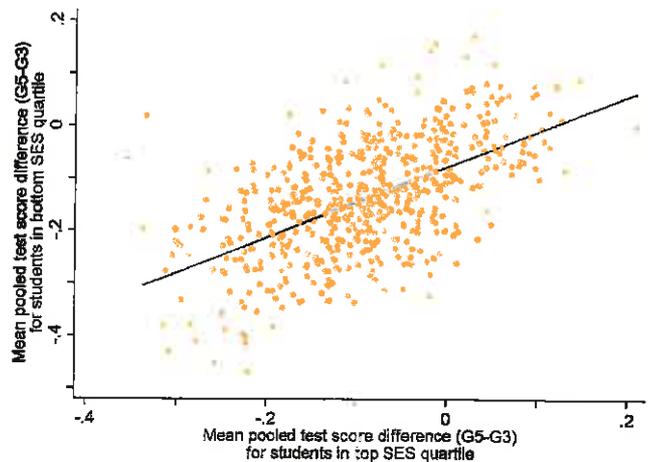
**B. Grade 5**



## Schools vary in their rates of socioeconomic convergence or divergence

In Figure 4 we plot the relationship between test score growth between third grade (the first statewide tested grade in Florida) and fifth grade (typically the last year of elementary school in Florida) for high-SES students and low-SES students. The horizontal axis reflects the mean test score growth for high-SES students and the vertical axis reflects the mean test score growth for low-SES students. We can interpret a positive value as representing the typical student in an SES group in a school gaining ground relative to their statewide peers, and a negative value as representing the typical student in an SES group in a school losing ground relative to their statewide peers. Incidentally, the typical relative growth from third to fifth grade in this set of heterogeneous schools is modestly negative (around 0.1 standard deviations).

**Figure 4. School-level associations in test score growth for students from top and bottom SES quartiles**



The first thing that is clear from this graph is that schools where high-SES students grow faster also tend to be the schools where low-SES students grow faster, and vice versa. But at the same time, we continue to see wide variation in the average growth of low-SES students for any given level of high-SES student growth, or the reverse. Among schools where high-SES students fall back around 0.2 standard deviations relative to the state average between third and fifth grades, there are some schools where low-SES students lose only around 0.1 standard deviation of relative ground, and others where low-SES students lose nearly 0.4 standard deviations of relative ground. Among schools where high-SES students neither

gain relative ground nor fall back relative to their statewide peers, there are some schools where low-SES students gain around 0.05 standard deviation of relative ground, and others where low-SES students lose 0.24 standard deviations of relative ground.

Just because one group gains ground on another in a school between third and fifth grades doesn't necessarily mean that the school is consistently serving one set of students better than another. It could, for instance, be a manifestation of regression to the mean: a negative relative gain between third and fifth grades could be reflective of particularly strong third grade test scores, and a positive relative gain between third and fifth grades could be reflective of particularly weak third grade test scores. It might also be a function of schools serving different students better or worse at different grade levels. And, of course, it's also possible that schools that serve one group better than another in the early elementary grades also serve the same group better than the other in the later elementary grades. Nevertheless, this finding indicates that policymakers would be well-served to take a close look at the specific practices of individual schools in an attempt to uncover the reasons why test scores converge in some schools and diverge in others.

### *Is the variation within or between school districts?*

Finally, we evaluate the degree to which differences in relative test score performance (or growth) of high-SES versus low-SES students are largely occurring within school districts or across school districts. The answer to this question would help us to understand more about where to shine the light regarding whether school district-level policies and practices or school-level policies and practices are likely to be more influential in serving as relative elevators for high-SES or low-SES students.

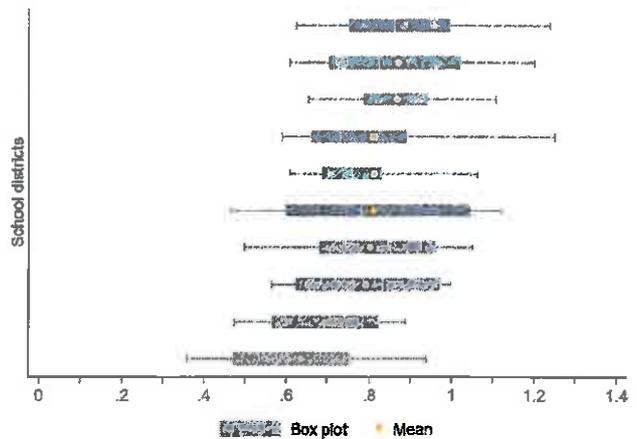
As a first step in this process, we look separately at the ten largest school districts in the state. (Florida has 67 county-level school districts, and the ten largest districts all rank within the 47 largest school districts in the United States, in terms of student enrollment, including seven of the 25 largest.) In Figure 5 we present box plots of the distribution of the high-low-SES third grade test score gap, the high-low-SES fifth grade test score gap, and the high-low-SES test score growth gap for each of these ten school districts. The solid part of the box plot represents a district's interquartile range (that is, the range of values from the district's 25th percentile to the district's 75th percentile) and the line represents the range of values from the

district's 10th percentile to the district's 90th percentile. In order to avoid identifying individual school districts, we present the ten school districts in the order of their average high-low-SES gap in the relevant graph (denoted by the orange circles); the school districts are consequently in different orders in each graph.

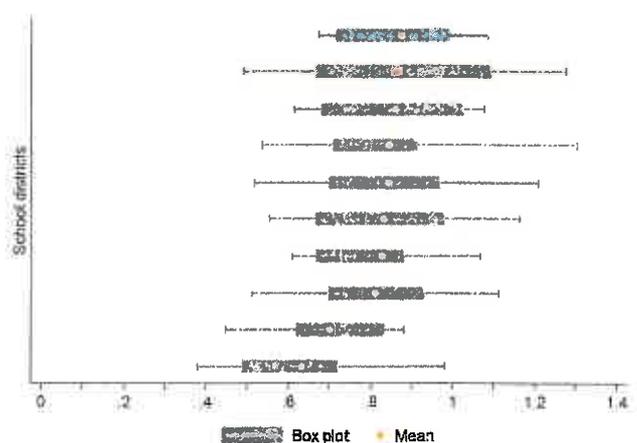
It's apparent from Figure 5 that school districts vary considerably in their test performance gaps between high-SES and low-SES students; this is unsurprising given the large cross-district variation in racial/ethnic gaps found in the work by Reardon and colleagues mentioned in the introduction.<sup>17</sup> Among the ten largest school districts in Florida, the average high-low-SES test score gap ranges from about 0.6 standard deviations to about 0.9 standard deviations in third and fifth grades, and the high-low-SES gap in test score growth ranges from zero to nearly one-tenth of a standard deviation. In few cases, the 25th percentile of this gap in one district is approximately identical to the 75th percentile in another district.

**Figure 5. Variation in SES gaps in test scores and test score growth in the ten largest Florida school districts**

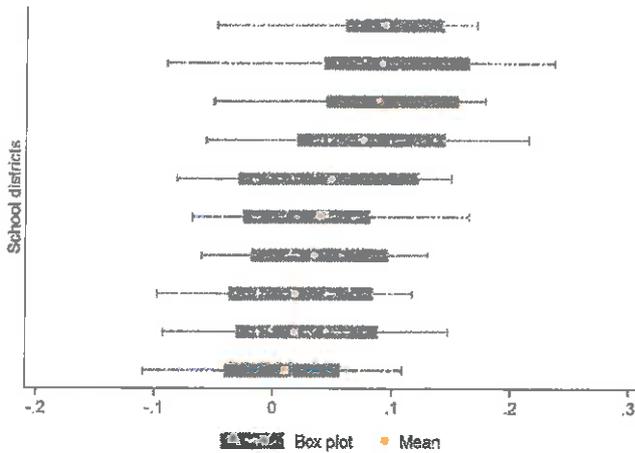
#### A. Grade 3



#### B. Grade 5



### C. Growth between grades 3 and 5



But mean gaps across districts miss very large differences within districts. Among each of the ten largest districts in Florida, the observed range between the 10th and 90th percentile of the SES test score gap is larger than the observed difference between the school district with the largest SES gap and the school district with the smallest SES gap (among the ten largest school districts in Florida, that is). Even the observed range between the 25th and 75th percentile of the SES test score gap within a school district is typically in the same ballpark as the between-district range. These findings make clear that while we can learn a tremendous amount by comparing school districts in terms of their racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic gaps in test scores, there is a large degree of variation *within* school districts in their outcome gaps as well.

### Conclusions and implications

This analysis makes clear that large differences in the performance of high-SES students and low-SES students in the same schools do exist; that these apparent gaps are not simply reflective of gaps in preparation; and that while the variation across school districts is substantial, the variation within school districts may be even larger (at least among the largest districts in Florida).

These findings provide substantial lessons for policymakers. For one, they have implications for the design and implementation of school accountability policies. Some schools fare especially well with both advantaged and disadvantaged students, others fare especially poorly with both groups, while others still fare well with one group and poorly with another. The pattern of differences across schools, across and within school districts, argues for enacting school accountability policies that hold schools accountable for the success of specific populations, rather than concentrating solely on overall schoolwide performance levels or gains.

These findings also highlight the importance of taking a close look at the practices and instructional policies at the school level, rather than solely concentrating on district-level policies. Differences in kindergarten readiness certainly explain a large amount of the performance differences between advantaged and disadvantaged students—at the population level and at the school level—but there appear to be major differences at the school level that contribute to the relative success of advantaged and disadvantaged students.

Meanwhile, the gap between advantaged and disadvantaged students is remarkably similar between schools with comparatively affluent student bodies and those with comparatively disadvantaged student bodies. This indicates that while there are many reasons why school districts and states might want to seek to integrate relatively advantaged and relatively disadvantaged students within the same school, it appears unlikely that a policy goal of reducing the test score gap between students in these groups will be realized through further socioeconomic integration (at least once there gets to be the degree of socioeconomic integration necessary to be part of this study to begin with). We caution, however, that our analysis is correlational rather than causal, so these patterns of findings are merely suggestive that socioeconomic test score gaps persist relatively unabated regardless of the degree of socioeconomic integration at the school level, and are far from definitive.

<sup>1</sup> One prominent recent meta-analysis of the extant literature is Selcuk Sirin, "[Socioeconomic Status and Academic Achievement: A Meta-Analytic Review of Research](#)", *Review of Educational Research*, 2005.

<sup>2</sup> National Assessment of Educational Progress mathematics data reported in [Digest of Education Statistics 2015 Table 222.85](#), National Center for Education Statistics.

<sup>3</sup> [Digest of Education Statistics 2015 Table 223.10](#).

<sup>4</sup> Sean Reardon, "[The Widening Academic Achievement Gap Between the Rich and the Poor: New Evidence and Possible Explanations](#)", in Greg Duncan and Richard Murnane, eds., *Whither Opportunity? Rising Inequality, Schools, and Children's Life Chances*, Russell Sage Foundation, 2011.

<sup>5</sup> Erin Fahle and Sean Reardon, "[How Much do Test Scores Vary Among School Districts? New Estimates Using Population Data, 2009-2013](#)", Stanford University, CEPA working paper 17-02, January 2017.

<sup>6</sup> Sean Reardon, Demetra Kalogrides, and Ken Shores, "[The Geography of Racial/Ethnic Test Score Gaps](#)", Stanford University, CEPA working paper 16-10, January 2017 version.

<sup>7</sup> Raj Chetty, Nathaniel Hendren, Patrick Kline, and Emmanuel Saez, "[Where is the Land of Opportunity? The Geography of Intergenerational Mobility in the United States](#)", *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 129(4):1553-1623, 2014

<sup>8</sup> As one piece of evidence, when states assign explicit grades to their schools, there is often exceptional variation in state-assigned grades within school districts. In [Florida](#), for example, in 33 out of the 44 school districts where at least 10 schools were graded in 2017, at least one school received a grade of A while at least one other school received a grade of D or F. In all but one of the 11 remaining districts, there was a three-grade difference between the highest-graded and lowest-graded school in the district.

<sup>9</sup> As one example, [Florida's school grading system](#) has placed extra weight on the performance improvements of historically low-performing students in its school grade calculations since 2002.

<sup>10</sup> We analyze records for children born in Florida between 1994 and 2001 and observed in the test score records in both third and fifth grades – a total of 872,893 children. We focus on these children so that we can observe relationships between socioeconomic status and student outcomes at different points in time. Third grade is the first time students are tested statewide, and fifth grade is generally the end of elementary school, so these two grades represents the

bookends of ages in which we observe performance statewide in elementary school.

<sup>11</sup> We use Medicaid-funded births as a proxy for poverty status at the time of birth.

<sup>12</sup> For more details about the way in which we construct this index, see David Autor, David Figlio, Krzysztof Karbownik, Jeffrey Roth, and Melanie Wasserman, "[Family Disadvantage and the Gender Gap in Behavioral and Educational Outcomes](#)", NBER working paper 22267, May 2016.

<sup>13</sup> These schools—around one-quarter of the overall set of elementary schools statewide—are relatively unusual. They tend to have higher average socioeconomic status students than the population of elementary schools overall. Students in the schools in this sample are more likely to have married parents (70.7 percent versus 61.7 percent statewide with third grade test scores), less likely to have fathers absent at the time of birth (9.8 percent versus 15.2 percent statewide), less likely to have Medicaid-funded births (a proxy for poverty at the time of birth, 37.7 percent versus 48.8 percent statewide), and have relatively better educated mothers (13.1 years of maternal education at the time of the child's birth, versus 12.5 years on average statewide). These schools also have fewer black students than the statewide average, with 15.7 percent black students versus 24.9 percent statewide for students with third grade test scores.

<sup>14</sup> The FCAT is universally administered statewide and is used by the state to evaluate students and schools.

<sup>15</sup> In the years at the beginning of our time period, the state had its own statewide kindergarten assessment. After a few years of statewide assessment recorded in the administrative data, the state introduced the DIBELS kindergarten readiness assessment. For more details about the kindergarten readiness assessment in the present data, see David Figlio, Jonathan Guryan, Krzysztof Karbownik, and Jeffrey Roth, "[The Effects of Poor Neonatal Health on Children's Cognitive Development](#)", NBER working paper 18846, February 2013. (The final version of the paper in the *American Economic Review* does not include the kindergarten readiness outcome, due to space constraints.) Statewide, 77.5 percent of low-SES students and 94.6 percent of high-SES students are ready for kindergarten.

<sup>16</sup> Eight schools that we include in grades three and five analyses do not run kindergarten classes, and thus we exclude them from the analysis. This leaves us with 560 schools for this analysis.

<sup>17</sup> [Reardon, Kalogrides, and Shore, \*ibid.\*](#)

Dear Dr. Martriano and Board of Education Members,

My name is Nadia Chaudhri and I live in polygon 3176. I strongly oppose the current proposed plan to redistrict 3176/176 away from RHHS. This plan violates several conditions of Policy 6010, the purpose of which is "to define the conditions and process by which school attendance area adjustments will be developed and adopted." I would like to address the violation of "section III R : school attendance area-geographic area from which a school's students are drawn," and how it affects my family in particular.

With this plan, our children will be districted to Wilde Lake High school, which is 6.7 miles away. When my husband and I were looking to move homes 5 years ago to accommodate our growing family, we chose to stay in Howard County because of the diversity of the county, the high caliber of the schools AND, most importantly, the proximity of our childrens' schools to our home. We made this conscious decision, so that we could be supportive members of our childrens' school community. Though we were disappointed to find out our neighborhood had been rezoned for an elementary school that was 5 miles away right before we moved, Triadelphia Ridge Elementary, rather than one that was 1.7miles away, Clarksville Elementary, we felt it was still close enough for us to participate in the school's activities or to get them if they got sick.

My husband and I both work at least 50 hours/ week, including nights and weekends. We chose to take longer commutes to work so our children wouldn't have to. My husband works in Northern Virginia and has a 1.5 hour commute each way. I work in Glen Burnie and Baltimore and it can take up to 60minutes on the way home. Under this current plan, our childrens' current bus time will be extended to at least 90min every day. Extended bus time means an earlier pick up; earlier pick up means earlier wake up time. In high school, earlier bed time may not be feasible with homework and activities. During their formative high school years, I am concerned about the deleterious effects less sleep will have on their mental and physical health.

I would also like the Board to consider the repercussions for families with multiple children of different age groups, such as ours. For three years, I will have children in high school, middle school and elementary school. Coordinating pick up from after school activities at three different schools that are not in proximity to each other will be a more than a juggling act; it may be unachievable on many occasions. This will limit how many activities in which they can participate and how active of a family we can be in there education. My support of their education, whether it means attending a play they are in or even eating lunch with them, is VERY important to me as a working mother. Please do not take that joy away from me and my children. Before school activities would not even be feasible, as Wilde Lake High School is not in any proximity to our commutes.

Lastly, as I mentioned earlier, I am very concerned about my children's extended bus route that will be along a mostly congested single lane Rte 108. I am quite anxious at the increased risk of accidents this will pose to ALL our children.

In conclusion, Dr Martirano's Strategic Call to action illustrates that the lack of equity across our schools is a problem that needs to be fixed. I wholeheartedly agree, but this is not the plan to do that. I strongly encourage you to review Greg Miller's plan on page 2 of his testimony as an alternative. As Dr. Martirano said at the September 5th meeting, he wants this plan to be

“‘ready-aim-fire’ not ‘ready-fire-aim.’” However, in my opinion, this plan does just that: it shoots before all the bullets have been laid out properly.

I implore you to keep polygon 3176/176 in RHHS.

Thank you for your time and efforts.

## Howard County Board of Education Meeting

October 14, 2019

I would like to start by saying that we all understand that it is necessary to Redraw the school attendance maps from time to time. But let's be clear that the reason for this is to remedy imbalances in utilization: some schools are over capacity and some are underpopulated.

The people of Howard County, while recognizing this necessity, have also clearly stated that their highest priority is to keep their communities as intact as possible. This is based on a survey that you, the Board of Ed, commissioned. so it would seem logical and straightforward that the BOE would balance the school populations with as little disruption as possible. There have been several plans proposed that would accomplish that goal.

Instead, the school superintendent is attempting to hijack the process and Push through a plan that would displace nearly 8000 students, sending them out Of their communities and across town to school

Why do that?

The proponents say it is about equity. I think we would all agree that equity, In this case, means making sure that every student needs what they need to succeed in school and in life. We all want there to be equity in education. But by proposing changes for the sake of improving equity, you are admitting that there is inequity in the school system. You are confirming that you think that every student is not getting everything that they need to be successful.

Is this the fault of the students or their parents? No. It is a school administration issue, a resource issue. If resources are inequitable, then re-allocate the resources more fairly, perhaps using the percentage of FARM program participants as a guide.

But moving students around will not solve this issue. Some students will go From a school with fewer resources to one with more, and that may benefit

Them, although it isn't clear that that is the case. But what about the students who are not moved? How does this plan benefit them ?

I question whether or not equalizing the number of FARM students between schools will benefit anyone other than the school administration. I have seen no evidence that this is the case.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "F. K. ...". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

**Good Evening Board Members,**

**My name is Deepika Dhuria and I reside in Polygon 176.**

**I oppose the redistricting plan proposed by the superintendent because it ignores community input, is based on inaccurate FARM data, was guided by an AAC that was not diverse in race or thought, increases pollution for years to come, and harms the very people it is meant to help.**

**I propose we use the Feasibility Study as a starting point because this was developed by an independent consultant and addresses capacity in our schools, which is what this process was started for.**

#### **My personal situation**

**176 is approximately 1.5 miles to River Hill High School, and I only cross one traffic light. We are proposed to be redistricted to a Wilde Lake which is 6.5 miles away and requires crossing several traffic lights. One of my children would be at Folly Quarter, and my other child would be at Wilde Lake, which are in the opposite directions from my home. Both children participate in after school activities and I am not sure how it will be possible as my husband and I both works full-time. If my teen learns to drive, this will increase the likelihood of an accident. Additionally, our county had previously talked about starting high schools later, but now are we seriously talking about making them wake up earlier? I am certain these same transportation hardships would hurt children if they were assigned from Wilde Lake to River Hill High.**

#### **FARM Rates**

**On September 23rd in a meeting with the BOE and the County Council, Dr. Martirano, explained that 10 years ago our FARM rate as a county was 11%, and that our FARM rate today is 22%. (Therefore, he added caution to where our FARM rate is going and implied this as an indicator for poverty in our county.)**

**I have included information from the National Center for Education Statistics, USDA, as well as Maryland Public schools in my testimony. My findings are that FARM percentages do not substitute as a measure of the level of child poverty, nor of changes in poverty rates over time.**

**Changes in eligibility occurred between approximately 2000 and 2013 that allowed more children to qualify for FARMS. The percentage of eligible for FARMS increased from 38 to 50 %, an increase of 12 percentage points. However, public school children who lived in poverty increased from 17 to 23 %, an increase of only 6 %.**

**One of the changes in eligibility is the Community Eligibility Provision, which was phased in for Maryland in School Year 2013/2014, and allows students to be eligible for FARMS without collecting household applications. When this Provision was put in place, FARM numbers increased.**

**Based on 2019 CEP data, 45% of Howard County's FARM enrollment were through direct enrollment.**

**When the Superintendent states that the poverty rate doubled in our County over the last 10 years, this is inaccurate. FARM Eligibility increases affected these numbers.**

## **Feasibility Study**

In January, the Board of Education directed HCPSS to initiate a systemwide school boundary review. Dr. Martirano stated that:

**This process is necessary because population growth has resulted in crowding at many schools while some schools in other areas have excess capacity.**

HCPSS hired an independent consultant for somewhere between \$400,000 to \$750,000 of our tax payer money. In June 2019, the consultant completed a detailed **Feasibility Study**, which included Planning Considerations, Needs and Strategies, and Foreseeable Attendance Area Adjustments. This detailed plan includes multiple options.

## **AAC**

The next steps were that the public provided input to this plan and the AAC reviews options in the Feasibility Study and compares them to Policy 6010.

Per HCPSS website, the AAC members represent community diversity and every planning region in the county. However, perhaps the superintendent wasn't aware or simply overlooked that the diversity of Howard County includes approximately 20% Asian Americans, so at least 2 members should have been Asians – however, we had no Asian American representation on the AAC. Additionally, the Western High Schools of River Hill, Glenelg, and Marriotts Ridge were not represented by any members of the AAC. Furthermore, six members of the AAC are directly from Calvin Ball's transition team.

**This violates Policy 2050 A2:**

**Policy 2050 Implementation Procedures – Advisory Committees to Staff and Schools:**

**A2 states:**

- A. When appointing members to advisory committees, the following guidelines should be followed unless established elsewhere in other policies and procedures:
  1. Appointees should have an interest and/or expertise in the identified purpose or charge established for the committee.
  2. Appointments should endeavor to reflect the diversity of the community and to represent a range of viewpoints and expertise.

**Since this policy was violated, we need to remove the superintendent's plan from the table. We need to start discussions with the Feasibility study which was developed by Independent Consultants.**

The role of the AAC was to review the feasibility study and provide feedback directly to the superintendent. It is very interesting, that the AAC provided minimal review of the feasibility study that our tax payer dollars were spent on. Instead, the AAC decided it was in their purview to prioritize equity over and above all. This prioritization of Policy 6010, 3c was elevated above all other policy factors.

## Results of the Attendance Area Boundary Review Survey

The question asked attendants to prioritize the criteria in Policy 6010. The top three were:

**Keeping feeds of students together, Maintaining contiguous communities or neighborhoods, and Transportation considerations. These priorities are ignored in the superintendent's plan, which increases the transportation footprint of our county.**

**The voices of our community were ignored in the Super's plan.**

## Appendix - FARMS Supporting Data

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<https://nces.ed.gov/blogs/nces/post/free-or-reduced-price-lunch-a-proxy-for-poverty>

## Free or reduced price lunch: A proxy for poverty?

April 16, 2015 NCES Blog Editor FAQs, General   

*By Tom Snyder and Lauren Musu-Gillette*

The percentage of students receiving free or reduced price lunch is often used as a proxy measure for the percentage of students living in poverty. While the percentage of students receiving free or reduced price lunch can provide some information about relative poverty, it should not be confused with the actual percentage of students in poverty enrolled in school. In 2012, just over half of public school children were eligible for free/reduced price lunches. In contrast, the actual poverty rate of public school students was 22 percent. Despite the correlation between the two measures, it is important to understand that they differ in important ways and that the difference is growing.

As the largest federal program for elementary and secondary schools, the National School Lunch Program provided meals to more than 31 million children each school day in 2012. All lunches provided by the National School Lunch Program are considered subsidized to some extent because meal-service programs at schools must operate as non-profit programs. While all students at participating schools are eligible for regular priced lunches through the National School Lunch Program, there are multiple ways in which a child can become eligible for a free/reduced price lunch. Traditionally, family income has been used to establish eligibility for free/reduced price lunch.

One way the percentage of students in poverty and those eligible for free/reduced price lunch differ is that many students eligible for free/reduced price lunch fall above the federal poverty threshold. A student from a household with an income at or below 130 percent of the poverty income threshold is

eligible for free lunch. A student from a household with an income between 130 percent and up to 185 percent of the poverty threshold is eligible for reduced price lunch.

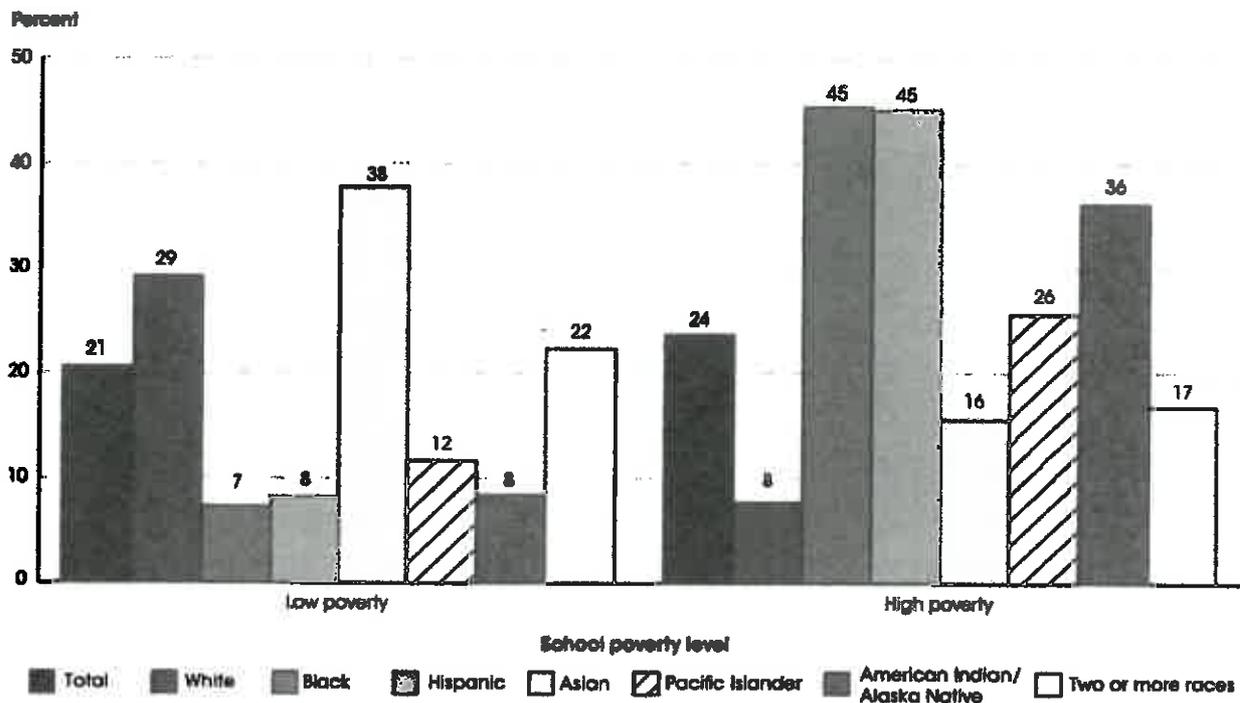
In addition, some groups of children such as foster children, children participating in Head Start and Migrant Education Programs, or children receiving services under the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act are eligible for free/reduced price lunch. Also, under the Community Eligibility option, some non-poor children may be included in the program if their district decides that it would be more efficient from an administrative or service delivery perspective to provide the free lunches to all children in the school. Thus, the percentage of students receiving free or reduced price lunch includes all students at or below 185 percent of the poverty threshold, plus some additional non-poor children who meet other eligibility criteria, plus other students in schools and districts that have exercised the Community Eligibility option, which results in a percentage that is more than double the official poverty rate.

Despite its limitations, the free/reduced price lunch data are frequently used by education researchers as a proxy for school poverty since this count is generally available at the school level, while the poverty rate is typically not available. Because the free/reduced price lunch eligibility is derived from the federal poverty level, and therefore highly related to it, the free/reduced price lunch percentage is useful to researchers from an analytic perspective.

In reports such as the Condition of Education, NCES has characterized a school as a high poverty school when more than 75 percent of its students are eligible for a free/reduced price lunch. In 2012-13, about 24 percent of students attended public schools that were classified as high poverty. Using this high poverty definition enables us to identify important differences among students: 45 percent of Black and Hispanic students attended such high poverty schools compared to 8 percent of White students.

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Percentage of public school students in low-poverty and high-poverty schools, by race/ethnicity:  
School year 2012-13



NOTE: High-poverty schools are defined as public schools where more than 75.0 percent of the students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (FRPL), and low-poverty schools are defined as public schools where 25.0 percent or less of the students are eligible for FRPL.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), "Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey," 2012-13.

One of the important limitations of the free/reduced lunch count is that the change in the eligibility requirements under the Community Eligibility option has meant that more children are qualifying for free/reduced price lunches. Between 2000-01 and 2012-13, the percentage of children eligible for a free/reduced price lunch increased from 38 percent to 50 percent, an increase of 12 percentage points. In contrast, the percentage of public school children who lived in poverty increased from 17 to 23 percent, an increase of 6 percentage points.

While the free/reduced lunch percentages can serve as a useful indicator of the relative numbers of poor children, it does not substitute as a measure of the level of child poverty, nor of changes in poverty rates over time. It is also important to keep in mind that neither free/reduced price lunch eligibility nor poverty should be considered measures of socioeconomic status (SES), which

measures a broader spectrum of family characteristics (e.g. parental education and occupations) that may be related to student performance. Some NCES surveys already collect SES data while others are investigating options for collecting better indicators of students' SES. These efforts will be detailed in a future blog post.

For more information on recent changes to free/reduced price lunch eligibility data in ED*Facts* see *Free and Reduced-Price Lunch Eligibility Data in ED*Facts*: A White Paper on Current Status and Potential Changes*.

<http://marylandpublicschools.org/programs/Documents/Nutrition/CEPData/CEPPlanningandImplementationGuidanceSeptember2016.pdf>

### ***History of CEP***

Before national implementation in SY 2014-15, CEP was phased in over a three-year period. Prior to each school year of the phase-in, FNS solicited applications from State agencies interested in CEP early implementation and made selections based on State and local support, eligibility of schools within the State, and the State's overall level of readiness for CEP.

In SY 2011-12, Illinois, Kentucky, and Michigan became the first three pilot States, and 665 schools participated in the initial year of CEP implementation. For SY 2012-13, New York, Ohio, West Virginia, and the District of Columbia joined the three initial States, making CEP available in a total of six States and the District of Columbia. In SY 2013-14, the final year of the phase-in, CEP was expanded to Florida, Georgia, Maryland, and Massachusetts. By the end of the pilot phase, CEP was operating in more than 4,000 schools and serving more than 1.5 million students in 10 States and the District of Columbia.

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/community-eligibility-provision>

<http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/programs/Pages/School-Community-Nutrition/CEPData.aspx>

**In fact, Community Eligibility Provision CEP data is available online. (See above). In 2019, Howard County Public Schools, there was a total enrollment of 57,712 students that qualified for Free or Reduced Lunches. Of those students, 5,293 students were enrolled through Direct Certification – this is 45% of students who were directly enrolled, and are figured into the drastic increase in FARM numbers over the last 10 years.**

The Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) is a non-pricing meal service option for schools and school districts in low-income areas. CEP allows the nation's highest poverty schools and districts to serve

**breakfast and lunch at no cost to all enrolled students without collecting household applications. Instead, schools that adopt CEP are reimbursed using a formula based on the percentage of students categorically eligible for free meals based on their participation in other specific means-tested programs, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).**

Dear Board Members,

My name is Shreya Tiwari. I am resident of polygon 176 and oppose the superintendent's redistricting proposal. I have been completely taken aback by this proposal that is not at all well thought and planned. My husband and I moved to the Walnut creek neighborhood as it represent great diversity and close to schools.

I have two daughters, younger one a 5<sup>th</sup> grader, older one an 8<sup>th</sup> grader entering High school next year. I do support to address issues like overcrowding in the schools however my daughter High School, River Hill is only at 94% of utilization and still most of students are being moved. She is already concerned about the new proposed school, Wilde Lake, if at all she will have any of her friends join her at this new school. My younger one though far from high school is already asking if any of this will have an impact on her future school. With frequent redistricting, please help me Board members, as to what should be my answer to my daughters?

We are only 1.4miles away from River hill currently however the proposed high school Wilde Lake is 7 miles. That means sleep deprived and stressed out children, more time they will be on phone and social media use that we all agree is not a good use of their time, less time with family. As working parents it's going to be hard to manage their after-school activity. We will have lots of teenage drivers who instead of driving 1.4miles will be driving 7+ miles, who will be responsible for the accidents or any unfortunate event that may happen with all these proposed changes. These are some very basic common-sense decisions, number

one is proximity to school, number two is transportation cost and most important of all children's safety. Not sure how it got this complicated in name of equity?

Howard county is supposed be one of the best school systems in the country, are we setting the best example in front of our kids by proposing plan without doing our home work well? These children may turn out to be future Professionals, CEO's and CIO'S, will they be good leaders if they follow the footstep of having the plan without doing a thorough work? As you have said Board members, they are all watching us with our choices and decisions we make.

As a taxpayer, I want to know where the \$3 million will come from for the transportation cost? In last couple of weeks, we have heard the voice of so many worried students, concerned parents & professional. I will highlight here Doctors stressing multiple times about negative consequences of redistricting on kids' mental health and over all wellbeing that can damage their initial formative years of life. Let's not discount their real-life experiences! They are coming to us and trying to avoid the problem that they see in their day to day practice.

Please keep polygon 176 & 3176 at River Hill and keep communities together.  
Thank you for your time.

Shreya Tiwari

10/15/2019.

Polygon # 176.

**ORAL TESTIMONY**  
**Pailin Wang, Polygon 1157**  
**10 15 2019 AAA Overflow PH IV - Region III (Speaker #46)**

Hello, my name is Pailin Wang and I am a resident of polygon 1157 in "The Fairways" neighborhood which comprises polygons 1157 & 157. I strongly oppose the plan's redistricting of my polygons on the elementary school level.

The polygons are currently districted to Manor Woods Elementary School and Burleigh Manor Middle School. The plan proposes a redistricting to Triadelphia Ridge Elementary School and Mount View Middle School.

I oppose the move on the elementary school level primarily due to the increased distance and travel time associated with the move. Policy 6010 IV.B.1.c would dictate for my polygons to be assigned to my neighborhood schools of Centennial Lane, Burleigh Manor Middle, and Centennial High. Although all are within walking and biking distance, we're currently districted to Manor Woods and Marriotts Ridge High. I can see that ship has sailed, and I've made my peace with the fact that I'm not districted to my neighborhood elementary and high schools. However, now, we're proposed to move to Triadelphia Ridge, which is the 22nd closest school to us. There are only 42 elementary schools. (See Appendix B). My polygons' current 3.7 mile commute would increase to 7.8 miles if we were sent to Triadelphia Ridge. And the plan turns what is currently a 15 to 25 minute commute to an estimated 25 to 45 minute commute depending on traffic. As it is, it is not uncommon for my children's bus to be the last one at school due to unpredictable traffic, and they sometimes miss the morning bell. I know that I would hate to consistently arrive at my 9am meetings at 9:05. By no fault of their own, my neighborhood kids are late in the morning. This leaves them frazzled, embarrassed, and unprepared. Increasing their commuting distance would greatly increase the risk of being negatively affected by unpredictable traffic.

I have more reasons why my polygon's move would contradict or otherwise not significantly support nine policy points, but I don't have time to read them all aloud. Please read the statement in your packets below which I did not have time to read.

Also, my son, a 3rd grader at Manor Woods, asked me to read this statement to you, so here it is.

Quote: "I think it would be an inconvenience to drive all the way to Triadelphia Ridge in the morning and afternoon traffic because I get headaches from the bus because its so loud and because I have nothing to do while I'm on the bus." End quote.

I'd like to add to his comment that from my observation and based on the stories I hear, traveling by bus is like entering no-man's land. Some kids have more energy than the bus can contain, and it results in screaming, out-of-control kids that remain undisciplined by the bus driver. The opportunity of bullying and inappropriate behavior is high when unsupervised kids are left to their own devices on a long bus ride.

In summary, please do not redistrict Polygons 1157 and 157. Also, please read my full oral testimony which I've provided to you. Thank you.

**Here is the full oral testimony I wanted to read aloud, but didn't due to the three-minute time restriction:**

Hello, thank you for hearing me tonight. My name is Pailin Wang and I am a resident of polygon 1157 in "The Fairways" neighborhood which comprises polygons 1157 and 157. I strongly oppose the plan's redistricting of polygons 1157 and 157 on the elementary school level.

The polygons are currently districted to Manor Woods Elementary School and Burleigh Manor Middle School. The plan proposes a redistricting on the elementary and middle school level to Triadelphia Ridge Elementary School and Mount View Middle School.

The redistricting of my polygons fails on 8 points of Policy 6010. The Policy only lists 14 points of consideration. I believe these failures demonstrate that the reassignment of polygons 1157 & 157 to Triadelphia Ridge ES is a poorly supported choice. I hope one or all are enough to convince you to do the right thing by not making any elementary school reassignments to polygons 1157 & 157.

**1. The proposal's plan does not significantly impact Policy 6010 IV.B.1.a, which is the policy regarding facility utilization via efficient use of available space.**

This proposal would result in a 3% utilization change for Triadelphia Ridge ES from 89% to 92%. This is a positive change in the right direction. However, the magnitude of % change is ranked in the bottom 3 among elementary schools whose utilization % are affected by the proposed plan. (Appendix A). There are 29 other elementary schools whose change in utilization % would be greater than 3%. Among those schools, the average change in utilization % is 16 and the median change in utilization % is 16. If the Board of Ed is looking for a good "bang for buck" move of any single neighborhood into the Triadelphia Ridge ES district, it would better off reassigning a larger neighborhood/polygon. My neighborhood's polygons have only 74 elementary aged students, which doesn't significantly move the utilization %s.

**2. The proposal's plan to move polygons 1157 & 157 is not in line with Policy 6010 IV B.1.c and B.1.d. which are the policies regarding facility utilization via fiscal responsibility and travel times.**

This policy point would dictate for my polygons to be assigned to my neighborhood schools of Centennial Lane Elementary School, Burleigh Manor Middle School, and Centennial High School. Centennial Lane is only 1 mile away. Burleigh Manor and Centennial High are only 1.9 miles away. Although all are within walking and biking distance, we're currently districted to Manor Woods Elementary and Marriotts Ridge High. I've made my peace with this. However, now, we're proposed to move to Triadelphia Ridge Elementary. Howard County has 42 elementary schools. By distance, Triadelphia Ridge is the 22nd closest school to us. (Appendix B). My polygons' current 3.7 mile commute to Manor Woods ES would increase to 7.8 miles if we were sent to Triadelphia Ridge. It turns what is currently a 15 to 25 minute commute to an estimated 25 to 45 minutes depending on traffic. As it is, it is not uncommon for my children's bus to be the last one at school due to unpredictable traffic, and they sometimes miss the morning bell. Increasing their commuting distance would greatly increase the risk of being negatively affected by unpredictable traffic. Additionally, at least two buses would be required to transport the 74 elementary-aged kids in my neighborhood. The increase in distance and time traveled by those two buses would result in increased operating costs for the County.

**3. The proposal's plan to move polygons 1157 & 157 is not in line with Policy 6010 IV.B.2.a, which is the policy regarding community stability via keeping feeds together by avoiding feeds of less than 15% at the receiving school.**

Polygons 1157 & 157 are currently districted to Marriotts Ridge High School and Burleigh Manor Middle. However, Triadelphia Ridge elementary school is not a feeder school of Marriotts Ridge HS; nor is it a feeder school of Burleigh Manor Middle; nor is it a feeder school of Mount View Middle School (the middle school which we've been proposed to be redistricted to). The table on Page 19 of the proposal shows that Triadelphia Ridge ES students feed 0.0% of Burleigh Manor MS and 0.0% of Mount View MS. The proposed plan would result in Triadelphia Ridge ES feeding 9.5% of Burleigh Manor MS or 9.3% of Mount View MS. The feed % would be even less - just 2% - if the other neighborhoods who were redistricted two years ago from Manor Woods to West Friendship and are again slated for redistricting to Triadelphia Ridge were spared from this round of redistricting. The math is difficult without access to more figures. But suffice to say, both feed percentages are lower than the 15% indicated in Policy 6010 IV.B.2.a.

**4. The proposal's plan to move polygons 1157 & 157 is not in line with Policy 6010 IV.B.2.b, which is the policy regarding community stability via contiguous communities or neighborhoods.**

Polygons 1157 & 157 do not have direct access to Route 144 and are not contiguous to the other Triadelphia Ridge ES polygons. Our entrance is off of Centennial Lane and is separated from the next closest proposed neighboring polygon by a busy, commercially-zoned stretch of Route 40. There exist several other polygons that would be a better choice if the goal were to keep contiguous communities or neighborhoods together.

**5. The proposal's plan to move polygons 1157 & 157 does not significantly support Policy 6010 IV.B.3.a, which is the policy regarding diversity of demographic characteristics via race/ethnicity.**

If the goal is to get Manor Woods ES and Triadelphia Ridge ES closer to county averages, the proposed plan does not really move the needle. (Appendix C). I observe no significant gains in the Race/Ethnicity distribution for either Manor Woods ES or Triadelphia Ridge ES. Manor Woods would have a net positive change of <5% closer to County averages, and Triadelphia Ridge would have a net positive change of 1% closer to County averages. It is essentially a trading of one race for another that, for all the trouble, does not materially change the race/ethnicity of these two schools.

**6. The proposal's plan to move polygons 1157 & 157 is not in line with Policy 6010 IV.B.3.b, which is the policy regarding diversity of demographic characteristics via FARMs participation.**

Manor Woods has an 8% FARMs rate before and after the proposed redistricting. Triadelphia Ridge has a <5% FARMs rate before and after the proposed redistricting. (Appendix D). Both are in the bottom third percentile of elementary schools for FARMs participation before and after redistricting. The proposal does not affect FARMs participation and does not serve to support this policy.

**7. The proposal's plan to move polygons 1157 & 157 is not in line with Policy 6010 IV.B.3.c, which is the policy regarding diversity of demographic characteristics via academic performance.**

Both Manor Woods and Triadelphia Ridge rank in the top 25% performing elementary schools in the County for Reading and Math both BEFORE the proposed change, and after the proposed change. (Appendix E and F). Both are in the top third percentile of elementary schools for PARCC test scores before and after redistricting. There is a 0% movement in the diversity of academic performance as measured by PARCC scores, so from that perspective there is no reason to implement the proposed redistricting of 1157 & 157 to Triadelphia Ridge.

**8. The proposal's plan to move polygons 1157 & 157 is not in line with Policy 6010 IV.B.3.d, which is the policy regarding diversity of demographic characteristics via ESOL students.** This proposal results in a change to % EL participation of -2% to Manor Woods ES (base 8% and proposed 6%); and a change of not indicated (base EL % stays at  $\leq 5\%$ ) to Triadelphia Ridge ES. The countywide average is 7% as indicated on Page 23 of the proposed plan. If the goal is to have every elementary school at 7%, the proposed plan does not accomplish this goal because the net differential between proposed % and desired % is 0%.

In summary, I oppose the redistricting of Polygons 1157 and 157 on the elementary school level, which I believe does not support Policy 6010. Please do not implement this move. Thank you.

## Appendix A

Based on figures presented on proposal's Page 13 Utilization and FARM - Elementary School

	Elementary School	BASE (2020-2021)	PROPOSED (2020-21)	Change	Change - Absolute Value	Change - Absolute Value (excludes 0's)	Comment
1.	Bushy Park	82%	117%	35%	35%	35%	
2.	Elkridge	118%	83%	-35%	35%	35%	
3.	Clarksville	70%	98%	28%	28%	28%	
4.	Pointers Run	124%	99%	-25%	25%	25%	
5.	West Friendship	103%	79%	-24%	24%	24%	
6.	Laurel Woods	91%	115%	24%	24%	24%	
7.	Cradlerock	116%	96%	-20%	20%	20%	
8.	St. John's Lane	119%	99%	-20%	20%	20%	
9.	Guilford	79%	98%	19%	19%	19%	
10.	Bellows Spring	106%	88%	-18%	18%	18%	
11.	Longfellow	86%	104%	18%	18%	18%	
12.	Bryant Woods	125%	108%	-17%	17%	17%	
13.	Fulton	122%	105%	-17%	17%	17%	
14.	Running Brook	91%	75%	-16%	16%	16%	
15.	Hollifield Station	126%	110%	-16%	16%	16%	
16.	Swansfield	79%	95%	16%	16%	16%	
17.	Deep Run	91%	106%	15%	15%	15%	
18.	Hanover Hills	89%	103%	14%	14%	14%	
19.	Waterloo	91%	105%	14%	14%	14%	
20.	Worthington	89%	102%	13%	13%	13%	
21.	Thunder Hill	100%	111%	11%	11%	11%	
22.	Clemens Crossing	105%	95%	-10%	10%	10%	
23.	Veterans	103%	112%	9%	9%	9%	
24.	Phelps Luck	95%	103%	8%	8%	8%	
25.	Manor Woods	92%	99%	7%	7%	7%	CURRENT DISTRICT
26.	Bollman Bridge	103%	97%	-6%	6%	6%	
27.	Waverly	112%	106%	-6%	6%	6%	
28.	Atholton	109%	114%	5%	5%	5%	
29.	Dayton Oaks	95%	91%	-4%	4%	4%	
30.	Stevens Forest	109%	112%	3%	3%	3%	
31.	Triadelphia Ridge	89%	92%	3%	3%	3%	PROPOSED DISTRICT
32.	Ducketts Lane	88%	90%	2%	2%	2%	
33.	Talbot Springs	123%	121%	-2%	2%	2%	
34.	Centennial Lane	111%	111%	0%	0%		
35.	Forest Ridge	95%	95%	0%	0%		
36.	Gorman Crossing	112%	112%	0%	0%		
37.	Hammond	95%	95%	0%	0%		
38.	Ilchester	102%	102%	0%	0%		
39.	Jeffers Hill	98%	98%	0%	0%		
40.	Lisbon	92%	92%	0%	0%		
41.	Northfield	108%	108%	0%	0%		
42.	Rockburn	102%	102%	0%	0%		

Schools listed here #1-33

Count	33
Average	15%
Median	15%

Schools listed here #1-29

Count	29
Average	16%
Median	16%

## Appendix B

	Elementary School	Distance from Polygon 1157 (miles) *	Comment
1.	Centennial Lane	1.1	Polygon 1157 & 157 was districted to CLES prior to being districted to WES
2.	St. John's Lane	3.2	
3.	Northfield	3.4	
4.	Waverly	3.4	Polygon 1157 & 157 was districted to WES prior to being districted to MWES
5.	Manor Woods	3.7	CURRENT DISTRICT
6.	Hollifield Station	4.2	
7.	Running Brook	4.6	
8.	Veterans	4.6	
9.	Longfellow	4.7	
10.	Thunder Hill	4.9	
11.	West Friendship	5.3	
12.	Swansfield	5.4	
13.	Bryant Woods	5.7	
14.	Phelps Luck	5.7	
15.	Worthington	6.4	
16.	Talbott Springs	6.7	
17.	Clarksville	6.8	
18.	Jeffers Hill	7.0	
19.	Stevens Forest	7.1	
20.	Ilchester	7.5	
21.	Clemens Crossing	7.7	
22.	Triadelphia Ridge	7.8	PROPOSED DISTRICT
23.	Bellows Spring	8.1	
24.	Atholton	8.2	
25.	Cradlerock	8.2	
26.	Rockburn	8.4	
27.	Waterloo	8.4	
28.	Deep Run	8.9	
29.	Pointers Run	9.5	
30.	Dayton Oaks	9.7	
31.	Guilford	10.1	
32.	Elkridge	10.7	
33.	Hammond	11.2	
34.	Bushy Park	11.8	
35.	Hanover Hills	12.0	
36.	Fulton	12.1	
37.	Ducketts Lane	12.2	
38.	Bollman Bridge	12.8	
39.	Gorman Crossing	13.3	
40.	Forest Ridge	13.5	
41.	Lisbon	13.8	
42.	Laurel Woods	15.7	

\* Distance as determined by Google Maps - the shortest distance of the routes offered

## Appendix C

Based on figures presented on proposal's Page 25 Race/Ethnicity - Elementary School

### Manor Woods ES

	<u>% Change based on proposal</u>
Asian	7% Closer to County average
Hispanic	<5% Closer to County average
Black	1% Further away from County average
White	<u>6% Further away from County average</u>
<b>Net change</b>	<b>&lt;5% Closer to County average</b>

### Triadelphia Ridge ES

	<u>% Change based on proposal</u>
Black	1% Closer to County average
Two or more	1% Closer to County average
White	2% Closer to County average
Asian	2% Further away from County average
Hispanic	<u>1% Further away from County average</u>
<b>Net change</b>	<b>1% Closer to County average</b>

## Appendix D

Based on figures presented on proposal's Page 13 Utilization and FARM - Elementary School

	BASE (2020-2021)	PROPOSED (2020-21)	Change	Change - Absolute Value	Change - Absolute Value (excludes 0's)	Comment
1. Stevens Forest	68%	54%	-14%	14%	14%	
2. Phelps Luck	63%	36%	-27%	27%	27%	
3. Laurel Woods	61%	49%	-12%	12%	12%	
4. Swansfield	61%	44%	-17%	17%	17%	
5. Deep Run	55%	53%	-2%	2%	2%	
6. Cradlerock	55%	51%	-4%	4%	4%	
7. Ducketts Lane	55%	49%	-6%	6%	6%	
8. Running Brook	52%	51%	-1%	1%	1%	
9. Longfellow	51%	52%	1%	1%	1%	
10. Bollman Bridge	51%	51%	0%	0%	0%	
11. Bryant Woods	50%	48%	-2%	2%	2%	
12. Talbott Springs	50%	46%	-4%	4%	4%	
13. Guilford	46%	43%	-3%	3%	3%	
14. Jeffers Hill	36%	34%	-2%	2%		
15. Forest Ridge	34%	34%	0%	0%		
16. Hanover Hills	33%	37%	4%	4%	4%	
17. Elkridge	33%	32%	-1%	1%	1%	
18. Hammond	25%	25%	0%	0%		
19. Waterloo	24%	44%	20%	20%	20%	
20. Hollifield Station	24%	24%	0%	0%	0%	
21. Thunder Hill	21%	37%	16%	16%	16%	
22. Veterans	21%	22%	1%	1%	1%	
23. Gorman Crossing	18%	18%	0%	0%		
24. Bellows Spring	17%	18%	1%	1%	1%	
25. Atholton	15%	25%	10%	10%	10%	
26. Clemens Crossing	13%	10%	-3%	3%	3%	
27. Lisbon	12%	12%	0%	0%		
28. Northfield	11%	11%	0%	0%		
29. St. John's Lane	9%	10%	1%	1%	1%	
30. Manor Woods	8%	8%	0%	0%	0%	CURRENT DISTRICT
31. Centennial Lane	6%	6%	0%	0%		
32. Rockburn	6%	6%	0%	0%		
33. West Friendship	6%	6%	0%	0%	0%	
34. Worthington	5%	6%	1%	1%	1%	
35. Fulton	5%	5%	0%	0%	0%	
36. Bushy Park	<5%	<5%	0%	0%	0%	
37. Clarksville	<5%	17%	0%	0%	0%	
38. Dayton Oaks	<5%	5%	0%	0%	0%	
39. Ilchester	<5%	<5%	0%	0%		
40. Pointers Run	<5%	<5%	0%	0%	0%	
41. Triadelphia Ridge	<5%	<5%	0%	0%	0%	PROPOSED DISTRICT
42. Waverly	<5%	<5%	0%	0%	0%	

## Appendix E

Based on figures presented on proposal's Page 21 Test Scores - Elementary School  
PARCC-Read

	<b>Elementary School</b>	<b>BASE</b>	<b>PROPOSED</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>Comment</b>
1.	Ilchester	84%	84%	0%	
2.	Clarksville	83%	74%	-9%	
3.	Waverly	76%	77%	1%	
4.	Bushy Park	76%	76%	0%	
5.	Centennial Lane	75%	75%	0%	
6.	Pointers Run	72%	71%	-1%	
7.	Triadelphia Ridge	71%	70%	-1%	PROPOSED DISTRICT
8.	West Friendship	70%	72%	2%	
9.	Fulton	70%	69%	-1%	
10.	Dayton Oaks	69%	66%	-3%	
11.	Worthington	68%	69%	1%	
12.	Manor Woods	68%	68%	0%	CURRENT DISTRICT
13.	Lisbon	67%	67%	0%	
14.	Clemens Crossing	66%	69%	3%	
15.	Waterloo	65%	48%	-17%	
16.	Rockburn	65%	65%	0%	
17.	Bellows Spring	63%	61%	-2%	
18.	St. John's Lane	63%	61%	-2%	
19.	Thunder Hill	62%	46%	-16%	
20.	Northfield	62%	62%	0%	
21.	Veterans	55%	54%	-1%	
22.	Hollifield Station	54%	54%	0%	
23.	Talbott Springs	53%	64%	11%	
24.	Forest Ridge	53%	53%	0%	
25.	Gorman Crossing	53%	53%	0%	
26.	Hammond	52%	52%	0%	
27.	Longfellow	50%	45%	-5%	
28.	Atholton	47%	43%	-4%	
29.	Elkridge	44%	47%	3%	
30.	Jeffers Hill	43%	46%	3%	
31.	Hanover Hills	43%	43%	0%	
32.	Ducketts Lane	41%	36%	-5%	
33.	Guilford	38%	39%	1%	
34.	Laurel Woods	37%	43%	6%	
35.	Bryant Woods	37%	41%	4%	
36.	Deep Run	37%	40%	3%	
37.	Phelps Luck	36%	55%	19%	
38.	Cradlerock	35%	35%	0%	
39.	Stevens Forest	33%	41%	8%	
40.	Running Brook	32%	32%	0%	
41.	Swansfield	29%	42%	13%	
42.	Bollman Bridge	29%	29%	0%	

## Appendix F

Based on figures presented on proposal's Page 21 Test Scores - Elementary School  
PARCC-Math

	<b>Elementary School</b>	<b>BASE</b>	<b>PROPOSED</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>Comment</b>
1.	Clarksville	89%	79%	-10%	
2.	Pointers Run	82%	81%	-1%	
3.	Centennial Lane	82%	82%	0%	
4.	Triadelphia Ridge	80%	77%	-3%	<b>PROPOSED DISTRICT</b>
5.	Waverly	79%	80%	1%	
6.	Dayton Oaks	77%	75%	-2%	
7.	Fulton	77%	76%	-1%	
8.	Ilchester	77%	77%	0%	
9.	Bushy Park	74%	76%	2%	
10.	Worthington	72%	74%	2%	
11.	Manor Woods	72%	72%	0%	<b>CURRENT DISTRICT</b>
12.	Rockburn	70%	70%	0%	
13.	Waterloo	66%	42%	-24%	
14.	West Friendship	66%	69%	3%	
15.	Northfield	65%	65%	0%	
16.	St. John's Lane	64%	62%	-2%	
17.	Thunder Hill	63%	47%	-16%	
18.	Clemens Crossing	63%	65%	2%	
19.	Hammond	60%	60%	0%	
20.	Veterans	59%	57%	-2%	
21.	Bellows Spring	59%	58%	-1%	
22.	Gorman Crossing	59%	59%	0%	
23.	Atholton	58%	51%	-7%	
24.	Lisbon	57%	57%	0%	
25.	Hollifield Station	56%	57%	1%	
26.	Longfellow	50%	46%	-4%	
27.	Forest Ridge	50%	50%	0%	
28.	Elkridge	47%	49%	2%	
29.	Hanover Hills	47%	47%	0%	
30.	Talbott Springs	46%	57%	11%	
31.	Bryant Woods	45%	47%	2%	
32.	Ducketts Lane	40%	36%	-4%	
33.	Deep Run	40%	41%	1%	
34.	Laurel Woods	37%	45%	8%	
35.	Guilford	36%	36%	0%	
36.	Phelps Luck	35%	59%	24%	
37.	Jeffers Hill	35%	38%	3%	
38.	Swansfield	34%	48%	14%	
39.	Running Brook	34%	35%	1%	
40.	Bollman Bridge	32%	32%	0%	
41.	Stevens Forest	30%	38%	8%	
42.	Cradlerock	26%	28%	2%	

From  
Balaji Bala

POLYGON #: 176

I am Balaji Bala from Polygon 176. I am opposing the current redistrict proposal because it violates HCPSS Policy 6010, impacts students in many ways, and discriminate certain county residents.

This is a very tough time for Howard County residents as the federal government policies trying to support "far-right" and Howard County polices trying to support "far-left". In both cases, it's the game of politicians for their personal gain in capturing "votes" from certain group of people. I am living in Howard County from 2002 and I witnessed People of Howard county stand for middle ground. No Blue or Red. We can call Howard County as "purple".

FARM factor is one of the major considerations in the current redistrict plan. We cannot solve the underlying problem by redistricting and moving the kids from different schools. Once you move several polygons to balance the so called "FARM" ratio, there is no guarantee that the politicians and their housing development friends will not build more "affordable" housing units in the same area. How far will you go and pull kids and polygons to keep this FARM ratio lower in the coming years? This redistricting is not the solution. Please do not approve.

Yes. The Overcrowding should be addressed. River Hill High School is currently under capacity. Proposal should support to bring in additional students to River Hill "without" moving any students out.

Yes. We have to close the achievement gap across various demographics. However, How does that solve by shifting kids from one school to the other?

In a balanced education system, the critical success factor is with the 3 pillars. **Student – Teacher – Parent**. If this bondage is not well established, there won't be any success no matter how hard you shuffle kids.

Rather than shuffling the kids around, if the money is invested in innovative education methods, it will benefit the family who are in need and raise their student proficiency rate.

My proposals are as below.

- Bring in the top educators (Teachers) to this school. Pay them higher wages.
- Establish stronger Parent – Teacher – Student relationship. If one of the links of the pillar fails, everything will fail
- Run a pilot program by Providing incentives to all 3 pillars (Student, Teacher and Parent). Measure the results in their Test Scores.
- Create accountability for parents, teachers and students

Every parent should spend time with their kids for education. Excellence in education starts from home. When implementing the incentive-based program, it motivates everyone to deliver their best. When an individual students scores are elevated, the entire school and community will elevate. I have the details below on incentive-based approach which is successful in “Medicare”. Similar approach can be implemented in many places. I recommend you read this section.

#### **Comparison of Medicare innovation with Incentive based programs**

The reason why people are in poverty is because of the politicians and their poor policies. I work on the Medicare related field. I would like to compare a scenario with our current situation. In the past, majority of Medicare payments were paid as “Fee-For-Service”. Which means, providers (doctors, hospitals, etc.) get paid for the services they render, which was a good start. But we needed improvements in quality of care. CMS (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services) came up with innovative ideas by providing incentives for provides who can keep the population healthy. Rather than paying flat rates on Fee for service model, it encouraged doctors and providers give a good quality of care and preventive care. This model is a great success for the people. Similarly, the entitlement programs should be designed to motivate people to come out of poverty. As an example, Raise the minimum wage for the individuals. So, they can spend more time with their kids rather than working 2 or 3 jobs to meet their basic needs. While, this is not the forum to discuss solutions, this is also not the forum to approve an experimental solution for much larger issue of socio-economic status.

During a presentation, the superintendent mention, how hard and how organized the people opposing his plan, he would move forward on the plan. This is totally against the law. We are not living in communist country. We are living in a great democratic country. I still believe in democracy and I hope these hearings are valuable and you take consideration of all the people in the county. Howard county is one of the top counties in the country to live and raise family. Please don’t change that by implementing this redistrict plan. Please don’t punish people for working hard and being successful. No one should suffer. All kids are equal.

People who pay higher taxes are already contributing to the “Equity” for the county. Poor money management causing funding issues for schools. We see the county cutting budget on several school activities due to budget issues but, ready to pay enormous amount of money for “Busing” the students. As a taxpayer of this county, we do not approve this approach. These kinds of polices will demotivate hard working individuals and tend to move more people toward entitlement programs as people can get easy money rather than working so hard.

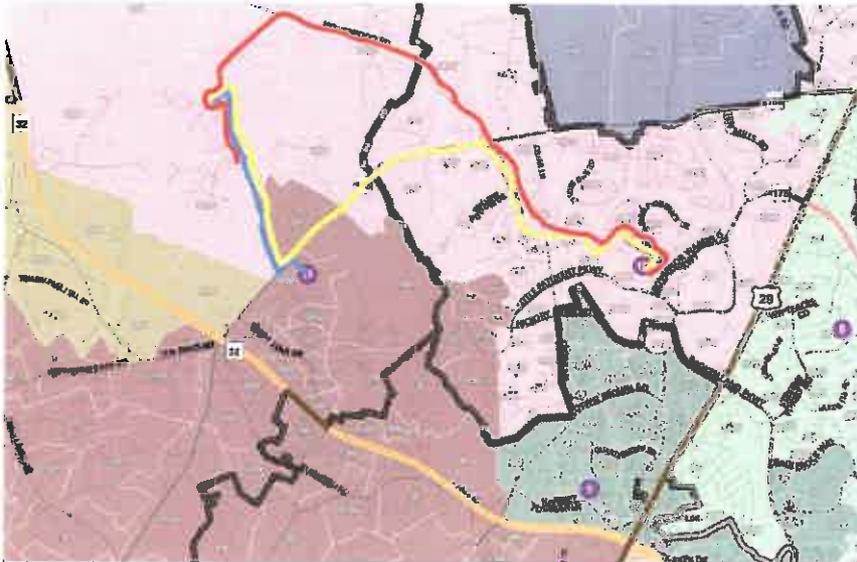
There are so much of Fraud, Waste and Abuse in entitlement programs. Fix those and it will bring down your “FARM” ratio.

#### **The Plan violates the HCPSS Policy 6010**

- Policy 6010 IV.B1 c
- Policy 6010 IV.B2 b
- Policy 6010 IV.B2 c

#### **Impact to Students:**

- Driving safety
- Less Sleep and higher stress
- Mental Health
- Longer commute time



“Blue shows our current route to River high school - where student drivers will need to take a single turn, at a stop light, and the bus ride is 10 minutes from bus stop to school. The yellow and red lines show the new possible routes, where student drivers will need to navigate over a dozen intersections”

“Mapping my community in Polygon 176 to Glenelg High School would be a mile closer than Wilde Lake High School in driving distance and 37% faster in travel time.

Mapping my community in Polygon 176 to Centennial would be the same distance as to Wilde Lake High School, but 23% faster in travel time.

Mapping this community to Marriott’s Ridge High School would be a mile further than WLHS, but 18% faster in travel time.

Even mapping this community to Atholton would be a mile further than WLHS, but 2 minutes shorter travel time by car.

Wilde Lake High School is the SIXTH closest high school to this community, by time traveled on roads and the THIRD or FOURTH closest by distance depending on bus route.”

**Discrimination:**

- AAC committee members are hand-picked with political agenda in mind.
- NO significant impact for any of the polygons where the AAC members live.
- NO single representative from River Hill HS, Glenelg HS, and Marriotts Ridge HS that are affected the most.

- 46% (6 out of 13) African American representation. 0% Asian representation comparing to the county's 20% Black and 19% Asian population.
- 2 members are from the same organization Foreign-Born Information & Referral Network (FIRN)
- 38% (5 out of 13) people are also on County Executive Calvin Ball's transition team.

One last thing. I would like offer to volunteer myself for any new approach and solutions discussions. You have my contacts in the written testimony. Reach me. Reach my community for help. Include everyone and have representation for all the groups.

God Bless Howard County. God Bless America.

With Respectfully,

Balaji Bala



Date: Oct 15, 2019

Dear Board of Education Members,

Hello, my name is Poornima Balaji, I am part of Polygon 176. I oppose this redistricting proposal.

I am a parent of a 9<sup>th</sup> Grader who is at River Hill School and a 3<sup>rd</sup> grader at Triadelphia Ridge Elementary School.

Two years before, we moved to this neighborhood, and our biggest pull factor was that the high school is only 5 minutes away. Due to the close proximity my daughter will be able to participate many clubs and sports and still have a ride back home. It makes it much easier for us to balance between both high school and elementary school activities of our kids. High school is the most critical part of the student life, which shapes their future, and tearing kids apart from their friends will only impact them negatively.

If students are moved to Wilde Lake which is 6 miles away it becomes a 45-minute drive with the traffic, which would just waste their precious time because nothing can be achieved in that time.

Capacity. River Hill is under capacity, so why move us out of the school? This redistricting proposal violates Policy 6010.

Why move us now, when High School 13 will be opening 2 years and redistricting will be necessary then? Is it ethical to move so many students' multiple times?

Howard county has Jumpstart program for Cyber security for all high school, but Riverhill and Oakland mills school are the only schools that offer 4 additional pilot programs for the kids. If my daughter moved to Wilde Lake, she will be missing the most precious opportunity, why should she suffer? Where is equity for her?

There are so many aspects in which this redistricting would effect all the students negatively, to the point where the huge negatives outweigh the little positive aspects. Their sleep is already alarmingly low as most are involved in clubs or sports in addition to homework. To waste 45 minutes on a bus ride that passes River Hill on the route makes no logical sense. They will have to end up waking up as early as 5. It is already dark in the morning, that early will create a safety hazard especially in the winter, since we don't have sidewalks in our neighborhood. Currently to get to River hill, a school that is 5 mins away, the bus comes at 6:45, how early is the bus going to come for a school 45 minutes away?

Changing buildings will make no difference, instead there should be changes made to help the students like extra programs and clubs. I hope the BOE understands and makes the right decision. If you want to truly make a beneficial difference FOR the students, voting no to the redistricting proposal will be the best decision.

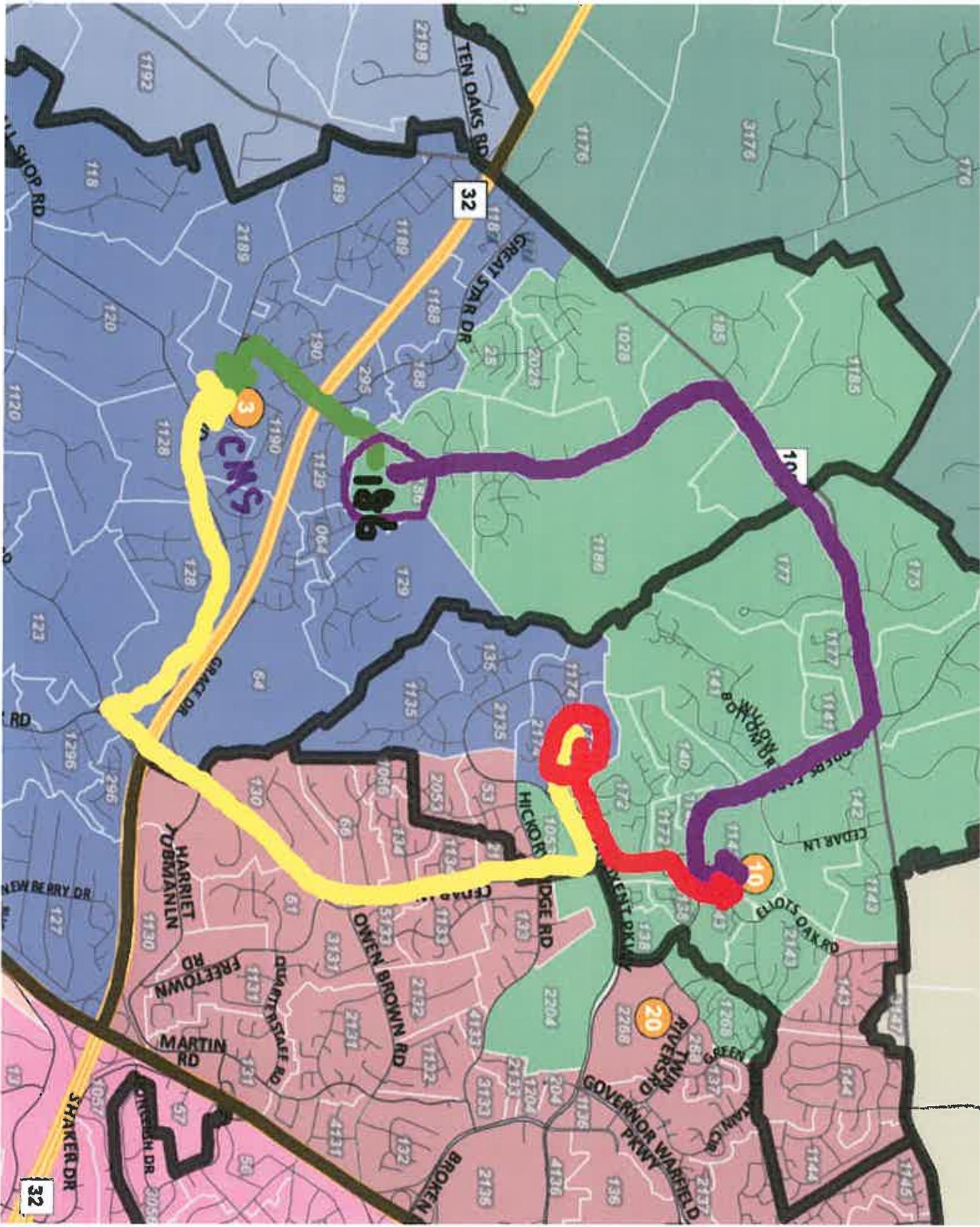
We have experienced firsthand the effects of switching schools, when we moved to this neighborhood, my daughter was a seventh grader, it took her a long time to adjust and feel comfortable with her friends. High school is already such a stressful and hectic 4 years, and social experimenting on these kids would produce an adverse outcome.

Please keep polygon 176 & 3176 at River hill high school and keep communities together. Thank you for your time.

Poornima



Polygon 176



## Testimony

Good evening, everyone. My name is Yan Sun. I am a resident of Polygon 186, a registered voter in District 4, and I strongly oppose the massive redistricting plan proposed by Dr. Martirano.

I appreciate the goal of Equity in Action but fail to see any evidence to support that this will actually achieve real equity. It is a huge action that will impact lots of students in the entire county. According to this proposal, all middle schoolers from polygons 28, 1028, 2028, 186, 1186, 185 and 1185 will be sent to a school much farther than their current school. For my family, the 5-minute drive becomes a 20-minute drive. Looking at this map, I cannot see how kids from our neighborhood benefit from this redistricting proposal. A massive redistricting could cause trauma to many kids, especially during their sensitive, teenage years.

On one of our recent Clarksville Middle School PTA meetings, a mom cried during the meeting while telling everyone how nightmare-inducing it was for her children to go through 3 school redistrictings. If this proposal passes, it's going to be nightmare number 4. This parent was hoping the BOE can adopt a plan that has the least disruption when implementing a county-wide school redistricting. Her wish is also my wish. As a parent, I stand in solidarity with those who oppose this ill-conceived proposal. Not only is it unjust, and yet another example of problems that arise from centralized decisions made by a few, but it will also set a terrible precedent for the future of Howard County and Howard County Public School Systems as a whole. These actions, and the misguided belief system behind them, destroy communities.

Community cohesion and parental involvement have a much bigger impact on a school's performance (and a child's well-being) than money redistribution and attempts at social reform made by a small group of people outside of said communities. Moving kids between communities cannot lower the number of the actual FARM kids, both the county and the Board of Education should work together to fix the real problem - reducing the number of FARM families. The Board of Education should also work on improving the academic performance of the FARM kids. (please see my suggestion at the beginning).

I work for a university where competency-based learning is being implemented throughout the entire curriculum. There, we have students who have different levels of entry knowledge. Our approach to improving students' overall graduation rate is to focus on the curriculum design to provide adaptive learning resources for all students to achieve the most, and therefore to build a more personalized learning path based on their achievements. Every student is different, everyone's learning preference is different, and everyone's learning pace is different.

Instead of forcing people to accept such a disruptive redistricting plan, my suggestion is for Board of Education members and school teachers to work harder on redesigning the curriculum to embrace and support various learning preferences and learning paces, and ignite FARM kids' internal learning desire to ultimately promote the learning.

Thank you.

Gabriel Spencer  
Polygon 2183  
October 15, 2019

My name is Gabriel Spencer and I oppose the current redistricting plan.

I live in Polygon 2183. I'm testifying in connection with polygons 183, 1183, and 1181. My kids attend Folly Quarter Middle School and Triadelphia Ridge Elementary School. We're currently assigned to attend River Hill. The current plan would move us to Wilde Lake.

I have **more** than just empathy for FARM kids. I was a FARM kid for most of my school experience. When I was in elementary and middle schools, my dad went back to school. When I was in high school, my mom went to back to school. One reason they could do that, is because my siblings and I were able to walk to and from school, which we did. During high school, when my mom left for early classes, I woke up my youngest sisters, fed them breakfast, and braided their hair. And I still had enough time to get to school because it was close to home. This is the reality for low-income families. They need **more** time to be home with family. We all need **more** time with our families.

Another thing that **bothers** me is that I feel like Howard County is **exaggerating** its definition of segregation in order to reach some political goal. There is an emphasis on equity that is coming from the U.S. House of Representatives Education and Labor Committee and trickling down to lower levels of government. Bobby Scott, the chairman of that House committee recently advanced two bills focused on school equity. Other leaders like Terri Hill and Calvin Ball also emphasize equity. But I'm afraid the superintendent's plan isn't mainly focused on student well-being. Its focus seems to be a way for politicians to show support for political leaders. I agree with the goal of the superintendent's plan, however, I oppose the **strategy** to get there.

Before co-sponsoring **both** school equity bills, Bobby Scott requested a report on school segregation from the Government Accountability Office. Based on that report, Mr. Scott commented that, "... segregation in public schools ...is getting worse..." However, the report, and consequently the Education and Labor committee, defines segregated schools as those where "75 to 100 percent of the students were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, and 75 to 100 percent of the students were Black or Hispanic."

When leaders like Bobby Scott or Terri Hill describe communities and schools with words like "ghettoized" and "segregation" they're broadening the definition of segregation so that it **fits** their agenda, instead of focusing on students. Let's simply consider the county schools that receive Title I funding. The school with highest poverty rate has 63% poverty and has a combined Black and Hispanic population below 70%. According to this definition, it's clear that Howard County schools are **not** segregated.

Please reject the current redistricting plan. Please develop a plan that gives Howard County student the resources and programs they need - in schools that are closest to their homes.

Thank you.

**Re: Board of Ed**

deepak baskaran

Tue 10/15/2019 1:12 PM

To: deepak baskaran &lt;dupont\_23@hotmail.com&gt;

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My name is Tammy Baskaran, polygon 176, mother of 3 boys, and I strongly oppose the superintendent's plan. This plan, intended to address overcrowding, now unnecessarily moves students for discriminatory reasons. Our neighborhood is 1.4 miles from River Hill High, which we all know is under capacity. For overcrowding purposes, there are zero reasons to bus kids out of this under capacity school, however you want to bus them to a school nearly 4 times farther away to Wilde Lake High. Personally if I have one son at Wilde Lake and my other two sons at Folly Quarter Middle, it will make sports and after school activities nearly impossible, as I cannot get to and from both schools with that distance apart. From Folly Quarter Middle to Wilde Lake it is nearly 9 miles.

With the superintendent's plan, sending 478 students out of under capacity River Hill, and bringing in 751- how is this even logical?

It certainly is not addressing overcrowding. From my polygon 176, none of the surrounding high schools - Wilde Lake, River Hill, Reservoir, Marriotts Ridge, or Atholton are over capacity at this point, leaving no reason to shift students among these schools. If you really intend to address overcrowding, focus on moving students from Eastern high schools to Western high schools where we have the capacity to relieve the overcrowding. My children are biracial and by opposing this plan- of negatively disrupting so many lives, uprooting kids, bussing them out of one under capacity school to another that's farther away- this doesn't make anyone racist (as some have stated), it is down right senseless. And just to make it clear, students from overcrowded schools are welcomed with open arms at our under capacity school. No one has an issue with students moving here. Are we being unreasonable having no need to leave our under capacity neighborhood school?

If overcrowding clearly isn't the reason why students are being sent out of River Hill, when my children ask me why they cannot attend our neighborhood school what do I tell them?

Board of Ed members- when you moved to howard county, did you take community schools into consideration at all? Did you think about which schools your children may attend? One would think you may have. Mrs. Taj, in your support of this plan, Centennial High is overcrowded, will you be volunteering your polygon to move out of overcrowded Centennial High to an under capacity school...such as Wilde Lake, for the sake of equity?

From the Board of Ed website, under "Superintendent," I quote, "Dr. Michael J. Martirano considers himself a teacher first and foremost, and believes children must be at the center of all decision making." Well you've heard so many children testify against this plan, and how they will be negatively affected for endless reasons, lets make sure to keep THEM "at the center of this decision making" too.

With achievement gaps, lets start with providing extra staff support and necessary resources to students and families where needed, not just hiding students in new classrooms to make the numbers look better on paper. How does this actually help anyone or address learning issues one may need help with? This plan is simply unjust treatment of select groups of people- hand picking specific races and categories of innocent children, only to redistribute numbers...this is discrimination, and this is wrong. Thank you.

Good evening Board members!

My name is Catherine Odubanjo, representing Polygon# 3176. I salute the many courageous young people who spoke a few weeks ago, with such passion and conviction, and to their parents!

Much has been said about this redistricting proposal, about how it fails to address equity, about how harmful it will be to our children physically, emotionally and psychologically, about how disruptive it will be to families, specifically referring to parent support through volunteering at the schools and how challenging it will be to support our children with after school programs under your proposed plan.

I am actually terrified of public speaking, but I am more terrified of remaining quiet, lest my silence be mistaken for consent. No! I oppose this redistricting plan in the strongest possible way!

I came to this country to attend college 32 years ago. I am an immigrant, chasing the increasingly elusive American Dream. As you can see, I am not white. As you can hear, I have an accent. Like the other parents, we are decent, hardworking people who desire to give our children the best chance to succeed.

I don't believe in handing your children everything on a Silver platter. I do believe in providing for them a solid foundation, a launching pad from which they can take off. This redistricting plan is a disaster waiting to happen. The trajectory of our children may be irreparably altered if this plan were to come to fruition.

Imagine with me for a moment. Imagine you have a scenario where a patient, who I'll call Mark Green, is doing well in Hospital A. He is getting better and he is thriving! Across town you have another patient, Jack Smith, who is not doing too well in Hospital B. In fact, Hospital B is on the verge of losing its accreditation. The ONLY solution offered by the CEO is a patient swap. Mark Green is to be transferred from Hospital A, where he is doing well to Hospital B where his condition might deteriorate due to substandard care. To do that would not make sense now, would it? Exactly! This solution is as ridiculous and absurd as the one being placed before our children. It would also prove catastrophic to leave patient Jack Smith in the substandard hospital.

You have no idea of the journey many of us parents have undertaken to arrive at this point. Every lowly position I took (from my first job working as a cashier at 7-11 to working as a home health aide while in college) made it possible for me and many, many other parents to hoist ourselves up another rung on the proverbial ladder of success. You look only at the "final" product and negate the hard work and sacrifices made along the way. Just because we enjoy a measure of

success does not mean we have “arrived !” We are a work in progress. Do not derail our efforts. Our children are not bargaining chips and they are not pawns on a chessboard.

Dr. Martirano, a good leader recognizes when they may have made a mistake or not thought things through or made a decision based on a “knee jerk” reaction rather than on proven facts. Leading from a position of humility is not a weakness, rather it is a strength! Sirs, madam, I implore you to reconsider your positions and vote NO! Thank you in advance.

Catherine Odubanjo  
12329 Preakness Circle Lane  
Clarksville, MD 21029  
Polygon 3176

Cathy O.

Good evening,

My name is Euna Kim, and I am from polygon 1199.

I strongly oppose to the superintendent's proposal based on my personal experience and research.

I would like to talk about two things. First of all, switching schools in adolescents negatively impacts their emotional and social well-being.

We moved to different states almost every 2 or 3 years in the past and whenever we moved, my two kids had adapted very well. However, 2 years ago when we moved to the Howard County, we thought my kids would adjust in school very well as usual but unfortunately, that didn't happen. My younger one was in 4th grade at the time and she was ok, but my older one was in 7th grade and she had a very hard time adjusting in a new middle school. She always felt isolated and depressed in a new middle school.

We realized that it was extremely hard and stressful for adolescents, like my older daughter, to switch schools because of social difficulties like mingling with new friends and facing academic challenges.

According to research, which was published in American educational research in 2014, youth who switch schools are more likely to demonstrate negative behavioral and educational outcome.

In the superintendent's proposal, nearly  $\frac{1}{3}$  of middle and high school students have to switch schools and it will impact negatively to them socially, academically, and mentally.

My second point is academic gaps between schools

When we moved to the Howard County 2 years ago, we realized my kids were behind so we did two things to catch up with the other students.

First, we tried tutoring service and I also started to supervise my kids more by helping them complete their homework.

Switching schools and evening out the percent of farm students, do not improve academic gaps. Farm students need more practical systems, such as mentor programs or free tutoring service to improve their grades. Howard county can use the money wisely for farm students rather than the new school bus transportation systems. PLEASE, BOE members,

Please don't underestimate kids stress, fear, anxiety, isolation from switching schools and come up with better and more practical solutions for farms students, instead of simply switching schools.

Thank you for listening.

Good evening Board Members,

My name is Krupa Patel and I am from Polygon 176. I have two daughters, one is in 5<sup>th</sup> grade and other one is in 8<sup>th</sup> grade. I am opposing the redistricting plan proposed for next year. The proposal is to resolve the issue for equity, overcrowding, FARM rate etc. But how about the problems it will generate by this plan, like traffic issues along roads and Intersections?

County will be spending Millions on additional dollars on transportation budget. How about the budget for traffic issues and traffic study? All the traffic issues that will be generated by adding many more buses and cars on the road to account for longer commute time! Has county considered all the intersection that will be impacted by this change? These studies are generally conducted before county approves any new development in the area based on their current routes to schools and work. Due to this proposal, the AM and PM trip counts, the direction to school and work and the time spent on the roads will drastically change.

For example, Currently, my feeder school is River Hill High, which starts at 7:20 am. In the morning, I usually try to leave for my work just before 7 am, so that I do not have to wait about 10 min or more on Sheppard Lane to make right turn on Rt. 108. The traffic usually backs up on Sheppard lane for approximately 1 mile from the traffic light. If the proposal passes, Polygon 176 and 3176 will be dropping their kids to Wild Lake High in the morning, which starts at 7:25 am. In order to get to school on time, the cars will be on Sheppard Lane from at least 6:45 am. I estimate the traffic backing up on Sheppard lane for more than 1.5 miles. In order to get to work I will have to leave before 6:45 am! In addition to this, many of the Fulton and Highland communities (total of 513 students from Atholton High and 96 from Reservoir High) are being redistricted to River Hill Highschool. Think about how many cars will be added on Rt. 108 in the morning and evening? It will take more 30 min. for these students to get to and from their new High school. There will be traffic backing up from RiverHill High school along Rt. 108 in both directions in the morning from 6:45 am and from 2:30 pm in the evening. This will not only affect the intersection of Sheppard Lane and Rt. 108, but other also the other intersections touching these roads.

I think this is one of the serious issues, if not thought out carefully, county will have to come up with additional budget to mitigate traffic issue, which might impact on school budget. This will make equity problem worse than better and I don't think anyone would want that.

Thank you for listening to me and being considerate!

Krupa Patel

October 15, 2019

**Group: Nodding Night Court**

**Polygon: 1186**

**Members: Reji Ponnarassery**

**Sowmya Krishnamoorthy**

**Kelly Cao**

**Re: Board of Education Boundary Review Public Hearings**

**Reji Ponnarassery:**

**Good evening everyone!**

**My name is Reji Ponnarassery and I live in Polygon 1186 in the Village of River Hill. I have two daughters, one is currently in Clarksville Middle School and the other one is in Clarksville Elementary School. Both my kids will be directly impacted by the proposed redistricting plan.**

**I am against the Superintendent's proposed redistricting plan for the following reasons:**

**Our polygon has been a part of the River Hill community and schools since its inception. Even though the polygons of River Hill are adjacent to the polygons of Harpers Choice, the villages are separated by a natural barrier formed by the Middle Patuxent Environmental area. The environmental area stretches from Rt 108 in the west all the way to Cedar Lane on the east. This area does not have any roads in it, therefore it keeps the two communities disconnected.**

**Since we have been in the River Hill schools for the past 8 years, we have built trusted relationships with parents of other kids in the River Hill community. We are working parents and sometimes have to rely on other trusted parents to pick up our kids from school in case of emergencies or after school activities. Since our kids will be in different schools than many of our friend's kids, we would only have a much smaller number of parents we can turn to for help.**

**With the split in the polygons from the Village of River Hill, our kids will be separated from their friends of many years. Several of their friends have grown up with them since kindergarten. They have always been able to bike to their friend's houses for play-dates or work on school activities which will not be possible anymore if they go to a school outside the community.**

**These are just a few of the reasons why I am against the redistricting proposal put forward by the Superintendent.**

**Also please note the attached map that shows the middle Patuxent environmental area dividing the Village of River Hill and the Village of Harpers Choice and it shows the polygon 1186 on the River Hill side of the environmental area.**

**Thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak.**

Sowmya Krishnamoorthy:

Hi, I am Sowmya Krishnamoorthy from Polygon 1186. I have 1 child in Clarksville Elementary School and another who will be there in a year. As per the current proposal we will be moved from Clarksville Middle to Harper's Choice Middle and triple our travel time.

We have had over 5 days of testimonies from students, parents, pediatricians, statisticians and lawyers opposing the move out of under capacity schools like Clarksville Middle. It is striking that we have not heard a single family set to move from Harper's Choice Middle to Clarksville testify in support of the move. Not a single testimony! The only ones supporting the swapping of students between schools appear to be those who either have no children in the school system or those whose children are unaffected by the moves proposed.

Our neighborhood in the Village of River Hill has followed the concept of neighborhood schools since its inception. Our houses have been districted to Clarksville Middle and River Hill High Schools from the time they were built i.e. the last 23 years. But we are now told that we no longer belong to our neighborhood schools in Howard County. Let us pause for a moment to imagine what replacing community schools by a model of school assignment done in favor of equal distribution of FARMS students might look like. I am holding up the map of the FARMS distribution in Howard County. As you can see, they are concentrated in pockets. Any changes to the composition of this map lies with the County Council and not with the BOE. If the BOE adopts this model, we are looking at large scale bussing of students from central Columbia to far flung schools like River Hill, Glenelg, Marriott's Ridge and Mt Hebron and vice versa with students crisscrossing each other on congested roads, enduring hour-long commutes as they set out to the school that is most in need of their SES value. Is this our eventual goal?

Apart from being in complete violation of Policy 6010, this vision has NO COMMUNITY BUY-IN. Good intentions are not a substitute for good policy. The community has come out in droves to state that they do not support this. Large scale changes implemented without community buy-in often face lengthy and expensive legal challenges and eventually get overturned by future elected representatives. The only way to get community buy-in for the lengthy commute that inevitably comes with FARMS distribution is to offer choice-based programs such as magnet programs where each family can evaluate the trade-offs and decide for themselves. As presented in the previous testimony on October 10th by the group "Polygon 186", this will cost significantly less than the cost to implement bussing.

Kelly Cao:

Good evening Board of Education Members and Superintendent Dr. Martirano. Thank you for your service in improving education for all children in Howard County. My name is Kelly Cao and I live in polygon 1186 in the Village of River Hill. I have three children who attend Clarksville Elementary School. I'm here today to oppose swapping students between Clarksville Middle and Harpers Choice Middle because I support community cohesiveness and choice programs over forced redistricting. Both Clarksville and Harpers Choice Middle Schools are under target utilization. Therefore, the sole purpose of moving 207 students from Clarksville to Harpers Choice and 87 students in the reverse direction from Harpers Choice to Clarksville is to average out the percentage of students receiving Free and Reduced Meals (FARM). Or so I thought, until I did some research into the polygons affected.

When I look closely at the six polygons that are proposed to move to Clarksville Middle School, three polygons (1135, 1174 and 174) have FARM percentages  $\leq 5\%$ . A closer look reveals that these polygons consist entirely of single family homes; there are no townhomes or apartments in these polygons. In fact, in polygon 1135, a home sold for over \$650,000 recently and average home sales were over half a million dollars according to zillow.com (see Attachments 5-7). The children in these polygons are not living in poverty. So why are these polygons proposed to move to Clarksville Middle? It's not to address overcrowding because both schools are under target utilization and it's not to average out FARM percentages. So, what is the reason for swapping these polygons with those in River Hill?

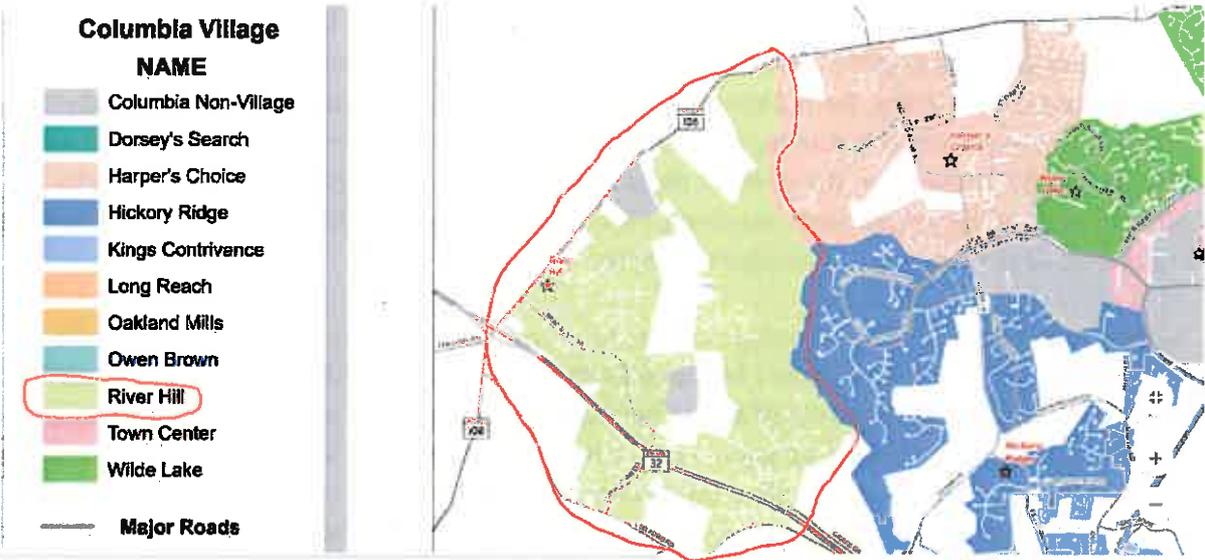
In the other three polygons proposed to move to Clarksville Middle School (135, 2135 and 2174), the neighborhoods consist of single family homes, townhomes and apartments. The mixed housing is consistent with higher FARM percentages (range 41 to 72%), but not all of the children within these polygons are living in poverty. For example, in polygon 135, a single family home sold for over half a million dollars recently (see Attachments 8-10). Rather than forcing entire polygons to schools outside their community, we should take a more tailored approach and offer choices to the students with the greatest need. Keep Clarksville polygons in their community, but you can still offer the option for students with the greatest needs to attend a school with lower FARM percentages, **if they choose**. There are several middle schools in the region that are under target utilization and could receive students including Burleigh Manor, Lime Kiln, Folly Quarter, and Clarksville. Clarksville would welcome all children regardless of race, socioeconomic status, religion, or other background.

Most importantly, students and parents need more choices when it comes to education. Students with the greatest needs can be offered an option to attend a school with lower FARM percentages that is outside of their community. However, the students and parents should be empowered to make the decision that's right for them; as it will likely have a significant impact on their daily lives. Families are not a one size fits all.

This would be an interim plan and more sustainable choice programs such as magnet schools should be seriously considered. I sincerely hope that you have the interests of all students in mind as you deliberate in the coming weeks. Thank you for your time.

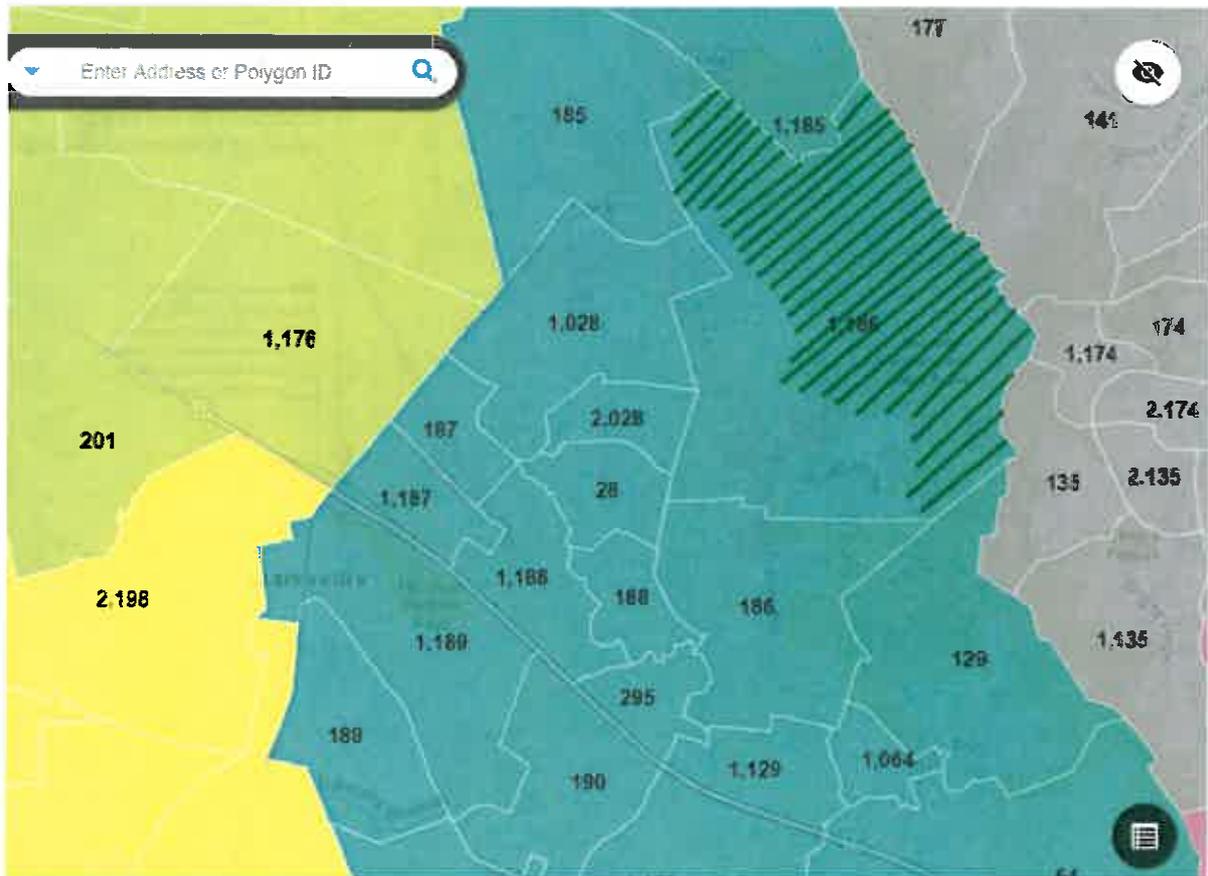
# Attachment 1. Village of River Hill

This map shows the boundary of the River Hill Community (red line).



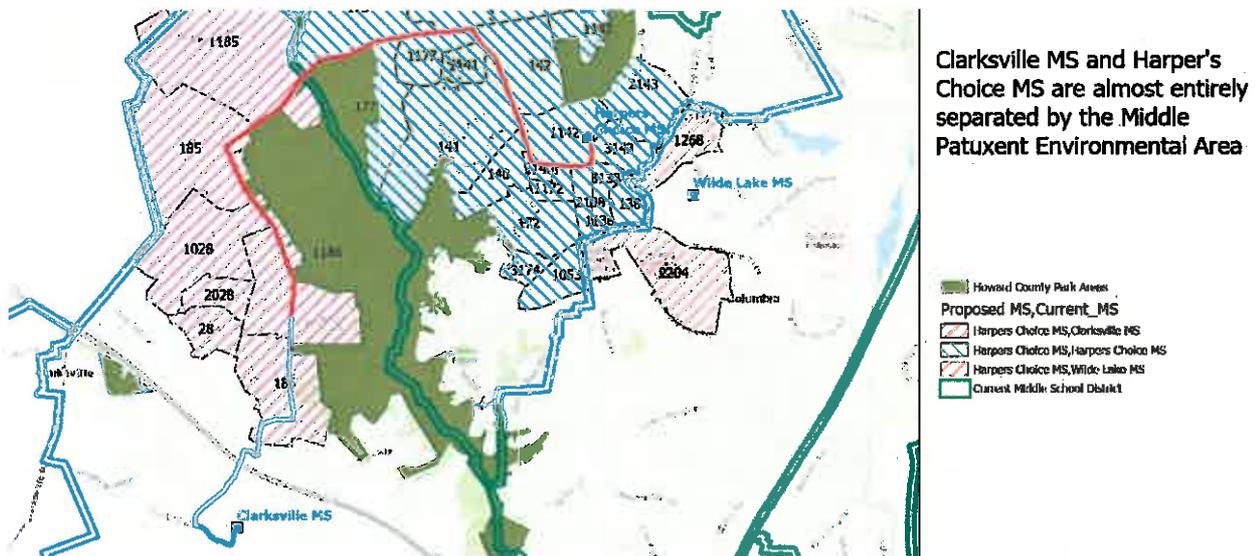
## Attachment 2. Middle Patuxent Environmental Area

The River Hill Village is separated by a natural barrier, the Middle Patuxent Environmental area, that stretches from Rt 108 in the west to Cedar Lane on the east. The Middle Patuxent Environmental area does not have any roads that traverse it.



### Attachment 3. Driving Route from Polygon 1186 to Clarksville Middle School vs. Harper's Choice Middle

The route to Harper's Choice Middle School is approximately three times the distance (red line) from Polygon 1186 compared to Clarksville Middle (blue line) and requires traveling on heavily congested roads, such as Route 108.



#### **Attachment 4. Percent of ES FARMs Students by Polygon (see next page)**

The dark areas mean there is low FARMs rate. As you can see, there are concentrated pockets of high FARMs in the east and large swaths of 0% FARMs rate out west. If the BOE wants to average FARM percentages across Howard County schools, we are looking at a scenario of neighborhood schools having no meaning and there being large scale bussing of students from central Columbia to schools out west such as River Hill, Glenelg, Marirott's Ridge, and Mount Hebron; and vice versa with students crisscrossing each other on congested roads, enduring hour long commutes as they set out to the school that is most in need of their SES value.

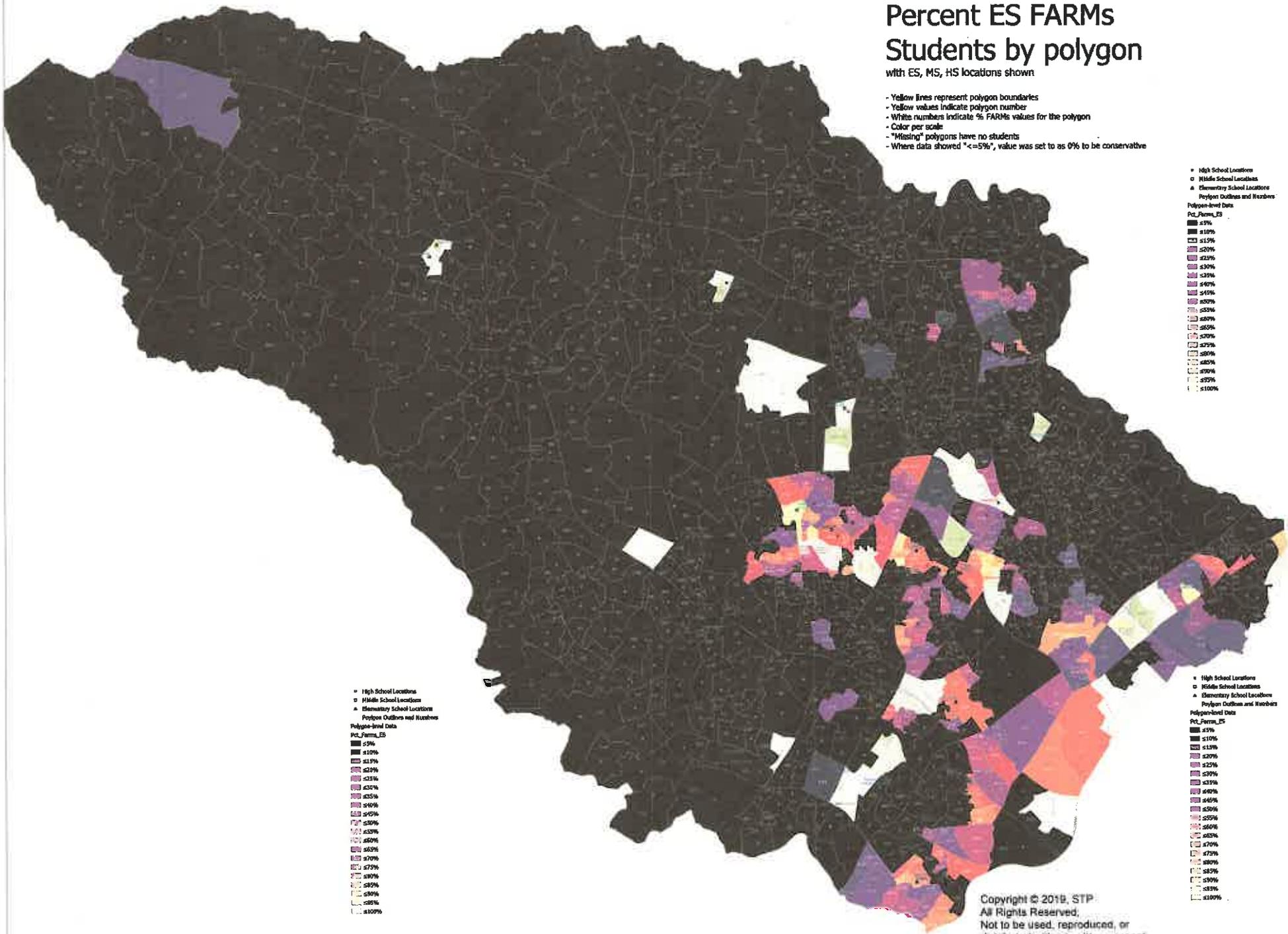
The map can also be viewed online at:

<https://chaowu.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/BoE-HoCo-ES-Percent-FARMs-Map-v2-PolyNums.pdf>

# Percent ES FARMs Students by polygon

with ES, MS, HS locations shown

- Yellow lines represent polygon boundaries
- Yellow values indicate polygon number
- White numbers indicate % FARMs values for the polygon
- Color per scale
- "Missing" polygons have no students
- Where data showed "<=5%", value was set to as 0% to be conservative



● High School Locations  
 ○ Middle School Locations  
 ▲ Elementary School Locations  
 Polygon Outlines and Numbers  
 Polygon-level Data  
 Pct\_Farms\_ES  
 ■ ≤ 5%  
 ■ ≤ 10%  
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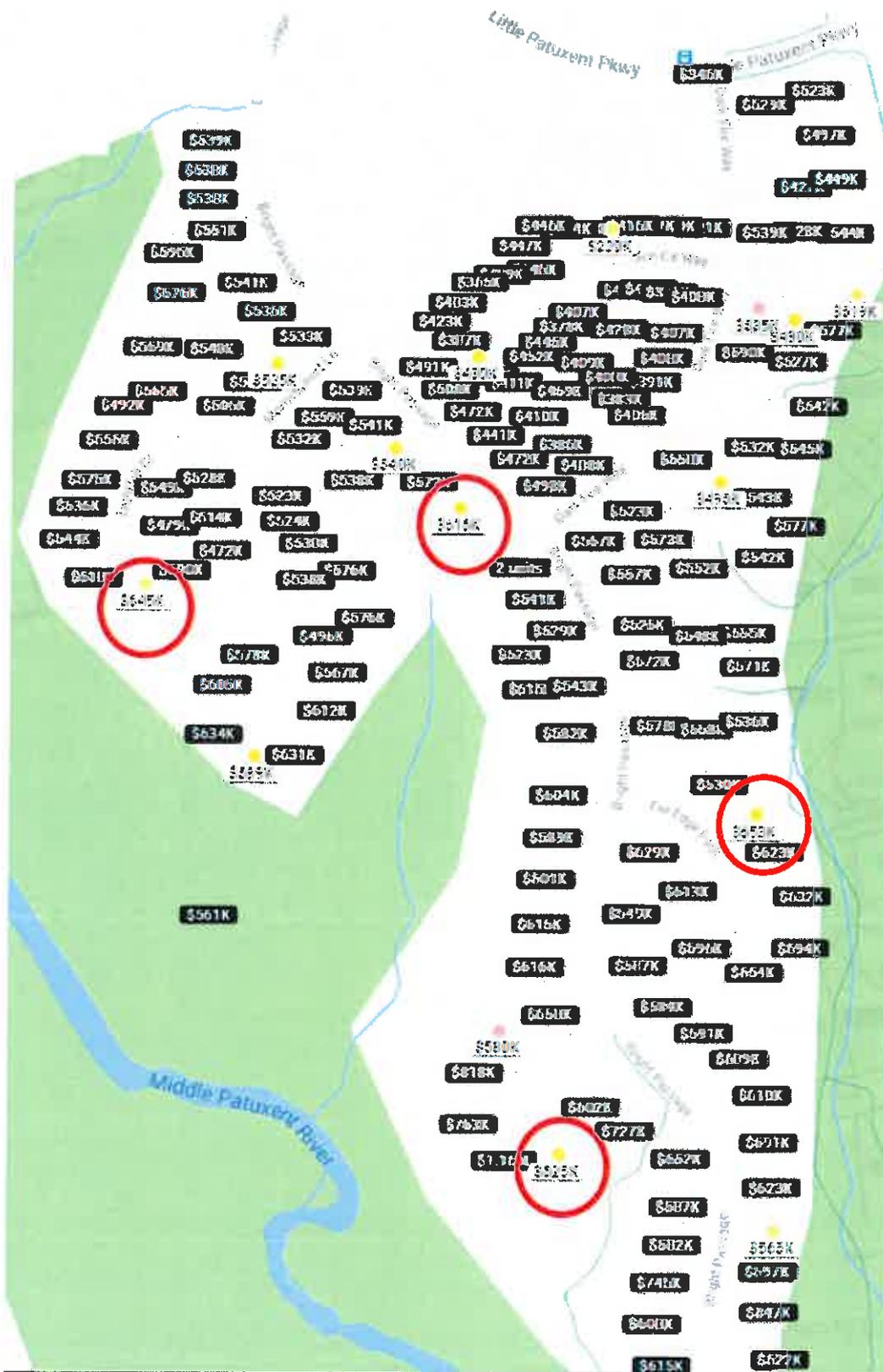
● High School Locations  
 ○ Middle School Locations  
 ▲ Elementary School Locations  
 Polygon Outlines and Numbers  
 Polygon-level Data  
 Pct\_Farms\_ES  
 ■ ≤ 5%  
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● High School Locations  
 ○ Middle School Locations  
 ▲ Elementary School Locations  
 Polygon Outlines and Numbers  
 Polygon-level Data  
 Pct\_Farms\_ES  
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 ■ ≤ 100%

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 (email chaowu16@gmail.com for contact details)

## Attachment 5. Polygon 1135: Home prices

Polygon 1135 has  $\leq 5\%$  FARM. There are only single family homes (no townhomes or apartments). A home sold for \$653,000 within the last 24 months.



Accessed 9/28/19 on [www.zillow.com](http://www.zillow.com)

Yellow dot = Home Sold (within the last 24 months)

Red dot = Home For Sale

## Attachment 6. Polygon 1174: Home prices

Polygon 1174 has  $\leq 5\%$  FARM. There are only single family homes (no townhomes or apartments). A home sold for \$545,000 within the last 24 months.



\*Actual selling price was \$470K in the detailed view

Accessed 9/29/19 on [www.zillow.com](http://www.zillow.com)

Yellow dot = Home Sold (within the last 24 months)

Red dot = Home For Sale

## Attachment 7. Polygon 174: Home prices

Polygon 174 has  $\leq 5\%$  FARM. There are only single family homes (no townhomes or apartments). A home sold for \$515,000 within the last 24 months.



Accessed 9/29/19 on [www.zillow.com](http://www.zillow.com)

Yellow dot = Home Sold (within the last 24 months)

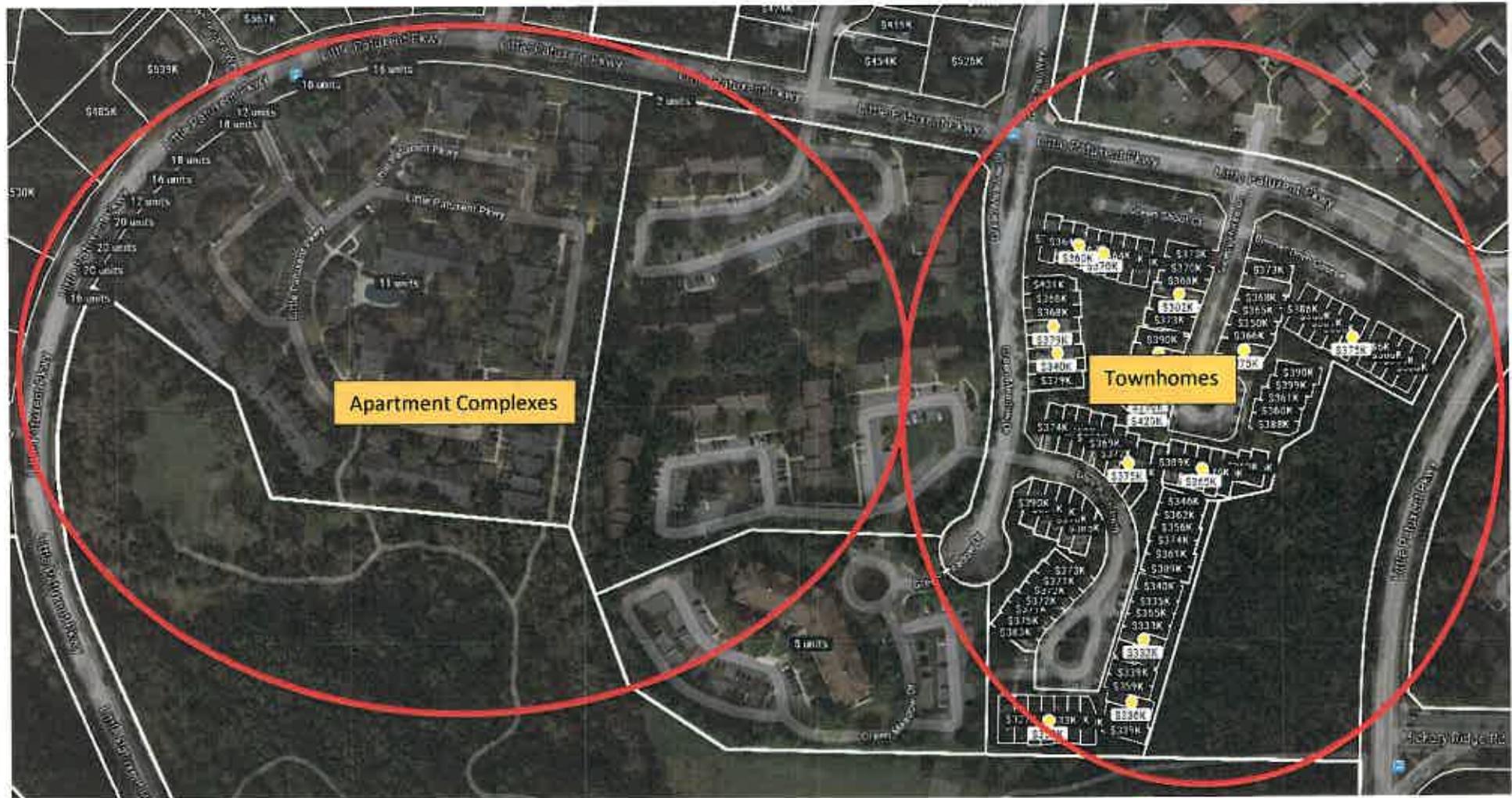
Red dot = Home For Sale





## Attachment 10. Polygon 2174: Composition of Housing Types

Polygon 2174 consists of apartments in the west and townhomes in the east.



Accessed 10/8/19 on [www.zillow.com](http://www.zillow.com)

## TESTIMONY BEFORE BOE OF HCPSS ON BOUNDARY REVIEW

Lei Zhong, Polygon 3176

October 15, 2019

#60

Dear BOE Members,

My name is Lei Zhong and I have been a Howard County resident for 19 years. Today my testimony will focus on educational equity, since Mr. Martirano has claimed equity is the basis for all of the boundary review process.

So, what exactly is educational equity? The main idea is, a student's personal **conditions** should not interfere with the potential of his or her academic success. Such conditions include but are not limited to race, gender, or social-economic status. Therefore, a public education system should provide for the students facing adversity.

About two years ago, Mr. Martirano made some insightful comments on equity when he was interviewed by HCPSS communication staff Brian Bassett. He talked about early start, the 30 million word gap. He mentioned making use of school media center as learning hub after school, since not everyone has internet access at home. He mentioned watching out student attendance to prevent potential drop out. He also mentioned family influence and community support.

**All great points. But, redistricting has nothing to do with any of these.**

Fast forward to ~~present~~<sup>2019</sup> Mr. Martirano became convinced that swapping and busing students was the silver bullet for advancing equity, no matter how disruptive it may be. Otherwise why bother moving as many as seventy-four hundred students?

I'm not going to repeat other testimonies, but want to highlight one plain fact. Howard County spends high dollars on each student. Students across all schools are exposed to virtually the same curriculum, taught by teachers with equivalent expertise, and provided with equivalent levels of resourcing and support.

**Clearly, switching schools is not the prescription for the equity problem.**

As a matter of fact, in a famous report named "Leading for Equity" (Mr. Martirano is familiar with it, by the way), their recommendations do not include redistricting at all.

Mr. Martirano, you said your job was "a dream come true" two years ago. The whole county shared your enthusiasm with high expectations. However, I am afraid your proposal has turned into a huge disappointment. Just feel the unprecedented objection, frustration, and anger from almost all testimonies.

The public hearing process is coming to an end. Dear BOE members, please reject the proposal for the students you proudly serve. I'm all for equity, but let's not hijack redistricting for what it's not meant to be.

## References:

1. HCPSS Insight: Get to Know Dr. Michael J. Martirano

<https://www.hcpss.org/insight/hcpss-insight-get-to-know-dr-michael-j-martirano/>

2. Leading for Equity: Opportunities for State Education Chiefs, by Aspen Institute

<https://assets.aspeninstitute.org/content/uploads/2017/05/LeadingForEquity.pdf>



## Leading for Equity: Opportunities for State Education Chiefs



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Testimony in Opposition to Redistricting

Tuesday, October 15, 2019

Howard County Board of Education

Name: Shekhaar Gupta

Address: 12305 Autumn Tree Ln, Clarksville, MD, 2102

Council District: 5, Polygon - 176

Council Representative: David Yungmann

Email: [sguptarealtor@gmail.com](mailto:sguptarealtor@gmail.com), Phone: 2144762856

I'm Shekhar Gupta from Polygon 176. I'm an immigrant and we all have our own **struggle** stories. When I visit India or any other country and people ask me – how is the education system in America – I tell them - my kids go to public school; schools are amazing and all kids are entitled to their nearby schools – they all said – it makes complete sense. Now I feel I was lying to them and kids and their future are controlled by our **BOE** and Superintendent.

I **strongly reject** Dr Martirano's plan because it does not address over capacity – it **ONLY** swaps students which will cause **ONLY** harm and no good. Why didn't you touch Centennial and other schools? Why would you move our kids from Riverhill which is 1.3 miles and takes 15 minutes TO Wild Lake which is 7 miles and will take over an hour **each way**? **GOD knows what the kids will talk in the bus for an hour.**

Being a realtor, I can tell you that you'll be discouraging Intellectuals from coming to **Howard County**. One of my friends who has a job in DC had given a down payment for a house in HOCO; He lost his down payment of \$10000 but he still didn't buy the house because he doesn't want to go thru all of this in future.

We had testimonies from highly qualified individuals – Renowned Psychiatrists/Psychologists/Pediatrician, PhDs, Statisticians – they are all assets to HOCO. I wish Superintendent had contacted these individuals. Using kids for political benefit is a **SHAME** and embarrassing to say the least. 99% people oppose this plan and we are still busy giving testimonies when it should be scrapped at the very first sight.

None of you condemned openly when someone said "**Rich kids should suffer**". In contrast, all of us believe "**NO KIDS SHOULD BE LEFT BEHIND**". Many people have shared their **personal stories** related to stress, depression, divorce, suicide, accidents; some of them were literally in tears– if that does nothing to you, then I would assume we live in a hopeless environment.

You are successful in dividing our community by Polygons, FARM/non-FARM kids, Rich/Poor kids. We all make mistakes, admit it and move on but I haven't heard Dr Martirano coming forward and saying that he made a mistake with this plan and it will be amended after looking and listening to all the statistical data.

I'm pleading you to do the right thing. Please don't get influenced by **POLITICIANS** or **HYPOCRITES** who will do anything for their personal interests. **Please REMEMBER - We got you elected, you should do what WE want and NOT what YOU want. – Thank You**

If you really want to experiment – please pick some of the proponents (may be 10) and move their school 10 miles away and don't let them chose which school they can go and let's see their reaction – PROPONENTS ARE HYPOCRYTES – pls look at some of their videos. My elementary kid who is very inquisitive came to me and asked me what is FARM and Polygons? Obviously, with social media and other resources, kids also are aware these days of whats going on and these are all the talks that they do in the bus. I feel kids are getting punished for a crime they didn't commit – so far kids used to think they have democracy in this country.

How and Why would you call it equity if you're NOT shuffling all 57000 kids in HOCO? We all have wasted 100s of hours on this illogical plan which might be politically motivated. I can't even imagine my wife handling 2 kids pickups/drops, afterschool activities, cook for kids, handle a high demanding job when I'm in business trip. One Board member talked about "UnQualified and Inexperienced Teachers" (teaching in my opinion is a NOBLE job and we should give them utmost respect- they become teachers because of their passion and love & affection for kids and NOT for money). I feel kids are just kids – leave them alone.

- You should look at the root cause of the problem and fix issues at the ELEMENTARY school level and build a strong foundation.
- High school kids can volunteer and give attention to kids that need help; Save the cost of bussing and use it to hire teachers and resources where we need them.
- In the IT industry, we work on RCA (Root Cause Analysis) and Lessons Learnt (after every release) that you guys should do after every school year end. Meet with all Principals to create a list to improve the schools.
- PTSA Presidents from different schools should meet at least every quarter to discuss ideas of what worked in their schools.

**Name- Leena Khedkar**

**Polygon # 176**

**Address: 12200 Basslers Way, Clarksville, MD 21029**

Hello, my name is Leena Khedkar and I am from polygon 176.

I am a mother of two teenagers attending HCPSS schools and I am here to oppose the superintendent's redistricting plan.

Over the last few weeks, I have heard hundreds of kids and parents testifying. More than 95% of them are against this plan. This must tell you that this plan is highly regarded as an **ineffective** solution.

I have spent a multitude of hours studying and researching this poorly thought plan and reached the same conclusions that have been expressed by my neighbors and community members, including; not just parents but also doctors, lawyers, economists and research scientists. A lot of evidence and data has been provided to prove that this plan will do more harm than good to our kids and community.

In the short 3 minutes, I will try to touch upon the key issues that I see with this plan

**1. Noncompliance with numerous sections of BOE Policies-**

- a. Violation in the formation and implementation of AAC, which led to poor representation of community across Howard County and giving preference to special interest groups which also lead to gerrymandering with polygon selection for redistricting**

- b. Inappropriate use of operational budget - instead of using the limited available funds for enhancing kids learning experience, funds will be wasted on unnecessary bussing which also does not solve the overcrowding problem
  - c. Contiguous Communities violation in multiple situations with no proper justification
  - d. Lack of transparency and inclusion of community and its feedback in the overall process, shortened review and response time for the current proposal, missing official minutes and notes, no rationale for disregarding the plan proposed by the independent consultants
2. The policies also prohibit the BOE to redistrict on the basis of race, color, gender, or socioeconomic status which was clearly violated in the superintendent's proposed redistricting plan

The violations list can go on and on.....

If the Superintendent puts forth more sensible plan which adheres to the policies, takes the community feedback into consideration, accounts for the studies conducted by Howard county, in which we have already spent close to half a million dollars – then we will be able to develop and implement a redistricting plan which will have positive outcomes. It can be a role model for other counties/states facing the same overcrowding issue.

This will prevent any socioeconomic or racial divide in this wonderful, diverse and inclusive county. It will also save the thousands of hours that we all have spent in researching and opposing this plan. And we will be in local and national media – all for the right reasons.

Remember you as community leaders and public servants have a bigger responsibility to make the right decisions since our kids' future and our community's wellbeing is at stake.

We elected you since we trusted you to make the most beneficial choices for our kids. Our kids are not guinea pigs for you to experiment with your unproven and ridiculous ideas about social engineering.

As a responsible citizen, I disagree with this plan. I urge the board members to do the same.

Reject this plan and start afresh for a better future for ALL the kids. Please keep polygons 176 and 3176 at RHHS.

Thank You

October 15, 2019

Members of the Board of Education  
Howard County Public School System  
Superintendent Martirano, HCPSS

Dear Board of Education Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Attendance Area Adjustment Plan proposed by Dr. Martirano, from August 20, 2019. The HCPSS is one of the most well recognized success stories in public education in this country. It has served as a beacon for families to move to Howard County in the hopes of a better education for our children. The strength of the system is due to its incredible cultural diversity, teachers, extracurricular activities and most importantly the local villages of families supporting the children.

While the intention to improve issues such as over-crowding and re-balancing of FARM rates has merit, the plan proposed by the superintendent to implement this is flawed and one we are strongly opposed to for the following reasons:

1. First and foremost, the plan does not adhere to Policy 6010, which has been discussed in detail by my predecessors. Our polygon (3176-Walnut Grove) and our sister polygon (Walnut Creek-176) are within 1 mile and 1.6 miles of River Hill HS. The busing of children to a much farther away school is not the optimal solution, and will further exacerbate the heavy traffic conditions at the busy intersections of 108 and Sheppard lanes. This intersection currently is having significant further development, including a new shopping center/business park opening there. At the same corner there is now a large retirement community being developed. Adding further traffic to these conditions via additional new bus routes will further exacerbate long commute times and is not safe. One should not have to drive by their village's closest high school which is **under-capacity** to one that is two towns over. California this past Sunday signed legislature to become the first state to mandate later start times at most middle and high schools. This proposal was to improve educational outcomes by providing more time for students to sleep. This change was backed by the American Academy of Pediatrics, which says it "recognizes insufficient sleep in adolescents as a public health issue, endorses the scientific rationale for later start times, and acknowledges the potential benefits to students with regard to physical and mental health, safety and academic achievement." The significantly longer commute times in a change to Wilde Lake HS from our polygon for a start time of 7:25 am will cause further sleep deprivation for the students, when their current closest high school is only 1 mile away.

2. The plan addresses overcrowding in regard to our and our sister polygon's (3176/176) current high school, River Hill, in a manner that is extremely disruptive. Transporting out 478 lives to bring in 741 students makes zero sense, particularly in a school that is under-capacity and has the ability to take on more students without uprooting those students already there.
3. Two independent feasibility studies performed at taxpayer costs recommended no changes suggested to our polygons feed to River Hill HS. However, the current proposal by the superintendent disregards this, without clear justification.
4. In a Baltimore Sun article from October 3, 2017 (exhibit A), then newly appointed Interim Superintendent Martirano's recommendation to the BOE was for halting high school redistricting at least until the county's new 13<sup>th</sup> high school opened in 2022. Furthermore, he states, "I don't want to put the county through two redistricting processes". What has changed in the interim since becoming appointed permanent superintendent? Dr. Martirano was applauded for halting something that was so controversial at that time. One would hope this 180 degree turn in position and fast tracking of redistricting again two years prior to high school number 13 opening is not just a byproduct of overarching political agendas and pressures.
5. In my profession, there is an axiom we follow in treating our patients: "Primum Non Nocere"....meaning "**First, do no harm**" which is part of the Hippocratic Oath we all take as physicians. In other words, before any intervention for an ailment or problem, consider the possible harms that may be inflicted. There are numerous experts who have commented on the detrimental effects this relocation and busing of students can have on their psyche and anxiety, as well the compounding effect unnecessarily long commute times can have on children, students, and parents. The countless testimonies both mailed and in person are clearly showing that the treatment being prescribed here is being overwhelmingly rejected by the body. Cutting and pasting swaths of polygons to generate a new area map with better apparent FARM rates is a 'Frankenstein' type approach which does not solve the underlying other equally as important problems contributing to the achievement gap. The act of physically re-drawing lines does not take into account lasting emotional scars that will be inflicted on the students of Howard county.

The solutions to these problems are not easy. However, there should be some basic tenants that provide the framework of any adjustment process. Most importantly, communities closest by distance to a particular school should have priority to have their children attend that institution. If the particular school is under capacity, like River High School, then additional students from the closest adjacent polygons should have the option to be zoned there and achieve maximal utilization rates.

The HCPSS should continue to support programs such as JumpStart, which is a better and proven way to help students. This is a program from my understanding that Dr. Martirano fully supported and should have more financial resources for transportation from other sites assigned to it. These costs will certainly be less than developing a whole new busing system for the current adjustment plan. One of the byproducts of a program such as this is that it is more natural way to foster relationships between various student bodies in lieu of forced re-districting.

In conclusion, I hope you consider the potential far reaching consequences of this plan beyond the "numbers" that each side can present to support their own views. The success of a child as a student and community member is multifactorial, and so much more than what occurs only within the walls of that school. The current plan in my opinion is an intervention which has more of a risk of harm and less certain chance of benefit. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Syed Hamid Husain

Polygon 3176

# Martirano's plan would slow redistricting

By ANDREW MICHAELS  
HOWARD COUNTY TIMES | OCT 03, 2017

<http://www.baltimoresun.com/maryland/howard/columbia/ph-ho-cf-martirano-redistrictin...> 10/15/2019

Interim Superintendent Michael Martirano (Brian Krista/BSMG)

The Howard County Public School System's 12 high schools should be excluded from the impending redistricting in the 2018-2019 school year, according to Interim Superintendent Michael Martirano, whose recommendations to the Board of Education Tuesday called for halting high school redistricting at least until the county's new, 13th high school opens in 2022.

To address the number of elementary students feeding into middle schools as well as the opening of Elementary School 42 in August 2018, Martirano proposed moving approximately 313 students at the middle school level and about 1,900 students at the elementary school level. These students would shift from schools in the eastern part of the county to underutilized schools in the western region.

Advertisement

<http://www.baltimoresun.com/maryland/howard/columbia/ph-ho-cf-martirano-redistrictin...> 10/15/2019

[More Maryland news] [Prop Labor Day start proposed for 2021](#) 4 weeks for only 99¢

[school year in Harford](#) »

Why is it so hard for Baltimore to synchronize its traffic lights? Here's what



Fake severed hands placed on Christopher Columbus statue as Baltimore's inner



Don't t. firefigh

As an alternative to large redistricting, the plan includes implementation of open enrollment at the high school level, which would

allow students to apply for attendance at a high school outside their school district in the county, as long as the desired building is below school capacity level.

"Elementary redistricting needs to happen, that's moving forward. We're looking at stopping the major disruption until we have some knowns in place," Fikes said. "There is no happy answer to redistricting, but at least people need a voice."

Martirano's final recommendations clashed with the Attendance Area Committee's latest findings to "scale back" the countywide redistricting, moving 10 percent of students at all school levels — about 5,656 students. The committee still suggested a countywide comprehensive redistricting, but limited high school redistricting to only incoming ninth-graders, unless they had an older sibling already attending that high school.

The AAC proposed that limiting redistricting to elementary schools would accommodate the opening of Elementary School 42 in August 2018 in Hanover and relieve overcrowding in schools that are above 120 percent capacity — a max capacity set by school board policy.

**LATEST COLUMBIA**

Letter: Howard County has its priorities wrong on transportation upkeep, repair

3h

## VALERIE JONES - POLYGON 176

This plan, while upsetting to many parents, has had the ironic effect of bringing communities together. We are finding common ground across all neighborhoods. We ALL want what is best for the children of Howard county and we all agree that we want to see the achievement gap close. The only difference is that we don't agree on how to close the gap. You can force a plan, but for it to actually work, you need to have community buy-in.

Importantly, one thing I would HOPE we can all agree on, is that **NO CHILD should be unnecessarily harmed** in order to lift another up.

### **DISTANCE**

In **Polygon 176**, our neighborhood of **walnut creek** is 1.4 miles from River Hill HS. It is the definition of a community school, with only 1 stop sign and **1 stop light** between our neighborhood and the front entrance of River Hill. We reach the school before we even reach a single gas station, our local grocery store, or our local restaurants. Driving up **Sheppard Lane**, it literally takes **4 minutes** to get there.

As it stands, kids from polygon 176 are slated to move to the 3<sup>rd</sup> closest high school by distance on roads, 6<sup>th</sup> closest by driving time. The proposed school is now **10 stop lights away** instead of 1. This meaningful change will have children spending unnecessary amounts of time on school buses and will obviously impact their sleep and ability to participate in after school activities.

### **SAFETY**

I also worry about safety, buses traversing **10 intersections** poses a real risk to students, and especially those kids who are new drivers doing the same route. They will actually drive right through the school zone traffic for river hill, a school they won't even attend.

What happens if there is a **national or local emergency**? Families like ours, who will eventually have one child in elementary, one in middle, and one in high school at the same time, will be desperate to reach our children who are spread all throughout the county. Why are we unnecessarily making it almost impossible to reach our kids in a timely manner?

### **CAPACITY**

What makes even less sense is moving children **OUT** of river hill high school. This school is **UNDER capacity**. In no circumstance, should a child be forced to move from their community school if it's under-capacity. Additionally, moving kids from polygon 176 creates an even smaller feed than they currently have-it drops from about **35% to a 17% feed**.

*This plan would rip our kids out from their community school, bus them to the 3<sup>rd</sup> closest high school, have them drive past the front entrance of their old school in order to get there, and then have a significantly smaller feed to a new school that includes even less classmates, causing more isolation. All of this disruption of lives is being done at an under-capacity school.*

Again, no child should suffer to lift another up.

### **LIFTING UP FARM STUDENTS**

Instead of putting money into busing children around the county, please invest directly into the lives of the children who need our help the most, FARM recipients. **Invest in full day pre-K, afterschool mentoring, and recruitment of bilingual teachers.** Give parents the option to enroll in "high performing schools" if they are under capacity. These **under capacity schools should indeed be able to RECEIVE students but should never send kids away.**

Greg Cooper polygon 1256. I'd like to thank the board members for going above and beyond in their work regarding the redistricting proposal. You have heard hundreds of versions of the same testimony, "We oppose this plan because it breaks up our community, lengthens our commute, disrupts the relationships our children have built, and violates policy 6010." In his statement regarding his redistricting recommendations, Dr. Martirano stated that equity was the driving force behind the plan, but he made no effort to explain how equalizing the FARMs rates would promote equity and improve learning. What he did say was that research shows that it is beneficial for students to be in a diverse school, which almost everyone in Howard County already agrees with, and we specifically chose our community because it is diverse.

Given the level of outrage in the community, it is fair to say that the proposed redistricting does great harm. For Polygon 1256, it is clear that the redistricting leaves us in a worse situation. Instead of going to the closest school, we are sent to the 9<sup>th</sup> closest school. Our children are separated from the rest of our community and from the rest of the students at Laurel Woods. There should be some attempt to explain to us in a meaningful and detailed way how this plan is good and why the harm that it does is required to achieve its benefits. There are many other tools at the school systems disposal to achieve equity that would not arouse such anger and opposition. Sending our students to Laurel Woods will likely overcrowd the school to the point that the pre-k will be endangered. Pre-k for FARMs students is an equity tool that is accepted by the community and is recognized as producing results. So, even if the theory about equalizing FARMs rates is correct, this is at best a win- lose proposition.

You heard from Sarah Bedair that the proficiency rate of FARMs students is not a function of the FARMs rate of the school. This is powerful evidence that simply mixing the FARMs rates will not result in better schooling for the FARMs students. The data also shows example of good performance at high FARMs schools. Studying those examples might provide a route to improve performance at all of the high FARMs schools.

Since Dr. Martirano has proposed a plan that makes no sense to the community and for which he has provided no support, people are assuming that there are other reasons for the plan, mainly being that this plan benefits developers.

My suggestions for the board are:

- First, you need better data and analysis. The board should create a mechanism whereby it can get the data and independent analysis that it needs to make rational decisions.
- Second, you should make minimal changes until you have time to come up with a comprehensive redistricting plan that takes into account the new schools and fixes the feeds.

Percentage proficient (FARM) averaged over MCAP ELA 3,4,5 & MATH 3,4,5 for 2015-2018

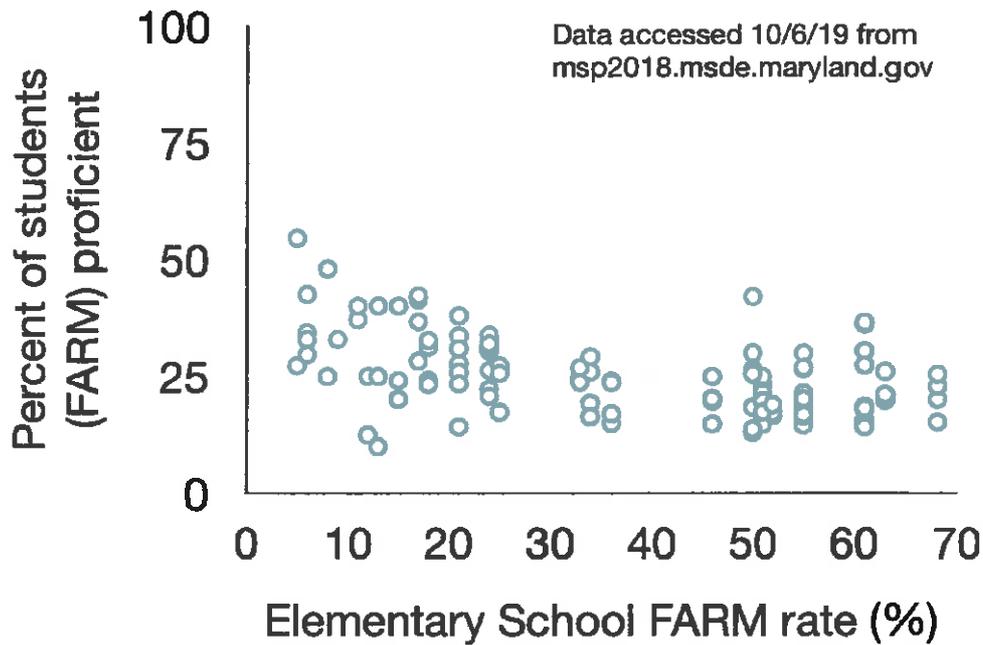


Figure 1: Elementary school FARM rate (or percentage of students in the school receiving FARM assistance) versus percent of students receiving FARM that are considered proficient. All data was pulled from msp2018.msde.maryland.gov for 2015, 2016, 2017, and 2018. Most data points represent the average of all 6 test scores (ELA 3, ELA 4, ELA 5, MATH 3, MATH 4, and MATH 5). There are some data points that average 2 of these test scores (e.g. ELA 3 and MATH 3) and some points represents an average of 4 of these test scores (e.g. ELA 3, ELA 4, MATH 3, MATH4); this is due to the data that was available on the msp2018.msde.maryland.gov website. The county-wide average proficiency for FARM students is 23% while the county-wide average proficiency for students not receiving FARM assistance is 68%. Therefore, the county-wide achievement gap for elementary school students is 45%. – Reproduced from Sarah Bedair’s testimony.

My name is Dr. Abhijit Bhatia. I am a resident of polygon 176, and a father of two children in the Howard County School System. I am here to voice my opposition to the redistricting plan being proposed. Although this whole process has been an important learning experience in civics and community involvement for all of us, it is not a good plan for the future of our children. You have already heard many voices from the affected communities, and I would echo their sentiment of rejecting this plan. Multiple valid reasons have been given during the several days of testimony. However, I would like to focus on two which are of particular importance to me. First is the issue of bullying. As someone who was bullied as a child, I am acutely aware of the harmful impacts it can lead to. According to the US Dept of Education, 33% of all students 12-18 years old, reported being bullied in a survey in 2006-2007. And of all cases of bullying, 10% occur in school buses. By redistricting our Walnut Creek polygon away from River Hill, which is about 1.5 miles away, to Wilde Lake, which is almost 6 miles away, it will dramatically increase the commute time in buses for the children, leading to more instances of bullying. Increase in bullying has been shown to correlate with increase in bus commute times. This will clearly negatively impact the development of the bullied children, just as they are entering the critical years of high school, leading to anxiety and depression. Not only does it impact the child who is bullied, but it also leads to guilt and anxiety in students who witness bullying, and do not what to do about it. This is clearly not an outcome that we are looking for in our childrens future. Second point, again relating to increase commute time, is the impact on their sleep time and mental development. As teenagers in high school, students are dealing with having increased responsibilities at school and also at home. If the students are spending increased amount of time in the bus, instead of finishing their work, and catching up on sleep, it will deprive them of proper mental development. According to the National Sleep Foundation, teenagers need 8-10 hours of sleep daily. Because of the biologic phase of their development, they have an altered sleep cycle, and tend to sleep later, and wake up later. In fact, several school districts have already delayed school start time to help optimize teenage brain development. In case of this redistricting, teenagers will be forced to get up even earlier than now, and to sit in a bus for a longer commute. This goes against the current research which indicates worse outcomes for teens getting up earlier. They should be getting up later and more sleep. Along with this, the increased commute time will inevitably lead to decreased parental involvement, and have a direct negative impact on the student. Overall, this is a plan that will not lead to better outcomes for our children, and should be rejected.

Samantha Norris, polygon 1157.

I live in the Greater Pines Fairways neighborhood off of Centennial Lane. We are slated to be moved from Manor Woods to Triadelphia Elementary. My neighbors have already told you about how this plan does not achieve the goals outlined by Dr. Martirano for our neighborhood, and how the plan violates Policy 6010. They've told you about how our neighborhood is 8-10 miles (depending on the route) from the proposed elementary school, how this is the 21<sup>st</sup> closest elementary school to us, how we are not contiguous to the rest of the school's community, how our kids will miss out on afterschool opportunities because of the anticipated hour and a half they will be spending on the bus, how small the feed to the middle school is, how we are the furthest east neighborhood in our current school zone and this proposal sends us even further west. I have provided maps which overlay the three routes from our homes to the proposed elementary school onto the county polygon and school districting maps. Please note that we would be driving through 3 other elementary school districts and past 2 other schools to arrive at the proposed school. So how have we gotten here?

We have overcrowded schools located in the middle of densely populated areas with high levels of low-income residents, and then we have schools in the middle of farmland with hardly any need for Free and Reduced Price Meals. This is a product of where the schools are located and where the affordable housing is located – a direct result of poor community and school planning, not where the lines are drawn. The county council has dropped the ball and allowed for the county to become segmented; and is now putting the *onus* on you, the board of education, to fix the problems *they* have created, and the *burden* on the children and their families. Trying to create “equity” in this environment, with this plan, is like treating a broken bone with a band-aid, this is a STRUCTURAL PROBLEM that will continue to exist and be perpetuated unless there are changes to the county development practices. Regardless of the reasons, we are faced with a proposal that suggests moving thousands of our children to schools far from their homes, some away from resources they desperately need, to “create equity”.

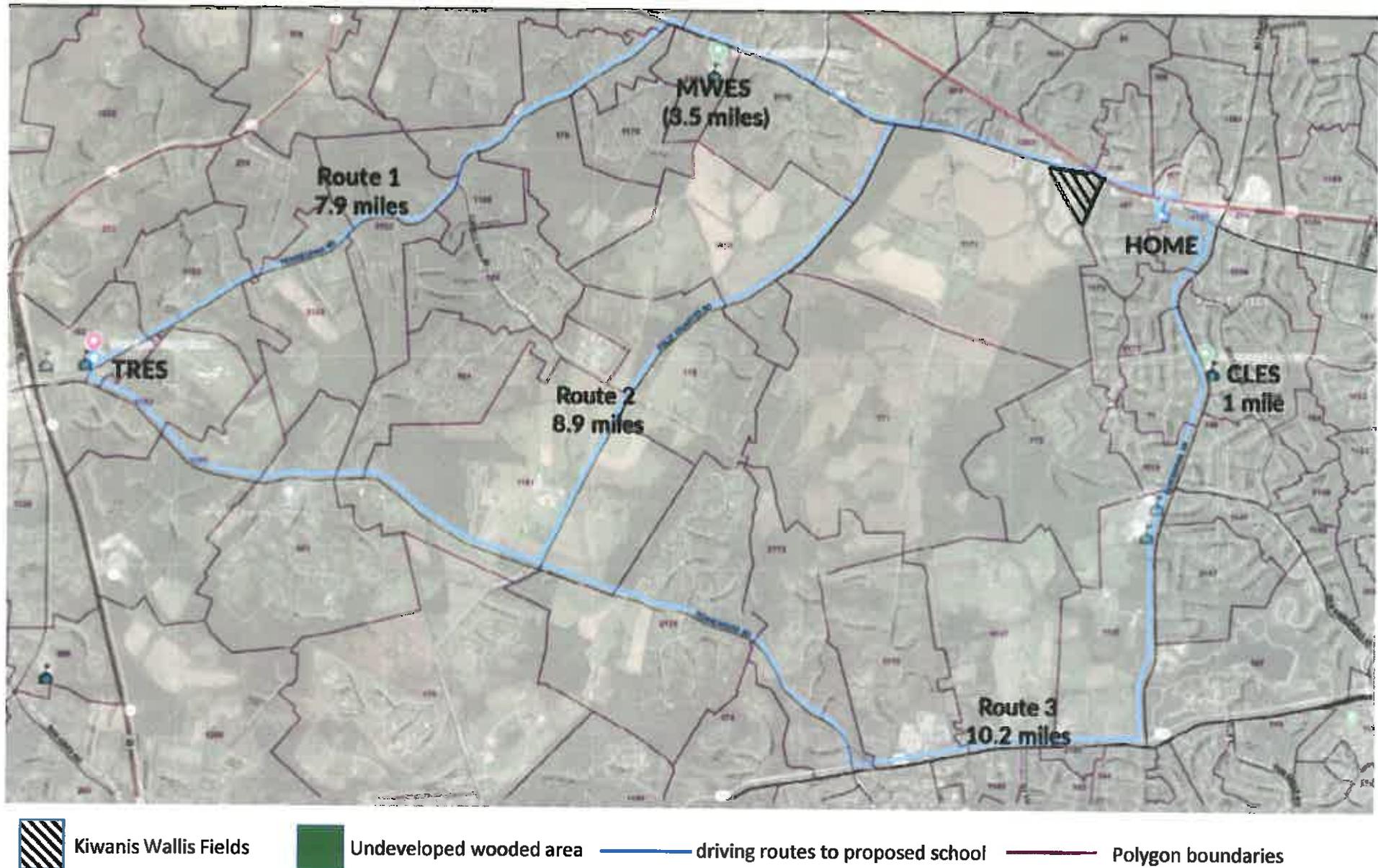
Meanwhile, those of us opposed to the plan are being told we have no right to “neighborhood schools”. This just plainly isn't true. Board policy 6000.IV.C.2 states: “School sites should be as central as possible to the ultimate area to be served by the school in order to minimize long-range transportation requirements, reduce the need for some children to walk... long distances, and enhance the ability of the greatest number of children to participate in after-school activities.” That sure sounds like we are supposed to have neighborhood schools, or at least that our children aren't meant to be bused halfway across the county. This feels like we bought one bill off goods but are being delivered another.

The HCPSS definition of Equity says “we will remove barriers to success for ALL children”. I support this goal, though I cannot support this plan of achieving it. We need to do better. We are a diverse and caring community. We value each other. We value our children. Having gone to a title 1 high school myself, I valued the opportunity to learn about the experiences and challenges of those different from myself and am happy that my children are getting similar opportunities in their school.

Redistricting to some extent is unavoidable, but this **has to be done** in a thoughtful manner that will lift up **all students**. Sending kids miles away from home isn't the answer; I can't begin to imagine how single parents, families without reliable transportation, families without a strong support system will make this work (from what I understand, these are the people the plan is aiming to help most). Please consider alternate options that minimize long range transportation and keep kids in the schools that were built to serve their areas.

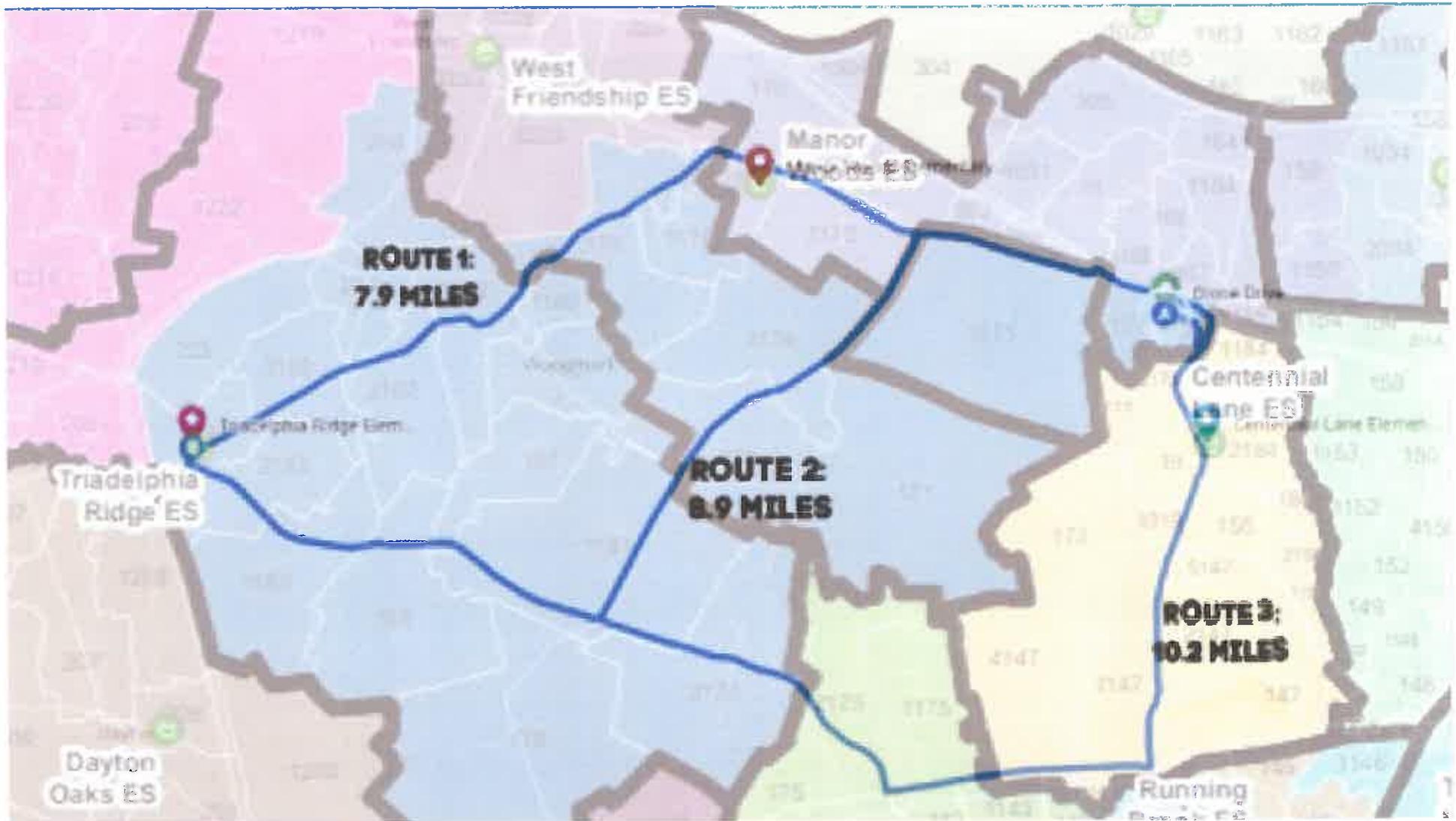
The Board is to be responsible to the community for the education of our children, and as such, is to formulate policies to foster their personal, academic and social development. I hope you are able to come up with a plan that will accomplish these goals.

Polygons 1157 and 157, the Greater Pines Fairways neighborhood, in relation to the proposed elementary school redistricting. Note 1171 and 171 are undeveloped farmland and wooded areas.



Source: Google Maps and 2018-19 HCPSS polygon map

Polygons 1157 and 157, the Greater Pines Fairways neighborhood, in relation to the proposed elementary school redistricting. This map shows the other schools and school zones we will have to go past.



Source: Google Maps and Redistricting Proposal map

My name is Jean Yu. I am a resident of polygon 1185. I am here to oppose the superintendent's redistricting plan. This plan causes massive disruptions to the lives of thousands of families and communities, all in the name of equity. And yet there is absolutely nothing equitable in how this plan was put together.

Let's examine what happened.

First of all, the school system spent hundreds of thousands of tax payer dollars to carry out the Feasibility Study of 2019. And yet the current redistricting plan essentially abandons all major recommendations of the Feasibility Study. Why? And where is the equity in that?

Second, the school system conducted Community Input Sessions where about 900 inputs were collected. And yet, the superintendent's redistricting plan addresses none of the top 3 concerns from the Community Input Sessions? Why? And where is the equity in that?

Third, the AAC has 14 members appointed by the Superintendent to, in the Superintendent's own words, "represent every planning region in the county." But these members reside in only 9 high school districts, and Riverhill, Marriottsridge, and Glenelg have no representation in the AAC. How is that for "representing every region in the county?" Where is the equity in that?

Fourth, out of the 14 AAC members, only one is of Asian descent despite the fact that Asians account for 20% of Howard County's population. Where is the equity in that?

Fifth, 5 of the 14 AAC members are from County Executive Calvin Ball's transition team. And the citizens of Howard County are supposed to believe the redistricting plan has nothing to do with politics? Where is the equity in that?

Sixth, out of the 14 AAC members, nobody, not a single one has to move from one school to another. Isn't that a curious co-incidence? Where is the equity in that?

Seventh, the redistricting plan turns walkers into bus riders, make some students pass four other school districts to go to their new school, and will certainly move some students again when high school 13 is completed. Where is the equity in that?

Eighth, the school system cancels school renovations and fires teachers because of budget constraint. But when it comes to busing students around the county, cost is no longer a concern, because no estimate of costs was done when the superintendent published his redistricting plan. Where is the equity in that?

Next time when we lay off teachers for budget constraint, will anyone remember the millions of dollars we will spend on busing contribute to the layoffs? And guess who suffer the most when we lay off teachers? It's the FARM students whose families lack resources. In other words, this redistricting plan will directly harm the students it claims to help. Where is the equity in that?

My list can go on and on, but in the interest of time, let me just finish by asking why a redistricting plan that is all about equity has to be developed through a process that is anything but equitable? The Board should completely reject the superintendent's plan and develop a new plan that is driven by parents instead of politicians.

Dear Board Of Education, thank you for this opportunity to testify. My name is Juanyu Bu, and I am from Polygon 176. I strongly oppose the superintendent's redistricting plan because it is fundamentally flawed and it does NOT improve education for children in Howard County. The original intention of the redistricting process is to solve the overcrowding issue at many of our Howard County schools. But after two rounds of feasibility studies and hundreds of thousands of tax-payer money spent, the superintendent totally ignored all of the feasibility study recommendations, worked behind closed doors with a few AAC members, and came up with this politically-driven plan that shifted the focus to address EQUITY in form of balancing FARM rates among different schools.

This latest plan has little or no community inputs, and has not gone through its due-process as the other plans from feasibility studies. This plan also unfairly targets the River Hill community by busing 478 students out and moving 741 students into the school. Altogether there are a total of 1,219 students impacted, or about 87% of the enrollment at River Hill High School. Moreover, the proposed moves in this plan will affect a total of 2,851 students for the entire county, but 43% of those students are associated with River Hill High School alone. Where is "EQUITY" in this case? Have you even considered the socio-economic impacts of this kind of drastic moves that completely divide up and change the composition of our communities?

I oppose any plan that puts the politics before the education of our kids, especially in the disguise of socio-economic equity. The notion of "EQUITY" is a noble one, but the approach presented in this proposal is a dangerous move towards social engineering. I am hoping that "Equity" in this case means equal opportunity and fair treatment, not equal outcome. We all want to provide our children the best education, and this requires communities to work closely together with students, families, and education staff at schools. But that should NOT come at a price of segregating our students into FARM and Non-FARM kids and equaling academic performance through balancing FARM rates. Swapping kids between schools and shuffling them around through long bus rides to balance FARM rates will only mask issues and hide root causes without providing any true improvement to education. This proposal is a simplistic and irresponsible approach to a complicate issue that is facing our growing community and education system. I expected a lot more from our elected officials, county appointed members and leaders. As someone has already pointed out in their testimony, the appropriate attention should be put into finding out what the FARM students are interested in and investing in programs that will help support their interests and fulfill their potentials.

Many people who testified before me have demonstrated how destructive and damaging this plan is in breaking up communities, increasing bus times, and causing emotional stress to our young children. I have also noticed that this plan has stirred up a lot of racial hatred and social divide, causing unnecessary confrontations and conflicts amongst communities and racial groups in Howard County. Therefore, I urge the board to completely reject the superintendent's redistricting plan, set aside the politics, and work together with communities to start a whole new approach to address the capacity issues and to improve our educational system.

Thank you for your time and this opportunity to share some of my thoughts and experiences.

Dear Members of the Board of Education and Dr. Martirano,

My name is Sejal Jani. My husband and I moved from Baltimore City to western Howard county six years ago. We took our children out of private school because we wanted a diverse community to raise our children in, where they can attend their local schools and we could support our local community by eating at local restaurants, shopping at our local grocery store and other small businesses. At the center of our community, is our high school, River Hill High school, which is only one mile away from our neighborhood, where we support and attend sporting events, theater performances and participate in band concerts.

My polygon, 3176, is immediately adjacent to River Hill High school, Under this proposal, our community is now being redistricted to Wilde Lake high school which is 8 miles away. RHHS is under capacity, as well as Wilde Lake High school.

So why swap the kids? If all Howard county schools are great, then why move families and children from their local community and friends, Where there commute time increases tremendously, and where it negatively impacts on our environment? Would you take a job where the commute is one hour vs 10 min with all else being equal?

As previous testimonies have mentioned that there are many studies showing longer commute times and less sleep negatively impacts the child's education and their mental well being. With suicide rates and substance abuse on the rise in our county, we need to ensure the safety of all our children. Instead of helping the children of Howard county, this proposal is directly harming their well being. Our children are being asked to bear the burden of poor county council decisions.

As you know, High school is a very challenging time in a students life impacting their social and academic development. Stability at school and at home is fundamental part in allowing students to achieve their potential. Relationships with their teachers, fellow students and other mentors often influence their career goals. Recommendation letters, after school clubs and sports are an integral part of their education as is their classroom time. The networking they need to start in high school is a big stepping stone towards college application process and other forms of higher education. This redistricting plan is very disruptive to students during these four critical years by not allowing these bonds to be formed in one school.

Children in high FARM schools have increased stress about their meals, their housing, and their daily structure. By shuffling students to make your numbers appear better on paper is not going to change this fundamental problem. Since we cannot go directly into homes and help those families, we as a county, should help these students thrive with all the additional resources the county can provide. Besides the free and reduced meals, we should invest in programs that provide homework help, after school tutoring, SAT help, college prep help and vocational courses that would interest them. All students with this current plan will have to endure longer commute times and therefore decrease their opportunity for tutoring, after school help, and team sports. ALL of which colleges and other forms of higher education consider to be important in their selection process. The superintendent's plan wastes millions of dollars on commuting students in the county instead of using these resources to hire teachers and provide services to help the underserved children.

I urge you to throw away this current redistricting plan. It is not fair to the students themselves and to their families. Utilize the research that has been done (for free) by the pediatricians, lawyers, the economist, and hundreds of parents and students, and take the time to create a task force to devise a better plan that minimizes student movement between schools and wait for HS 13 to be built. Use them as a guiding light to create a plan that truly focuses on improving the education for ALL Ho Co students.

The superintendent's policy recklessly swaps children in the name of equity. His performance at Howard county has decreased the number of educators, limiting technology classes and dangerously over crowding some schools. The repercussions to the students and families of this county will be devastating, long after you have gone.

The board of education needs to listen to their constituents and clearly recognize that moving more than 7000 children and their families to satisfy poorly done statistics, is not the answer to helping socioeconomic equity and definitely not in the interest of those students being shuffled. Keep polygon 3176 and its sister polygon 176 at River Hill and in their local communities.

Thank you.



#3176

Vahini Gannavarapu

Polygon 304

Dear Board of Education Members,

I have two kids one in High School, another one in Elementary, We moved Howard County because of the top Rated Public school district located in MD.

Today I am here to express my concerns with regard to the elementary school redistricting proposal for the year 2019. I am here to ask you not to let the elementary kids from a few polygons in Howard County be denied of equitable education as promised by Policy 6010.

Kids from our polygon have already been moved from Manor Woods Elementary to Waverly Elementary School in 2018. How many times do these kids have to go through this before they complete their education in public schools?

**The distance to Waverly Elementary is 4.5 miles, where as to Bushy Park Elementary is 10.1 miles from where I live. Mind you, these are only one way distances.**

Taking the miles into consideration, imagine for a second, the amount of time and the number of miles that any parent would have to travel to and from school in a single day, if the kids are moved from Waverly Elementary to Bushy Park Elementary?

And for parents to attend PTA, Voluntary Activities taking lot of time travelling these many miles, and also picking kids from after school activities.

Imagine how miserable it would be if a parent or a guardian or a grandparent had to reach their kid in emergency?

Friend group and peer group is very important while growing, if kids move frequently from one school to other school they will have that impact.

Needless to say, the mental and physical stress caused due to travel fatigue affects the overall well being of the kid. In today's world, **a kid's learning doesn't end with returning from school**. They participate in one or the other extra-curricular activities every day. This business of **travelling 20 miles a day for school is going to leave them with no energy to pursue any of their other interests**.

Why should 5-11 year old kids have to travel so many miles every single day to obtain elementary education, especially residing in one of the best school districts in the state.

Is this what you call equitable educational opportunity? I would appreciate your support and careful consideration in this matter. I urge you to reject this proposal, which has already been rejected by you in 2017.

Thank you for the opportunity.

Good evening.

My name is Yong-Woo Lee. I live in polygon 1199 with my family.

Thank you for this opportunity to speak in front of you. For the record, I am strongly against the redistricting proposal. I am deeply concerned, because it does not address the overcrowding issues effectively. At the same time, it does not address other HCPSS priorities in a meaningful way. Rather, it contains the faulty plans that are massive and destructive to the students, families, and communities in the Howard County, in the name of "advancing equity",

Speaking of advancing equity, I would like to remind you that the HCPSS has a webpage to introduce its strategic plan, ("Strategic Call to Action" <https://www.hcpss.org/scta/>). The page offers a clear description of Equity. It says, "EQUITY is providing the access, opportunities and supports needed to help students, families and staff reach their full potential by removing barriers to success that individuals face. It does not mean equal or giving everyone the same thing."

Here is a question for you. In that description, where do you find a good justification for advancing equity, by busing and shuffling more than seven thousand students around? I don't find it, and many other county residents cannot find it either, as pointed out in other testimonies.

The proposal says that one of three critical priorities is "advancing equity by addressing FARM distribution". If superintendent thinks that high FARM rates is the main barrier to success, then he is totally wrong. Is that the reason that he has proposed to move more than seventy-four hundred students to other schools to smooth out FARM rates? Where is the equity for non-FARM students? His proposal sets up a tremendous barrier to the success of non-FARM students. If you have a balanced view, then you should be able to this major conflict in his proposal.

So, I cannot agree to his proposed idea. In fact, I find it very offensive, because, on the flip side, it sounds to me that it is OK to sacrifice non-FARM students in the name of advancing equity. That is the reason that I find this approach as another type of discrimination against non-FARM students.

On a personal level, my 1<sup>st</sup> daughter is attending River Hill High School as a 9<sup>th</sup> grader. Under the proposal, my daughter will be moved to Glenelg High School next year. I cannot understand it, and I cannot accept it. River Hill High is two times closer to our polygon than Glenelg High. Also, River Hill High will stay below target utilization at least for next 10 years, according to the projection in the feasibility study. So, it is not logical or reasonable to send existing River Hill High School students to other schools.

I greatly welcome HCPSS to invite other students to the River Hill High. However, you must not move existing students to other schools in the name of so-called "advancing equity". It is a discrimination and very cruel thing to do.

Thus, I urge you, board members, to reject this proposal. Thank you for listening.

Dear BOE members,

Good evening!

First of all, I want to thank all of the BOE members for providing this forum for my testimony and the testimony of many other homeowners this evening! Having a serious, honest, and fact based discussion on this very challenging matter is what is most important to the children and the families that are being directly impacted by any actions that the BOE members and the Superintendent may ultimately decide.

My name is Jim Arnold. My family and I currently reside in the Walnut Grove Community in Clarksville, which is in polygon 3176. Our Community is approximately one (1) mile from the River Hill HS.

In addition, I am an elected BOD member for the Walnut Grove HOA, and have been since 2012.

I am speaking tonight, as a member of our group on behalf of the WG HOA, who is in opposition to Dr. Martirano's redistricting plan.

I recognize that the Walnut Grove HOA BOD members share many similarities with the BOE members.

First, the five (5) members of the WG BOD are elected by the WG homeowners to serve the needs of our WG HOA Community.

The WG BOD works together as a group to set goals and achieve them in a way that positively affects All of our members.

Though members of the WG BOD are volunteers, we All take our jobs very seriously.

Further, we have a fiduciary responsibility to manage properly the WG HOA Funds.

At times, we are faced with some difficult decisions.

In the end, if we don't do our jobs and meet the needs of our members, when the next election comes, dissatisfied members will vote in new leaders to follow the specific community's needs.

Though I was born in Baltimore and was raised in Catonsville, I eventually moved to Howard County in 1998 with my new wife. We first lived in a Community in West Friendship up until 2011. We then moved into our new home in the Walnut Grove Community and we have resided there since. We were blessed with two (2) children who were both born and have been raised in Howard County.

We were one (1) of the first families to move into WG. We then quickly welcomed many new and culturally diverse families who chose to move into our Community. Our neighborhood has grown with the addition of many hard working middle-class families. These families typically include two (2) working parents along with plenty of children. Moreover, a quick study of the demographics of the WG Community also reveals that many of our neighbors are actually immigrants from different countries. Those families chose to move to our Great Country, ultimately deciding to stay and build within our local community together.

We consider the WG Community to be one (1) large extended family with many diverse backgrounds.

As previously stated, polygon 3176 is in very close proximity to the River Hill High School. For many of our WG families, the River Hill area is the center of our community. We shop at the local Farmer's market and stores, we socialize at the local restaurants and bars, we watch our children's performances at the River Hill High School Auditorium, and we even have our WG HOA meetings at the River Hill Claret Hall.

I sincerely believe that considering any such move of having our children relocate to the Wilde Lake High School will simply destroy their senses of belonging, connectedness, and support. This would be especially true for those kids from whom immigrant families just settled into our WG neighborhood and called River Hill their new home.

We recognize and understand that the overcrowding issue needs to be properly addressed in Howard County. Overcrowding not only negatively affects students' academic performance, but it could be a potential safety and liability issue, as well. Currently, we all know that the River Hill High School is under-capacity. With that said, we would welcome new students, just in the same way as we have welcomed new families in to the WG Community. Moving so many students from the under utilized River Hill High School and then sending them to the Wilde Lake HS makes no sense in so many ways.

The current redistricting plan of redistributing a total of 7396 students is neither effective nor practical. From a board perspective, the proper funds must first be available for any such redistricting plan. With Technology teachers being surplus and the Talbott Springs Elementary School replacement and the Hammond High School addition and extension being delayed, does the BOE have sufficient funds to cover the additional transportation costs? If yes, why not spend those funds to directly support the needs for those identified under privileged students both at Talbott Springs and at Hammond High who have high percentage of Free and Reduced Meals (FARMS) students.

In conclusion, I want to Thank you All for listening, and to please consider public input and discard the superintendent's current redistricting plan. Members of the BOE, please work together to come up with an alternative plan that is less disruptive and that can directly benefit those students who are underprivileged. Please keep Polygon 3176 and our sister community 176 at the River Hill High School.

Respectfully,

Jim Arnold

Dear BOE members,

I am Yun Lu from polygon 3176. Thank you for taking the time to listen to our testimonies. On behalf of the Walnut Grove HOA, I am speaking in opposition to Dr. Martirano's redistricting plan.

Our polygon is adjacent to the River Hill high school. This plan will send our nearby polygons to three different high schools, the opposite of contiguous community. Sending 478 students from an under-capacity school to two opposite directions is illogical. Our commute distance will increase 3-4 times due to reassigning from River Hill to Wilde Lake HS. North bound 108 is already packed during high school rush hour. If Dr. Martirano's plan passes, North bound 108 will become a parking lot because of the additional 515 students from Atholton HS and 96 students from Reservoir HS. The traffic on Homewood Rd and Harpers Farm Rd will be significantly worsened as well due to redistricting 276 River Hill students to Wilde Lake.

As a statistician, I prefer using numbers and facts. Pages 3 to 7 of my testimony contains an objective evaluation of proposed River Hill High School assignment area change relative to Policy 6010 standards, and Dr. Martirano's plan has failed many standards. Dr. Martirano aimed to advance Equity by addressing FARM distribution. I would like to direct your attention to page 6, the number of students moved and the outcome achieved. River Hill HS will be receiving 741 students and sending 478 students. A total of 1219 students impacted! How about the outcome? FARM rate at the RHHS will change from <5% to 5%. Furthermore, the FARM rate was not even accurate. The actual FARM rate at RHHS was 6.8% instead of <5% due to the Jumpstart program. The so called improved FARM rate is even smaller than the margin of error.

We understand the BOE needs to address the overcrowding issue. However, River Hill is sending more students than any of the five overcrowded high schools (Howard sending 233, Centennial sending 231, Mt Hebron sending 167, Hammond sending 215, Long Reach sending 311). Two out of the five high schools are still above 110% utilization. Why not just move students into River Hill to solve overcrowding and increase diversity?

River Hill has been disproportionately impacted by Dr. Martirano's plan. There is no River Hill representative on AAC. This is taxation without representation! Dr. Martirano called his plan "Equity in action." As part of the River Hill community, we demand equity for all!

Even though we are opposing Dr. Martirano's plan, I found his quote on the HCPSS website insightful: "If we take care of our children and their well-being, and nurture and believe in them, academic achievement will take care of itself. We must understand our children first, because in order to teach a child well you must know a child well."

More than one hundred students have testified against this plan. Dr. Martirano's plan has added unnecessary anxiety and stress to the students, and has created barriers to success for students and has negatively affected their well-being.

I urge the board to take serious consideration of student testimonies because they are the ones that will be impacted the most and the children have put their trust in you. Our children are watching you. As Dr. Martirano said, "children must be at the center of all decision making." Please reject Dr. Martirano's plan, work together and come up with an alternative plan that is less disruptive, more effective in solving overcrowding, and can actually benefit the underprivileged students.

**HCPSS Policy 6010, School Attendance Areas – Section IV Standards**

**A. The Board will consider school attendance area adjustments whenever one or more of the following conditions exist:**

Condition	River Hill HS (RHHS)	Wilde Lake HS (WLHS)
A new school or addition is scheduled to open	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
An existing permanent school facility is significantly damaged, deemed unusable, or otherwise scheduled to close.	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
School attendance area projections are outside the target utilization.	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
The program capacity of a school building is altered.	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
The road network(s) within one or more school attendance areas is altered.	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
A unique circumstance that prompts adjustments to promote efficiencies, provide for the welfare of students, or adapt for shifts in program delivery.	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
<b>Attendance Area Adjustment Consideration – Not warranted for RHHS and WLHS</b>		

HCPSS Policy 6010, School Attendance Areas – Section IV Standards

B. The Board, Superintendent/Designee and the AAC will consider the impact of the following factors in the review or development of any school attendance area adjustment plan. While each of these factors will be considered, it may not be feasible to reconcile each and every school attendance area adjustment with each and every factor.

1. Facility Utilization. Where reasonable, school attendance area utilization should stay within the target utilization for as long a period of time as possible through the consideration of:

Facility Utilization	Current		Proposed		Comment
	River Hill	Wilde Lake	River Hill	Wilde Lake	
Efficient use of available space. For example, maintain a building's program capacity utilization between 90% and 100%.	√ (98%)	√ (91%)	√ (109%)	√ (93%)	RHHS and WLHS are under capacity. Both can receive students to relief overcrowding of other schools. The proposed move is illogical and ineffective: RHHS receiving 741, sending 478. WLHS receiving 373, sending 197.
Long-range enrollment, capital plans and capacity needs of school infrastructures (e.g., cafeterias, restrooms and other shared core facilities).	?	?	?	?	No sufficient information to evaluate based on 2019 Feasibility Study and Superintendent's proposal
Fiscal responsibility by minimizing capital and operating costs.	√	√	X	X	HCPSS incurs additional transportation cost.
The number of students that walk or receive bus service and the distance and time based students travel.	√	√	X	X	Both RHHS and WLHS students will have substantially increased total distance and travel time.
Location of regional programs, maintaining an equitable distribution of programs across the county.	?	?	?	?	No sufficient information to evaluate based on 2019 Feasibility Study and Superintendent's proposal
Facility Utilization – Proposal worsens 2 out of 3 sub-factors able to be evaluated					

HCPSS Policy 6010, School Attendance Areas – Section IV Standards

B. The Board, Superintendent/Designee and the AAC will consider the impact of the following factors in the review or development of any school attendance area adjustment plan. While each of these factors will be considered, it may not be feasible to reconcile each and every school attendance area adjustment with each and every factor.

2. Community Stability. Where reasonable, school attendance areas should promote a sense of community in both the geographic place (e.g., neighborhood or place in which a student lives) and the promotion of a student from each school level through the consideration of:

Community Stability	Current		Proposed		Comment
	River Hill	Wilde Lake	River Hill	Wilde Lake	
Feeds that encourage keeping students together from one school to the next. For example, avoiding feeds of less than 15% at the receiving school.	✓	X (Dunloggin MS 11%)	✓	X (Dunloggin MS 7.8%)	Superintendent's proposal makes the feed from Dunloggin MS to WLHS even smaller.
Areas that are made up of contiguous communities or neighborhoods.	✓	✓	X	X	Adjacent polygons to RHHS were sent to three different high schools.
Frequency with which any one student is reassigned, making every attempt to not move a student more than once at any school level or the same student more frequently than once every five years.	✓	✓	X	X	Given #13 HS construction, and the remaining overcrowding issue at Centennial HS and Howard HS even after the superintendent's proposal, some students may be moved more than once.
Community Stability – Proposal worsens all 3 sub-factors					

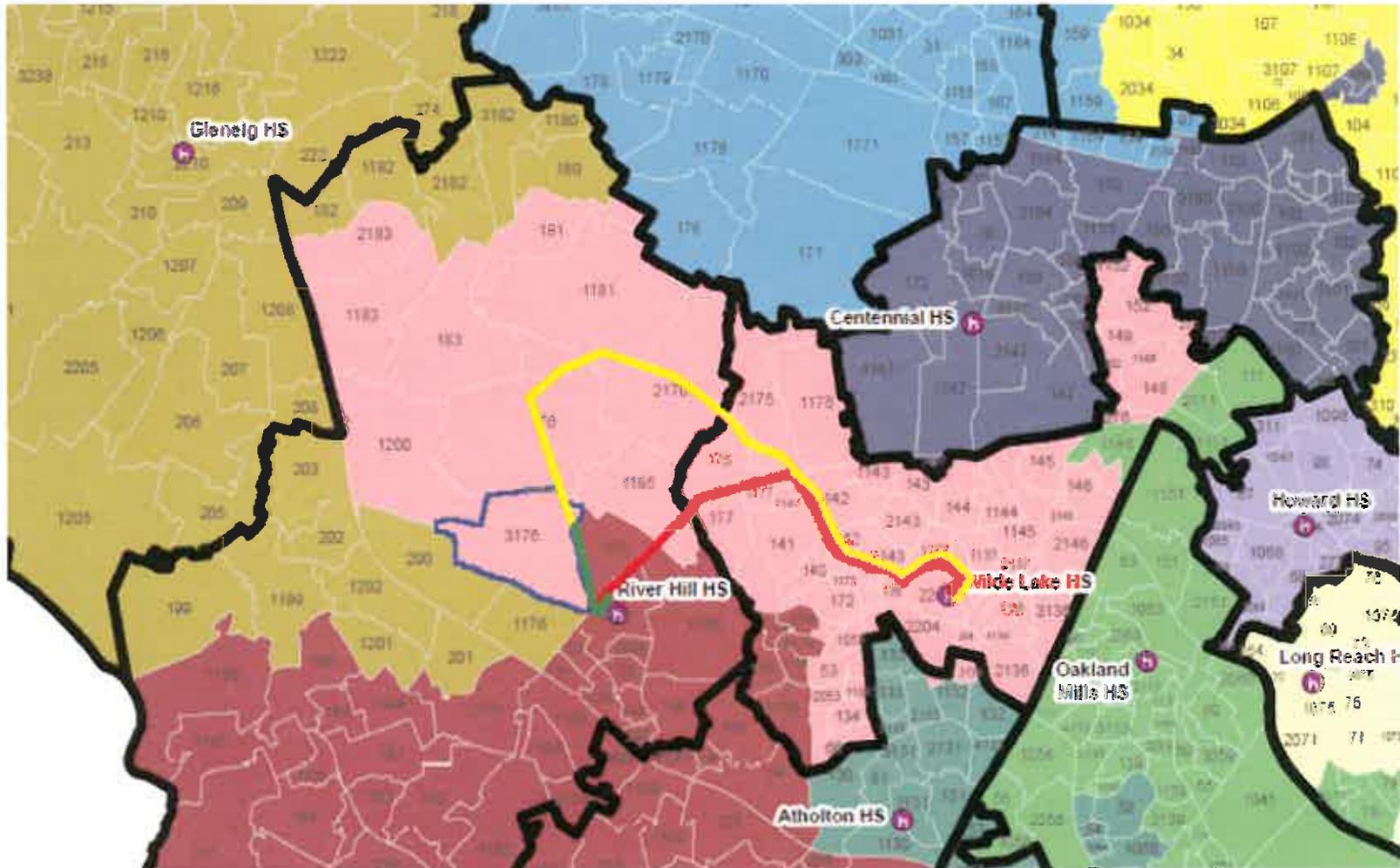
HCPSS Policy 6010, School Attendance Areas – Section IV Standards

B. The Board, Superintendent/Designee and the AAC will consider the impact of the following factors in the review or development of any school attendance area adjustment plan. While each of these factors will be considered, it may not be feasible to reconcile each and every school attendance area adjustment with each and every factor.

3. Demographic Characteristics of Student Population. Where reasonable, school attendance areas should promote the creation of a diverse and inclusive student body at both the sending and receiving schools through the consideration of:

Demographic Characteristics	Current		Proposed		Comment
	River Hill	Wilde Lake	River Hill	Wilde Lake	
The racial/ethnic composition of the student population.	√ (White 48%, Black 7%, Hispanic ≤5%, Asian 34%)	× (White 26%, Black 45%, Hispanic 13%, Asian 7%)	√ (White 48%, Black 11%, Hispanic 6%, Asian 29%)	× (White 28%, Black 40%, Hispanic 12%, Asian 12%)	×: Segregated per HoCo Council decree that <40% white="segregated".
The socioeconomic composition of the school population as measured by participation in the federal FARMS program.	√ (<5%)	× (46%)	√ (5%)	– (38%)	The actual FARM% at RHHS was 6.8% instead of <5%. The change from <5% to 5% FARMS is smaller than the margin of error.
Academic performance of students in both the sending and receiving schools as measured by current standardized testing results.	√ (Read 82%, Math 73%)	√ (Read 45%, Math 27%)	√ (Read 76%, Math 64%)	√ (Read 52%, Math 36%)	Note, it is not real improvement for students, just balancing numbers.
The level of English learners as measured by enrollment in the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program.	√ (≤ 5%)	√ (≤ 5%)	√ (≤ 5%)	√ (≤ 5%)	Does not move the needle.
Number of students moved, taking into account the correlation between the number of students moved, the outcomes of other standards achieved in Section IV.B. and the length of time those	√	√	× (receiving 741, sending 478 )	× (receiving 373, sending 197)	Despite the large number of students moved, the plan doesn't move the needle much at either school.

results are expected to be maintained.					
Other reliable demographic and diversity indicators, where feasible.	?	?	?	?	No sufficient data
<b>Demographics – Proposal does not significantly improve outcomes and is highly disruptive</b>					



Supt. Proposal - High School

	Capacity	Impacted by Future Capital Project	Projected Utilization			Students Receiving Free and Reduced Price Meals (FARMS)			Regional Programs
			BASE (2020-21)	2020-21	2024-25	Base	Proposed	Change	
Abolton HS	1,460		102%	96%	100%	10%	25%	15%	
Centennial HS	1,360		120%	111%	117%	11%	12%	1%	
Glenold HS	1,420		82%	102%	105%	<5	<5		
Hammond HS	1,220		116%	108%	126%	10%	38%	-1%	Regional ED
Howard HS	1,420		136%	119%	125%	14%	15%	1%	
Long Reach HS	1,488		114%	107%	130%	47%	32%	-5%	
Mammoth Ridge HS	1,615		95%	110%	119%	5%	9%	3%	
Mt. Helbron HS	1,400		117%	104%	112%	16%	14%	-2%	Regional ED
Oakland Mills HS	1,400		90%	90%	100%	35%	31%	-4%	ALS
Reservoir HS	1,551		109%	104%	117%	26%	21%	-5%	Regional ED
River Hill HS	1,488		90%	109%	104%	<5	5%		
Willie Lake HS	1,424		95%	110%	108%	46%	36%	-8%	

Countywide MS FARMS

22%

*moving 1219 students*

Dear BOE members,

Good evening. I am Marilyn Lorenzo from polygon 3176 and I am speaking on behalf of the Walnut Grove HOA to oppose Dr. Martirano's redistricting plan.

I strongly support promoting equity, diversity, and inclusiveness. I support narrowing achievement gaps. However, the superintendent's highly disruptive redistricting plan won't achieve these goals and will negatively impact our children. There are better alternative plans.

There are many issues with the proposed plan that have been brought up to you already in previous testimonies and by our group today. I am going to focus on FARM students and how we can help meet their needs, including such a basic need as is food. It is a sad fact that there are hungry children right here in Howard County, the third most affluent county in the US. Redistricting FARM students out of Title 1 schools will not help them, it will potentially hurt them. Just imagine a student who must get up extra early in the morning, sit on a long bus ride with an empty stomach, leave close friends and familiar teachers behind, just to find out that there is no free breakfast served at the new school. Many FARM families might have limited access to transportation, missing the school bus means missing school, breakfast, and lunch. How can students improve academically when they are hungry or missing school? We are proposing alternative plans to achieve equity, diversity and inclusiveness, and at the same time help narrow achievement gaps.

1. Invest in meal programs to help FARMs students who are outside of Title 1 Elementary Schools, in Middle Schools and High Schools.
2. Invest in events and programs that are accessible to FARM families without transportation (at the local community or through public transportation).
3. Invest in programs for English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) students: by providing translators for these students and their families and brochures in other languages.
4. Invest in programmatic support: with onsite health care, class counselors, AP class information, free tutoring and social workers to help kids and their families.
5. Redirect funding to high FARM rate schools or directly apply to FARMs students.
6. Set up a buddy school system to share PTSA funds, other resources, and cosponsor events

Equity doesn't mean swapping students and balancing FARM rates while disrupting the communities. It will be achieved by a long-term joint effort of government input and community support. When communities work together to improve achievement gaps, that is true inclusiveness. When we provide the access, opportunities and support needed to help students reach their full potential by removing barriers instead of creating barriers, that is true equity. When we truly respect people with different opinions, that is true diversity.

BOE members, we are putting our faith in you. Please discard the superintendent's redistricting plan, address the overcrowding issues through appropriate redistricting, carefully evaluating socioeconomic and ethnic demographics within the polygons and assessing the negative impact this would cause in our children and families instead of just swapping kids around, and adopt alternative plans to improve equity.

I truly believe that the current plan has not been carefully thought through. Please do not disrupt our communities and keep Polygon 3176 and our sister community 176 at our local River Hill High School.

Thank you for listening.

Good evening. I am Zhen Zhang from Polygon 3176. I am testifying on behalf of Walnut Grove HOA. Walnut Grove is a diverse community with 88 households.

I am here to show our unanimously strong objections to Dr. Martirano's proposal. As an Asian American, a first generation immigrant, I am all for equity. According to national nonprofit Education Trust, equity means that students who are furthest behind should be provided with more of resources in and out of their schools to catch up, succeed, and eventually, close the achievement gap. As we all know, STEM is increasingly a gateway to high-paying 21st century careers. Lagging math achievement has been a persistent problem in underserved schools.

In a 2014 study by the University of Chicago, high school students who were at risk for dropping out greatly improved their math test scores and school attendance with the help of intensive tutoring and mentoring in merely six months. Based on these results, Chicago has expanded the programs to reach even more disadvantaged students in its public high schools.

As we speak, new research projects led by Carnegie Mellon University is using AI-based cognitive tutors to improve high school student math achievement. In addition, many school districts across the country are providing high quality Career and Technical Education, internship and pre-apprenticeship opportunities to help disadvantaged students achieve academic excellence, while preparing for their future careers. **Surely, we can learn from these successes.**

Education research has shown with solid evidence that appropriately organized schools can help virtually all students master the knowledge they need to succeed. This should be the focus of the BOE and other elected officials in directing our educational policies. Shuffling 7000 students across the county not only doesn't help achieve that, it takes precious time out of our high school students' lives taking long bus rides to schools that are much farther away – the precious time that can be used for targeted mentoring and tutoring to improve their academic performance.

BOE members, after hearing hundreds of testimonies and reading thousands of letters objecting this proposal, I urge you think twice before you vote. Please keep Polygon 3176 and our sister community 176 at our local River Hill High.

Dear BOE members,

I am Naimish Pandya and live in Polygon 3176. I am member of the WG HOA and am speaking on behalf of our community in opposition to Dr. Martirano's redistricting plan. I have been a resident of our Walnut Grove & River Hill communities in Clarksville since 2015. I am also an active community member, serving on activities throughout our County, including several HCPSS committees for many years, such as the Calendar Committee and the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee. My perspective is informed by all of these experiences, as well as being a Father of two girls who attend the Folly Quarter Middle and Triadelphia Ridge Elementary Schools.

My wife and I are explants from Ohio and Pennsylvania, respectively, but have been in Maryland for over a dozen years and in Howard County since 2014. As Jim said earlier, the WG & River Hill community is indeed a big family. My wife and I have come to know many community members at a personal level and really appreciate the generosity and kind-hearted warmth of many folks, who have become intimate friends. Growing up, I changed schools frequently, as my father was an engineer, in which his work took him to different regions of the country. We mostly lived in small towns such as Grand Island, New York, a small town near Buffalo, or Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania, or Union City, California, a small town near San Jose, and finally to Royersford, Pennsylvania, a small town 50 miles outside of Philly, where my sister and I completed our high school. Though the frequent moving was quite disruptive, one thing I learned is the value of small-town living throughout the U.S. At the heart of these communities are our schools, frequently our high schools, where the entire townspeople get together for Friday night football games or for weekend events and gatherings. We moved to Clarksville, and to Walnut Grove specifically, for this community embrace and for the River Hill experience. Having lived in numerous small towns throughout this country, what impresses me most about Howard County broadly is its unique ability to retain that small-town spirit. Despite the heavy population growth over decades, one can still palpate that small town feeling throughout the County. Neighborhoods form communities, which have their own personalities and vibrancy throughout the County – from Kings Contrivance & Hickory Ridge areas at the heart of our County, to Ellicott City / Elkridge in the North, to Maple Lawn / Fulton down South; to Savage & Laurel communities in the East to the Clarksville / Glenelg communities in the West. There are small pockets of large families throughout. This redistricting plan is disruptive for each and every community, small and large, throughout the County. As a fellow community member, I find it difficult to believe that you would find the mass disruption caused by this redistricting proposal as healthy and beneficial to any of our communities throughout the County. You are not just translocating more than 7000 children throughout the County, but you are disrupting the natural occurrence of activities that occur in several neighborhoods throughout the County.

Given our nature to serve this community as volunteers, the people you and I serve and represent expect us to be more inclusive and thoughtful in our actions. We recognize that the County is burdened with a strained school system due to overcrowding in a few of its schools. However, Dr. Martirano's plan does not ask the entire County to participate in alleviating this burden, as many schools are hardly impacted by this redistricting. Further, schools, such as our

River Hill high school, should be asked to absorb more students, given that it is not at maximum capacity! Rather, the Plan is counter intuitively asking River Hill to swap out its kids – where children from our community (Polygon 3176), our sister community of Walnut Creek right behind us (Polygon 176), and many of our other nearby communities will go to a school that's a 45-minute bus ride away, while children from another part of the County are also asked to endure a similar 45-minute bus ride themselves to come here! Yun has provided, in detail, the strains on a child due to long commutes, which, again, numerous child psychologists and pediatricians have also testified to. Heck, we all know what long commutes do to us, as adults, since many of us work outside of Howard County. It's pure torture! So, why are we doing that to young children and adolescents in their formative years?? If the intent is to solve overcrowding – this plan does not achieve that in a fair, balanced and equitable way throughout the County by not asking each and every school to participate equally in the re-allocation of students to ease the overcrowding. Children from overcrowded schools are needlessly asked to endure longer commutes, when perhaps closer schools can help in alleviating this problem. Our River Hill high school will happily welcome additional students from overcrowded schools because we have the capacity to add; but there is no logical reason to justify sending our children to attend other schools --- again, if the intent is to solve overcrowding!

But throughout this endeavor, we have learned that that is not the sole intent for this proposal. Rather it appears that the main intent, in the guise of being a secondary outcome, is to balance FARM ratios. At the core of it, however, to me, "balancing" FARM ratios implies that we must IMPROVE existing income inequity among families of children who use FARM programs. To improve implies to help those families in need – not to add further burdens to them. Yes, there may be published data that demonstrated academic improvement among FARM students when their environment is changed to associate with students who excel academically and have better economic means. But, as many have previously testified, these studies are not definitive, and we should collectively refrain from making decisive conclusions from such equivocal analyses. Nevertheless, it is in the best interest of County, to try to determine optimal approaches to improving FARM ratios, not just geographically redistributing them. Both, Marlyn and Zhen have provided some suggestions that you, the BOE, can enact and implement to economically help these families and academically help these children. As County leaders, you should be thinking about creating incentive programs that truly are beneficial to FARM families. Why not create an accreditation program in which students who excel academically are provided community service credits to mentor their peers from other schools in the County – and, to advance that cause, implement policies and procedures at each school that actually enable that. Meaning create a volunteer after school mentoring program and provide transportation to facilitate and enable students to actually get together! That would be money well spent – and it would help both students, the mentor and the mentee! Why not create business incentives, in which businesses like Kumon, Mathnasium, Best Brains, and several others that exist and operate in our County – to conduct classes free of charge, or subsidized, in schools where children need that extra academic attention? These businesses can be provided tax incentives or other benefits. That would truly help these students academically! If the

intent is to help academically struggling students and **IMPROVE** FARM ratios, there are far better ways of going about doing this than this disruptive, mis-aligned redistricting plan.

In conclusion, I implore to your sentiment to serve – if you ran to be a BOE member that truly makes a positive difference in our County – than reject this redistricting plan! Let's work together at solving the challenges of HCPSS and find a better way to solve both, the overcrowding and the imbalance of FARM ratios, in our schools. Thank you.

Naimish Pandya  
WG HOA Board Member

  
15 Oct 2019

Good evening, My name is Jian Wang, and I am from **Polygon 1028** I oppose the proposal. I strongly believe that our children should have equal education opportunity. Although I m not rich, I donate every year to support education for those low-income families. As a taxpayer who have voted you in the past , I urge you investigate three things before making your decision:

1. Investigate the root cause
2. Investigate the unintended consequence,
3. Investigate AAC integrity

First of all, you have to identify what is the real problem, and then the root cause of the problem. The proposal was based on significantly flawed data. USDA does not recommend FARM data to be used in isolation for determining the socioeconomic status of a student. Further, the use of the FARM ratio as a leading factor in the efforts does not provide actual resources to those students. Politicians fool the parents by telling them there is a magic way to improve their kids by busing them to a different school. At the end of the day, the problems will still exist.

All the County schools have the same curriculum, same quality teachers, same infrastructure & funding. Will Busing kids around really help students? Will averaging the FARM ratio really help the FARM students? Let me beg a question, if a student does not know what 1 plus 1 equals, simply sending him to another school, siting with a rich kid will make him know 1 plus 1 equals 2? If you believe so, pls provide us evidence. I am sure you will win a Nobel prize next year. [Then I'd ask our kids to stop all after-school activities, because all they need to improve is to sit with a rich kid or go to a different school. If this were true, all we need are bus drivers, the board of education can be re-named as board of transportation.]

The proposal fails to provide any evidence that can improve educational outcomes.

So please Find out the **root cause**, maybe Home environment, after -school activities and community culture are the factors, but NOT the school system.

Second, investigate the **unintended consequence**- The risks to students, to families, to the community are too high

- Longer commute time, Less sleep, Driving safety, Mental health, Environment issue, Social and community issue. ANXIETY, STRESS AND DEPRESSION!
- 
- Considering the 2-fold longer distance to Harpers Choice middle, increased traffic on rt 108, it would be taking extra 30 min each single day for each child! If I ask you one extra minute for my speech, you'd be upset. but the proposal would take extra 30 min from each child every day. Our children need much time for their growth and development.
- The students had to wake up extra early, travel long distances to their schools, and then could not easily socialize with our friends after school because they needed to get on the bus back to our distant neighborhoods.

- Environment issue. It will significantly worsen the traffic on Route 108. Traffic in RT 108 is already bad [How serious is the problem at Rt 108 now? It will take more than 20 minutes to make a turn at peak time
- Social, mental and community issue. The river hill village are divided into half by the plan. The kids are separated from their buddies in the village. The kids and their future classmates do not shop in the same village center. - This causes a BIG social problem for the next generation. ANXIETY, STRESS AND DEPRESSION!

Lastly, please **investigate AAC integrity** and political motivation.

Where is River Hill representation in the AAC? Zero. Yet River hill community suffered the most from this proposal. Where is Asian American representation in the AAC? Zero. Asian American is the minority in the county, but majority of Asian American families suffered from this proposal. I want to remind you that any action, intentional or unintentional, that is based on race or skin color that subordinates an individual or group based on skin color or race, is racism.

So,

- Please stop this proposal driven by politics and ideology, but opposed by thousands of families who elected you to the board
- Please stop this unjustified experiment on thousands of kids. This plan has no evidence of benefits, but numerous toxicities. It does not solve any problem. It will create lots of problems to students, families, the community and to the county!
- Please stop this highly discriminative plan. **no kids should suffer**. Black kids should not suffer, White kids should not suffer, Asian American kids should not suffer.

Thank you!

Colleen Brimen  
Polygon 1185

Dear Board of Education,

I am writing in opposition to the superintendent's proposed Attendance Area Adjustment Plan. As a parent of three, my primary concern is with the well-being of my children, the need to resolve existing problems in Howard County schools and the overall well-being of our community as a whole.

The Superintendent's proposed plan would remove my children from our community feed schools. This was shocking to me as we live less than a mile from our high school. This move would isolate my children from the friends they have made, the kids in our community, our carpool group, and after school activities. I understand some kids attend private school and do fine but, that is not a choice I would make for the above mentioned reasons. We as a family rely greatly on our village. This proposal would tear us from the community support which allows our family to prosper. It is one thing to ask your neighbor to bring home your child while she is picking up hers, it is quite another, to ask her to drive to two schools 25 min apart.

The Superintendent's plan purports to achieve socioeconomic equity. While diversity of all kind is advantageous, it is not advisable at all costs. Should not the primary goal be to have all our children thrive? I do not believe, the swapping of high FARM and low FARM student bodies will achieve that goal. Indeed, the proposal from the superintendent sadly reads like a political attempt to show equity on paper while remaining cold to the feelings and vulnerabilities of the Howard County children. Kids are holistic beings and no child who has to get up earlier, ride on a bus longer, go to a school without his friends and miss out on the personal growth and learning of after-school activities is going to be better off because the child next to him in school has parents of a different social economic background. In fact, Howard County students already enjoy one of the most diverse school systems in the state of Maryland.

The Howard County School System has several problems which need to be addressed. These include: overcrowded schools, budgetary management of school system funds, the continual growth of those funds and infrastructure.

Disappointingly, the proposed redistricting does NOT resolve the problem of overcrowding in our schools. We as a community must prioritize this problem. However, as kids are not pions to be moved about, redistricting should only occur once and that move needs to resolve the overcrowding of today and take into account the population growths of tomorrow.

The superintendent's plan is a miss use of the Educational budget. Spending exorbitant amounts of money busing children while that money could go to schools which fall behind in the student success matrix, is a pitiful allocation of resources. Let's actually improve the educational experience for those who are falling behind not just average out the numbers on paper.

Another concern I have with the proposed plan are the unintended consequences it will undoubtedly bring. The greatest appeal Howard County has are its wonderful schools. Over

the last 20 years and more many Parents have moved here seeking those schools. The prices of real-estate have gone up and Howard County Schools enjoy the large budget created by those property taxes. Should the BOE enact this or any proposal which, drastically change boundary lines and promise future boundary shifts, parents will cease to see Howard County as a stable and strong educational choice for their children. Such a change in reputation WILL lower property value and with it greatly lower the educational budget Howard County students enjoy and administrators can't seem to do without.

Growth and a lack of road infrastructure have lead our mostly rural county to an increase in traffic. The proposed plan is not only bad for our environment but for our commutes. While Clarksville and Harpers Choice appear to buttress each other on a map they are in fact separated by the 1,021 acre Middle Patuxent Environmental Area. This natural barrier will force those who are pushed out of their community schools to drive around the Environmental Area on an already congested Route 108 as opposed to driving short distances through local streets. Increasing the amount of miles and time buses, parents and students spend on our roads endeavoring to make their daily commutes will mean greater delays and danger for all. Additionally, and on a more personal note; my street (a street shared by many) is off Route 108 in a section which is known colloquially as "Dead Mans" curve. There have been deadly accidents on this curve and with more INEXPERIENCED drivers FORCED through this stretch, I fear the odds of getting plowed into from behind, will greatly increase.

I came to Howard County as a Child and returned as an adult seeking the stable community I had known, for my children. Do not split communities as our schools are our strongest uniter and a community of friends is more powerful, loving, stable, and safer than a community of strangers.

I would like to wrap this up by stating, that I do not see how you, the Howard County Board Of Education, elected by residents and here to serve those same residents can even entertain this proposal after reading the Attendance Area Boundary Review Survey. in the survey the people you represent clearly stated their top three priorities in redistricting to be 1) minimizing transportation, 2) maintaining student body feeds through elementary, middle and High School, 3) maintaining communities intact. Interestingly, by far and away the standards our community felt were least suitable to form a basis of redistricting was demographics which was clearly defined as socioeconomic and other related factors. The Superintendent's plan not only chooses to ignore the community's voice but, indignantly flips its priorities. What happened to the costly feasibility studies which move far less students and are closer aligned to the overall community's desires? As an elected board, I hope you will leave your politics and personal goals aside, listen to what the community wants and oppose this plan.

In hopes you are listening.

Sincerely,  
Colleen Brimen

Beverly Ann Menke

Polygon 1185

I come to you with a background as a medical doctor, a composer of music and an author.

I am against the current Redistricting Proposal and I am having a hard time comprehending how we are here. You see, I cannot understand how after hearing hundreds of individuals and received thousands of letters opposing this monstrosity, you haven't already told us to relax, you are ceasing and desisting. Because, you haven't announced this I have to believe that there is the possibility of you going against the will of an immense majority. Your constituents, who have given you their trust and voted you into those seats.

When looking into this issue I sought to find out who are the members of our Board of Education. Then I saw all of you and I was really surprised. The lopsided gender group of seven women to one single man, really gave me pause. How can we be here? How is this even possible? Women and mothers laying before us a proposition that will disrupt thousands of homes? Women, men too, but women would not hurt a single child. And we don't care what the child looks like or whose child it is. Right? I need to always believe this.

I've lived in Clarksville for twenty years. From my home (Polygon1185) to River Hill High School there is less than a mile and there is one single turn. The turn into the school's driveway. River Hill High School is indeed a fine school. The government put up the brick and mortar, and Clarksville with its surrounding areas, put up the rest. Parents tirelessly helping and shaping what we have there today. Now we are told our children may not go there?

Our schools, as are our children, are a direct reflection of parental, not governmental, involvement. Overcrowding is an issue to be resolved by busing those children who voluntarily sign up to go to alternate communities, where there is room. Voluntarily. We are in the United States of America, we don't force kids and families to succumb.

I have sat on a Board of Education in the past and I know from experience that our greatest successes come when we use simple common sense, listen to our communities and invite them in, to help us. The problems this board is confronting are resolvable and it can be done in harmony.

Vote no and be our champions. We will then stand with you and help successfully resolve the ongoing difficulties of Howard County Schools.

You can win and we really want you to.

Goodnight.

Jane Blayman

Polygon 183

To Whom It May Concern:

*I am Jane Blayman, a resident of polygon 183. I am a committed career woman, a small business owner, a room parent, a member of three PTA's, a rec baseball team manager, a chaperone, a volunteer, a mentor, a stake holder as well as a shareholder, and an advocate for equity AND equality. I am sure I have just described all of my neighbors and parents that are here with me tonight.*

As I sifted through the egregious amounts of data for which supported this new plan, it consumed me. I immediately wanted to foster a solution. There cannot possibly be funding for this plan when we just witnessed a cut in personnel staff across the county? Is there? Is there no better way to foster change other than to uproot 10% of the total student body?

School culture, or better yet, school spirit is a vital part of belonging, cohesion if you will, among any student body. I can tell you from experience, that I chose what colleges I applied to based off their student involvement, school spirit, and the yearning I had for every student *wanting* to be present. Why you ask? The high school I attended, River Hill, simply did not cultivate that sort of environment. Had I had that experience in high school, my yearning for it would have been diminished. When I entered high school as a freshman, there was little school spirit present as River Hill was the *new* high school. There was confusion about the school colors, a lack of school involvement, and a poor sense of belonging. There was little attendance at the pep rallies and homecoming was laughable at best. Coming to a school where the tensions were high for these reasons, or simply not wanting to belong, resulted in independent self-focus on your school work, and a countdown of the minutes until that final bell each day. This is not an ideal high school experience. This will be the average high school experience throughout the county if you approve this plan.

Creating an *experience* is what is most important at the high school level. This proposed plan creates so many ripples within the school feeds I foresee the ability to maintain any sort of pride or sense of belonging very challenging.

I have faith in the Howard County school system to do right by every student in attendance. I expect it. If there are shortfalls within communities, or within their schools, there should be action at those levels. Improvement plans and financing additional resources as needed, and ensuring continuously that the changes made have positive effects, is what garnishes positive change.

I fear my children will not have the same educational resources if this plan goes into effect. Can you reassure me that they will have that? We are an agriculturally based family, wanting to raise our kids in 4-H, with land in the backyard for show pigs if they so desire, or room for a garden if they wish to grow. There is room for my daughter to ride a pony, for me to run a business, which in turn helps me to provide for my family. I cannot have this set up in Columbia, but I will have to get to Columbia twice a day to pick up my eldest when he starts high school (according to this proposed plan). I would like to take you through what my worries are, with your intention of broadening my commuting burden. I already start my morning at 5am to feed our horses. My oldest children often help me, and as they grow older will be even

more involved. We will probably be working through when the bus comes, which currently is 6:45 for high school which is doable. This proposal I can only assume will be conservatively 20 minutes earlier. I will then have to drive them to school, 20 minutes one way, without traffic. Then I need to rush home to get my middle schooler off to school by 7:20. At that point my elementary schoolers will need to be up and out the door to make the bus by 8:00. I then have to drive, locally thank goodness, to my corporate job in Fulton. The new proposal is not within my current driving routine. Did you already know this? I will be reliant on a paid for transport that will not affectively meet my needs? How will my child participate in 4-H and other local to us activities if they are increasing their commute to school. Better yet, how will my child fit in as an agricultural enthusiast at a school that does not have such a presence? My star football play who has dreamed of playing where I went to school and his Uncle played for four years...how do I tell him that he no longer gets to have his dream? Is there no preserving that? Is that just a used to be, the way it was feeling? Why? Can we not create just equity without uprooting over 10% of the county population? You are choosing my eldest children to be an experiment to a demise. What is the contingency plan if this proposal is enacted and it fails? Will you be offering tuition reimbursement at the community college due to the ill effect this had on my children? This social experiment should be an election of participation, not a mandatory occurrence. It is unjust to uproot so many families, at the same time, to create a world of upheaval for a social experiment.

You need to hear me when I say that I actively chose where to raise my family, as a customer of Howard County. To be a repeat customer of a Howard County education, and to feel that your total needs are not being met, that is a customer service issue, an issue of equity. This plan does not create equity for my children. It creates upheaval, an unnecessary transition, and better yet a more stressful education. That is not an issue of socioeconomic engineering, bussing, polygon-swapping, or suffering. This is an issue of equity, and this plan ignores that completely. This plan needs to cultivate equity within the homes of Howard County. Listen to the customers that are reaching out. Ask the customers that are not. Help the customers who have offered vibrant suggestions to these issues within the faltering schools. Creating equity starts at home. More importantly, it starts within the four walls of the school that is offering the education.

## Testimony in front of the Howard County Board of Education

October 15<sup>th</sup> 2019

Good evening. My name is Dr. René Vidal and I live in Maple Lawn's **Polygon 1256**.

I am here to express my strong opposition to the redistricting of polygon 1256 from Fulton Elementary to Laurel Woods Elementary.

I believe the plan is partly informed by the HCPSS Report on Equity (published in June 2019). This report shows that the achievement gap in Howard County schools has increased over the last three years; while at the same time there are growing disparities in FARM rate across our schools. Based on this data, it is tempting to conclude that reducing disparities in FARM rate will help reduce the achievement gap.

As a child, I grew up in a very poor neighborhood. While the school I attended would definitely qualify as 100% FARM, I had the fortune of living in a tight-knit community, which together with a loving and caring family, provided me with all of the support I needed to succeed. I had the luxury of studying at Berkeley and becoming a Professor at Johns Hopkins, where I currently direct an institute for data science.

As a data scientist, I love making decisions based on data, so I commend Dr. Martirano for trying to adopt a data driven approach in the proposed redistricting plan. However, before making any decision, I think it is extremely important to consider that

### Correlation does not imply causation.

As an example of what this means, the attached figure shows that the number of PhD degrees granted in civil engineering is almost perfectly correlated with the consumption of mozzarella cheese in the US. Should we then give more mozzarella cheese to our children in the hope of increasing the number of PhDs in civil engineering? I hope this example shows to the board the danger of confusing correlation (even high correlation) with causation.

The proposed plan neither benefits the children of polygon 1256 nor the children currently assigned to Laurel Woods. Specifically:

- **No benefits for children of polygon 1256:** the proposed plan will split the Maple Lawn community and isolate 140 children from their neighbors by sending them to a very distant school.
- **Overcrowding Laurel Woods:** the proposed plan will lead to 122% overcapacity at Laurel Woods, the highest in the county, which goes against the primary objective of redistricting.

Having established that the proposed plan is not grounded on scientific evidence and will help neither the children of polygon 1256 nor the children assigned to Laurel Woods, it seems that the only motivation for this plan is to do a social experiment with our children. As a scientist, I do believe that a well-designed experiment can help validate our

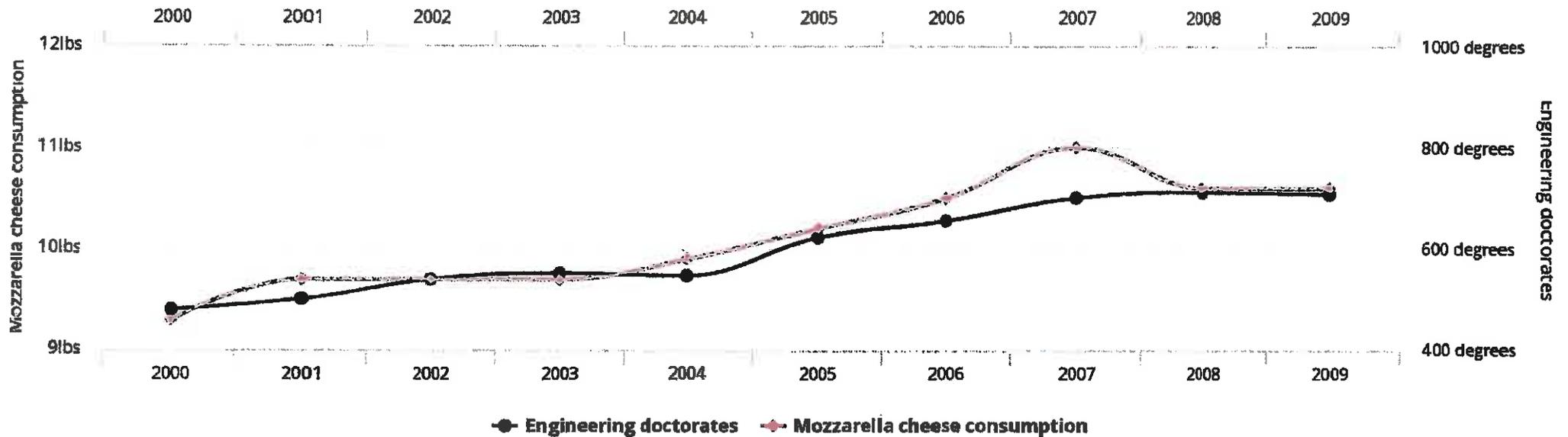
theories. But I also know that a social experiment with children would require informed consent from their parents. The board should not proceed without the parents' consent.

In summary, in the absence of demonstrated benefit for the proposed plan, I urge the board to reject the plan to redistrict polygon 1256 to Laurel Woods and to focus on improving school utilization while, as Dr. Martirano once said, "Keeping school boundaries contiguous and maintaining neighborhood schools".

One community, one school.

Dr. René Vidal

# Per capita consumption of mozzarella cheese correlates with Civil engineering doctorates awarded



tylervigen.com

Correlation: 95.86% ( $r=0.958648$ )

Good evening. My name is Robyn Guerrasio and I live in polygon 3176. Thank you for the long hours you have spent listening, and for the hours you will spend on the work that lies ahead of you.

I'd like to talk about a report you're certainly familiar with – "Equity: Responding to Performance and Opportunity Gaps in HCPSS". This report was presented to you in June of this year, just 4 months ago and I have to say - I love this report. It's great. I'm dismayed by the achievement gaps pointed out but I very much support the rationale for making changes and appreciate it's clearly stated, evidence backed goals for improving these gaps. I did find it very interesting that not one of the goals or suggested processes in here suggests moving kids to other schools in order to improve their performance. In fact, it spends one whole section discussing the importance of relationships between staff and students. The report suggests that administrations need to be 1. diverse and 2. able to build trusting relationships with their students in order to show them they're invested in their success. A quote from the report: "Restorative justice practices build healthy relationships based on empathy between students and staff.... As the school environment becomes more nurturing for all students, student engagement and attendance should increase, disruptive behaviors should decrease, and course access and performance should become more equitable, reducing opportunity gaps and disparate treatments based on race, ethnicity, economics and family country of origin." So I ask you: How can a kid trust in their school as a place that is invested in them when there is rampant uncertainty about where they'll be going to school next year?

A strong educational experience is based on relationships - if it weren't, wouldn't it be cheaper to send students home with textbooks and call it a day? But that's not what we do because that's not what works. What makes it work are people - people who look for what individual kids need, who push to do better and who can see when something isn't working.

One other thing about attendance – Table 1 indicates that economically disadvantaged kids (their label, not mine) have an absentee rate of more than 10% compared to their peers, and that attendance is one of the factors that predicts achievement. I have to wonder how these kids who struggle to attend regularly will attend school more when their schools are farther away and their transportation options are limited.

Now I know that everything I just advocated for cannot be applied to all right away and that some kids have to be moved to relieve overcrowding. Our capacity crisis is, by nature, inequitable. As you adjust boundaries to ease overcrowded schools, I ask that you please keep neighborhoods together and consider feed sizes - if kids have to start over with teachers and hallways and counselors and bus routes, don't make them start from scratch socially as well. While that happens, let's continue to make sure ALL schools are following the suggestions in the equity report and that ALL schools are equipped to embrace every student and help them succeed.

And finally, I am begging you to consider school start times in your adjustments. Others before me have laid out the case so I won't belabor the reasons but understand, please, that the situation is already tenuous. I think it very likely that making teens get up and out their doors even earlier will be a breaking point for some. Let's not test just how far their resiliency will go. Thank you.

**Table 1**  
Summary of Opportunity Gaps Observed for Student Groups within HCPSS  
as Measured by State Accountability Measures in 2017-18

Area	Measure <sup>a</sup>	Student Group							
		Asian	Black	Hisp	White	Two+	EcDis	EL	SpEd
Attendance	Chronic Absenteeism (ES)		•	•		•	••		•
	Chronic Absenteeism (MS)		•	•		•	••	•	••
	Chronic Absenteeism (HS)		•	•		•	••	••	•
Behavior	Suspension Rate (ES)		•			•	•		•
	Suspension Rate (MS)		•				•		•
	Suspension Rate (HS)		•	•		•	•	•	•
Access	Access: Well-Rounded Curriculum (ES)		•						•
	Access: Well-Rounded Curriculum (MS)		•	•			•	••	••
	Access: Well-Rounded Curriculum (HS)		••	••			••	••	••
	Progress twd English Proficiency (ES)								All English Learners: 75%
	Progress twd English Proficiency (MS)								All English Learners: 57%
	Progress twd English Proficiency (HS)								All English Learners: 62%
	On-Track in Ninth Grade		••	••				••	••
Course Performance	Academic Growth in Mathematics (ES)		•	•		•	•		•
	Academic Growth in Mathematics (MS)		•	•			••		•
	Academic Growth in ELA (ES)		•	•			•		••
	Academic Growth in ELA (MS)		•	•		•	•		•
	Proficiency on Math Assessment (ES)		••	••		•	••	••	••
	Proficiency on Math Assessment (MS)		••	••			••	••	••
	Proficiency on Math Assessment (HS)		••	••			••	••	••
	Proficiency on ELA Assessment (ES)		••	••			••	••	••
	Proficiency on ELA Assessment (MS)		••	••			••	••	••
	Proficiency on ELA Assessment (HS)		••	••			••	••	••
	Credit: Well-Rounded Curriculum (ES)	•		•		•	•	•	•
	Credit: Well-Rounded Curriculum (MS)		•	•			••	••	••
	Credit: Well-Rounded Curriculum (HS)		••	••			••	••	••

*Note.* A dot (•) is placed where the student group's performance was worse than the overall average. Two dots (••) are used when performance was more than 10 percentage points lower than the overall group performance. Black = Black/African American; Hisp. = Hispanic/Latinx; Two+ = Two or More Races; EcDis = Economically Disadvantaged; SpEd = Special Education; EL = English Learner; ES = Elementary School; MS = Middle School; HS = High School  
<sup>a</sup>See Table A5 for the percent of points earned for each measure.

- Across measures and school levels, these student groups tended to have less access and opportunity to educational experiences that support on-time graduation: Black/African American students, Hispanic/Latinx students, students who were economically disadvantaged<sup>7</sup>, students who received special education services, and English Learners (EL).

<sup>7</sup> Students are determined to be economically disadvantaged based on Direct Certification as approved by USDA for the State of Maryland (see <http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/stateboard/Documents/05222018/TabK-ESSAUpdate.pdf>)

**Paul Funk (#87)  
Polygon 1183  
10/15/19**

**My name is Paul Funk and my family resides in polygon 1183. While I support efforts to advance equity in our schools, I am here in opposition to Dr. Martirano's redistricting plan due to the undue burden it places on my family.**

**Polygon 1183 is currently districted to attend River Hill High School, which is 5 miles away and the bus comes at 6:25 AM. Dr. Martiano's plan redistricts us to Wilde Lake High School, which is 7-10 miles away (depending on the bus route). Currently, most Howard County high school busses pick up students after 6:20 AM, which is quite early but understandable considering they need to arrive by 7am. However, there are a couple of River Hill High School busses that begin picking up kids as early as 5:59 AM! With multiple studies showing the critical importance of sleep for teenagers and the number of concerned parents and students you have on your hands, I would expect your redistricting efforts to seek to mitigate these instances, not add to them. Or, in cases like ours, where the most underutilized high school in the county (Glenelg) is a near 3 miles away - redistrict us and our contiguous communities to that logical location.**

**My wife and I have spent a combined 40 years in public service. And after many years of developing and managing large-scale strategies, I have an appreciation for the difficulty in making strategic decisions with multiple competing variables to consider. Sometimes we develop strategies based on data-driven research and findings. And sometimes strategies are developed based on how a person or persons of influence FEELS. These are traditionally referred to as "politically motivated" strategies. Being a data person, I'm not a fan of the latter, but I recognize they are a fact of life. What I have a low tolerance for is going through extensive data collection and analysis, and the pomp and circumstance of stakeholder engagement, when decision-makers already have their mind made up out of the gate.**

**Listen to the voice of your constituents. After reviewing a significant portion of published written testimonies, I've concluded that over 95% of them are in opposition to this plan. The community outreach you conducted last summer determined the top 3 priorities of Howard County citizens to be:**

- Keeping Feeds Together (66%),**
- Maintaining Contiguous Communities (60%), and**
- Transportation Time & Distance (43%)**

**Clearly, you haven't struck the right balance.**

Many people have testified over the past few weeks and said they don't envy your position. Call me crazy, but I do kind of envy it. I like to solve complicated problems and appreciate the importance of getting something like this right. If I was in your position, I would have strongly advocated for a data-driven strategy and transparency about the decision criteria we established when launching this process last January. I would have worked to ensure we developed a set of transparent decision logic that determines student placement based on:

- A. Capacity of the nearest school
- B. Keeping Feeds Together
- C. Distance & Transportation Times AND THEN
- D. Socioeconomic Factors

So what is your decision logic? Have you used weighted factors? If so, what are those factors and what weighting was used? This process isn't proprietary...it's public service! If you were more transparent, the community would have a much greater appreciation for how you are trying to resolve the various competing issues in your redistricting decisions.

I recommend considering the following:

- Don't move rising Juniors and Seniors
- Don't move kids that are at schools currently under capacity
- Move kids in over capacity schools to the next closest under capacity school
- Offer open enrollment for underutilized schools with priority placement for the disadvantaged
- Develop incentives to attract and retain teachers in schools with high FARM rates

I'm going to conclude on a personal note...

My family's motto is "hurry up and have fun"; I have a plack in my kitchen that says, "Ain't nobody got time for that"; and my family's theme song is Time from Culture Club (because time won't give me time - my wife dared me to sing that line, but I don't want this to go viral). But in all seriousness, are you picking up on a theme here? Time is a precious commodity in my family's life...and, quite frankly, I forbid you to take that away from us! You shouldn't have that right. You must appreciate the power you're wielding and how your decisions impact the thousands of Howard County citizens you were elected to represent.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

October 15, 2019

Members of the Board of Education  
Howard County Public School System  
Superintendent Martirano, HCPSS

Dear Board of Education Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Attendance Area Adjustment Plan proposed by Dr. Martirano, from August 20, 2019. I recognize that we must do something about overcrowding and having children in trailers is not okay. However, the current redistricting plan, although well-meaning, is also not okay. I want to share with you my personal reasons why. First and foremost, I grew up in NYC, and I was a Farm child. In NYC, children had the option for high school to go to schools out of their school districts. The high school I went to had a graduating class of 700 with Farm rates more than our schools in Howard County. I was one of 60 students in a specialized program in an otherwise low performing school. The intent was to integrate, but the real impact was that we were segregated. The 60 students were in special classes, and the only time that we interacted with the other 630 students was at the GYM. As a county, if we do want to address the inequities and access to a better education, I suggest that we invest programs at an earlier age, and spend money to reduce class sizes and make sure the best teachers teach at our most vulnerable schools. This is my humble opinion will have a more significant impact.

As a parent, we are always making tradeoffs. When I purchased my home in 2014, I chose a house that was close to my children's schools. I work in Virginia, and the commute at times is unbearable. I frequently rush home to try and make it to my children's after school activities. I have three children, 10, 7, and 3. The current rezoning will place my children on opposite ends of the county. This rezoning would be more palatable if the choice were two schools equidistant apart. However, under the proposed plan, the school will be several miles away relative to the 1 mile away that River Hill is currently for me. Again this is not well planned. Another impact is going to be waking up children earlier and creating more sleep-deprived children so they can be shuttled in busses across town for a start time of 725. This proposal is a violation, in my opinion, of article 610, as has been pointed out before. So yes, rezoning needs to happen but not arbitrarily. What is upsetting is the county allows for new construction when schools are overcrowded and in fact, provides for new neighborhoods that are still not built and further away from River Hill to continue to be zoned for River Hill.

In closing, as a FARM child who believes in equal educational opportunities for all, transporting out 478 children to bring in 741 students in a school that is under-capacity and can take on more students is a plan that I can not support. The impacts are real, including disrupting families, creating more congested roads, and not a fair option for those of us impacted.  
Sincerely,

Tanveer Gaibi Ploygon 3176

Good evening. My name is Adam Aderton. I am a dad to two elementary school kids for whom I – like all parents – would do anything. I am also the very last person who will be testifying at a public hearing on the redistricting process. Congratulations – you’ve made it to the end (or at least to the end of the beginning)! I want to thank you for holding these sessions and for the careful consideration you will give to the concerns of thousands of parents, students, and worried citizens who have participated.

Like nearly everyone who has testified, I oppose the proposal put forward by the superintendent – and, in particular, the portion of the proposal that would send students from my polygon and adjacent polygons to Harpers Choice Middle School. And, like nearly everyone, I oppose the proposal because I can’t see how it reflects what’s best for students and families in Howard County.

Over the past month, I’ve watched and read as people across Howard County have pleaded with you to reject this proposal because it will cause them real hardship. I’ve seen the children worried that they’ll have to leave their friends, wake well before dawn, spend more than an hour on a bus (each way), miss after-school activities, and be unable to care for younger siblings. The kids’ stories broke my heart. I’ve seen parents worried about how they’ll stay involved in their kids’ schools when those schools are three times as far away and about how they’ll make already-tight commutes work with longer routes to school and increased traffic congestion. I’ve watched numerous child psychiatrists (I had no idea we had so many experts available) talk about the devastating effect of redistricting children to new schools with small feeds and of the compounded risk of doing it all again in two years. And, I’ve seen the budget-conscious ask just how we plan to pay for all of this given that the district is already cutting educational programs. Community feedback has been overwhelming that the superintendent’s proposal imposes too great a cost for too speculative a gain.

At the same time, I join those who have recognized that educational equity is an important interest and that more should be done to address it. But, critically, we should not be seeking to achieve equity at the expense of the tens of thousands of families for whom the schools are currently working. This recognition that we can do more to help the families and schools that need it without upsetting every other school in the county is a central reason that redistricting is so overwhelmingly unpopular.

As all of you have heard for months – people like their current schools. That makes sense – Howard County has wonderful public schools. The schools are the sole reason I and thousands of families like mine live in Howard County. As a board, I suggest you borrow a principle from medicine and, before making any move, first do no harm. I suggest that your goal should be to move the minimum number of students needed to balance capacity. To achieve equity, you should reallocate resources as necessary. If you take those criteria as your guides, you will have the best chance of producing a plan the community can accept.

Thank you very much for your time tonight, over the past few weeks, and in the weeks to come. All the children of our county are counting on you.