

How To Advocate For the HCPSS Budget

Access information about the budget here: [FY2025 HCPSS Operating Budget Process](#)

The budget report can be accessed here: [Superintendent's Proposed FY 2025 Operating Budget](#)

To advocate for increasing the amount of money the school system receives, letters should be directed to several different groups. The Board of Education needs to know that they should advocate for more money. The County Executive should be encouraged to provide the school system with more revenue. Our state officials need to be encouraged to fund the initiatives they are requiring with the Blueprint for Education.

At the board level:

Advocate for the board to request what we need. To ask our county officials for the money that we need to continue to be a world class school system.

The board also needs to know what cuts you would like them to avoid. It is important to look through some of the proposed cuts and let them know why you think some of the proposed cuts should not be made.

Below is a list of some of the things proposed to be cut (a full list of proposed cuts and possible impacts can be found in the Budget book which is linked above)

- Change in class size ratios, increasing class sizes by 2
- Elimination of grade 6 team building activities (what used to be Outdoor Education but became the field trip to Robinson Nature center)
- Elementary Gifted and Talented seminars and Curriculum Extension Units (CEUs)
- Elimination of 3rd grade strings
- Curricular field trips (kindergarten trips to the library)
- High School Science paraeducators
- Reduction in HS Media Specialists
- Elimination of BSAP and GT Summer Institutes
- Reduction of College/Career transportation- bus services may not be offered to students taking classes at HCC
- Support for the MESA program
- Elimination of personal aids for students receiving special education services
- Several support positions in special education that provide training and consultation
- 15 custodial positions
- Elimination of the transportation analyst
- Elimination of 1.00 Security Investigator and 1.00 Security Assistant
- 13 building maintenance positions
- 13 ground maintenance positions

How to provide testimony via email:

- Send email testimony to boe@hcpss.org
- Emails become public testimony. Do not include anything in your email that you do not want released publicly. Some people will write their testimony in a separate document and attach it to the email.

Emails do not need to be overly complicated. Just let them know what you feel and why you feel this way. Here is a sample letter:

Dear Board of Education members:

I am writing because I believe it is important that the Board of Education ask the County Executive for the money needed to maintain our current level of services and comply with the new Blueprint mandates. If we want to continue to have one of the country's best school systems we need to make it a priority.

I am also writing to implore you not to cut [insert funding]. [Add a few sentences about why you think this should be preserved.

How to provide testimony in person:

To testify in person you can pre-register in advance by telephone (410-313-1584) or by completing a google form. The sign up is usually released three weeks in advance and closes at 4:30 on the last working day prior to the meeting. The hearings on 2/15 and 2/26 have reached capacity. If additional hearings are scheduled, the date will be added here. The board typically asks students who are present to testify first. When you testify, you have 3 minutes to speak. This is about 1 page of single-spaced text. It is recommended you bring several copies of your testimony with you.

How to provide feedback on the budget:

Additional you can provide general feedback to the Board of Education at budgetfeedback@hcpss.org

At the county level:

At the county level you can request that the county increase the money being allocated to Howard County Public Schools. Let them know more money is needed to avoid cutting necessary services.

Relevant County Officials:

| | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| Calvin Ball | Liz Walsh |
| David Yungman | Opel Jones |
| Deb Jung | Christina Rigby |

How to advocate to the County Executive to fully fund the schools' requests:

- Send your emails to executive@howardcountymd.gov
- Emails become public testimony. Do not include anything in your email that you do not want released publicly. Some people will write their testimony in a separate document and attach it to the email.

Emails do not need to be overly complicated. Just let them know what you feel and why you feel this way. Here is a sample letter:

Dear Dr. Ball:

I am writing to encourage you to increase the money provided to the Howard County Public school system so that cuts in current levels of services do not need to be made. [Then give your reasons].

How to advocate to the County Council to fully fund the schools' requests:

- Send your emails to councilmail@howardcountymd.gov
- Emails become public testimony. Do not include anything in your email that you do not want released publicly. Some people will write their testimony in a separate document and attach it to the email.

Emails do not need to be overly complicated. Just let them know what you feel and why you feel this way. Here is a sample letter:

Dear Council Members:

I am writing to encourage you to work with the Howard County Public School System to adequately fund our schools. This year millions of dollars in cuts have been proposed that will greatly impact our school system. It is important.....

At the State Level:

Many of the increases in the HCPSS budget are due to Blueprint mandates. Write to our delegation and the governor ask the state to increase the funding for schools so we can afford the new initiatives. Let them know that without additional state funding positions and services critical to the operation of our schools and education of our students will be cut. Send your emails to the following people:

Katie Fry Hester - katiefry.hester@senate.state.md.us

Clarence Lam - clarence.lam@senate.state.md.us

Guy Guzzone - guy.guzzone@senate.state.md.us

Chao Wu - chao.wu@house.state.md.us

Natalie Ziegler - natalie.ziegler@house.state.md.us

Courtney Watson - courtney.watson@house.state.md.us

Pam Guzzone - pam.guzzone@house.state.md.us

Terri Hill - terri.hill@house.state.md.us

Jessica Feldmark - jessica.feldmark@house.state.md.us

Vanessa Atterbeary - vanessa.atterbeary@house.state.md.us

Jen Terrasa - jen.terrassa@house.state.md.us

Governor Wes Moore - <https://governor.maryland.gov/contact-the-governor/>

Here is a sample letter:

Dear _____,

I am writing to you in response to the millions of dollars in proposed cuts to the Howard County Public School system budget. These cuts will severely impact our schools. Many of the cuts we are facing are due to the mandates in the Blueprint for Education. Although these mandates will bring many wonderful things to our system local county governments cannot afford to implement these positive changes without cutting important services. I implore you, our state officials, to provide more funding to the county school systems so that the Blueprint ideals can be achieved without sacrificing our current system.