



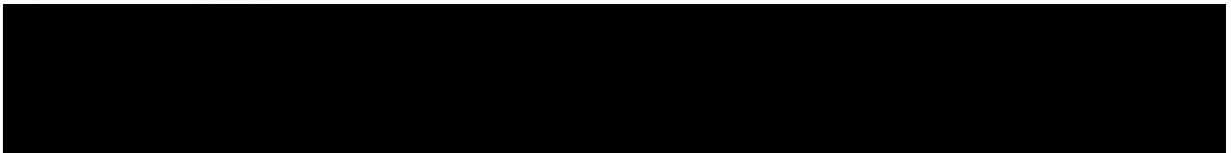
November 21, 2019

CONFIDENTIAL  
HAND DELIVERED

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

Re: Maximizing Public Confidence in the Board of Education During the  
Redistricting Process

Dear Board Members:



However, the Panel also notes the precept of Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) Policy 2070 Ethics is that "...the success of a public school system is dependent upon citizens having the highest trust in their public officials and employees... citizens have a right to be assured the Board, Superintendent, and HCPSS employees maintain impartiality and independence of judgement in the performance of duties and responsibilities."

The Ethics Panel understands that residence and/or home ownership in Howard County are inextricably linked to service on the Board of Education. Thus, it is unavoidable that every Board member potentially has a perceived financial interest in every redistricting plan, regardless of whether their polygon is actively affected by a plan or perceived to be protected from the effects of a plan.

In light of this, and in order to maximize public confidence in the Board, the Ethics Panel recommends that for any polygon in which a Board member is a resident and/or homeowner, the redistricting plan's effect on that polygon, whether it is moved or not moved at any level, should be justified on a quantitative basis consistent with the quantitative decision criteria affecting all other polygons. Quantitative criteria could include, but are not limited to: balancing school utilization, balancing FARM populations, minimizing travel times for students, and minimizing HCPSS costs. If the outcome under an approved redistricting plan for a Board member's polygon is not transparently the result of applying consistent quantitative criteria, public trust in the process will not be maximized and additional complaints to the Ethics Panel seem likely.

Sincerely,

*LaShanda Whaley (ty)*

LaShanda Whaley  
Chair  
Ethics Panel