

**From:** [Candace Dodson-Reed](#)  
**To:** [Superintendent](#)  
**Subject:** [External] Anonymous letter  
**Date:** Friday, May 24, 2019 4:16:57 PM

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Good afternoon Dr. Martirano,

I'm glad that you and Freeman had a chance to talk today about the anonymous letter. Look forward to chatting with you on June 18th!

As Freeman mentioned to you this was not personal. As a graduate and former parent, I take great interest in ensuring that our public schools are the best they can be.

If you'd like to talk before the 18th, please let me know. And please let me know if I need to do anything to follow up with the BOE. I believe both you and the BOE were copied on the letter.

Have a good weekend! :)

Best,  
Candace

Sent from my iPhone. Please pardon any typos.

**From:** [Towanda Brown](#)  
**To:** [Candace Dodson-Reed](#)  
**Cc:** [Mavis Ellis](#); [Larry Walker](#)  
**Subject:** Re: [External] Concerns based on yesterday's BOE meeting  
**Date:** Saturday, March 16, 2019 10:52:42 AM

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Hi Candace.

Sorry I mis-titled your being Sabina's campaign manager. I will find out the exact information I found during her campaign.

Everyone deserves to be at the table and should be given equal opportunity. My point is the AACRT and PFLAG should not be called out as special groups for the charter. I am not discriminating against PFLAG, but it appears that the BOE is discriminating against other groups who are partners with the HCPSS.

I do hope that Mavis hasn't violated any confidentiality by sending this to you. I will have the other BOE members determine that.

Towanda

Sent from my iPhone

On Mar 16, 2019, at 9:50 AM, Candace Dodson-Reed <[cdodreed@gmail.com](mailto:cdodreed@gmail.com)> wrote:

Thank you for sharing this with me. I'm quite disappointed to read this. My contribution and the record of the Roundtable is well known in this community.

Also, for the record, I was NOT Sabina Taj's campaign manager but I am so happy she was elected to represent all children.

I'll address this with the AACR (African American Community Roundtable). Copying the president of the AACR, Larry Walker.

Hopefully you will share this with the LGBTQ community as well. They are not a special interest group and deserve to be at the table as well.

Best,  
Candace

Sent from my iPhone. Please pardon any typos.

On Mar 16, 2019, at 8:04 AM, Mavis Ellis <[Mavis\\_Ellis@hcpss.org](mailto:Mavis_Ellis@hcpss.org)> wrote:

Good Morning,

Yesterday the Board and others received an email where your name and organizations with which you may be associated with were

included. I thought it only fair that this information be shared with you.

Mavis Ellis  
Chair  
Board of Education of Howard County

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**From:** Towanda Brown <[ttbrown@verizon.net](mailto:ttbrown@verizon.net)>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 15, 2019 11:45 AM  
**To:** BoE Email; Michael Martirano  
**Cc:** Karalee Turner-Little  
**Subject:** [External] Concerns based on yesterday's BOE meeting

Good morning BOE members and Dr Martirano,

I am writing to you as a concerned citizen of Howard County based on last night's BOE meeting. I know most of you personally and was quite shocked and disappointed at quite a few things which I will itemize below; however, my biggest concern is the chokehold that this BOE has put Dr. Martirano and his staff in. I know most of the staff the community interfaces with personally as well and they have done an excellent job making the community feel a part-of the HCPSS, particularly when it comes to policies and joint community activities.

I have been in this county for over 30 years and have seen many Superintendents. Dr. Martirano and his staff are truly and honestly committed to community partnership and interaction, but he has been put in a position of choosing between protecting his staff (who works extremely hard) and providing support to the community. Here is an example to make it crystal clear...at our CAC meeting on Wednesday, March 13, there was a risk that the meeting would be cancelled, after everyone was in attendance because there was not a BOE member present. Why does the Superintendent feel he has to possibly take that course of action? Perhaps the BOE collective needs to discuss this and hold one another accountable for making the Superintendent feel this is a decision he must make or he and his staff will have repercussions and a tongue-lashing. I want everyone to consider the following:

- 1) people made sacrifices to come to the CAC meeting to hear a topic discussed, including some getting childcare. Do you really want to dismiss and discount the importance of their time?
- 2) the CAC membership is entitled to hear from the HCPSS independent of whether a BOE member is present or not...last year, we didn't have a BOE

representative at more than half of the meetings. According to the bylaws, the BOE has no role but to share information.

3) CAC is expected to be an advisory to the BOE based on topics of interest where the HCPSS is knowledgeable and should be trustworthy. Why do they have to be babysat. In over 10 years since my involvement, this has never been the case.

Regarding the decisions and discussions last night, my concerns are as follows:

1) if the BOE feels that 4 years on the obrc is too much and compromising, why doesn't their appointee follow the same logic? Why did the BOE vote that their personal appointee is an exception? It gives the appearance that there are separate rules for the BOE hand-selected folks that circumvents the concerns. This appears to me as a privilege and mis-use of power and authority. I noticed the same regarding particular BOE members having more members of their support group in the Educational Equity policy.

2) a BOE member is making recommendations to include a group in a charter who she has personal bias towards based on her campaign. Candace Dodson-Reed, Sabina Taj's campaign manager, formed the African-American Community Roundtable (AACRT) — now she wants them written into the OBRC charter? I would suggest someone look at the contributions of the AACRT to any policy team or HCPSS effort. You will notice their lack of participation...so why are they being rewarded?

3) a BOE member is making a recommendation to include a special interest group (PFLAG) who makes up less than the population of many other groups in the HCPSS such as Chinese, Korean, Indian, who have been more involved over the past few years than PFLAG. How does a special interest group that composes such a small population warrant inclusion in a charter?

What happened last night concerns me. Is this really where we are as a county? What incentive do other groups, who have true two-way partnerships with the HCPSS have to continue when there is clear favoritism and bias? Most of the groups identified for inclusion in the charter have one way partnership, they want the HCPSS to do for them. Most don't participate on a policy to provide input unless it benefits their political or personal agendas. Are the rest of the BOE members oblivious to the fact?

I think a consequence of behaviors such as last night by the BOE will result in less community participation by valuable partners. Is this what the collective BOE wants?

Sincerely,

Towanda Brown

Sent from my iPhone