

From: [Noah H. Jacobs](#)
To: [Jennifer Mallo](#)
Subject: [External] Please do not cut 3rd Grade Strings
Date: Thursday, March 7, 2024 3:50:44 PM

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Dear Ms. Mallo,

It was disappointing to watch the recent Board of Education meeting and see that you voted No on restoring funding for 3rd Grade Strings. This program is of equal importance to others which had their funding restored and I strongly urge you to reconsider and vote for the measure.

I have many concerns about the possibility of 3rd Grade Strings being eliminated from HCPSS, but one that I fear may go overlooked is that of equity. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] We know that not every family is as fortunate as we are, and the elimination of 3rd Grade Strings will mean that those families who are not able to pay for private lessons will suffer the most as far as the lost opportunity of learning a musical instrument and all of the countless benefits that come with that experience.

I write today to respectfully urge you to reconsider and vote to restore 3rd Grade Strings so every child in HCPSS has access to the life-changing benefits of learning a musical instrument from an early age and being part of an ensemble that will benefit not only themselves as individuals, but their schools and communities as well.

I urge you to support 3rd Grade Strings. I urge you to listen to the countless parents, educators, and students who testified, many through tears, about the reasons that Strings has meant the world to them, to help them develop confidence, skills, and abilities that have translated to other areas of their academics, as well as their lives outside of school. I urge you to not close this door and make this opportunity unavailable to students. I urge you to vote to support 3rd Grade Strings.

Sincerely,
Noah Jacobs

[REDACTED]

Noah H. Jacobs

[REDACTED]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]



From: [Jennifer Mallo](#)
To: [Board & Student Member](#); [Karalee Turner-Little](#); [Bill Barnes](#); [Darin Conforti](#)
Subject: Scenarios spreadsheet, alternative view
Date: Thursday, March 7, 2024 3:03:26 PM
Attachments: [FPY25 Budget Comparison Doc.xlsx](#)

All,

I have made a spreadsheet showing the different scenarios, what they contain and what they do not. It contains scenario C as well as a potential scenario D. I find looking at it from this point of view may be helpful for comparing the scenarios side by side.

Jen

Jennifer Swickard Mallo
Board of Education of Howard County, Chair
Pronouns: She/Her/Hers
443-355-7043 Direct, Cell

From: [Donna Forton](#)
To: [Board Member's Email](#)
Subject: Work Session Remarks & Slides
Date: Thursday, March 7, 2024 2:32:28 PM
Attachments: [3-7-2024 Barnes Remarks - Scenario C Budget Deliberations_fin.pdf](#)
[3-7-2024 Budget Work Session Scenario C Slides.pdf](#)
[image001.png](#)

Donna M. Forton

Donna M. Forton
Executive Assistant, Office of the Board of Education
Howard County Public Schools
10910 Clarksville Pike
Ellicott City, MD 21042
Phone: (410) 313-1584



OFFICE OF THE
BOARD OF EDUCATION
OF HOWARD COUNTY

From: [Karalee Turner-Little](#)
To: [April Harrison](#); [Jennifer Mallo](#)
Cc: [Catalina Ruiz Rojas](#); [Jerilyn Johnson](#)
Subject: Work Session Remarks & Slides
Date: Thursday, March 7, 2024 2:27:32 PM
Attachments: [3-7-2024 Barnes Remarks - Scenario C Budget Deliberations fin.pdf](#)
[3-7-2024 Budget Work Session Scenario C Slides.pdf](#)

Please share with Board members on Sharepoint but hold off on posting on Board Docs.

Bill suggests that all materials can be posted right before the meeting.

Thanks so much!

K

From: [Antwan Perry](#)
To: [Jacquelin McCoy](#); [Antonia Watts](#); [Judith Jones](#); [Razia F. Kosi](#)
Cc: [Agenda Questions](#); [Stephen Cowles](#); [Karalee Turner-Little](#); [Bill Barnes](#)
Subject: RE: Policy 1080
Date: Thursday, March 7, 2024 2:24:55 PM

Greetings, Ms. McCoy –

Thank you for the note. Since we have some time prior to the Board taking final action on this policy in May, I will be sure to find some time for us to meet and discuss in detail in addition to whatever we may be able to discuss today should we get to this agenda item.

Appreciate your observation and I look forward to us discussing.

Best,

-Antwan

From: Jacquelin McCoy <Jacquelin_McCoy@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, March 7, 2024 2:04 PM
To: Antwan Perry <Antwan_Perry@hcpss.org>; Antonia Watts <Antonia_Watts@hcpss.org>; Judith Jones <Judith_Jones@hcpss.org>; Razia F. Kosi <Razia_Kosi@hcpss.org>
Cc: Agenda Questions <AgendaQuestions@hcpss.org>; Stephen Cowles <Stephen_Cowles@hcpss.org>; Karalee Turner-Little <Karalee_TurnerLittle@hcpss.org>; Bill Barnes <Bill_Barnes@hcpss.org>
Subject: Re: Policy 1080

I would like to have a conversation about the use of the term "restorative justice" to "**restorative practices**" as the previous term connotes the idea of criminality. I am sure this will require a discussion but I believe that labels matter and make a difference in how things are perceived.

Some labeling can be a hinderance to engagement and understanding.

Be well,

Jacky McCoy

Educator

[Howard County Board of Education](#) (At-Large County 1)

Pronouns: she, her, hers

Real Education, Real Access, Real Family Engagement

From: Antwan Perry <Antwan_Perry@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, March 7, 2024 12:30 PM
To: Antonia Watts <Antonia_Watts@hcpss.org>; Judith Jones <Judith_Jones@hcpss.org>; Razia F. Kosi <Razia_Kosi@hcpss.org>
Cc: Agenda Questions <AgendaQuestions@hcpss.org>; Stephen Cowles <Stephen_Cowles@hcpss.org>; Karalee Turner-Little <Karalee_TurnerLittle@hcpss.org>
Subject: RE: Policy 1080

Hi Mrs. Watts –

My colleagues and I had an opportunity to review and discuss your suggestions and we are in agreement with your recommendations. We will be sure to incorporate these changes into the draft that you all will receive prior to the policy coming back for Action.

Thank you!

Best,

-Antwan

From: Antwan Perry <Antwan_Perry@hcpss.org>
Sent: Monday, March 4, 2024 8:20 PM
To: Antonia Watts <Antonia_Watts@hcpss.org>; Judith Jones <Judith_Jones@hcpss.org>; Razia F. Kosi <Razia_Kosi@hcpss.org>
Cc: Agenda Questions <AgendaQuestions@hcpss.org>; Stephen Cowles <Stephen_Cowles@hcpss.org>; Karalee Turner-Little <Karalee_TurnerLittle@hcpss.org>
Subject: Re: Policy 1080

Hi Mrs. Watts,

Thanks for reviewing and for your questions. We will take a look and provide an update at least by the Board meeting, if not sooner.

Best,

-Antwan

From: Antonia Watts <Antonia_Watts@hcpss.org>

Sent: Monday, March 4, 2024 8:15 PM

To: Antwan Perry <Antwan_Perry@hcpss.org>; Judith Jones <Judith_Jones@hcpss.org>; Razia F. Kosi <Razia_Kosi@hcpss.org>

Cc: Agenda Questions <AgendaQuestions@hcpss.org>; Stephen Cowles <Stephen_Cowles@hcpss.org>

Subject: Policy 1080

Dr. Perry,

Standard 3.B. 4. Can you please check with DEI about this phrasing? This phrasing feels like it should lead with the creation of a restorative culture.

“Commit to restorative justice in education in order to create restorative cultures in schools that value respect, dignity, and mutual concern.”

Standard 3.C.3. This section in its wordiness has the potential to miss something. I think it would be sufficient to say “Provide ongoing professional learning focusing on factors influencing educational equity for all HCPSS employees.” If this needs to remain, then remove the religious groups names. No other groups are named here.

Standard 3.C.4 (Something is wrong with the numbering). DEILs. Add in “with guidance from the DEI office” These poitions should be connected to the DEI office.

Standard 4.A.

There needs to be a measures of accountability section added or language that clearly says what the masures for each one of these items will look like. This section is too broad.

Thank you,
Antonia

Antonia Watts (she/her), Chair

District 2

E: antonia_watts@hcpss.org

M: 443-774-8626

From: [Karissa Bryant](#)
To: [Jennifer Mallo](#); [Yun Lu](#); [Linfeng Chen](#); [Robyn Scates](#); [Jacquelin McCoy](#); [Student Board Member](#); [David L. Clark](#); [Donna Forton](#); [Ombudsman](#); [Bill Barnes](#)
Subject: Re: Budget Cuts
Date: Thursday, March 7, 2024 2:05:46 PM
Attachments: [Why 3rd grade orchestra shouldn't be cut..pdf](#)

Sorry! Take two with a PDF! Thanks for your patience!

From: Karissa Bryant <Karissa_Bryant@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, March 7, 2024 1:23 PM
To: Jennifer Mallo <Jennifer_Mallo@hcpss.org>; Yun Lu <Yun_Lu@hcpss.org>; Linfeng Chen <Linfeng_Chen@hcpss.org>; Robyn Scates <Robyn_Scates@hcpss.org>; Jacquelin McCoy <Jacquelin_McCoy@hcpss.org>; Student Board Member <Student_Member@hcpss.org>; David L. Clark <David_Clark@hcpss.org>; Donna Forton <Donna_Forton@hcpss.org>; Ombudsman <ombudsman@hcpss.org>; Bill Barnes <Bill_Barnes@hcpss.org>
Subject: Re: Budget Cuts

Hello,

I also wanted to share a google doc. that my 5th grade orchestra students worked on when they found out about the possible cuts to 3rd grade orchestra and G.T. teachers. I found it very touching and hope you'll vote tonight to save these important positions that make such a positive impact on our students' lives.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Thank you!

From: Karissa Bryant
Sent: Monday, February 12, 2024 3:01 PM
To: Jennifer Mallo <Jennifer_Mallo@hcpss.org>; Yun Lu <Yun_Lu@hcpss.org>; Yun Lu <Yun_Lu@hcpss.org>; Linfeng Chen <Linfeng_Chen@hcpss.org>; Linfeng Chen <Linfeng_Chen@hcpss.org>; Robyn Scates <Robyn_Scates@hcpss.org>; Jacquelin McCoy <Jacquelin_McCoy@hcpss.org>; Student Board Member <Student_Member@hcpss.org>; David L. Clark <David_Clark@hcpss.org>; Donna Forton <Donna_Forton@hcpss.org>; Ombudsman <ombudsman@hcpss.org>
Subject: Budget Cuts

To the Board of Education:

I am reaching out to request a reevaluation of the proposed budget for the academic year 2024-2025. As a member of the Phelps Luck Elementary community,

every single program that stands to be eliminated will directly affect the HCPSS policy 1080 on Education Equity that all students will be provided with academic and non-academic programs to achieve the highest potential. For many of our students, the only opportunity to engage with arts and enrichment activities is within our school building, as many of the families in our Title One school do not have the financial means nor the time to provide those experiences outside of school hours. Programs such as 3rd-grade strings and our elementary-level Gifted and Talented seminars are essential to provide equitable access to enrichment experiences for economically-disadvantaged students.

Furthermore, I am concerned about suggestions to increase class sizes, which would hamper teachers' ability to effectively engage with students. Increasing class sizes in an already overpopulated school will have detrimental effects on the ability of students to learn and create meaningful connections with staff and classmates.

I understand that a budget needs to be drawn and that cuts need to be made, but the current proposed changes do not seem to align with the mission of our school system.

Kindly requesting a revision of the budget.

Karissa Strawley Bryant

From: [Jennifer Mallo](#)
To: [Student Board Member](#); [April Harrison](#)
Cc: [Board & Student Member](#)
Subject: RE: Meeting Minutes Work Session 2/29
Date: Thursday, March 7, 2024 1:53:00 PM
Attachments: [2024 02 29 Minutes Draft.pdf](#)

I was in Boarddocs, so I just grabbed them for you.

J

From: Student Board Member <Student_Member@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, March 7, 2024 1:46 PM
To: April Harrison <April_Harrison@hcpss.org>
Cc: Board & Student Member <fullboard@hcpss.org>
Subject: Meeting Minutes Work Session 2/29

Hello Ms. Harrison,

Could I please be provided with a copy of the rough draft meeting minutes from the 2/29 work session?

Thank you,

Lamia Ayaz

Student Member of the Board

Howard County Public School System

From: [Jennifer Mallo](#)
To: [Karalee Turner-Little](#)
Cc: [Darin Conforti](#)
Subject: RE: Budget Adoption Documents for Review
Date: Thursday, March 7, 2024 1:02:00 PM
Attachments: [FPY25 Budget Comparison Doc.xlsx](#)

Darin,

Can you please cost out Scenario D. I think my rough/back of envelope numbers are close.

Thanks,
Jen

From: Karalee Turner-Little <Karalee_TurnerLittle@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, March 7, 2024 12:55 PM
To: Jennifer Mallo <Jennifer_Mallo@hcpss.org>
Subject: RE: Budget Adoption Documents for Review

Thanks---do you want Darin to review or do you want to share as is?
I haven't had a chance to look over carefully.
K

From: Jennifer Mallo <Jennifer_Mallo@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, March 7, 2024 12:53 PM
To: Karalee Turner-Little <Karalee_TurnerLittle@hcpss.org>
Subject: RE: Budget Adoption Documents for Review

Please see Scenario D.

From: Karalee Turner-Little <Karalee_TurnerLittle@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, March 7, 2024 12:48 PM
To: Jennifer Mallo <Jennifer_Mallo@hcpss.org>; April Harrison <April_Harrison@hcpss.org>
Cc: Bill Barnes <Bill_Barnes@hcpss.org>; Darin Conforti <Darin_Conforti@hcpss.org>
Subject: FW: Budget Adoption Documents for Review
Importance: High

Chair Mallo and Ms. Harrison,
This is the first installment of information for Board members for today's meeting.
Attached is the Scenario C Factors and below they are bulleted out. The above MOE total for Scenario C is 58M.
April, please let me know if you want our office to post on SharePoint-----let's hold off on posting on Board Docs at the moment.
Any questions can be directed to Mr. Conforti.
Thanks so much,
K

- Scenario C included:
 - Class size increase of 0.0 Elementary and 1.0 Secondary \$5.293M and 81.30 positions restored
 - Summer School BSAP/GT (summer 2024 and 2025) restored to \$1.4M including FICA
 - HS Science Paras/Testing Assistants \$390,407 and 14.0 positions restored
 - HS Library Media \$593,686 and 7.5 positions restored
 - 3rd Grade Strings Music \$795,600 and 12.0 positions restored
 - Elementary GT \$1.326M and 20.0 positions restored
 - Curricular Field Trips at 50%, \$146.1K restored
 - Math League \$5,500
 - Special Education
 - Assistive Technology Team including 1.0 Technical Assistant/1.0 Para positions \$78,991 restored and SLP 1.0 position \$128,510 restored
 - Resource Teachers 2.0 positions \$248,933 restored
 - \$100k addition for contracted review of Special Education
 - Temporary Contract Employees reduced from 138 to 65, \$1,738,620 restored
 - Photographer 1.0 position restored \$93,522
 - Howard County Conservancy Teacher 1.0 position restored \$110,049
 - SMOB 50K contracted labor restored
 - DEI 3.0 positions \$351,900 restored
 - Benefits costs for the above

From: [Jennifer Mallo](#)
To: [Antonia Watts](#)
Subject: Can you get behind...
Date: Thursday, March 7, 2024 12:53:00 PM
Attachments: [FPY25 Budget Comparison Doc.xlsx](#)

Scenario D

Jennifer Swickard Mallo
Board of Education of Howard County, Chair
Pronouns: She/Her/Hers
443-355-7043 Direct, Cell

From: [Jennifer Mallo](#)
To: [Jolene Mosley](#)
Subject: draft
Date: Thursday, March 7, 2024 12:34:00 PM
Attachments: [FPY25 Budget Comparison Doc.xlsx](#)

Jennifer Swickard Mallo
Board of Education of Howard County, Chair
Pronouns: She/Her/Hers
443-355-7043 Direct, Cell

From: [Jennifer Mallo](#)
To: [Jacquelin McCoy](#)
Subject: doc per phone call
Date: Thursday, March 7, 2024 11:59:00 AM
Attachments: [FPY25 Budget Comparison Doc.xlsx](#)

Jacky,

Here is the document I spoke about. It is in draft form as it has not been double checked by anyone else for accuracy.

Jen

Jennifer Swickard Mallo
Board of Education of Howard County, Chair
Pronouns: She/Her/Hers
443-355-7043 Direct, Cell

From: [Jennifer Mallo](#)
To: [Bill Barnes](#); [Karalee Turner-Little](#)
Subject: Possible Document to help with confusion
Date: Thursday, March 7, 2024 11:28:00 AM
Attachments: [FPY25 Budget Comparison Doc.xlsx](#)

Bill, Karalee,

Can you please review this? I thought this type of presentation of the information might help Board Members

jen

Jennifer Swickard Mallo
Board of Education of Howard County, Chair
Pronouns: She/Her/Hers
443-355-7043 Direct, Cell

From: [CLES Music Boosters](#)
To: [BoE Email](#); [Bill Barnes](#); [Karalee Turner-Little](#); cball@howardcountymd.gov; councilmail@howardcountymd.gov
Cc: [Terry Eberhardt](#); [Ebony Langford-Brown](#)
Subject: [External] Support the will of the people! Save Music in HCPSS!
Date: Thursday, March 7, 2024 7:54:25 AM
Attachments: [Signatures March 7 - petition signatures jobs 37915273 20240307124153.pdf](#)
[Comments March 7 - petition comments jobs 37915273 20240307124502.pdf](#)

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [REDACTED] [Learn why this is important](#)

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Once again, we are writing to call your attention to the petition [Save Music in HCPSS!!!!](#) At the time of this writing, the petition has reached **4,852 signatures**.

Do not ignore the will of nearly 5,000 individuals that you are charged to represent. It is the responsibility of the BOE and County Council to work to incorporate the will of the people into their work. However, as evidenced by the budget process thus far, the people's will is not being considered.

The inclusion of 3rd Grade Strings in the HCPSS budget is \$795,000, only .06% of the requested budget. However, if strings remain excluded, 12 phenomenal music educators will be eliminated, thousands of 3rd graders will miss out on the opportunity to participate in their first instrumental experience, and the foundation for the revered music program in HCPSS will be dismantled.

Do NOT let this happen. Include 3rd grade strings in the 2024-25 HCPSS budget.

Attached are the most up to date lists of signatures and comments at the time of this email. Please read, see the will of the people, and follow their lead.

From: [School Business Daily](#)
To: [BoE Email](#)
Subject: [External] Affordable Connectivity Program Sunsets
Date: Thursday, March 7, 2024 7:27:45 AM

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ASBO International

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ASBO International



March 7, 2024

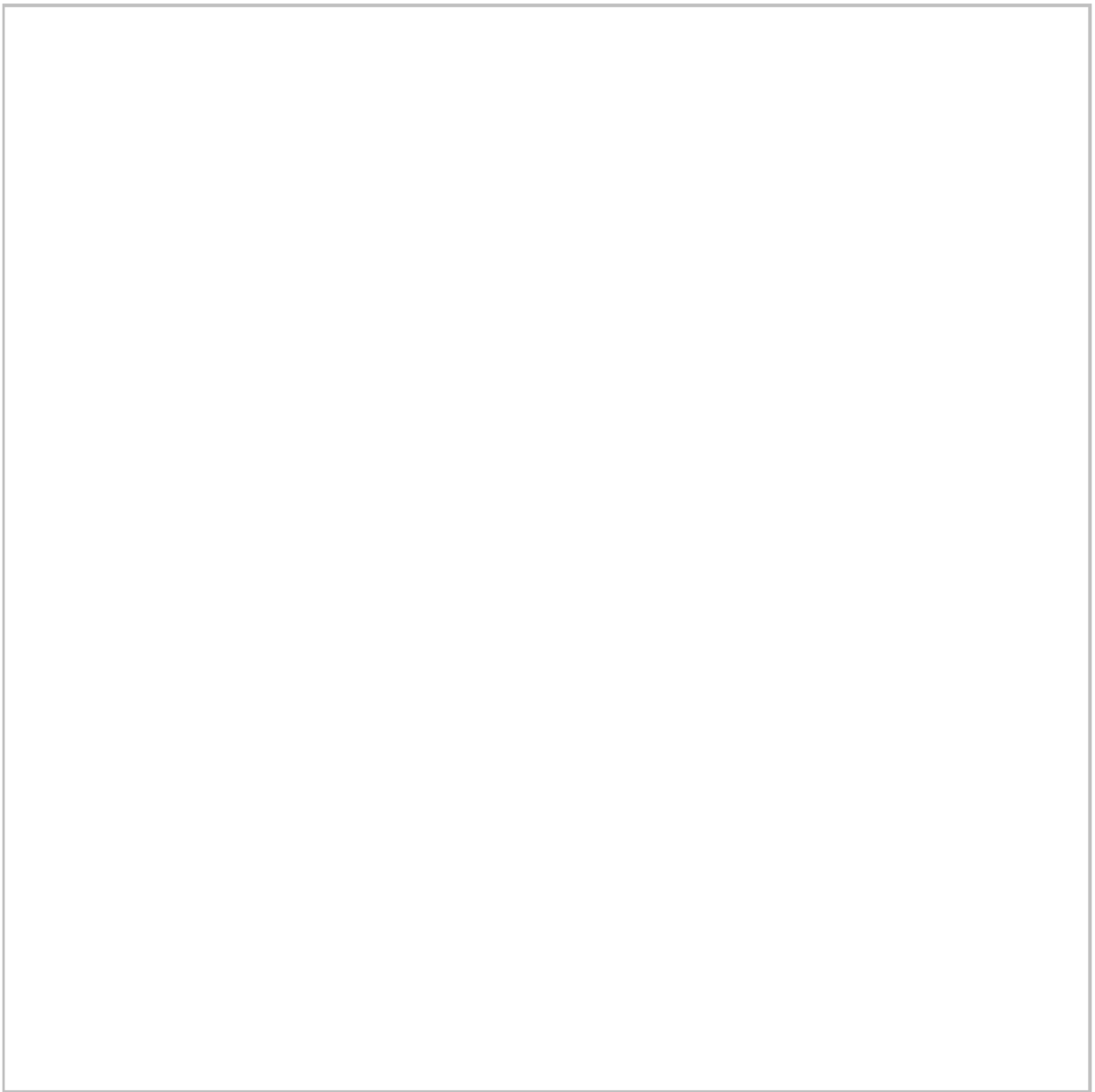
Good Morning, Sandra

LEADING THE NEWS

Affordable Connectivity Program Sunsets

The Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP), which has helped provide broadband services to nearly 23 million households nationwide, officially stopped taking applications in early February. According to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), federal funds are expected to completely dry up by the end of April. Though congressional lawmakers proposed a \$7 billion bicameral, bipartisan bill in January to temporarily extend the program, the legislation has stalled. Without additional funding, the FCC warns that millions of people who were connected to home internet services through the ACP could lose access. The program provided a \$30 monthly discount to eligible households to pay for broadband. According to a fall survey of 1,600 program participants released by consulting firm Benenson Strategy Group, 81% of parents enrolled in the ACP said they were worried that their children would fall behind if they lose home internet access. States can support districts by ensuring they have access to resources, or tap into already existing funds to help address larger infrastructure needs in their school communities. "District leaders could consider partnering with their communities and local governments to address internet affordability when leveraging new infrastructure access to broadband that might have recently been established through the federal \$42 billion Broadband Equity Access and Deployment Program," adds Brian Stephens, director of stakeholder engagement at the Funds For Learning consultancy firm, which helps schools and libraries navigate the E-rate funding process.

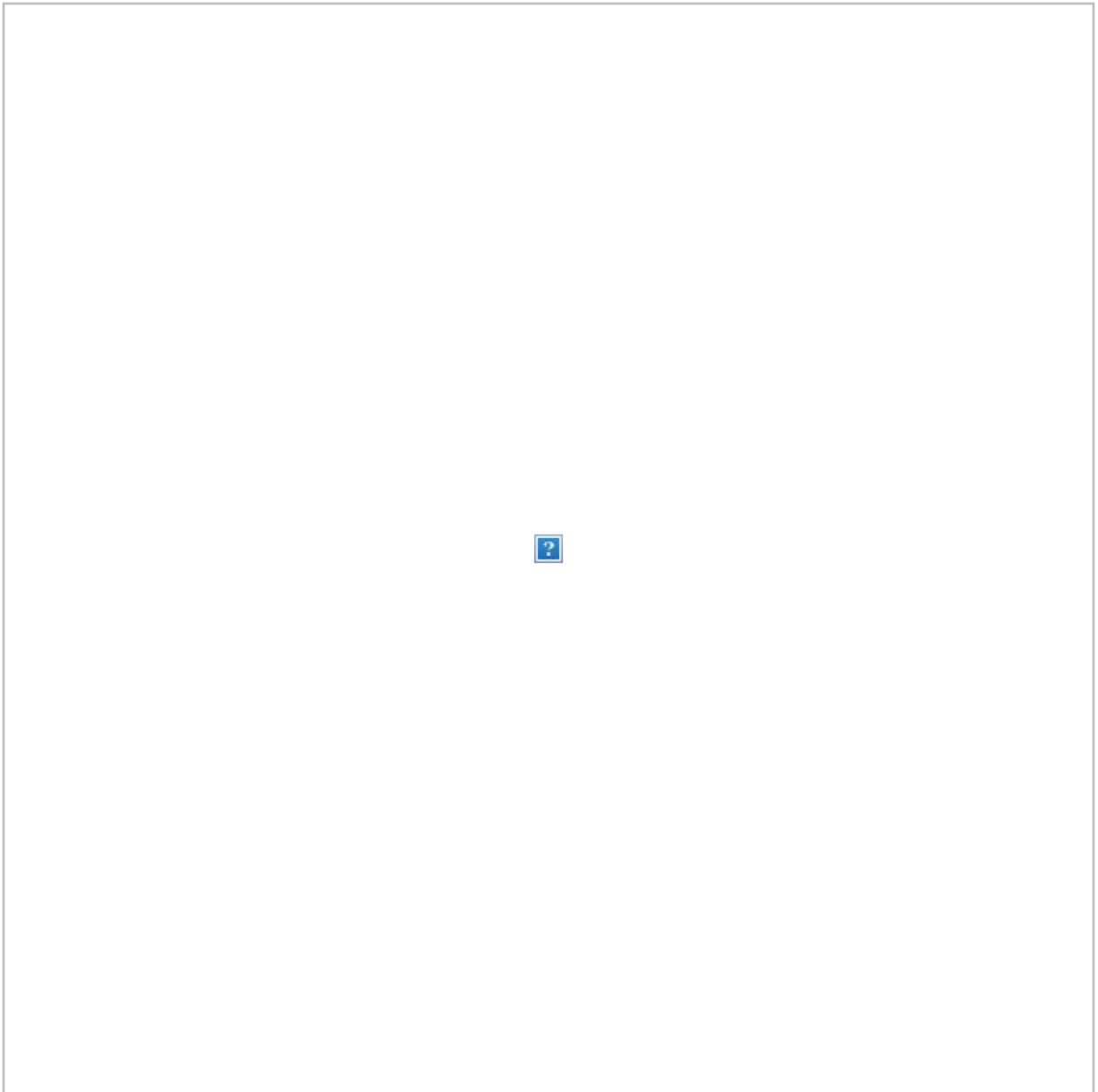
K12 Dive



BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Iowa House Bill Allocates Millions For Arming School Staff

Iowa House lawmakers are pushing through a bill that would provide \$3 million to pay for training for school districts that choose to arm staff members. The legislation is part of a larger bill with other school safety requirements. Both bills are part of Republicans' legislative response to the shooting at Perry High School in January. School districts would be limited to grants of \$25,000 under the bill, but they could use the money to purchase infrastructure and equipment related to arming staff, or to facilitate staff training. The bill would also require school districts to conduct school safety reviews and share the results with law enforcement, create a task force to review school infrastructure safety and security standards, and require schools to have emergency radios that are capable of contacting law enforcement. House File 2586, the bill to allow districts to arm school staff and grant them legal immunity, has advanced in the Senate.



OPERATIONS

Unions Supporting Republicans Against School Choice Measures

A new report reveals that teachers' unions have increased donations to Republican state level legislative candidates over the past six years. The unions have donated millions of dollars to certain Republican candidates' state legislative primaries in states that support school choice and parental rights bills. This move comes as the unions oppose school choice, fearing that parents are demanding more education choice. The unions have adopted a different donation strategy, supporting candidates who might disagree with them on other issues but oppose policies that expand education freedom for families. While publicly endorsing Democrats, the unions have also supported Republicans who have voted against school choice measures.

Fox News

Rural California School Districts Feeling Neglected

Rural school districts in California are struggling with a lack of attention from state leaders, according to a report by CalMatters. These districts face challenges in providing special education, transportation, teacher recruitment, and staying in compliance with state regulations. Rindy DeVoll, executive director of the California Rural Ed Network, highlights the amplified challenges faced by rural districts. Around 35% of schools in California are rural, meaning they are at least 25 miles from a city and have fewer than 600 students. Students in rural schools often lag behind their suburban peers in meeting state standards, graduation rates, and completion of coursework needed for public universities. The needs of rural areas are largely ignored by California policy, which is geared towards wealthier coastal communities. Rural school districts receive limited funds from Federal Rural Education and Achievement grants. Assemblyman James Gallagher also emphasizes the expensive burdens faced by less wealthy inland areas.

EdSource

From ASBO International



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Submit your presentation proposal for the 2024 Annual Conference & Expo by March 11. Review the submission criteria and send your proposal today!

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MANAGEMENT AND TRAINING

Boston Public Schools Recognized For Advancing Sustainability

Boston Public Schools is being recognized for its efforts to advance sustainability within the district. The school system is one of the recipients of the 2024 Best of Green Schools Awards, organized by the Center for Green Schools (CGS). "They have empowered and inspired students, teachers, and communities to create and foster greener, more sustainable learning environments," says Anisa Heming, director at the CGS. Boston Public Schools has invested in numerous sustainability practices and programs, improving areas such as indoor air quality, drinking water access, and efficiency upgrades. St. Mark's School in Southborough was also recognized for its sustainability commitments, including waste reduction and carbon emissions elimination. The school achieved its goals outlined in its climate action plan two years early.

Boston Globe



North Carolina Education Officials Face Primary Defeats

North Carolina's public schools superintendent and some state legislators won't be returning to their positions in 2025 after primary defeats. State Supt. of Public Instruction Catherine Truitt narrowly lost Tuesday's Republican primary to Michele Morrow, a homeschooling parent and conservative activist. Also on Tuesday, six-term Democratic Sen. Mike Woodard from Durham County, who voted to overturn a few of Democratic Gov. Roy Cooper's vetoes, lost his primary to a self-proclaimed progressive. Truitt, in her first term as schools' chief, led the Department of Public Instruction during the COVID-19 pandemic and later recovery, and implemented a new legislature-backed plan to improve reading skills in early grades. Morrow will take on Democrat Maurice "Mo" Green in the general election.

[U.S. News](#)

LEGISLATION

School Choice Plan Receives Final Approval In Alabama

Alabama Gov. Kay Ivey's \$100 million school choice plan has received final approval from the Alabama Senate. The CHOOSE Act will allocate up to \$7,000 of state funding per student for education-related expenses, such as private school tuition and tutoring. The program will start in the 2025-26 school year and will initially be limited to families making less than 300% of the federal poverty level. However, the first 500 spots are reserved for students with special needs. Public school advocates have criticized the program, while supporters argue that it provides an opportunity for students to learn in an environment that best meets their needs. Alabama's school choice program is similar to those in Arizona, Arkansas, and Oklahoma. Pending the governor's signature, the program will become law.

[Tuscaloosa News](#)



TRANSPORTATION

New York Schools Eligible For Electric Bus Charging Infrastructure Funding

A program introduced by New York Gov. Kathy Hochul aims to assist school districts in acquiring charging infrastructure for electric buses. The program is open to school districts and bus operators that have purchased electric buses since January 2023. Funding for the program comes from the state's Clean Water, Clean Air, and Green Jobs Environmental Bond Act and the New York School Bus Incentive Program. The program offers funding for chargers and associated electrical upgrades. Priority districts may receive additional funding. Hochul has also set a goal of converting the state's school bus fleet to zero-emission by 2035.

[School Bus Fleet](#)



INTERNATIONAL

Much For Education In Alberta Budget Proposals

To address rising enrolment in Alberta schools, the provincial government would provide more than C\$1.2 billion (\$890 million) in funding for enrolment growth over the next three years, if Budget 2024 passes. The funding would enable school authorities to hire up to 3,100 additional teachers and classroom support staff across the province. In addition, Budget 2024 provides more than C\$1.5 billion (\$1.11 billion) to school authorities over the next three years so they can continue to provide specialized learning supports.

[Education News Canada](#)

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From: [Erin Parker](#)
To: [BoE Email](#)
Subject: [External] Fwd: Budget Testimony on behalf of HCPSS
Date: Wednesday, March 6, 2024 9:41:43 PM
Attachments: [2024-03-03 Budget Speech for County Executive.pdf](#)

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Dear County Executive Ball,

I have testified in person or virtually for the past several years. Unfortunately, I have a conflict this year [REDACTED], and I am unable to testify verbally. Please consider my written testimony.

Thank you for your consideration!
Erin Parker
Ellicott City resident

From: [Ballotpedia](#)
To: [Jennifer Mallo](#)
Subject: [External] Hall Pass: Your Ticket to Understanding School Board Politics, Edition #100
Date: Wednesday, March 6, 2024 5:11:01 PM

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Ballotpedia's Hall Pass



March 06, 2024

Welcome to *Hall Pass*, a newsletter written to keep you plugged into the conversations driving school board politics and governance.

In today's edition, you'll find:

- On the issues: The debate over reading instruction in California
- School board filing deadlines, election results, and recall certifications
- AI a prominent topic at COSSBA annual conference
- Extracurricular: education news and numbers from around the web
- Candidate Connection survey

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BALLOTPEDIA

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On the issues: The debate over reading instruction in California

In this section, we curate reporting, analysis, and commentary on the issues school board members deliberate when they set out to offer the best education possible in their district. Missed an issue? Click [here](#) to see the previous education debates we've covered.

Last October, we ran a four-part series exploring the science of reading: [one](#), [two](#), [three](#), and [four](#).

California legislators introduced [Assembly Bill 2222](#) on Feb. 7, requiring the science of reading approach to instruction, which it defines as “explicit and systematic instruction in phonological and phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension, and writing.”

The *Los Angeles Times* Editorial Board writes that the science of reading instruction—which they say includes formal teaching on sounding out words (phonics) and vocabulary—is common sense. The Editorial Board says California should require more phonics-focused technical instruction in teacher training and student curricula.

Allison Briceño writes that the science of reading approach is poorly defined and tends to oversimplify the learning process. Briceño says science of reading curricula tend to focus too much on foundational skills like phonics and less on other related skills like writing and language development. She says teachers should have the flexibility to choose what reading curriculum to use.

[Editorial: The science of reading works. California should require it](#) | The Editorial Board, *Los Angeles Times*

“It’s an impressive-sounding moniker, the science of reading. But many successful teachers call it common sense and have been using it informally for years. It involves more direct instruction by the teacher, a significant dose of phonics, or sounding out words from letters, as well as building vocabulary, encouraging students to read aloud and helping them comprehend what they’re reading. In contrast, the two other principal methods of literacy education followed the theory that reading comes naturally to children, who just need to be exposed to engaging literature and figure out words by guessing them from the pictures and other context. While this actually does work for 30% of students, it leaves the futures of the other 70% in peril. Opponents of science of reading complain that phonics is too mechanical. But it doesn’t have to be if combined with vocabulary and enjoyable literature. Besides, what’s worse, a couple of years of sounding out words to build fluency and comprehension, or a lifetime of illiteracy? ... Schools need a sense of urgency to ensure that California students are improving academically right now, especially those in marginalized groups and from low-income families.”

[Opinion: Should California schools stick to phonics-based reading ‘science’? It’s not so simple](#) | Allison Briceño, *Los Angeles Times*

“In fact, the term ‘science of reading’ lacks a clear definition. It’s more a misleading marketing ploy and ideological catchphrase than a subset of research or teaching methodology. ... Researchers agree that learning to read is a complex process. But curricula that claim to be aligned with the science of reading tend to oversimplify the process, overemphasize and isolate foundational skills such as phonics (the correlation between letters and sounds), overlook oral language as a foundation for reading and ignore the importance of writing. In other words, they misrepresent the “science” part of the ‘science of reading.’ Learning to read in this way would be like learning to pedal on a stationary bicycle and then being expected to ride a bike through L.A. traffic without understanding balance, steering, speed and the rules of the road. ... Overemphasizing foundational skills can take classroom time away from writing, language development, science and social studies. Foundational skills are extremely important for young students, but they are insufficient for developing critical thinking, reading and writing.”

Share candidate endorsements with us!

As part of our goal to solve the [ballot information problem](#), Ballotpedia is gathering information about school board candidate endorsements. The ballot information gap widens the further down the ballot you go, and is worst for the more than 500,000 local offices nationwide, such as school boards or special districts. Endorsements can help voters know more about their candidates and what they stand for.

Do you know of an individual or group that has endorsed a candidate in your district? Click [here](#) to respond!

School board update: filing deadlines, election results, and recall certifications

In 2023, Ballotpedia covered elections for over 9,000 school board seats in more than 3,000 districts across 34 states. We’re expanding our coverage each year with our eye on the more [13,000 districts](#) with elected school boards.

Election results from the past week

Yesterday was Super Tuesday, and voters in [15 states and two territories](#) went

to the polls to cast ballots in federal, state, and local elections in one of the biggest voting days of the year (subscribe to Ballotpedia's [Daily Brew](#) for coverage of elections up and down the ballot!).

March 5 was also a big day for school board elections. Ballotpedia covered school board elections in Arkansas, Alabama, California, Louisiana, North Carolina, and Tennessee. That included elections in the [Los Angeles Unified School District](#)—the second-largest in the country. We also covered recall elections in two California districts.

Here's a brief look at some election results.

Los Angeles

Four seats on the [Los Angeles Unified School District](#) school board are up for election this year. On March 5, voters decided primaries for Districts 1, 3, 5 and 7. Candidates can win outright with a majority of the vote. If no candidate wins a majority, the two top vote-getters advance to a general election in November.

As of this writing, only one candidate—incumbent Tanya Ortiz Franklin, in District 7—is leading with a majority of the votes.

Here's a look at the [early results](#):

- **District 1:** Seven candidates are running in this race. Khallid A. Al-Alim and Sherlett Hendy Newbill are leading, with each having 22.3% of the vote. Dewayne Davis is in third place with 17.9%.
- **District 3:** Six candidates are running in this race. Incumbent Scott Mark Schmerelson and Dan Chang are leading with 41.5% and 29.5%, respectively. Raquel Villalta is in third place with 13.2%.
- **District 5:** Four candidates are running in the race. Grace Ortiz and Karla Griego are leading with 32.8% and 31.9%, respectively. Fidencio Gallardo is in third place with 23.6%.
- **District 7:** Incumbent Franklin has 53.8% of the vote and Lydia A. Gutiérrez has 46.2%.

[According](#) to the *Los Angeles Times*, “Big-picture issues include declining enrollment, potential school closures, the ending of pandemic-relief aid, the future of school police and student drug use.”

Recall elections

- [Orange Unified School District](#)

Who faced recall? Board members [Madison Klovestad Miner](#) and [Rick Ledesma](#).

What's the outcome? As of this writing, early results show 53% voted "Yes" to recall Miner and Ledesma, and 46% voted "No." Votes are still being counted. Click [here](#) to learn more about this recall.

- [Woodland Joint Unified School District](#)

Who faced recall? Emily MacDonald, the Area Two representative on the seven-member Woodland Joint Unified School District board of trustees.

What's the outcome? [Unofficial results show](#) 60.61% voted "Yes" to recall MacDonald and 39.39% voted "No." Click [here](#) to learn more about this recall.

Read more about school board recalls [here](#). We'll have more on noteworthy March 5 school board elections next week.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) a prominent topic at COSSBA annual conference

Artificial intelligence (AI) in education was one of several major topics at the Consortium of State School Boards Associations' (COSSBA) annual conference in Dallas, Texas, from Feb. 23-25. AI was not a topic at COSSBA's inaugural conference last year.

COSSBA represents state school board associations in 25 states. More than 1,300 school board members from all 25 states attended the conference.

I traveled to Dallas for the conference and spoke with school board members from around the country.

What is COSSBA?

[COSSBA](#) was [founded in late 2021](#) and is one of two national organizations representing state school board associations. The other, the [National School Boards Association](#) (NSBA), was founded in 1940. COSSBA describes itself as a "non-partisan, national alliance dedicated to sharing resources and information to support, promote and strengthen state school boards associations as they serve their local school districts and board members." For more background on COSSBA and NSBA, [click here](#).

Last year, I covered COSSBA's inaugural conference in Tampa, Florida, [here](#) and [here](#).

AI in classrooms

COSSBA Chief Operating Officer Debb Oliver said AI raises many questions, including about school safety. Oliver told me: “One of the things we hope to keep awareness of it’s not just AI—AI is not bad. It’s not good. It is a shift. And it’s something that we all are going to have to be a part of. How do we look at that holistically?”

[ChatGPT](#) is the most prominent AI platform. OpenAI, a nonprofit, released ChatGPT on Nov. 30, 2022. Within two months, more than [100 million people](#) were using the tool, making it the technology with the fastest-growing user base in history at the time. ChatGPT, an example of [generative AI](#), is [trained on large volumes of data](#) to [predict](#) which words are likely to follow one another. Users interact with ChatGPT through questions and prompts. With varying levels of accuracy, ChatGPT can generate essays, solve math problems, write computer code, and more.

Other notable AI platforms include Google’s [Gemini](#) and Anthropic’s [Claude](#).

An EdWeek Research Center poll of teachers and district leaders conducted between Nov. 30-Dec. 6 found that [56% of respondents](#) expect AI use to increase in the next year. Educators have [responded to ChatGPT](#) in varying ways. Districts in [Los Angeles](#) and [New York City](#) have blocked access to ChatGPT out of a concern that it could help students cheat. Other districts, like Wichita Public Schools in Kansas, have cautiously [embraced](#) the tool in and out of the classroom.

Breakout sessions on AI included:

- AI in Education: Opportunities and Challenges
- AI Writing Generators — The Good, The Bad and The Ugly
- AI in Education: Legal and Policy Considerations
- AI in Education: Safety Considerations

[Marvin Jones](#), a member of the Cabot School District school board in Arkansas, said AI will “cross every segment of society, and education is going to be on the forefront.” Jones, who said recruiting high quality teachers is one of the biggest issues facing his district, said that AI could help schools deal with teacher shortages: “With AI, my experience from what limited exposure I’ve had, this could very well be the vehicle that helps schools move to the forefront in terms of educating the young people like we should.”

On whether students might use AI platforms to [cheat](#) Jones said: “A dishonest student can be dishonest today without AI. Right. There’re too many forums out there they can utilize.”

Director of Digital Initiatives for the Missouri School Boards' Association Mark Henderson, who presented at a session on AI in the classroom, said, "For teachers, you know, it's basically a virtual teaching assistant that can help them develop lesson plans and worksheets, and test and write letters to parents and just endless possibilities. For students, you know, there's so much that they can do with research and with developing their own ideas, learning about things they could never have learned about before."

Henderson, also said he was worried AI could be used to manipulate local elections, including those for school boards: "We did a [webinar](#) with some state associations about deep fakes and their potential threat on the elections."

[On the Ballot](#), Ballotpedia's weekly podcast, has covered [state-level AI regulation](#) and [AI's effect on political news](#).

What other topics were covered at the conference?

The conference featured keynote speakers and dozens of breakout sessions on finance, governance and leadership, safety and mental health, community involvement, and student achievement. Session titles included:

- School Safety Preparedness: Beyond Drills and Tabletop Exercises
- Parental Rights in K-12 Education
- I Count too: Affirming Students Who Look Love Learn and Live Differently
- Unlocking the Science of Reading: A Journey into Literacy
- Governing School Boards Through an Equity Lens: A Transformative Approach to Education

Extracurricular: education news and numbers from around the web

This section contains links to recent education-related articles from around the internet. If you know of a story we should be reading, reply to this email to share it with us!

- [FCC rolls out planned \\$200 million school cybersecurity program](#) | *Politico Pro*
- [Virginia school board member arrested on Jan. 6 charges](#) | *WTOP News*
- [Nex Benedict's school will be investigated over possible federal civil rights violations](#) | *The Oklahoman*
- [Teachers Unions Quietly Spend Millions on GOP Primaries in 32 States](#) | *The Daily Signal*

- [‘More kids, more joy.’ What happened when two small Denver elementary schools merged](#) | *Chalkbeat Colorado*
- [Voucher expansion leads to more students, waitlists and classes for some religious schools](#) | *The Associated Press*
- [Head Start funding not keeping pace with rising child poverty rates](#) | *K-12 Dive*
- [Coalition Challenges Residency Requirements for Public Schools](#) | *The 74*
- [The Surging Growth of K-12 Classical Education](#) | *RealClear Education*
- [Beaufort, South Carolina, schools return most books to shelves after attempt to ban 97](#) | *CBS News*
- [‘There’s just not enough resources’: In wake of violence, Brockton High students say school needs more teachers](#) | *Boston Globe*
- [The Pathfinder: The Ballot Information Problem](#) | *PBS*
- [Should kids learn about LGBTQ issues at school? Many teachers and teens say no, new surveys find.](#) | *Chalkbeat*

Take our Candidate Connection survey to reach voters in your district

Today, we’re looking at survey responses from Incumbent [Susan Hines](#) and [Brock Foley](#), two of the seven candidates running in the [April 2 general election](#) for three seats on the [North Kansas City Public Schools](#) Board of Education in Missouri.

Hines and Foley are the only candidates who have, as of this writing, completed the survey. North Kansas City Public Schools is the fourth largest district in Missouri, with an estimated enrollment of 20,300 students.

Here’s how Hines answered the question, **“What are the main points you want voters to remember about your goals for your time in office?”**



“Being elected to the School Board will enable me to continue championing an educational environment that mirrors the inclusivity, resilience, and excellence that defined my own educational journey. Let’s access, affirm, and activate the full potential of all children of North Kansas City Schools together!

- The students in our district inspire me every day-
 - Northtown students spoke up in 2021 about the district’s need to review the approach and policy on removing books from

our libraries with passion, eloquence, conviction, and persuasion.

- A student spoke about how the restorative approach she experienced in the Temporary Alternate Placement Center helped her to move forward and return to school with new-found confidence and sense of purpose.
- I am proud of how our district continues to evolve and adapt - the homogenous, rural district that my grandmother, Hilda Linville, went to school in through the 1920s and 30s is very different from the cosmopolitan canopy our community has become.”

Click [here](#) to read the rest of Hines’ responses.

Here’s how Foley answered the question, **“What are the main points you want voters to remember about your goals for your time in office?”**



- My primary concern, before anything else, is student success. I want students leaving the North Kansas City School District to be confident, capable, and prepared to join society as productive citizens. I want our students to be set up for fulfilling lives, where they go and whatever they choose to do.
- If we want our students to be successful then the North Kansas City School District must be fiercely committed to student welfare. There are many challenges facing our young people but perhaps none is more prevalent today than the well documented issue of poor teen mental health. Schools cannot be expected to solve this problem but they are on the front lines of fighting it! Our students cannot be successful if they are not well and I will be fiercely committed to improving our students well being.
- Finally, I want better for our teachers. I want to see low teacher turnover, high teacher pay, and high job satisfaction. Happy teachers mean happy students.

Click [here](#) to read the rest of Foley’s responses.

If you’re a school board candidate or incumbent, click [here](#) to take the survey. If you’re not running for school board, but there is an election in your community this year, [share the link](#) with the candidates and urge them to take the survey!

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From: [April Harrison](#)
To: [Board & Student Member](#)
Cc: [Donna Forton](#)
Subject: 03 07 Agenda
Date: Wednesday, March 6, 2024 2:10:17 PM
Attachments: [03 07 24 Agenda.pdf](#)
[image001.png](#)

Attached is the agenda for tomorrow's meeting. This is based on the work session/adoption being completed by dinner. If it finishes prior to dinner and time permitting, we will move into the Oakland Mills Schematic Design Report followed by the remaining items. If the work session/adoption is not completed by 6:30, we will follow the below agenda.

7:00-8:00 p.m.

Public forum

Public Hearing

Oakland Mills Schematic Design Report for ACTION

8:00-10:00 p.m.

Pick up with Budget Work Session

April

April Harrison

Administrator

(410) 313-7194

(410) 313-6833 FAX



OFFICE OF THE
**BOARD OF EDUCATION
OF HOWARD COUNTY**

From: [April Harrison](#)
To: [BO Final Agenda](#)
Subject: 03 07 04 Agenda - Revised
Date: Wednesday, March 6, 2024 1:27:47 PM
Attachments: [03 07 24 Agenda.pdf](#)
[image001.png](#)

Attached is a revised agenda for the March 7, 2024, meeting of the Board of Education.

Thank you,

April Harrison
Administrator
(410) 313-7194
(410) 313-6833 FAX



OFFICE OF THE
BOARD OF EDUCATION
OF HOWARD COUNTY

From: [Judith Jones](#)
To: [David Albert](#)
Cc: [BoE Email](#)
Subject: RE: [External] Reservoir walkout
Date: Wednesday, March 6, 2024 12:35:10 PM

Good Morning Mr. Albert,

Thank you for your continued advocacy. We are in an agreement on many issues. Students' rights to peacefully assemble under the protections and guidelines of Policy 9020 does allow for the violation of other policies. Certainly, the behaviors you described below are not acceptable and would be in violation of our Student Code of Conduct. Investigations are happening and on yesterday, I met with Rabbi Fuller to discuss these reports and concerns. I am scheduling a meeting with the principal of Reservoir High School, Rabbi Gordy and a member of the ODEI to engage in meaningful dialog. Please know that I share your concerns and continued meetings and collaboration are happening that have high administrators, members SMIL (School Management and Instructional Leadership), members of the ODEI, school security, and PISWB, (Program Innovation and Student Well-being), and the Howard County Jewish Federation, to discuss, share experiences of the student walkout, challenges, and concerns. The goal is to create some guidance and resources for administrators.

Again, I appreciate the continued engagement. Please the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion will always continue to have conversations with our system in support of all students. Have good week.

Respectfully,

Judy

Judith Jones

Pronouns: She, Her, Hers

Director of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, Howard County Public Schools

10910 Clarksville Pike, Ellicott City, MD 21042

Judith.Jones@hcpss.org

(410)313-1542

"It's Not Enough to Do Equity; You must BE Equity" ~ Baruti K. Kafele

From: David Albert <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, February 29, 2024 9:26 PM
To: Judith Jones <Judith_Jones@hcpss.org>
Cc: BoE Email <boe@hcpss.org>
Subject: Re: [External] Reservoir walkout

Hello Ms. Jones,

While I appreciate you responding, it's not clear that you actually read my email. At the very least, you again avoided responding to the specific questions I asked and policies I referenced. I don't know whether you are aware of HCPSS anti-discrimination policies, but I will re-iterate from previous communications that HCPSS policy 9020 **also** states:

- [9020](#) (Students' Rights and Responsibilities) which states: "Students may exercise their rights and responsibilities *as long as they do not interfere with the rights of others or a school's ability to provide a safe and supportive environment*. Additionally, students are responsible for making choices that affirm a *safe, nurturing, and inclusive environment, ...*". Furthermore:
 - Section B (Safe and Supportive Environment) states: "Students have the right to learn in a safe and supportive environment that fosters hope, engagement, and well-being for all."
 - Section C.1.a (Non-Discriminatory Practices) states: "Students have the right to be free from discrimination, bullying, harassment, intimidation, sexual harassment, and hate/bias based on race, ethnicity, national origin, immigration status, ..., religion, ancestry, ..." with reference to policy 1010.

I encourage you to familiarize yourself with HCPSS policies [1010](#) and [8050](#) as well.

Policy 9020 in no way absolves HCPSS or your office of the responsibility to enforce HCPSS and Title VI anti-discrimination policies. Those policies are meant to protect all students, **including Jewish students**. Neither policy 9020 nor the right to assemble and speak freely at school established by Tinker extend to speech hurtful to other groups, especially protected classes; this has been repeatedly upheld by the Circuit Courts.

Entirely predictably, the walkout at Reservoir treated Jewish students to chants of "F__k the Jews"; another student was told "6 million wasn't enough, they should have taken care of you too.", the principal has received multiple complaints of antisemitic incidents that they are investigating and was told that "some Jewish students felt unsafe". For each of these walkouts, there have been Jewish students who stay home out of fear and throughout the HCPSS schools there are now students who hide their identity.

I expect your office will again assure me, that *you* think everything went beautifully because there were no injuries and that Jewish students were provided a safe place to

hide and talk to staff about how it feels to be excluded, hated, and threatened. That a DEI office can repeatedly defend hate speech harming a protected class of students and can do so with such abject lack of empathy is unfathomable to me and a disgrace to HCPSS. I take no comfort in your mention of a "focus team" since you conspicuously avoided language that might suggest goals of combating antisemitism, hate speech, or enforcement of anti-discrimination policies.

These walkouts and the refusal of local school administrations to protect Jewish students have left large groups of parents and community members in distress. The Federal government **just opened a Title VI investigation into MCPS**; must HCPSS follow suit? If nothing else, those distressed parents and community members are now highly-motivated, single-issue voters who will be seeking a BoE willing to make the staffing and policy changes needed to ensure that **all** HCPSS students, including Jews, are afforded equal protection.

So I will ask once more and will not contact you again if you choose not to respond or respond again with deflection: what is your office doing to prevent Jewish students from having to endure yet another round of HCPSS sanctioned chants of "F--k the Jews"?

Sincerely,
David Albert



On 2/29/2024 4:36 PM, Judith Jones wrote:

Good Afternoon Mr. Talbert,

I hope this communication finds you well. I want to thank you for your patience in my response and for sharing your sentiments with me. As a system, we recognize and openly acknowledge the continued impact that the war in Israel and Gaza are having on our students, staff, families, and our broader community. Our focus remains on the well-being and safety of our students. As mentioned in previous communications, our policy 9020 states, *"Students have the right to assemble. Students have the right to freely choose the subject and form of a peaceful demonstration. Schools may set reasonable limits as to the time, place, and manner in which students and student groups may assemble, as long as those restrictions advance legitimate educational goals."*

The Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and our schools do not approve or disapprove of student walkouts because according to policy, they can occur without any approval. Walkouts are student led as per the policy. The school

system generally takes the stance of trying to work with student leaders to identify the time, location, and other logistics that is the least disruptive to daily operations of the school day and to ensure student safety. Our school leaders do their best to understand what messages will be promoted and guide students towards choices that are the most inclusive and fact-based. School based and central office staff are always in attendance to promote student safety and that if any messages that promote hate can be immediately interrupted.

While I understand that referencing the policy may provide you little comfort, please know that many administrators have made provisions for supports to be in place for any student who is impacted by the walkouts. Staff are prepared and some schools have provided alternative spaces for students to share and express how they are being impacted. Please know that a focus team has been developed to look closely at policy 9020 with discussions of forming guidance to schools so there is consistency and supports with walkouts. The concerns that have come from our community and the challenges that our school-based leaders are faced with, have been shared and discussed at these meetings. These meetings will continue throughout this school year.

As this continues to be a challenging time, please know that HCPSS will continue to uplift the vision and mission of our school system. As always, I thank you for your advocacy.

Respectfully,

Judy Jones

Judith Jones

Pronouns: She, Her, Hers

Director of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

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(410)313-1542

"It's Not Enough to Do Equity; You must BE Equity" ~ Baruti K. Kafele

From: David Albert [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 27, 2024 2:44 PM
To: Judith Jones <Judith.Jones@hcpss.org>
Cc: BoE Email <boe@hcpss.org>
Subject: [External] Reservoir walkout

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [REDACTED] [Learn why this is important](#)

! CAUTION: This email originated from outside of HCPSS. Do not click links or open attachments, unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Ms. Jones,

I am writing again in the hope that you will act to stop the wave of antisemitism at HCPSS. It is impossible for Jewish students, staff, and community members to feel safe and welcome at schools where their classmates, faculty, and administration are rallying to preserve a group that is explicitly genocidal towards Jews. The walkouts and rallies at HCPSS and MCPSS schools are performative antisemitism as evidenced by their timing (an MCPSS school chose the anniversary of Kristallnacht), their perverse inversion of terms like "genocide", their repetition with minor twists of classic antisemitic tropes, and their failure to advocate for the equal safety of Jews or solutions that would advance a lasting peace. The messages of the walkouts are, without doubt, directed primarily at and against the local Jewish community: the only group the walkouts actually impact. The organizers surely understand that high-school walkouts will have no impact on US or Israeli foreign policy.

Tomorrow, at Reservoir HS, the ironically named student group "Students Against Genocide" will be sponsoring just such a walkout. The invitation states: "After nearly 30,000 deaths, most of which includes women and children, ...", blindly repeating the unverifiable claims of a genocidal terrorist organization that crushes press freedom. Some of their claims defy reason: do these students suppose the IDF has woman-and-children seeking bombs? That IDF soldiers are ignoring the adult male Hamas fighters and instead seeking out women and children to kill? These claims, and others, don't stray far from the classic antisemitic blood libel. There is nothing educational about these walkouts, they are simply HCPSS-sanctioned expressions of hate against a minority group. I implore you to afford Jews the **same** protections you would afford any other minority. Would you encourage or allow a walkout demanding preservation of the Klan? ISIS? Perhaps a notoriously anti-LGBTQ hate group? Would you make the same assertion in those cases that "HCPSS supports student voice"?

I remind you again of HCPSS policies:

1. [1010](#) (Anti-Discrimination) which "is to establish expectations for behavior that promote a safe, engaging, and supportive school environment". This policy prohibits discrimination on the basis of both religion and national origin (among other characteristics) - that includes Jews. It "recognizes a responsibility to promote worth, dignity, respect, and safety which includes intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or educational environments or substantially interferes with an individual's ability to work, learn, ..., or participate in

or benefit from the educational program."

These apply to "any school system activity, on or off school property, in which a student directly participates", or "an activity in which the student does not directly participate but represents the school or student body simply by being present". There is no exception for activities being held during "raider time" or other non-instructional time.

You have been informed previously that there are Jewish students who stay home rather than face the hostility and intimidation of these walkouts. That is clearly "substantial interference".

I finally call your attention to 1010 Section V.D. "The Equity Assurance Manager/designee will commence appropriate action within two working days upon receipt of the complaint regardless of how the complaint is reported." What actions have you taken to address these complaints?

2. [9020](#) (Students' Rights and Responsibilities) which states: "*Students may exercise their rights and responsibilities as long as they do not interfere with the rights of others or a school's ability to provide a safe and supportive environment. Additionally, students are responsible for making choices that affirm a safe, nurturing, and inclusive environment, ...*". Furthermore:

1. Section B (Safe and Supportive Environment) states: "Students have the right to learn in a safe and supportive environment that fosters hope, engagement, and well-being for all."
2. Section C.1.a (Non-Discriminatory Practices) states: "Students have the right to be free from discrimination, bullying, harassment, intimidation, sexual harassment, and hate/bias based on race, ethnicity, national origin, immigration status, ..., religion, ancestry, ..." with reference to policy 1010.

Your past response when I've raised these policy concerns has been to dismiss them out of hand and refer me to 9020 C, by which I assume you meant to refer me to 9020 D.1.c - Assembly. These walkouts are neither educational, nor inclusive and certainly do not foster the inclusive, nurturing, supportive environment HCPSS policy demands; you and your office have a responsibility to oppose them. Even if you personally dislike Jews, or are merely comfortable with others' displays of antisemitism, your professional responsibility is to look after

the well being of all protected classes, including Jews, not just those classes you favor.

I have copied the board of education on this email in the hope that board members will encourage you to afford Jewish students equal protection. The board surely understands that the HCPSS DEI office turning a blind eye to antisemitism (or even encouraging it) is a moral failure, a failure of responsibility, and is guaranteed to create a very large number of single-issue voters in the upcoming BoE elections.

Please stop these walkouts for hate.

Sincerely,
David Albert



From: [April Harrison](#)
To: [Jennifer Mallo](#)
Cc: [Bill Barnes](#); [Karalee Turner-Little](#)
Subject: RE: Proposed Board Mtg Agenda Revisions
Date: Wednesday, March 6, 2024 11:42:09 AM
Attachments: [image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[03_05_24_Agenda.pdf](#)

Since we can't give the students a definitive time, I removed them from the agenda. Please confirm the attached agenda for posting. If necessary, it can be adjusted during the meeting. However, we would not be able to add any additional items unless a motion is made.

April Harrison
Administrator
(410) 313-7194
(410) 313-6833 FAX



OFFICE OF THE
**BOARD OF EDUCATION
OF HOWARD COUNTY**

From: Jennifer Mallo <Jennifer_Mallo@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, March 6, 2024 10:54 AM
To: Karalee Turner-Little <Karalee_TurnerLittle@hcpss.org>; April Harrison <April_Harrison@hcpss.org>
Cc: Bill Barnes <Bill_Barnes@hcpss.org>
Subject: Re: Proposed Board Mtg Agenda Revisions

I think this works. Thank you for working together to find a workable solution.

Jennifer Swickard Mallo
Board of Education of Howard County, Chair
Pronouns: she/her/hers
443-355-7043

From: Karalee Turner-Little <Karalee_TurnerLittle@hcpss.org>
Sent: Wednesday, March 6, 2024 10:12:45 AM
To: Jennifer Mallo <Jennifer_Mallo@hcpss.org>; April Harrison <April_Harrison@hcpss.org>
Cc: Bill Barnes <Bill_Barnes@hcpss.org>
Subject: Proposed Board Mtg Agenda Revisions

Jen,

For your consideration based on where Board ended last night and what absolutely has to get done tomorrow.

Let us know if you have questions or concerns.

K

Proposed agenda revision for 3/7/23:

4:00-6:30 p.m.

1. Approval of the Agenda
2. Budget Work Session

6:30-7:00 p.m.

Dinner break or flexibility if budget work session needs to continue

If Budget Work Session not complete:

7:00-8:00 p.m. (but if the below 3 items end before 8pm, move on to budget work session)

Public forum

Public Hearing

Oakland Mills Schematic Design Report for ACTION

8:00-10:00 p.m.

Pick up with Budget Work Session

If Budget Work Session is completed:

7:00-10:00 p.m.

Public forum

Public hearing

OMSDR for ACTION

Consent Agenda restricted

Consent Agenda

HCEA report if this has to be part of the mtg---if not, reschedule

Legislative Report

Quarterly Agenda

Policies----ACTION ones first: 7070, 7080, 4080, 9100, and then 1080

Board reports (including student) if time permits

So the items to be rescheduled are: Marriotts Ridge report; Sup Report; Extended Year Programs; Proposed Policy Activity Report; Any policies we don't get to

Karalee Turner-Little, Ph.D. (she/her)

Deputy Superintendent

Howard County Public School System

10920 Clarksville Pike

Ellicott City, MD 21042

Office: 410.313.8951



From: [MILE: Maryland Initiative for Literacy & Equity](#)
To: [Jennifer Mallo](#)
Subject: [External] A Day of Giving With MILE
Date: Wednesday, March 6, 2024 7:59:47 AM

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Dear MILE community,

While we may not be participating in today's Giving Day celebration at UMD, MILE is excited to use this special day to host our own 24-hour fundraising event, the **MILE Book Drive!**

Through our Amazon wishlist, MILE is accepting book donations for local elementary school students in our after-school program, MILEstones Reading Tutors. This program supports emergent readers using Reading Ready, an evidence-based reading program at Hollywood and Kingsford Elementary Schools.

Supporters can purchase books on our Amazon wishlist or send requested books directly to our mailing address:

MILE Book Drive

2130 HJ Patterson Hall

College Park, MD 20742

[Click Here to Donate](#)

MILE recognizes the importance of giving and generosity. With your support, we can further the MILE mission and provide young learners with the tools they need to succeed. We are grateful for any and all contributions, whether you are purchasing a book or sharing our fundraiser with a colleague or peer.

Thank you for your support,

The MILE team



Connect



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Maryland Initiative for Literacy & Equity
2130 HJ Patterson Hall
University of Maryland

College Park, MD 20742

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From: [Anthony DeBella](#)
To: [Jacquelin McCoy](#); [Antonia Watts](#); [Jennifer Mallo](#); [Jolene Mosley](#); [Linfeng Chen](#); [Robyn Scates](#); [Yun Lu](#)
Cc: [Ginger Segala](#); [Jackie](#)
Subject: [External] Thanks for asking for more Tuesday
Date: Tuesday, March 5, 2024 7:37:31 PM

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [REDACTED]. [Learn why this is important](#)

! CAUTION: This email originated from outside of HCPSS. Do not click links or open attachments, unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

I know asking for GT and 3rd Grade Strings puts you and the Board out on a limb. Our public school system wouldn't be the same without these. Rest assured we will back you up and take our cause to directly to the County Executive. Our goal is to advocate to fully fund the BoE request.

Thank you,
Anthony DeBella

On Tue, Mar 5, 2024 at 4:49 PM Anthony DeBella <[REDACTED]> wrote:

There is a [change.org](#) petition in circulation with over 4,000 signatures obtained since Saturday. See Centennial Lane ES Music Boosters petition.

Also, CAC has provided you with information on the number of school instruments in use by students that illustrate the need for 3rd grade strings as an equity and inclusion mechanism.

Anthony DeBella