

1. *Generally, schools east of or near route 29 are over capacity, while those further west are under capacity (Source: HCPSS.org school profiles). Many of these schools also have a concentration of low income students. Furthermore, Downtown Columbia development will contribute to a growing student population in these already crowded schools. As a Board member, what steps would you suggest to equalize the distribution of students to minimize the number of students in overcrowded schools and mitigate the lack economic diversity in our schools?*

There will need to be some short-term redistricting that addresses this. The amount of capacity from projects at Running Brook and Swansfield is being swallowed as they're completed. The new capacity from the Wilde Lake Middle construction will be used as cohorts move up from Running Brook. I would advocate for a slight shift west in planning attendance areas. There is an attempt to prevent children from being redistricted more than once in their HCPSS lifetime and I would encourage that to continue.

In regard to long-term planning, I believe the new elementary school for downtown Columbia will be needed sooner rather than later. Long-range planning needs to happen to have several scenarios of when the cohorts will move into middle and high school. Wilde Lake can absorb some near-term expansion of its attendance are. I will advocate for capacity and housing occupancy triggers. These triggers will already have If/then clauses that were predetermined so that they can limit surprises to the community and the school system when adopted.

Concentration of poverty in education has been proven to cause additional problems. Our school system should have schools that exhibit economic and cultural diversity like Howard County itself.

2. How would you support implementation of the Elementary School Model in the Howard County Public School System over the next 5-10 years? Do you see the Elementary School Model as meeting the needs of students with diverse learning styles, ELL students, special needs students and those with IEP's? What metrics would you use to evaluate the success or shortcomings of the ESM in the schools where it has been implemented?

I do not support expansion of the Elementary School Model until further results from existing schools are presented to the community. Research has proven that music and art have benefits for developing brains. Until I see tangible benefits and speak with educators, parents and administrators, I do not want to expand this program. There also needs to be a better plan for how it flows into middle school and how high school credit for graduation is calculated.

My understanding from speaking to educators is that children with special needs are having trouble with the additional requirements. It creates an additional burden on vulnerable children as well as their educators.

As far as metrics, while I'm not a fan of test scores, I would look at the year-over-year scores. Have they improved compared to prior years and how do they compare to the schools with and without it? I would also involve educators on the real-world impact they see. In addition, parents should be involved for what they see at home.

3. How do you feel about Board of Education election and representation by district versus at-large?

Howard County has grown tremendously over the past decades. I think it is hard to adequately deal with constituent service when a Board member is representing the entire county. While I realize that the councilmanic districts don't line up exactly with the school clusters, it could be codified that certain schools "belong" to one of the districts. So, Howard HS could be assigned to District 1 although it draws from multiple councilmanic districts from an attendance area perspective.

4. What is your view of inverting the current school starting times by flipping the start of elementary school with high school as is done in some other jurisdictions?

I am definitely in favor of pushing high school later. Pediatricians have been saying that teenagers have a different sleep cycle. As they begin to drive, especially early in the morning, I also have concerns about their lack of attentive driving. Regarding middle school and elementary school being earlier, I am open to either. As a young mom, having a late elementary school start was very difficult and costly. Middle and high school don't require a parental work schedule change or require expensive child care. We have other school systems that we can follow in doing this and learn from their mistakes and emulate their successes.

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Delivering my own campaign signs has provided the opportunity to drive thru parts of Howard County that I had never seen. I'm a WHC resident, so doing this really gave me some perspective on the seemingly endless housing developments built with inadequate infrastructure already in place to support it. Developments like Maple Lawn, Taylor Village and Oxford Village causing a domino effect of overcrowding in schools in surrounding areas. It seems developers are dictating redistricting and we are left to play catch up. The proliferation of multi family housing units and lower cost housing options in the east has led to the hyper concentration of schools with high numbers of students dependent on FARM. By virtue of zoning regulations in PlanHoward 2030, as well as septic and well considerations, development in the rural West is restricted, housing is more expensive with no multifamily options—its no surprise that socioeconomic and racial diversity is lowest at these schools. Distance to schools in the West makes it a less appealing option for more eastern parents, as they want to be close to the schools their children attend.

Development of Downtown Columbia will further impact the schools in the East—the trickle down effect of not having infrastructure in place prior to development of housing.

As a board member, I would attend zoning meetings that could impact capacity—kids move into apartments, townhouses and mansions alike and I think developers have been able to skirt restrictions because they have underestimated the number of students the project would bring. We need to be involved at the very beginning and we need to have a strong voice to bring what is considered acceptable numbers for overcapacity down. I believe no more than 100 percent capacity is our goal and that portables not be counted towards this.

Redistricting will take place this year and we need to make every effort to shift students to reduce both the capacity and burden on schools in the east. Everyone benefits from a more diverse school and as we redraw boundary lines, we need to make this a priority.

Glenelg HS is 78 percent white. Less than 5 percent of the students qualify for FARM. Conversely, Oakland Mills HS is 22 percent white with 40 percent of the students receiving FARM. The difference is shocking—less than 15 miles in distance and this disparity exists. It will take time, but I believe if we take a more proactive approach, rethink how we draw boundary lines and make equity a priority, it can be done. It should not matter where you go to school in Howard County—you should be able to receive the same educational experience. Once our schools are on a more equal footing, there will be less resistance to redistricting. To make this happen, we need to start by unburdening schools in the east.

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We do not have the metrics or results of pilot studies to know whether the ESM has been effective and whether teachers are satisfied with it. Though it provides wonderful opportunities, it requires intensive resource allocation and we need to ensure that other areas are not sacrificed in order for the program to run. I have heard from parents who both support and oppose it. Many do not like changing classes and the loss of instructional time on other subjects. There are students who do not speak English yet are spending time learning Spanish. Students with IEPs who need more language arts and math support who now spend that time in Spanish. There are no grade evaluations for Spanish so there is no way to assess effectiveness. I do not question the worth of language as part of our curriculum but we need to assess whether this model is working especially in times of restricted budgets. Most importantly, this was a pilot study—before we can make decisions on the worth of this program, we need the data from the schools where it was implemented. As a board member, I would demand the data before making any type of decision on the continuation and/or expansion of the program, especially among special education and ELL students. Is time devoted to this program sacrificing more worthwhile experiences for these students? Metrics should also include student, staff and teacher evaluations.

3. How do you feel about Board of Education election and representation by district versus at-large?

I support election by area for 5 members and 2 at large. Areas should reflect high school and corresponding feeder schools and not be aligned with County Council Districts. It is difficult to run a countywide campaign and many qualified people do not run for this very reason. This gives inherent benefit to incumbents who can rely on name recognition and voter apathy for re-election. I believe if you represented a specific area, where you live, you are more accountable to stakeholders; there is more

opportunity for communication and face-to-face interaction if you live “where you work”. I also believe that there should be a two-term limit for BOE members.

4. What is your view of inverting the current school starting times by flipping the start of elementary school with high school as is done in some other jurisdictions?

There is no easy answer and it will be impossible to make everyone happy. But the fact remains, health is our number one priority and this should be the focus—not convenience, not sports. What is best for student health? Other jurisdictions have adjusted start times minimally (15-20 minutes). I believe that if we are truly going to make an impact, we do need to do more of a “flip”. That being said, 2 hours later is a pretty big difference and would make a significant impact. I would work to make cuts in other areas to free up more transportation money to increase the number of busses that would allow elementary/middle schools flip with high schools starting in between. For example, elementary 730-8; middle school 915ish and high school 830.

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We need to reevaluate the how, why and when we redistrict. There is no “one size fits all” approach or model that will work every time.

The Board of Education (BOE) needs to work with our county executive and county council to better understand the residential growth predictions in an effort to properly plan for the fluctuation of the student population. School capacity needs to keep pace with population growth. The interrelationship between zoning and school capacity needs to be a bigger part of the discussion. That will allow us to better handle these issues.

The simple notion that we can just "redistrict" as needed is a major contributor to this problem. If we are going to build new homes and increase the number of students in any given area then we also need to expand our schools to meet the new capacity. The BOE continues to deal with the symptoms of development by redistricting. We need to be more proactive and be engaged in the discussions surrounding residential development, in particular when development is planned for areas where schools are already overcrowded.

School capacity and zoning are linked and the current APFO is outdated. The population has grown by nearly 90,000 since the current ordinance has been in place. The recent APFO Task Force recommended that capacity limits for any school be changed from 115% to 110%. However, it was also recommended that if projected enrollment lies between 110% - 115% of capacity then the developer can move forward if it pays an additional public school facilities surcharge. If projected enrollment is between 115% and 120% of capacity then the developer can pay a surcharge triple the amount in current law.

In theory, this reduces the capacity at which schools are still considered "full" and should help alleviate enrollment at any given school. However, by allowing developers to pay a fee, we all know that they will pay it and the end result will be increased enrollment at schools that already are overcrowded.

We all know that the houses will get built faster than the schools can be expanded. In the end, the students who attend these schools receive no benefit from the extra surcharges. We need a model where our school capacities can keep up instead of trying to play catch-up every time a new home is built.

2. *How would you support implementation of the Elementary School Model in the Howard County Public School System over the next 5-10 years? Do you see the Elementary School Model as meeting the needs of students with diverse learning styles, ELL students, special needs students and those with IEP's? What metrics would you use to evaluate the success or shortcomings of the ESM in the schools where it has been implemented?*

Before any decision is made to expand or scale back the ESM, the Board of Education (BOE) needs to have a detailed analysis of how the current ESM schools are performing. This includes having an open and honest dialogue with parents, educators and staff at ESM schools. The limited information that is available from HCPSS regarding the ESM does not include enough information to allow a complete and proper analysis of the success of the ESM.

In addition, to properly evaluate any program, the BOE and the community needs to know the actual cost of the program and what other programs, initiatives, or needs, will not be able to be met in order to fund these programs. It is our job as board members to make sure we meet the education needs of all students and maintain our fiscal responsibilities to the taxpayers who fund our schools. 60% of the county's budget goes to the school system. How that money is allocated and spent must be carefully considered and we must do a better job of involving everyone in those discussions.

3. How do you feel about Board of Education election and representation by district versus at-large?

I support the concept of district-based elections for Board of Education (BOE) members. Under the current system with all BOE members elected at large families seeking assistance and advocacy are unsure of how to approach the BOE. Although each BOE member (except for the Chairman) is assigned a cluster of schools, some BOE members take this responsibility seriously and actively assist their cluster school with issues while others are not as engaged. Plus, the assignments can change from year to year,

adding additional confusion. If the elections were District based it would enable voters to hold BOE members directly accountable. The current arrangement does not provide parents and citizens an opportunity to select their school's BOE representative.

I am confident we can create a district-based system that gives the voters the accountability they deserve and maintains the integrity of our electoral process.

4. What is your view of inverting the current school starting times by flipping the start of elementary school with high school as is done in some other jurisdictions?

There is ample scientific evidence and data that later start times for high school and middle school students would be beneficial to student well-being and academic performance.

In April 2016, the Board of Education (BOE) voted to support the recommendations presented by the School Start and Dismissal Time Charter Committee for a later start time for the 2017-2018 school year.

I support the BOE's decision to have an earlier start time for middle and high school students. To move forward, we have to determine how to make these changes and still enable student participation in after school activities. Bus routes and transportation will need to be modified. There will also be a financial impact of this decision and that will need to be addressed and the BOE will need to work with county government to implement this change.

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On August 25, 2014, the American Academy of Pediatrics published a policy statement, "School Start Times for Adolescents," and technical report, that outlined strong evidence that adolescents need more sleep. The lead author of the policy statement, Dr. Judith Owens stated, "The research is clear that adolescents who get enough sleep have a reduced risk of being overweight or suffering depression, are less likely to be involved in automobile accidents, and have better grades, higher standardized test scores and an overall better quality of life." A too-early start to the school day is a contributor to chronic sleep deprivation among American adolescents.

I will ensure the BOE addresses this with an eye toward making it work, as opposed to finding reasons why it will not work. The BOE and the school system must work with our community as we move forward. Other jurisdictions have made these changes successfully. We should look to those jurisdictions for examples of what went well and what could be done better and find the best model for HCPSS.

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1. Generally, schools east of or near route 29 are over capacity, while those further west are under capacity (Source: HCPSS.org school profiles). Many of these schools also have a concentration of low income students. Furthermore, Downtown Columbia development will contribute to a growing student population in these already crowded schools. As a Board member, what steps would you suggest to equalize the distribution of students to minimize the number of students in overcrowded schools and mitigate the lack economic diversity in our schools?

This really a tough question and one that the Board and HCPSS staff cannot figure out on its own. It is one where parent and community input is very important as well as collaboration with our elected officials who approve development in Howard County. It is one where we made need to bring in an independent consultant to advise us on not only the current state of our enrollment dilemma but look at the impact of long term student population growth and decline in some areas. So how do we adjust attendance areas to address overcrowding and areas where there is a lack of economic diversity?

First, I would plan to more fully utilize some of our schools that have extra space. Special Programs, whole school signature programs like the aerospace technology program. All students in a wide area would have a choice for their Middle School Program and can choose from programs that are being offered such in aerospace, digital design, or creative and performing arts. There is no entrance test, and students choose one, two, or three and are placed based on their selections. At the high school level, I would recommend having at least one International Baccalaureate (IB) program using a whole school model where students can choose to take a course for certificate or seek the IB diploma. The location of these programs is key as they would draw students. HCPSS could provide transportation if needed.

Second, the Howard County Board of Education needs to work more closely with our elected officials at the County and State level as we try to minimize the impact of new development and increasing numbers of students in our public schools. We should also work more closely with our community since there many

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have expertise that could help us formulate our decisions. These are just some ideas that we should begin to look at as we try to deal with overcrowding and diversity concerns.

2. How would you support implementation of the Elementary School Model in the Howard County Public School System over the next 5-10 years? Do you see the Elementary School Model as meeting the needs of students with diverse learning styles, ELL students, special needs students and those with IEP's? What metrics would you use to evaluate the success or shortcomings of the ESM in the schools where it has been implemented?

As you may know, I have a background in educational evaluation. Years ago, when I was in graduate school at the University of Wisconsin, I went across the country to evaluate the implementation of open classroom schools. They were placed in over 25 states from California to New Hampshire from Minnesota to Texas and Florida. Teacher education institutions taught teachers how to teach in them. School districts built schools with pods to accommodate the program. Central office staff thought it was the best thing since sliced bread! Where are they now? Gone. Walls have been built to separate the pods into real classrooms even in Maryland.

I say that to say that not all educational innovation is good, and that the central office staff are not necessarily the best folks to ask if the program is working. We need to ask the teachers who are in the classrooms on a daily basis. We have to ask the parents with kids in the program to see if it is meeting the educational standards they expect especially the parents of students with special needs, ELL students and those with IEPs.

At this time, HCPSS has not done a full evaluation of the implementation of the Elementary School Model. My understanding is that there have just been progress reports. What we should be provided is both formative and summative data. The formative data would be provided by teachers during the program and the summative data would allow for yearly comparison of student results. There are also aspects that aren't easily measure by metrics, and that is the surveys of

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parents to determine how they and their children feel about the program. A number of parents have commented to me that they think students should have more of an opportunity to bond with their teachers in primary grades and that allowing teachers to specialize in core areas should not be the biggest priority. My answer to the question about supporting the EMS for the next 5-10 years is that I would monitor the progress reports, review any of the evaluations being done, reach out to parents and educators involved in the program, look at performance data in a disaggregated way to determine if this program should be implemented in other schools for the long term.

3. How do you feel about Board of Education election and representation by district versus at-large?

I would support a combination of ways to elect members of the Howard County Board of Education. It works well in other places by ensuring that every area of the county have not only a contact person, but that person will be the same for the whole time they are on the Board. That person could be a big support to other members of the Board since they would have intimate knowledge of their schools. At the same time, I feel strongly that each Board member gain an understanding of all the communities served by HCPSS and each of their schools. Right now, each Board member is assigned a group of schools and those assignments change from year to year.

4. What is your view of inverting the current school starting times by flipping the start of elementary school with high school as is done in some other jurisdictions?

Let's start with the premise that high schools should have a later start time. I agreed with that. Then consideration has to be given to how late they should start. Some school systems found that 20 minutes later was not enough. Then we have to look at transportation, its costs and the start times for elementary schools and middle schools should start. Evidently this has been discussed for years in HCPSS by workgroups. I totally agreed that now is the time to act to

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make the changes that will impact our students. Having the elementary schools open first allows for the older siblings to be at home first thing in the morning. Then if the high schools started some time before middle school, it would give high schoolers time for more activities and sports before it got too late. I would also advocate for more extracurricular programs and activities for both middle school and elementary students. Again we need support of our elected county officials as well as our state officials who approve our funding. Again, these are some thoughts on how to resolve this challenging concern.

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I wish I had a solution to this problem that would make everybody happy, but I believe one would be a logistical impossibility given our present situation. That said, it is critical that we choose a course that will best relieve overcrowding while mitigating the lack of economic diversity in our schools.

Unfortunately, I believe the solution must involve redistricting. Though there are pros and cons, I believe that our present challenges can best be addressed through a “domino” approach; that is, filling the schools having capacity with students who live in closest proximity, and then continuing to do the same in layers moving from the least to the most crowded such that long bus trips are minimized. Students in walking distance of their schools would continue to walk to school, but for bus riders, we should be sensitive to trying to keep neighborhoods together as much as possible, as the concept of neighborhood schools is desirable. But when getting farther from the walking area of each school, the domino layering would take effect, and when this happens, the sensitivity regarding keeping neighborhoods together should continue, as we would want to minimize small pockets of students and families having to leave their friends and acquaintances. While these boundaries are being drawn, consideration should also be given to balancing economic diversity. Though total balance might not be realistic due to logistical considerations, we can make substantial improvements. This is important for many reasons, but I’ll mention a couple.

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First, the experience of students at schools with populations of relatively affluent families is different from that of students at schools which are less affluent. For example, as a retired band director in HCPSS, I can say that, all other things being equal, the experience of a member in a band where 80% of band members take private lessons is different from the experience of a member in a band where 20% of band members take private lessons. The situation would be similar regarding experiences in other courses; for example, students in math classes at schools where many students have access to extra math tutoring, after school math classes, and summer math enrichment camps, have a different experience than students in schools where this is not the case. There are things the county could and should do to compensate, and this compensation can be very effective, but the experiences are still not the same.

Second, there are social benefits that come from students of different backgrounds (economic, racial, ethnic, etc.) going to school together. Among them is that they experience firsthand that there are wonderful people from many different backgrounds, having travelled varied roads in becoming wonderful people.

One tangential factor that is often mentioned when boundary lines are discussed is that of property values; redistricting can cause both positive and negative changes. I believe that, if we do it right, we can at least come close to raising all boats, even more than presently exists when comparing our county's property values with those of neighboring counties. We should publicize what I believe is presently the case — students can get a fantastic education at any of the Howard County Public Schools. Making our school system greater should help most everyone.

Having been a teacher who has experienced redistricting multiple times during my 34 years in our school system, I know that it is a very emotional topic. What I have generally seen, though, is that once students and families settle in and

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become accustomed to their new school, they like it. Until that occurs, though, there is often much stress. During the transition time when students have to move from one school to another due to redistricting, I think that we should consider the possibility of setting up a program that will ask concerned students and families to attend their new school for a month, and if they still want to return to their former school after that month an arrangement could be made allowing them to do so under certain circumstances. I believe that a relatively small number of students would choose to return, but offering the option would make the process much less stressful for students with special social or educational needs.

2. How would you support implementation of the Elementary School Model in the Howard County Public School System over the next 5-10 years? Do you see the Elementary School Model as meeting the needs of students with diverse learning styles, ELL students, special needs students and those with IEP's? What metrics would you use to evaluate the success or shortcomings of the ESM in the schools where it has been implemented?

When considered as a complete initiative, I would not support implementation of the Elementary School Model in the Howard County Public School System. There are portions of the model that I would like to see at all of our elementary schools, but I would like to see some of it discontinued in its present form. More specifically:

a) Expanding Prekindergarten — I favor this concept for families who would like to participate, but we are a long way from being able to implement it countywide, due to insufficient space and funding. Therefore, I would like to see HCPSS form a partnership that could include existing HCPSS Pre-K initiatives, Head Start, the Judy Center, preschools, day care centers, Howard Community College, the Howard County Library system, the Howard County Department of Recreation

and Parks, the Columbia Association, and Howard County General Hospital, which could develop and implement alternative supports for families who would otherwise participate in Pre-K but for whom the option does not exist at this time. Hopefully there will be a time when Pre-K can be expanded, but given the present fiscal needs of the school system, specifically in accommodating growth in already overcrowded buildings, I unfortunately cannot state with confidence that it would be during the next 5-10 years.

b) World Language — I have major reservations about the World Language program as it is being implemented in the Elementary School Model. I question the long-term benefits versus the liabilities of reduction of time for other classes and the problems caused by scheduling challenges. It is not clear that there will be funding to accommodate this program in all of the elementary schools as is desired, as well as to make the appropriate accommodations in middle schools and high schools. It is not clear if enough qualified teachers will be available to implement the program if it is expanded and continued. Meanwhile, middle schools receive students from some elementary schools that have had the World Language program and students from other schools that have not had the program, or have had the program for different amounts of time. These concerns and others are discussed in more detail below. This appears to be an example of “leaping before we look”. If there is not clear evidence that this program can be implemented in a way that is clearly beneficial to our students, I believe that it should not continue in its present form.

For those who are interested, please permit me to be more direct and specific:

- 1) There is an equity issue; the Spanish program is presently only offered at the Elementary School Model schools (presently 8 out of 41 elementary schools), and expansion is dependent on funding. Most of our students presently get no elementary school Spanish instruction.
- 2) At the middle school level, it is possible that, for example, only one out of the four feeder elementary schools will have been an Elementary School Model school, so a relatively small number of students that have had elementary school

Spanish instruction will be entering 6th grade at each middle school; often not enough to form a full class. For example, in a middle school with two 6th grade Spanish classes, there might only be half of a class that has received elementary school Spanish instruction. Furthermore, if the program is phased in at, for example, a second elementary school feeder, incoming students from that school will have had fewer years of Spanish instruction for at least the next several years (e.g., in one particular year “School 1” students might have had the program for three years (since 3rd grade) and “School 2” students might have had the program for one year (since 5th grade); this situation would continue to be exacerbated if new schools are added to the model. Thus, what will be done with 6th grade Spanish classes who have beginners mixed in with students that have had several years of 30-minute per day instruction? The only answer I have been given is that instruction will be differentiated. Though differentiated instruction is possible to some degree, what is proposed seems to me to be relatively ineffective and inefficient, and calls into question if 30-minutes of daily Spanish instruction for six years (K-5) is warranted if there is not a sufficient program to transition to in the middle schools.

3) As it presently stands, if I understand correctly, all of these students will still only be eligible for Spanish (level) 2 in 9th grade after three years of middle school Spanish. I imagine there will eventually be some adjustments made to this to enable capable students to enter 9th grade at a higher level, but I do not believe an approved plan for this presently exists. In the past, level 1 was spread over 2 years in middle school (grades 7 and 8).

4) I have been told that it is reasonable to expect that the beginner 6th graders should be able to be almost caught up to the students who were in the elementary Spanish program (either by the end of 6th grade or the end of 8th grade). If this is the case, to me, it does not seem worth giving up time from related arts, technology, and other coursework to make time for the Spanish program every year in elementary school (the 30 minutes per day every day has to come from something). Middle school students are also not able to take a lot of classes they would otherwise have if they were not taking Spanish, and many parents may not want them to miss the other opportunities during grades 6, 7,

and 8 in order to take one level of Spanish during those three years. If that is the case, the student will probably lose a lot of what was learned in elementary school Spanish.

5) Spanish is the only World Language offered in elementary school, including schools that have relatively large Spanish-speaking populations. For students who already know Spanish, taking Spanish might not be the best use of their time in school. Also, for students who later decide to switch World Languages, it is questionable if taking Spanish in elementary school was the best way for their time to have been spent.

6) Though it might be possible, it is questionable whether we can hire the number of qualified, quality Spanish teachers needed to staff the fully-implemented Elementary School Model Spanish program as well as to staff the requisite accommodations in the middle and high schools. Even more questionable is if the funding will be provided for the program's expansion, and if it is, what else will suffer, knowing that the county budget is not unlimited.

I am not anti-World Language, but I feel that the Elementary School Model Spanish program is a good illustration of building a plane while flying it. For the reasons listed above, I don't think it is sustainable, and I imagine it will go away when the superintendent leaves. Furthermore, I question its value given the logistical challenges and the way it is being implemented. That is why I stated that, with the knowledge I presently have, I would not continue the program as it presently exists.

It is quite possible that students can graduate proficient in a second language without expanding elementary World Language. Also, there are quite possibly better ways to expand elementary World Language than the one that is presently in the Elementary School Model, but some creativity might be required. For example, programs offered outside of the school day could be a possibility. Out-of-the-box ideas like expanding the school day for elementary school students could even be explored, which could open up possibilities for later high school start times, possibly accomplishing both goals for the cost of one (I have not

thoroughly researched this, but want to illustrate the possibility that better options could exist). Also, possibly the elementary school Spanish program should not be mandated for all students. If it is as easy to catch up as the HCPSS website implies —

My child is transferring to a school with the Elementary World Language program from one that did not have a program. Will she need a tutor to catch up?

Students in Elementary Spanish classes are using a program called Descubre el español con Santillana. The structure of the Descubre materials affords multiple entry points for students. At each level, the student book begins with an introductory unit, assuming students enter the program with zero knowledge of Spanish, and the remaining units are sequential, spiraling within the grade level. Each level of the program moves at a faster pace, allowing for the recycling and expansion of acquired vocabulary and skills. Also, the cultural perspective of the material changes from level to level, so students who are in a second or third year of World Language will be able to recycle and master previously-learned vocabulary, while still being exposed to new vocabulary and cultural perspectives.

— students who are struggling in reading and/or math, for example, might have their time better spent receiving assistance with those subjects. (This is an example of where the needs of ELL students, special needs students, and those with IEP's might not be being optimally met.)

I believe that the present ESM World Language program has not been well thought out, and that we have “leaped before we looked” seriously and intelligently at the implementation and the consequences. I believe we can do much better.

c) Strengths Development — I would eliminate this program as it now stands. Whereas I do feel that encouraging the development of students' strengths is desirable, I think this can be done without the financial and time expenditures that this program is requiring. I think there are better ways to use the money and

time. I also feel that the program's overarching philosophy of "focus on what is strong rather than what is wrong" is flawed; I don't believe that doing both is mutually exclusive. I believe our students and staff should focus on what is strong while also focusing on improving what is wrong.

d) Departmentalization — I think that this concept has merit, but probably more in grades 3-5 than in grades K-2. I believe that decisions should be made regarding departmentalization at the local school level, due to needs and desires of various school communities, teachers, and administrators. If it is found that a great majority of schools prefer the same arrangement, and if countywide standardization of this arrangement would promote efficacy, I would be in favor of considering standardization of that arrangement, at least in general. If not, in the absence of compelling proof, I would leave the decision regarding the implementation of departmentalization to the individual schools. By giving individual schools this autonomy, they could consider the needs of their students, including those with diverse learning styles, ELL students, special needs students, and those with IEP's, when making their decisions, and they may even decide to vary the implementation of departmentalization grade-to-grade and year-to-year based on the needs of their particular student populations. The Elementary School Model is too rigid to allow for these adjustments.

e) Telehealth — I think this concept has merit, but it appears to be underutilized and continued funding of the present program seems to be hard to justify. I would favor discussions with the Howard County Health Department to try to find a way to offer these services countywide in a cost-efficient manner that would justify the funding. A cost/benefit analysis would then have to be made regarding the future implementation of this or another program.

Regarding the use of metrics for evaluating the ESM, I could see value in comparing results of the initiatives with results from non-ESM schools with similar demographics, but as is probably obvious, for reasons stated above, I would want

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to eliminate or alter most of the initiatives. Thus, from my point of view, metrically evaluating the present ESM would not be time and resources well spent.

3. How do you feel about Board of Education election and representation by district versus at-large?

My view on this subject is different from most people with whose views I normally agree. In speaking with them, my stance had been moved from about 90% to 60%, but it has not been changed. Even though there appear to be legitimate concerns regarding insufficient responsiveness from board members, I do not believe the election procedure should be changed; I believe that Board of

Education members should continue to be elected at large countywide and not by district. I am concerned about unintended consequences.

Though there are county boards of education that are elected in various at-large, districted, and appointed configurations, none has appeared to corner the market in effectiveness. For many years Howard County has been considered at least one of the best school systems in the state, yet for some stakeholders the grass appears to be greener in other counties. Unless someone has found proof that an alternative arrangement is superior to the present one, changing to district-based Board of Education elections could become yet another example of “leaping before we look”, with potentially harmful consequences.

Board members might be inclined to tailor their decisions to favor the voting constituents in their district instead of making decisions based on what is best for the entire county. Board members’ real constituents should not be only the voters in their districts, but should be the students, parents, and residents in all of Howard County. In the previously proposed councilmanic-district plan, the at-large board members who would presumably have the best interests of the entire county at heart, would be outnumbered five to two. There are two legislative

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bodies involved in decision-making in the case of the state's House of Delegates and Senate, but our Board of Education is not set up that way. I believe that our Board of Education should not be elected to represent an area, it should be elected to do right by all of our county's students, parents, and residents.

The proposed bill could actually backfire and reduce responsiveness. For example, if there is a problem at an individual school or area, presently all seven board members are responsible for fixing the problem; if the bill is passed, regarding voter constituency, four Board members would essentially have no responsibility for schools in that area of the county. It would also likely increase contention.

There are other ways to increase board responsiveness without these unintended consequences. For example, board members are presently assigned to clusters of schools for purposes that include being points of contact for each school community. Yet, most parents and other community members don't know which board member is assigned to their area. By extensively publicizing their assignments through school and community channels, and by ending the practice of annually changing their cluster assignments, board members' ability to be connected to, knowledgeable about, and responsible for specific areas of the county can be greatly enhanced. Citizens could more easily identify and contact their cluster's board member when needed.

Board members making countywide decisions should be responsible to a countywide electorate, and should not have to decide between what is best for the county and what will get them re-elected by their district. Though I appreciate the proposed efforts to improve our system, I believe that better and less risky alternatives exist.

As evidence that our present system is reasonably effective, in the November Primary Election, two of the three incumbents did not garner enough votes to move on to the General Election, and the other placed fourth in a race where only

the top three become board members. Thus, the present system seems to have proven to be reasonably able to produce change that will hopefully address concerns presently expressed by the community.

4. What is your view of inverting the current school starting times by flipping the start of elementary school with high school as is done in some other jurisdictions?

I am in favor of later high school start times, but I don't think that flipping the start of elementary school with high school is the best solution. I don't presently have "The Solution", but I have an idea for one. One of the main reasons that the flip is being considered as opposed to simply making the high schools start later is the cost; having buses make two runs instead of three countywide, for example, would be quite expensive at a time where money is tight and there are many funding demands (the amount varies depending on the variation used, but some models estimate a cost of about \$12 million). Issues with the flip include

challenges for high school students involved in athletics and/or after school jobs and activities (several elementary schools presently dismiss at 3:55pm), and day care (or "latch-key" situations) for elementary school students who would have an even longer time between school dismissal time and the time that their parent(s) would arrive home from work. Though there are exceptions to these situations, I believe that these situations are common enough to be relatively problematic.

My idea is to try to solve multiple problems with one hybrid solution (which should be piloted to confirm its viability). In this case, we might want to consider extending the school day for elementary school students whose families would like them to take part. During this extra time, students could participate in enrichment activities such as World Language instruction, intramurals, G/T projects, receiving homework assistance, etc. These students would need less after-school care, and they would be leaving school later, enabling third bus runs. Meanwhile, having buses carry students of mixed levels (e.g., elementary and

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middle school students) could save money and provide flexibility. Furthermore, for students in the extended day programs, the cost of separate “after-school buses” would not be needed. Thus, though extra funding would be necessary, high schools could start later (but not excessively), elementary school students could have worthwhile academic and enrichment activities, and parents could have reduced day care costs and less concern about “latch-key” children. Because of their complementary natures, my proposal could provide a lot of “bang for the buck” (though it would cost more than just flipping the elementary and high school start times). It could enable later high school start times that are not so late as to interfere with athletics and after school jobs and activities, in addition to providing quality elementary school after-school programs.

That said, if my idea would not prove practical, I would not be opposed to considering flipping the elementary and high school start times, but I would want to involve the community in this or any decision about changing school start times. There are many variables, considerations, and complexities. Though my present feeling is that the flip would not be a great solution, I would support it if that was what the community wanted. The school system does not presently seem to be considering “out-of-the-box” “big picture” solutions to addressing the desire for later high school start times, and I think that we should be open to options that combine initiatives to accomplish multiple goals at lower costs than would otherwise occur if they were not combined. That might be the key to making the initiatives actionable.

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1. Generally, schools east of or near route 29 are over capacity, while those further west are under capacity (Source: HCPSS.org school profiles). Many of these schools also have a concentration of low income students. Furthermore, Downtown Columbia development will contribute to a growing student population in these already crowded schools. As a Board member, what steps would you suggest to equalize the distribution of students to minimize the number of students in overcrowded schools and mitigate the lack economic diversity in our schools?

I share this concern of overcrowding in schools on the east side of Rt29. The common sense solution is an additional school or expand the existing schools to accommodate students, and look at our school attendance area policy. The population density in the east is higher than on the west side. It is important that the County Council and County government take immediate steps to address this issue. School system should do its part of finding ways to expand existing schools and provide the necessary staff, teachers and resources needed to combat this situation. I will continue to work with the community to advocate for economic diversity throughout the county. Some of the current challenges with redistricting westward include logistical and facilities issues. HCPSS has properties in downtown Columbia for additional schools and when the Swansfields ES and Widlelake MS renovations are completed, we will have additional capacity. We need to ask developers to commit to school funding.

Addressing the issue of diversity and socioeconomic status in the schools requires a community effort. County government has to look at revitalization and fair housing, and I am committed to working on this issue with them. Research shows that students of diversity, especially economic diversity, thrive when learning together so that achievement gaps are minimalized. The Coleman Report showed us two things: that integration of children from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds improves outcomes for children living in poverty and that family, and community are important factors in a child's success. The Thurgood Marshal Alliance suggests the following that can be done from a school system perspective:

- Setting an enrollment goal that is majority middle income, between 25% and 40% low income(FARMS), and with no single race/ethnicity comprising more than 60% of the enrollment
- Prioritizing inclusive educational programming, so that the school's enrollment diversity infuses each child's daily experiences
- Providing holistic student supports, including health and mental health services, and both afterschool and summer learning opportunities
- Committing to serve all children, including those with special needs and those for whom English is a second language

The Elementary School Model (ESM) is a pilot program that encompasses the last three bullets above. We could also look at the high school level and develop "Talent" Schools within the Columbia schools with a STEAM focus (Science-Technology-Engineering-Arts-Mathematics). There are logistical challenges but I think we could accomplish this with the right support.

2. How would you support implementation of the Elementary School Model in the Howard County Public School System over the next 5-10 years? Do you see the Elementary School Model as meeting the needs of students with diverse learning styles, ELL students, special needs students and those with IEP's? What metrics would you use to evaluate the success or shortcomings of the ESM in the schools where it has been implemented?

The ESM is a four-year pilot that is in its second year. Preliminary feedback has been positive and as data reveals progress, I would like to see expansion in all the elementary schools. One of the strongest components of the model is full day Pre-K for all students in the community. Research shows that early intervention as well as a student's social-behavioral readiness for Kindergarten can improve academic outcomes for students. Other components of the model include daily world language. There is a critical time period for second language acquisition in the elementary school age child as well as children that acquire a second language have better academic outcomes overall. Pre K and world language are research

proven methods for eliminating achievement gaps. Strengths development for students as well as teachers and parent engagement is another component. Departmentalization allows for strong content teaching for students and Telehealth keeps students healthy and in the classroom. Current review includes observations and surveys. Soon we will have more objective assessment data to review outcomes.

The ESM pilot encompasses the whole child and prepares students for the future. I visited Laurel Woods on the first day of school and they were starting their second year of the ESM pilot. I spoke with parents and staff who believe the program is working well. I believe it is important that everyone understands the components of the ESM model that impact student achievement:

World language every day. One of the critical need areas for our students of the future is to be bi-lingual for the next generation jobs and careers. Research shows that there is a critical age, about age 7, when language needs to be acquired to be fluent as an adult.

Departmentalization Learning and Teaching: Teachers can focus on the subject area they teach best, and their strength, expertise and talent enhances the teaching and learning experience for the children.

Strengths: Having the ability for a child to see their strengths for themselves and in working with others will guide them along their education journey and keep them focused when they need to make critical decisions regarding course work and careers in the future. It will guide them in critical thinking and team building skills.

All Day Pre-K: Early intervention is critical. Academic success is predictive based on looking at the academic interventions from 3-years-old to 3rd grade. Early identification and intervention are required for our most vulnerable student groups.

Depending on the level of a child's special care needs and their IEP or 504plan, they have the opportunity to incorporate all or some of these components into their educational plan.

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Not all ELL children come to school fluent in their own language or have the proper grammatical structure, so they will benefit also from interactions with their teachers and peers and will benefit from daily language instruction.

3. How do you feel about Board of Education election and representation by district versus at-large?

Such changes should require a thorough study of all pros and cons and involve all stakeholders rather than an abrupt local bill. If this process has to change then it should be done as a county referendum once the public is provided with facts and figures and not by a local delegation bill.

Below is the testimony I gave on behalf of the board and still support this position.

“Currently, each voter has access to a pool of candidates that represent the best the county has to offer. (Representation by district) would limit each voter’s choice to a much narrower pool. It would also bind Board members to the special interests of voters in their own district, and constrain their ability to make decisions that serve the best interests of all students in the system. And because there is no clear alignment between school attendance areas and councilmanic district, many voters living in one district would have children attending schools in a different district.

...the existing Board governing processes(has) been very effective in addressing the unique needs of each of our 76 schools. Currently each BOE member is assigned to a cluster of schools each year, and each gets to know the people and attributes of each school in their cluster. This results in the best of both worlds – Board members gain an understanding of local needs and differences, while keeping the best interests of the entire system at heart. “

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4. What is your view of inverting the current school starting times by flipping the start of elementary school with high school as is done in some other jurisdictions?

Sufficient sleep is important for students physical and mental health. Sleep cycles shift and change during adolescence. The medical research supports a later start time and I support the American Academy of Pediatrics recommendations for a later start time for middle and high school students. Flipping high school and elementary school times may be the easiest method but may not be the best solution. With flipping you would have very young children out at bus stops in the early dark mornings and you would not have older siblings at home in the afternoon to tend to their elementary school siblings. Also middle school students would not benefit from any time change and this is a critical age when many physical and metabolic changes are occurring in a child's body.

At the April 28th 2016 meeting we had a very good discussion regarding the data and support from the community regarding change and this is the action from the minutes.

“Action: Dr. Siddiqui moved that the Board support the recommendations for a later start time for the 2017-2018 school year and that staff go back to committee and review the following options: an 8:15-8:30 start minimally for middle and high school students, busing options, traffic studies, and also a funding placeholder in the FY 2017-2018 budget. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Vaillancourt and approved by the Board (5/2) with Ms. De Lacy and Mrs. O'Connor voting no.”