



# Howard County Council

George Howard Building  
3430 Court House Drive  
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043-4392

## COUNCILMEMBERS

Liz Walsh, Chair  
District 1

Opel Jones, Vice Chair  
District 2

Deb Jung  
District 4

Christiana Rigby  
District 3

David Yungmann  
District 5

## Minutes - Approved

Joint Board of Education and Council Meeting  
February 10, 2025  
Hybrid Meeting (Virtual and In-Person Meeting)  
Video Streamed on <https://hcpss.zoom.us/j/95488409744>  
9:45 a.m.

### **Opening of Meeting**

Meeting was called to order at 9:46 am.

**Council Members present:** Liz Walsh, Opel Jones, Deb Jung, Christiana Rigby, and David Yungmann.

**BOE Members Present:** Jolene Mosley, Linfeng Chen, Jacky McCoy, Meg Ricks, Antonia Watts, Andrea Chamblee, James Obasiolu, and Jennifer Mallo.

### **Staff Present**

**HCPSS:** Bill Barnes, Superintendent; Brian Hull, Chief Financial Officer; Dan Lubeley, Executive Director, Capital Planning and Construction; Dr. Caroline Walker, Chief Equity and Innovation Officer; Dr. Terri Savage, Chief Academic Officer; Michael Carson, Human Resources Executive Officer; Cornell Brown, Chief Operating Officer; Darin Conforti, Executive Director of Budget; Jahantab Siddiqui, Director of Student Transportation; and April Harrison, Board Administrator.

**County Council:** Michelle Harrod, Council Administrator; Jim Almon, Legislative Analyst; and Nick Rinehart, Legislative Analyst.

## **Agenda**

### **Budget**

Excess Funds in Capital Projects.

Cornell Brown, Chief Operating Officer, and Dan Lubeley, Executive Director for Capital Planning and Construction, for HCPSS were present to answer questions regarding Capital Projects and the excess in funds in past County budget years.

There was general discussion amongst Council and Board members. Topics of discussion included concerns about allocation of excess PAYGO funds in the County budget, the HB1450 Task Force, and County and school funding priorities.

#### State Budget Impacts on HCPSS

Brian Hull, Chief Financial Officer for HCPSS was present for questions and discussions about the Governor's proposed budget and estimates of impacts on HCPSS. Mr. Hull outlined the immediate impacts to the school system's budget. According to Mr. Hull, the bottom-line impacts would equal an \$8 million deficit for FY26, with \$5.5 million less revenue and \$2.5 million increase in expenditures.

There was general discussion about the potential federal funding impacts to the school system and Howard County Government.

*Council requested follow-ups:*

- *Greater understanding and details of federal funding impacts on Howard County Government and school budgets.*

#### **School Start Times**

Mr. Barnes introduced the topic by giving an overview of a recent HCPSS Board of Education request regarding the feasibility of later school start times and mentioned he would be seeking additional direction from the Board on how to proceed.

Cornell Brown, Chief Operating Officer, Jahantab Siddiqui, Director of Student Transportation, and Jennifer Robinson, Chief Schools Officer, were present to answer questions.

Ms. Watts indicated that the Board's request was for clarification on the timeline for implementation of later school start times.

There was general discussion regarding the labor market, financial implications of this proposal, the benefits of later start times, and how to engage the community on the proposal.

#### **Student Transportation and Walk Areas**

Policy 5200 Student Transportation and Analysis of Impact on Students and Update on Walk Areas for 2025-2026 School Year

Jahantab Siddiqui, Director of Student Transportation provided an overview of this policy update and the timeline for implementation of this change.

There was general discussion among Council members and Board members regarding appreciation for the change in policy, further details on the implementation timeline, and how walk zones are measured.

#### **Process for Investigating Claims of Inappropriate Behavior of HCPSS Staff and Contractors**

Michael Carson, Human Resources Executive Officer, and Jen Robinson, Chief Schools Officer, were present to answer questions regarding this agenda item.

Topics of discussion included further details on the process of reporting incidents, community messaging when incidents occur, and what happens if the reporting process isn't followed.

*Council requested follow ups:*

- *More detailed flow chart of the process of reporting incidents of inappropriate behavior of HCPSS staff and contractors.*

### **Violence in Middle Schools Update**

Jen Robinson, Chief Schools Officer, was available to answer questions on this topic.

There was general discussion about the details on the trends of middle school bullying and violent incidents, the process of analyzing incident frequency in each individual school, the process of reporting incidents, whether schools are following the same protocol in responding, and opportunities for extracurricular activities as a means of reducing violent incidents.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 am.