

1. Some believe that Howard County schools are overcrowded. However, data seems to reflect a balancing issue. Would you consider school redistricting to best utilize the existing facilities we have in our county?

Yes, redistricting must be used to balance our populations and fully utilize our existing facilities. This must be done in conjunction with continued expansion of our infrastructure and capital construction of high school #13 as well as an elementary school in the Turf Valley area. We cannot in good conscience ask for additional monies from the county and state if we do not first adequately use the open seats in the western part of the county where our schools are under-enrolled. Redistricting will allow for capacity balancing at current enrollment levels. As we add between 1,000-1,500 students a year to total enrollment, the school system will also need to continue to build new schools and work with the county to find suitable acreage in the growing population areas.

2. If Howard County schools operate under capacity as a result of the Board of Education's desire not to redistrict, are you willing to fund school construction without state funding?

First, I believe re-districting absolutely must occur. At this time, I do not see a scenario in which I would advocate for school construction without state funding. That being said, if funding disagreements were to arise as they have recently at Talbott Springs Elementary School, where the state approved a renovation instead of a rebuild; we would need to address that differently. In the case of Talbott Springs, the return on investment for a renovation is not as great as that of a rebuild. During a renovation, the health concerns (*i.e.*; mold exposure and remediation), education instructional disruptions, and the number of seats under-capacity for enrollment, indicate that the school system should aggressively solicit state funds to rebuild. For situations like this, the Board should actively pursue a reconsideration and approval of state funding as well as exploring all our funding options with the priority being the educational mission of the school system.

3. How can the Board of Education best support education while at the same time promote Howard County as a business destination?

The Board can best promote Howard County as a business destination by (1) delivering high quality education that makes Howard County a desirable location in which to live and work; (2) investing in partnerships with the business community to create win-win scenarios with our students and local businesses; and (3) operating as effective stewards of public funding for education in Howard County.

4. Do you believe that there is a shortage in career and technology education and how would you address this issue going forward?

I believe that we have not sufficiently invested in career and technology education (CTE). As a system, we often use "the % of graduates attending college" as a metric for our success. This sends that message that CTE is not as important or essential. While I am happy with the addition of new CTE offerings in HVAC and Agricultural Science, I think we need a full evaluation of

our offerings and the associated levels of participation. This is without doubt an area in which effective partnerships with the Howard County business community could produce high dividends for our students. I would favor a more engaged CTE advisory committee in partnership with the Howard County business community to ensure that our programs are relevant, and our students are able to transfer their education to gainful employment.

5. Howard County has long been lauded for its education system but there are concerns by many that an achievement and equity gap exist. Do you agree with these assessment? How would you work with the superintendent and the community to address these concerns whether real or perceived?

There is an achievement gap and an equity gap. The equity gap not only occurs between students, but also between schools. My goal is to examine the policies, programs, and underlying procedures to identify discrepancies, gaps, and unintended consequences. For example, I recently brought it to the attention of the Board that the Athletics and Extra-curricular Eligibility policy may disproportionately affect our socio-economically disadvantaged students, African American, Latino, Special Education, and male students. I have already met with the Administration to suggest different solutions. As a board member, I will continue to identify problems, concerns, and issues and then follow with engagement and discussion with stakeholders, offer potential solutions, or remediation options. I will also continue to support reduced class sizes that are critical to providing services to those at the lower end of the achievement gap and those students lost in the middle.

I also believe that the Board needs to direct the Superintendent to allocate resources proportional to needs at schools. Schools with higher needs, based on achievement and equity gap measures, should be allotted a higher proportion of resources, including staffing, to focus on reducing critical deficiencies.

6. Previous Board of Education and administration decisions have left the school system with a health fund deficit. What recommendations will you propose to remedy this situation and prevent it from happening again?

First and foremost, we cannot simply give a pass to the Superintendent and be remiss in our fiduciary responsibility. The Board must commit to combing through not just the budget at a granular level, but also performing in-depth examinations of monthly operating budget reports. The Board should insist on instituting quantifiable metrics that budget area managers must meet and manage to in their spending. These metrics must also be used to determine the success or failure of programs and new initiatives. For example, over the past 4 years, there has been a 30% increase in headcount in non-teaching central office staff (Administrative, Management, and Technical Personnel [AMT] not represented under a bargaining agreement) – this type of overhead increase is not sustainable.

Additionally, we need a multi-year strategic plan that informs our annual budgeting process. Just as we examine our capital budget across 5-10 years, we need to assess our long term operating needs in a more systemic fashion. When we treat each year as a budget crisis, we make short term decisions – such as deferring essential maintenance – rather than critically examining

programs for areas which might need reductions. As a result of this, HCPSS now has a deferred maintenance backlog exceeding \$500M.

7. Is the current budgeting process between Howard County and HCPSS working well, or does it need improvement? What improvement would you pursue?

The budget process needs improvement. Initially, the HCPSS needs to develop and share a comprehensive multi-year strategic plan that drives the annual operating budget. The BOE and County Administration need to know what the school system expects for outyear costs on any new initiative. The BOE and County Administration need to have reasonable faith in HCPSS projections of enrollment growth and costs of services. To achieve that, the Board must exhibit the ability to analyze, examine, and study the fiscal issues, not simply ask for more money. I will bring my background in economics and data analytics to dig deep into the financial information to do just that.

I will also suggest an increased partnership with the business community on the Operating Budget Review Committee (OBRC) of the Board of Education. The members of the business community currently on the OBRC are disproportionately under-represented compared with the education community. As a result, there tends to be more of a focus on what else we would like to fund as opposed to what areas may be able to achieve cost savings or may require reductions.