

**BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HARFORD COUNTY**

**PRESENTATION OF**

**SUPERINTENDENT'S RECOMMENDATION  
OF A CANDIDATE FOR  
BOARD OF EDUCATION ETHICS  
PANEL POSITION**

**APRIL 17, 2023**

Background Information:

The Board Ethics Policy provides for a five member Ethics Panel to implement the Board Ethics Policy. The members of this Panel are persons selected by the Board and who are not employed by the Board. There is one vacancy with respect to the panel. This vacancy occurred with the end of the service term of Pastor Mark Nolan.

Discussion:

Upon the vacancy of Pastor Mark Nolan on the Board's Ethics Panel, advertisement of the vacancy was posted. Two candidates submitted letters of interest along with a resume. Kimberly Neal, Esquire, General Counsel and liaison to the Ethics Panel, along with John Burke, Esquire, Deputy General Counsel, conducted interviews of each candidate. Irene "Niki" Wiggins, Esquire, is well-qualified to serve on the Board's Ethics Panel. If approved, Ms. Wiggins will serve a five-year term on the Board's Ethics Panel.

Attachments:

1. Ethics Panel application of Irene "Niki" Wiggins, Esquire.

Superintendent's Recommendation:

The Superintendent recommends that the Board approve the selection of Irene "Niki" Wiggins, Esquire, to the Board's Ethics Panel, for a five-year term beginning April 17, 2023, and ending April 17, 2028.

Irene (Niki) Wiggins  
206 Edmund St.  
Aberdeen, MD 21001

February 3, 2023

Kimberly H. Neal, Esq.  
General Counsel  
c/o Diana Rasinski  
Board of Education of Harford County  
102 S. Hickory Ave.  
Bel Air, MD 21014

**Re: Opening on the Harford County Public Schools Ethics Panel**

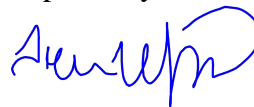
Dear Ms. Neal:

I write to express interest in being considered for appointment to the school system's Ethics Panel, per the press release dated January 23, 2023. Harford County's schools play a critical role in ensuring the well-being of our community. Not only do they care for the minds and bodies of our children, but many of those children ultimately utilize their educations to improve our county through productivity and creativity. Unethical practices by those entrusted with the development of our children have the potential to significantly undercut the mission and effectiveness of the school system. I would love the opportunity to serve HCPS and help maintain a system that works to the best advantage of our children and our community.

My work as an attorney and a consumer advocate makes me well-suited for a position on the Ethics Panel. As an Assistant People's Counsel, my job entails protecting Marylanders from unethical practices by the State's utilities. I understand how to thoroughly investigate and document possible violations, and the significant impact those violations have on the vulnerable. I also have experience effectively communicating about complex issues with all interested parties. As a legal professional I am fully committed to confidentiality, discretion, and objectivity as part of my day-to-day work, and I would bring that commitment to this role as well.

I appreciate the dedication HCPS shows to our county's children every day, and I hope to have the opportunity to contribute to the system's success. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,



Irene (Niki) Wiggins

Encl.

## **Niki Wiggins Biographical Sketch**

Since 2021 I have served the people of Maryland as an Assistant People's Counsel for the Office of People's Counsel, an independent State agency. There, I represent the interests of residential consumers in matters relating to the cost and quality of their utility service, including protecting consumers from unethical and harmful business practices. Prior to working for the Office of People's Counsel I served the citizens of Harford County as an Assistant State's Attorney, where I enjoyed working to get justice for victims of crimes and ensuring that the rights of the accused were protected during the legal process. I graduated summa cum laude and as a member of the Order of the Coif from the University of Maryland Carey School of Law in 2019, and have been licensed to practice law in Maryland since 2019. While in law school, I completed an internship with Kids in Need of Defense helping to represent unaccompanied minors in immigration proceedings, and was a member of the Immigration Law and Policy Association.

I received my undergraduate degree in history and economics from Notre Dame of Maryland University in 2009 where I graduated summa cum laude. Prior to attending law school, I had a successful career in contracts and finance working for the Allegis family of companies in Maryland. I decided to switch to a career in the legal field to advocate for people who did not have the power to advocate for themselves.

My husband and I have enjoyed living in Harford County together for ten years. We are the parents of three bright children who attend school in the Harford County Public School system. When we are not at an extracurricular activity or a sports game for the kids, our family enjoys spending time on the water, attending and volunteering at church events, and playing with our dog, Loki.