

Communications Office

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Harford County Public Schools Applauds County Council for Additional Investment While Highlighting Ongoing Funding Gap

Harford County Public Schools (HCPS) extends its sincere appreciation to the Harford County Council for approving approximately \$2.3 million in additional funding for the Fiscal Year 2027 budget. This investment will allow the school system to preserve 24 teaching positions, directly supporting classroom instruction and minimizing disruption to students and families.

“This critical funding is a vital investment in our community and demonstrates the County Council’s dedication to our students and educators,” stated HCPS Interim Superintendent, Dr. Dyann R. Mack.

While HCPS is grateful for the Council’s support, the school system must also underscore that, due to decisions made by County Executive Bob Cassilly, the approved budget still leaves an approximately \$13 million shortfall in funding that is required to maintain current operations and to honor negotiated salary packages. As a result, HCPS continues to face difficult financial challenges heading into the upcoming school year.

Board President Lauren Paige previously outlined the serious implications of this funding gap in her most recent budget communication. To balance the budget under current conditions, HCPS is evaluating several potential reductions and cost-saving measures, including:

- Staffing adjustments beyond classroom teachers, including reductions in central office and support positions
- Increased class sizes due to remaining staffing constraints
- Reductions in extracurricular activities and athletics funding
- Decreases in professional development opportunities for staff
- Operational efficiencies, including delayed maintenance and facility upgrades
- Program adjustments or consolidations, particularly in elective and specialized offerings
- Transportation and service modifications, where feasible

“These are not decisions we take lightly,” Dr. Mack said. “Each potential reduction has a real impact on students, staff, and the broader school community. Our goal remains to protect classroom instruction as much as possible, but the scale of this funding gap requires difficult trade-offs.”

Dr. Mack reiterates her commitment to work collaboratively with county leaders and community stakeholders to advocate for sustainable funding solutions that meet the needs of a dynamic school system.

“As I stated previously, I hope that the county executive and his team, sit down with HCPS for future operating budget discussions to better understand our students’ needs, legal requirements of building a school operating budget, and the expectations our families and community have for Harford County Public Schools,” said Dr. Mack.

“We appreciate the County Council’s commitment to our schools during this critical time,” Ms. Paige noted. “Now, it is time for the County Executive to do his part. The County Executive chooses where to allocate funding, and his continued refusal to close this \$13 million gap threatens the very foundation of the services our community expects and our students deserve.”

HCPS will continue to provide updates as the budget process moves forward and encourages community members to stay informed and engaged.

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