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Vicky Cutroneo
Candidate, Board of Education
OMCA Questionnaire

1. Serving as PTA Council President provided me with the opportunity to become familiar with issues and challenges unique to each school and more importantly to collaborate with PTA and community leadership on a variety of issues. Housing development patterns and turnover have propagated the disparity that comes with concentrated poverty--research shows that when the percentage of students dependent on free and reduced meals exceeds 25 percent, it is impactful to not only the individual student, but to the school as a whole. It contributes to the cycle of concentrated poverty, lower test scores, less desirability for prospective homeowners/resistance to redistricting. Given that standardized tests are more an indication of student wealth than academic ability or quality of instruction, the inherent bias against schools with high levels of poverty is hard, if not impossible, to overcome.

Recently I analyzed PARRC scores as they related to FARMs data by county. The top 4 scoring counties in Maryland predictably had the top 4 least percentage of FARMs students and vice versa. Concentrated poverty clearly exacerbates disparity and the achievement gap and I believe that it is of utmost importance to place more emphasis on balancing this when redistricting.

A. Recognizing the impact of concentrated poverty on a school is the first step to identifying real, impactful interventions. It is simply unfair that there exists such disparity between schools that are just miles apart.

B. Redistricting students based on income alone is against the law. That being said, socioeconomics must be taken into consideration and given more weight as redistricting decisions are made. BOE Members must make decisions based on established policies and on reliable, accurate data, not on emotion or the loudest voices. They must also become more familiar with the nuances of walking attendance areas and the specific socioeconomic dynamics impacting Title 1 schools and those schools trending becoming Title 1.

C. One size does not fit all, targeting staffing models (more social, mental health supports at Title 1 schools). For example, even larger Title 1 elementary schools still share school a psychologist, I believe these schools should have at least 1, ideally 2 dedicated staff members. More support staff, smaller class sizes at least K-2, more summer learning opportunities to combat the "summer slide" have all been shown to mitigate the effects of concentrated poverty in Title 1 schools. When I ask parents at these schools what they need, the number one answer is more staff.

D. Look at best practices to see which programs, staffing models, supports are finding better success with the extra funding provided to Title 1 schools.

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2. I have already worked with Oakland Mills community, providing information on the most current deferred maintenance lists and have also testified in support of the TSES rebuild, as well as writing a letter to County Council and the Director of the Interagency on School Construction, detailing long standing mold issues in the building that I believe dilutes the case for renovating the school and renders a rebuild the most fiscally sound choice.

For the past 3 years I have been vocal about the impact of deferred maintenance as well as the increasing reliance on portables, which are rife with safety and environmental health issues. Many of these deferred projects are pose potential serious environmental health concerns and I would continue to advocate towards treating them as such, not as maintenance projects. Oakland Mills HS is in dire need of an HVAC renovation, deferred since 2009, yet we continue to earmark capital funding towards capacity projects in newer schools and new construction. This renders older schools in areas of less development at a huge disadvantage.

I believe BOE members need to be more of a visible presence in Annapolis, advocating for increased capital funding. I testified many times at the State level as a private citizen on facilities issues/funding and was disappointed that our elected leaders were not doing the same throughout the year. I learned just how important it is to show up in person.

I would also advocate towards a school facilities advisory committee that reports directly to the Board of Education; many times the first the Board hears about facilities issues is during capital budget public hearing and I believe the Board needs to hear from parents, community members about facility issues more frequently. We need to hear from the people who spend time in the buildings, whose children spend their days in them.

3. There should be no program implementation without a sustainable long term fiscal plan. Period. Grants should be utilized to complement more permanent types of funding. That being said, I believe that the Elementary School Model could possibly have been transformed into a more cost effective program, keeping the language component only. The loss of world languages at our schools with a large Hispanic/Latino community will continue to deeply impact those communities, those teachers did more than teach, they served as a connection for parents and students who may otherwise not have felt engaged. Honestly, I think we cannot call ourselves world class without an elementary world language program.

4. As a Board member, I will continue to serve as a conduit between school system and community.

I was extremely disappointed with the school system's defensive response to the Oakland Mills Community's concerns regarding inaccurate FARMs data; moreover, corrections were quietly posted to the HCPSS website on a Friday afternoon, with no public comment or clarification. This is not transparency.

I recognize the incredible resource that the OMCA is for their students and families, there is simply no other community like it and instead of treating advocates with disdain and defensiveness, we should be utilizing the depth of resources and support that the OMCA provides. I know that I have truly enjoyed becoming more engaged and as a Board member would continue to prioritize these conversations and relationships. There is a reason that schools in Oakland Mills continue to see improving graduation rates, scores and decreasing suspension rates and a big part of it is the support received from the community.

Oakland Mills Community Forum

Responses to Questions: Robert O Glascock

Background Information Regarding Equity and Differentiation

When President Obama signed the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) on December 10, 2015, I began to reflect on the past 13 years since No Child Left Behind (NCLB) became a law. I thought about my involvement in the school improvement process as a district leader, a turnaround director at a state education agency (SEA), and now as an education consultant and Board of Education candidate. I decided to share my experiences in school turnaround and what I learned from those experiences.

The goal is to engage educators, parents and families, researchers, policymakers, business entrepreneurs, and non-profit organizations in a reflective dialogue about what we have learned about school improvement and turnaround since the creation of NCLB and what we need to do move forward under ESSA to not only turnaround our lowest performing schools but sustain the improvements over time.

School Improvement in a School District

In 2002, I was the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction in the Howard County Public School System (70 schools) in Maryland. Before the ink dried on the NCLB parchment, my Deputy Superintendent approached me in January 2002 about developing a plan to address the prevalent gaps in achievement that existed in the school system, especially in the schools with diverse student populations. I told her that I would form a task force and prepare a report to the Board of Education (BOE) for June. She turned to me and said gently, we go the BOE in March.

The result was the development of The Comprehensive Plan for Accelerated School Improvement (CPASI) as a district and school reform initiative designed to accelerate achievement for all students and provide intense focus and support for

the lowest achieving schools in the district. The CPASI aligned processes and priorities throughout the school system and established clear expectations for all schools. The processes and priorities were:

- Establishment of two system goals that address student performance and safe and nurturing environments that all schools and the system use to guide our work;
- Establishment of specific achievement targets for student achievement that are much higher than expectations at the state and federal levels;
- Establishment of specific indicators and standards for student performance against which all school and student performance will be measured;
- A multi-year school improvement planning process that requires on-going monitoring, evaluation, and refinement;
- An instructional focus on acceleration rather than remediation.

To differentiate support and resources for our lowest achieving schools, we created a School Improvement Unit (SIU) for nine elementary, four middle and three high schools. Based upon DuFour's work in Professional Learning Communities at Work, professional learning communities (PLCs) were established in those schools connected together by a central PLC that included school administrators and central office staff.

To be successful, I recognized that we needed to establish trust and collegiality among central office staff (cross-department collaboration and alignment) and school principals, teachers, and students. Central office culture needed to change from "direct and tell" to "listen and respond." The shift to a capacity building approach within schools focused on improving teaching and learning so that ultimately student performance was accelerated and sustained.

The SIU became the research and development arm of the school system because of its inherent design in identifying practices that could have wider application across the county. Principals and school improvement teams were given greater autonomy but were held to high standards of performance. Through monthly PLC meetings, SIU administrators and central office staff collaborated with each other to problem solve and share effective practices. Principal and assistant principal identified critical issues through candid conversations with the deputy superintendent and

superintendent. I worked with central program staff to address the school leaders concerns and identify ways to respond to their needs.

For example, principals consistently expressed their frustration about not being able to attract and hire highly qualified and effective teachers for their schools. I invited the Director of Human Resources to attend one of the PLC meetings and listen to their concerns. Following the meeting, I negotiated a change in the teacher hiring practices so that SIU principals could interview the highly qualified teacher candidates before other schools. To provide principals with a hiring incentive, I created a "one to one" teacher laptop initiative for SIU schools. Additionally, the principals had the authority to accept or reject administrative teacher transfers from other schools.

A focus of the SIU Professional Learning Community for school leaders was to foster peer-to-peer learning. This extended to yearly progress evaluations. Each SIU principal and members of their school improvement team made a 15-minute presentation to their peers on the progress they had made in meeting their school improvement goals and objectives based on quantitative and qualitative data. This stimulated reflective practice and increased accountability for results.

Student, Parent, Family, and Community Engagement

In designing the SIU, we recognized the need to rethink parent involvement beyond attending PTA meetings and student conferences. The African proverb: "It takes a village to raise a child" became the fundamental principle upon which we began to think and act differently on how to engage parents and families with school and central office staff.

Organizationally, I created the Department of Student, Family, and Community Services to coordinate development and implementation of academic intervention and student services, design and implement a model for family and community outreach in all schools linked to school improvement efforts, and align and integrate delivery systems for student, family, and community support services. Supports included:

- Providing a parent liaison for each SIU school to maximize the involvement of parents and the community.
- Creating the Office of International Student Services to better serve our immigrant families and English language learners;
- Hiring a Hispanic achievement specialist to work collaboratively with central programs and schools to achieve the school system's goals for Hispanic students, and ensure they are college and career ready at the time of graduation;
- Conducting quarterly SIU-PTA President Meetings that served to a) increase the level of understanding among parents whose children attended a school participating in the SIU; and b) identify strategies for engaging the broader parent community and defining their role in the SIU initiative;
- Providing support for attendance at state conferences on family and community involvement for parents and school staff;
- Adopting and implementing the Joyce Epstein Model (Johns Hopkins University) for family and community involvement.

Additionally, I submitted multiple grant applications for the 21st Century Community Learning Center Grant and received funding to create the Bridges over Howard County, community learning centers that provide students at SIU schools with after-school academic enrichment opportunities as well as additional services designed to complement their regular academic program. Family literacy and related educational learning opportunities were provided to parents and families through these centers.

Within two years, all of the schools exited school improvement status as defined by the Maryland State Department of Education.

Overall we learned that we had to:

- Establish strong entrance and exit criteria for schools that needed to be refined over time;
- Reevaluate schools to make certain they are still a match for the initiative;
- Continuously identify ways to eliminate duplication of efforts and enhance and expand services (including into non-SIU schools)
- Assure that schools were adequately being served and were meeting their objectives and school system goals;
- Identify practices and strategies that have potential for system-wide replication (research and development component);
- Focus on improving initiative quality, participant outcomes, and implementation of best practices;

- Build networks and relationships with central office, principals, teachers, parents, and community members;
- Maintain staff motivation to accelerate student achievement;
- Promote continuous professional growth for all staff.

The School Improvement Unit built capacity of school personnel to function as a professional learning community—one that is collaborative, takes a collective inquiry approach to student achievement and strives to implement the best practices and continuously improves them.

Successful implementation of school turnaround requires willingness to examine instructional, organizational, professional development, and operational practices for inefficiencies and willingness to engage in honest and open discussion about how to improve them. It requires involvement of school-based staff, central office staff, and parents, families and the community. The key is that everyone accepts responsibility for eliminating the achievement gaps.

The School Improvement Unit focused the system and its schools on accelerating achievement for each one of our students, even when it means doing things differently than they have been done in the past. It was action research —and promised an opportunity for replicating best practices across the system in an efficient and effective manner.

1. Equity: Based on my track record of turning around schools through the Comprehensive Plan for Accelerated Student Achievement and as the Executive Director for School Turnaround at the Maryland Department of Education for six years, I will advocate for a systemic approach to the elimination of achievement gaps among students. The goal is to improve school system and schools capacity to turnaround schools and sustain the improvements over time. Thus, student achievement will dramatically increase and result in closing of the achievement gaps among students in Oakland Mills community.

Redistricting: Policy 6010 – School Attendance Area, defines the redistricting process for the HCPSS. A major component of the policy requires that The Board of

Education must consider demographic characteristics of the student population by promoting the creation of a diverse and inclusive student body at both the sending and receiving schools. The BOE can alleviate the disparity in the number of economically disadvantaged students in the Oakland Mills community and other schools by following the redistricting policy and ensuring an equitable distribution of economically disadvantaged students in schools.

Facilities: All students should have access to safe and modern facilities. So how do we sustain equity and keep it at the forefront of our education system? As a board member, I will advocate for the development and adoption of a policy on equity. This policy will explicitly define what educational equity is and will be in Howard County. Equity in education is based upon fairness, inclusion, and access. Student's personal and social circumstances should not be a barrier to student potential and academic success. The school system must ensure that all students have access to curriculum and programs in an inclusive environment. HCPSS must provide programs, resources, and equitable facilities for all students and schools and provide additional staff, resources, and programs, based on needs such as English language learners and students with disabilities.

So why a policy? School system policies define what we want for our children, how we will provide it and how we know if we do it well. The policy on equity will serve as a framework by which the equity is infused into the school system's education programs and operations. As a policy, equity cannot be ignored. It is time for all of us to reflect and examine our personal beliefs about educational equity. For me, it is a moral imperative.

2 & 3 Program Development, Implementation, and Sustainability

The elimination of the Elementary School Model and thus World Language in elementary schools is a result of a faulty program design. To ensure that HCPSS initiatives are sustainable, the BOE must require that the superintendent and staff conduct a pilot program and evaluate its effectiveness in meeting program goals and objectives before

expanding the program. Additionally, the BOE must commit to funding only if the results indicate that students are being successful as defined by specific measures.

4. Communication and Transparency:

Each member of the BOE, except for the Chairman, is assigned a cluster of schools. The purpose is to facilitate school visitations, attendance at special events, and points of contact for each school community. In addition, I will advocate that each BOE member must serve as a liaison with community residents in their cluster to improve communication between the senior leadership of the school system and the community. In this way, residents can make sure that issues raised to the Superintendent and staff are acknowledged promptly and appropriately and action steps are taken to address the issues.

Danny Mackey

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1) The demographics of Howard County are changing rapidly and we need to elect leaders who understand this. At Wilde Lake High School, where the motto is "Where Diversity Excels," I had first hand exposure to the benefits of a diverse student body and also witnessed the failure of our system to adequately serve students of color and students from difficult economic situations. As a Senior in high school I aided in a tenth grade on-grade-level English class and had my eyes opened to the vast injustice of our school system under-serving and ultimately failing many students, particularly students of color. It was eye opening for me to see the enormous achievement gap present between the AP/GT courses and the on-grade-level courses. Since that year, equity has been and will continue to be in the forefront of my mind. Ensuring equitable opportunity for all students will require HCPSS to engage communities that have been historically under-served by the education system, come to terms with those failures, and provide a concrete and earnest effort to close the achievement gap. We must work to ensure that we provide opportunities to our students that give them the ability to succeed in light of their circumstances regardless of where they live, any disability they may have, their home situation, the color of their skin, or any factor. This includes turning our focus to our most vulnerable youth, particularly at a young age, to ensure they are keeping up with their peers. This will require better collection, analysis, and use of data. It will also require programmatic differences between our higher and lower achieving schools; the Board of Education must be fierce advocates for defending equity.

2) As a civil engineer and construction professional I know what it takes to initiate and manage large capital projects and bring them to fruition on-time and on-budget. I look forward to the opportunity to streamline our procurement and contracting services to reduce waste in our capital spending and spend our currently available dollars more efficiently. We cannot continue to delay much needed maintenance projects in favor of capacity projects elsewhere in the county; it is a cycle that is indicative of poor planning by HCPSS and must change. We must pursue unique funding mechanisms and work with county and state partners to identify opportunities for revenue as it relates to maintenance of our aging facilities while accommodating and planning for our county's continued growth.

3) HCPSS needs to do a better job of developing metrics for programmatic success before the implementation of new pilots. We must also evaluate our pilot programs and tweak them before expanding them to other schools. As a recent graduate of the system my first thought on every issue is how our actions will impact the students of our county. That is why I take serious issue with short-sighted decision-making that jeopardizes the consistency of our children's educational experience and disrupts the consistency of our educators' work environment. I will be an advocate for adequately funding programs that are proven to improve our students' academic performance and social and emotional wellbeing and ensure that funding is identified and secured before program implementation.

4) I have been an advocate for increased transparency in the Howard County Public School System for several years. I gave a testimony on accountability and a subsequent testimony on transparency in 2016, the first of which can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x2nNTw84v2g>. Giving community members access to accurate information is an important part of rebuilding trust between the community and our school system. That is why I will advocate for the hiring of budget and system analysts who

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work directly for the Board of Education and can procure and distribute information and answer to the Board of Education rather than the Superintendent. I will serve as a conduit to elevate community concerns and ensure that they are receiving appropriate attention.

Jen Mallo
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Jen Mallo, written response to Oakland Mills Community Association

1. The demographics of Howard County schools can be very different. Schools in Oakland Mills tend to have much higher proportions of minority students, students speaking a primary language other than English, and students from economically disadvantaged families. As a member of the Board of Education, what will you do to ensure that the needs of these students and their schools are addressed properly and equitably? Additionally, what will you do as the school system considers future redistricting and capacity decisions to help alleviate the disparity we see in the numbers of economically disadvantaged students (as measured by such data as students receiving FARMS assistance) in school populations between schools that are often just a few miles apart?

As a parent whose three children attended Swansfield Elementary School, Harper's Choice Middle School, and Wilde Lake High School, I certainly understand and appreciate these concerns.

Schools should receive supports proportional to their needs. At a minimum, this should include facilities, staffing, and resources.

We need to follow policy 6010 (School Attendance Areas) which directs the school board to balance facility utilization, community stability with demographic characteristics. When I sat on the review of this policy, I strongly advocated for the inclusion of new demographic concerns in addition to the preexisting use of FARMS data. We were able to include in the policy that school attendance areas should be diverse and inclusive. This can only be achieved if we follow the policy.

2. Oakland Mills High School currently has over \$41 million in deferred maintenance, Oakland Mills Middle School has almost \$20 million in deferred maintenance, and Talbott Springs Elementary School has almost \$37 million in deferred maintenance. Three of the top ten schools ranked by amount of deferred maintenance are in Oakland Mills. Furthermore, Talbott Springs has the worst facilities condition index in the school system, and Oakland Mills High and Middle have the second worst high school and middle school indices in the county, respectively. While we hope for a new Talbott Springs, Oakland Mills High and Middle are consistently deferred for renovation in favor of projects to add capacity. What will you do as a member of the Board of Education to ensure that students have access to equitable, safe, and modern facilities regardless of the capacity issues in the school?

With deferred maintenance currently totaling a half a billion dollars, the Oakland Mills cluster has certainly taken a disproportionate share of the burden. Three of the four schools in your cluster have four times the amount of expected maintenance for the size of the population. These three schools total 19% of the total deferred maintenance budget.

To put that in perspective of the larger picture, in FY08, our annual capital budget was a little over \$80M – while in FY18 it stands at \$65M. This is nearly a 20% reduction in absolute terms – and a whopping 35% reduction when adjusted for local inflation. For the past decade, we have seen a slow but steady decline in capital spending on our Howard County schools. Our county is chronically underfunding capital maintenance.

As a Board of Education member, in order to prioritize health, safety and equity, I will continue to

1. Advocate for adequate funding for capital funds (restored to FY08 pre-recession levels),

2. Redistrict to utilize our existing capital infrastructure to relieve the immediate burden of overcapacity schools. This also has the potential to relieve the pressure to build new capacity while at the same time restart maintenance that has been so long deferred.
 3. Bring awareness to the inequity that Oakland Mills Cluster schools are facing with their disproportionate deferred maintenance.
 4. Prioritize maintenance and renovation for issues affecting health and safety.
3. The recent budget debate over the Elementary School Model and the sudden elimination of World Language left students with gaps in their educational experiences and left the school system without a full cohort of students upon which a complete evaluation of the program could have been performed. What will you do as a member of the Board of Education to ensure that HCPSS initiatives receive enough funding stability to allow for proper evaluation of their efficacy and to support the students who were part of these initiatives through their academic careers in the school system?

As a board, we need to demand data and hold managers accountable for delivery of said data. We need to increase our reliance on quantifiable and qualitative measures of efficacy. Each new initiative should begin with a five to ten-year strategic plan. This plan would lay out funding expectations, outcome expectations, measures that will be used to determine success, staffing expectations, and finally potential for growth and scalability if success is achieved. We need to start with a long term strategic operating budget rather than a series of one-year budget shortfalls. If a program does not have funding sustainability, then we can phase out the program rather than abruptly discontinue it, leaving our families feeling as though they have had the rug pulled out from under them.

4. The Oakland Mills Community has raised several concerns over the past year and has been disappointed with lack of response from the Superintendent and his staff. For example, the Oakland Mills Community Association, local PTAs, and local residents flagged large errors in the FARMs data provided to the Area Attendance Committee last summer. Residents sent emails, and OMCA sent official correspondence to the Superintendent and his staff, yet the data were not addressed until a member of our County Council called a community meeting two months after the data had been released and the errors had been flagged. The AAC did not receive corrected data until they had already met several times and generated scenarios using the bad data. Similarly, the community did not know about the issue with state funding of Talbott Springs until months after Central Office staff knew based on dates on correspondence released under an MPIA request. As a member of the Board of Education, what will you do to ensure that residents or organizations raising issues to the Superintendent and his staff are acknowledged promptly and appropriately, and that further communication and proper corrective action occur quickly when necessary?

When I started my career as an Intelligence Analyst, the motto was "trust but verify". If I made a prediction based on the available data, the first question was always, "but what if your data is wrong?". I will apply that same level of critical analysis as a Board member. Although I trust that the staff will attempt to bring forward the most accurate information, I will always be open to verification of that data by the involved members of our community. Our decisions need to be based on sound data. I believe that we as a school system will find greater success with not just transparency, but full openness.

Robert Miller

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1) These students have needs that can be both unique and overlapping, and each can benefit from specific supports. A high priority for me would be increasing the amount of time educators are able to provide individual assistance to students who could benefit (by reducing time spent dealing with standardized tests, teacher evaluations, Central Office administrivia, etc.). We should strive toward having each student progressing at his/her potential; in various cases, this could involve individual tutoring, translating, enrichment, differentiation, and the like. Furthermore, ensuring that students have a solid foundation of skills is an investment in their future education and their quality of life. Appropriate staffing for the needs of each school's students should be a priority. I would work with the other Board members and our funding authorities (the County Executive and County Council) to obtain funds for these initiatives. I would support our school system in making efforts to compensate for extra challenges these students face during and outside of school, as both can affect academic and life success. Scholarships from community organizations, instructors, businesses, and others could help students whose families face financial challenges. Retirees, high school students seeking service hours, and others willing to volunteer could provide supports and enrichment opportunities for students. When some students have access to tutors, enrichment, technology, arts, sports, role models, educational travel, literature, etc., and others do not, inequities are structural. As much as possible, we should try to provide equitable opportunities that are not solely dependent upon the financial resources of students' families. We can't close the achievement gap without closing the opportunity gap. Additionally, I would support the provision of a high-quality diverse teaching staff as well a curriculum that honors diversity in its offerings and its content, as well as the use of restorative practices in regards to school discipline and management, in order to improve educational outcomes and school climates.

I believe that efforts toward equalizing school demographics are important when making redistricting and capacity decisions, and should be a relatively heavily-weighted criterion in HCPSS Policy 6010 (School Attendance Areas). Though I believe Howard County has done a good job overall in provide for the ability to get a great education at all of our schools, I do believe there is a "tipping point" where students' educational opportunities are affected. To illustrate, being in a class with a lot of students who have had many opportunities for enrichment is a different experience from being in a class where students have not had these opportunities. Though there are many factors which need to be examined when redistricting, socio-economic factors should be strongly considered. Some programmatic initiatives (e.g., JumpStart, CTE programs, World Language Immersion programs) could potentially be helpful in reducing the disparities, too.

2) It is my understanding that HCPSS presently has about \$500M of deferred maintenance, and yet is probably better off than most other school districts. First, I would want to ascertain what needs to be addressed as high priorities, considering factors such as student safety and health, whether substantial negative consequences could occur if actions are not taken, and educational needs. Then, the Board should communicate well with our County Executive and County Council in order to obtain financial support for needed initiatives, and enlist community support when necessary. This should be done with attention toward ensuring that, to the extent possible, the educational experience at older schools keeps up with that at newer schools. Furthermore, we should determine what

schools should receive the deferred maintenance, and which should be renovated or replaced, and then make appropriate plans. Unfortunately, we are falling behind our population growth when it comes to building schools. We must enlist the support of our funding authorities to build new schools, renovate existing schools, and reduce our reliance on portable classrooms. We should change the modus operandi from falling behind to catching up, and the Board should provide the long-term planning and the leadership to involve the community and funding authorities to start making more inroads soon.

3) I would try to prevent programs from being implemented in ways that are clearly not sustainable in a way that is in students' best interests. The Elementary School Model (ESM) World Language program was not well-conceived; there was no realistic plan regarding what students in the program would do to appropriately continue their World Language studies in middle and high school. (Mixing students who have several years of daily instruction with beginners in 6th grade is to me not an appropriate continuation to their World Language experiences.) Since the program existed in only about 20% of our schools, a lack of sufficient staffing to accommodate these students once they entered middle school and beyond was destined to occur unless there was a significant increase in funding, for which reliable plans had not been made. In some ways it paralleled the Teachers for Tomorrow (T4T) program; it sounded good, but appropriate funding plans were not developed ([https://www.boarddocs.com/mabe/hcpssmd/Board.nsf/files/AXWKCK4EA88B/\\$file/04%2024%202018%20T4T%20BR.pdf](https://www.boarddocs.com/mabe/hcpssmd/Board.nsf/files/AXWKCK4EA88B/$file/04%2024%202018%20T4T%20BR.pdf)). Families of ESM World Language participants would not likely have experienced these issues until their students entered middle school (though there were also other aspects of the program that were not well thought out, such as what to do with students who move into ESM schools.) As a member of the Board, I would try to prevent the implementation of programs without the assurance of sufficient funding that would enable the programs to appropriately exist if they are evaluated and found to be valuable and desirable. In the process, I would try to plan for the future in order to avoid abandoning students while in the midst of programs.

4) A number of years ago, I was surprised when I learned that a rating of "very satisfied" on surveys was not looked upon as sufficient by the corporation that manufactured my vehicle; only "extremely satisfied" was considered acceptable. For the most part, the results of the difference in the customer service philosophy was quite noticeable. Our school system should be striving for that, too. Communication and appropriate actions should be prompt, appropriate, transparent, honest, and responsive, and I would try to encourage that approach and expectation from HCPSS staff. Frankly, I was surprised that the situations mentioned occurred under the present administration and Board, but if a resident contacted me about an issue, I would expect to keep in touch with that person until the issue was resolved. Though I would be just one of seven Board members, I would encourage a culture where good communication with the community would be the expectation for Board members and staff members. I would also like to see this expectation of staff members be a part of superintendent evaluations.

Anita Pandey
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- 1. The demographics of Howard County schools can be very different. Schools in Oakland Mills tend to have much higher proportions of minority students, students speaking a primary language other than English, and students from economically disadvantaged families. As a member of the Board of Education, what will you do to ensure that the needs of these students and their schools are addressed properly and equitably?**

As a professor at an HBCU, Morgan State, and a family engagement and cultural competency expert with specializations in reading, early childhood & ESL, I will fight for culturally inclusive teaching, instructional resources, and assessment. genuine and broad-based family and community support. In my experience, and as research shows, not all PTAs and school administrative staff (including front office personnel) are as inclusive of minority students and families as they need to be.

One of my goals is to see to it that we sign agreements with HBCUs so that we are actively recruiting a diverse group of teachers for field experiences and long-term employment. Right now, UMD and Towson have a visible presence at our schools, but no minority-serving institutions.

We need to reach out to and engage all families and communities and this is not as hasty and superficial as sending out a flyer in Spanish. ESL and other minority students and families—mostly low-income—are discriminated against in multiple ways. For instance, those that reside in “multifamily” setups are ‘stuck’ in limbo and usually the last to be admitted and served from a (parent-teacher) translation perspective. Several parents of children at Hollyfield, Guilford, and Patapsco have shared with me that they have had to wait 3-4 weeks before they can communicate or meet with their child’s teacher. As I shared with the Office of Children and Families when I reached out to offer my pro bono services as a family engagement specialist—even before I decided to run—none of our schools in Elkridge and Ellicott City have Hispanic Liaisons. I have written about these obstacles for students and families in a number of my publications and shared them in podcasts and in media interviews, as well. Below are some links:

A Write-up on our US House of Reps. Briefing:

Gross, Natalie. Linguistic Experts Point to Benefits of Teaching Children Multiple Languages. Education Writers Association Latin Blog. Accessed September 23, 2018. <https://www.ewa.org/blog-latino-ed-beat/linguistic-experts-point-benefits-teaching-children-multiple-languages>

Anita’s Radio Interviews: Selected Broadcasts & Podcasts

Milwaukee Public Radio/WUWM's *Lake Effects* Anchor Amy Kiley interviews Anita Pandey about best practices in reading and more for underperforming schools in the home of America's private/"charter" schools, namely, Milwaukee:

<http://wuum.com/post/expert-considering-students-home-language-could-help-school-performance#stream/0>

<http://www.blogtalkradio.com/edutalk/2015/01/29/nabe-english-language-learners-misidentified-in-a-multi-lingual-world>

Anita's Podcasts on the "WORD gap" & early quality assessments, including preschool assessments like CLASS™:

<http://ecla.buzzsprout.com/>

Recorded at Erikson Institute's Early Childhood Leadership Academy in Chicago, IL:

Part 1 identifies the 2 most frequently used assessments of instructional quality and zones in on CLASS™

Part 2: focuses on some limitations of CLASS™

Part 3: focuses on how to ensure culturally inclusive ECE assessment

The first podcast in this series was a follow up to a feature article by Anita Pandey that was published by Columbia University's *Teacher's College Record* on Aug. 25, titled:

Beyond Black 'n White: Addressing Cultural Bias in Word Gap Studies

http://schd.ws/hosted_files/cube2016/ef/VocabCultBiasTCRecordPandey.pdf

Additionally, what will you do as the school system considers future redistricting and capacity decisions to help alleviate the disparity we see in the numbers of economically disadvantaged students (as measured by such data as students receiving FARMS assistance) in school populations between schools that are often just a few miles apart?

As I have stated on Facebook on more than one occasion, in redistricting, we must first and foremost seek to level the income and linguistic divides by, for instance, moving students out of our higher-income-schools to FARMS-heavy schools like Oakland Mills.

2. Oakland Mills High School currently has over \$41 million in deferred maintenance, Oakland Mills Middle School has almost \$20 million in deferred maintenance, and

Talbott Springs Elementary School has almost \$37 million in deferred maintenance. Three of the top ten schools ranked by amount of deferred maintenance are in Oakland Mills. Furthermore, Talbott Springs has the worst facilities condition index in the school system, and Oakland Mills High and Middle have the second worst high school and middle school indices in the county, respectively. While we hope for a new Talbott Springs, Oakland Mills High and Middle are consistently deferred for renovation in favor of projects to add capacity. What will you do as a member of the Board of Education to ensure that students have access to equitable, safe, and modern facilities regardless of the capacity issues in the school?

In addition to fighting for renovation of these schools as a BOE member, I will ensure that we work closely with County Council and County Executive, on the one hand, and that we also actively advocate in Annapolis for increased funding for both renovation of our existing “deferred maintenance” and “worst facilities condition index” schools, as well as new schools (e.g., HS 14). I have a track record of success in advocating for disadvantaged students and families at the State, national and international levels. I have also provided testimony in Annapolis--for the passage of the Seal of Biliteracy in MD, as well as another bill that sought to equate (and by extension, replace) World Languages with programming language(s).

- 3. The recent budget debate over the Elementary School Model and the sudden elimination of World Language left students with gaps in their educational experiences and left the school system without a full cohort of students upon which a complete evaluation of the program could have been performed. What will you do as a member of the Board of Education to ensure that HCPSS initiatives receive enough funding stability to allow for proper evaluation of their efficacy and to support the students who were part of these initiatives through their academic careers in the school system?**

As a language specialist and teacher who had the benefit of picking up multiple languages during my childhood in different parts of Africa, and having taught, researched and written about culturally inclusive vs. exclusive instruction and evaluation and assessment, I would fight for sustained funding for World Language and two-way dual language immersion pilots --starting in pre-K when children are naturally predisposed to master languages. I would illustrate the benefits of qualitative assessments to make a case for a return of World Language offerings at the P-5 level. I would also help identify and tap supplemental funding sources and fight for earlier introduction of one or more languages (and reduced & alternative testing). I have successfully written and evaluated proposals for World Languages and “ESL” offerings for students and families from the *U.S. Department of Education* and other federal agencies and Foundations, including the *Department of Health and Human Services (Admin. for Children and families)*, and *Dining for Women*. As I share in my presentations and publications, knowledge of world languages has been demonstrated to accelerate children’s executive functioning skills,

enhance their interpersonal skills, and to ease English acquisition, reading, and even math and science. In the interim, with some ingenuity and planning (e.g., team teaching), we could introduce WLs through music and choir, as well as through student and community-run heritage language-literacy Clubs and programs. This will help bridge the achievement gap through individualized instruction for “struggling readers,” “special needs,” & “ESL” students and families by including every voice—ultimately reducing dyslexia, stress, and instructor and family frustration and workload.

4. The Oakland Mills Community has raised several concerns over the past year and has been disappointed with lack of response from the Superintendent and his staff. For example, the Oakland Mills Community Association, local PTAs, and local residents flagged large errors in the FARMs data provided to the Area Attendance Committee last summer. Residents sent emails, and OMCA sent official correspondence to the Superintendent and his staff, yet the data were not addressed until a member of our County Council called a community meeting two months after the data had been released and the errors had been flagged. The AAC did not receive corrected data until they had already met several times and generated scenarios using the bad data. Similarly, the community did not know about the issue with state funding of Talbott Springs until months after Central Office staff knew based on dates on correspondence released under an MPIA request. As a member of the Board of Education, what will you do to ensure that residents or organizations raising issues to the Superintendent and his staff are acknowledged promptly and appropriately, and that further communication and proper corrective action occur quickly when necessary?

As a parent and community member that contacted the BOE and the Superintendent about two disadvantaged boys that attended Veterans Elementary School and I finally successfully got them re-admitted at Johnnycake Elementary Schools (after their mother and I gave up on HCPSS), I have experienced the unresponsiveness described here. Given that the Superintendent is accountable to the BOE, I would require his staff and him to share weekly with BOE members any and all resident and/or organizational issues raised (including via email, as well, whenever possible, so we can review and discuss the communication shared), as well as his/his staffers' responses, so that lines of communication not only remain open at every level but flow efficiently and in a timely manner.

1. The demographics of Howard County schools can be very different. Schools in Oakland Mills tend to have much higher proportions of minority students, students speaking a primary language other than English, and students from economically disadvantaged families. As a member of the Board of Education, what will you do to ensure that the needs of these students and their schools are addressed properly and equitably? Additionally, what will you do as the school system considers future redistricting and capacity decisions to help alleviate the disparity we see in the numbers of economically disadvantaged students (as measured by such data as students receiving FARMS assistance) in school populations between schools that are often just a few miles apart?

The data is clear about the benefits of integrated, economically diverse student bodies. Test scores and graduation rates increase, and lower income students at integrated schools go on to earn more as adults and live healthier lives. Schools with high FARM populations also tend to have fewer experienced teachers, and their facilities are more likely to be older and inadequate. Oakland Mills is a case in point in Howard County. It is an unacceptable state, one that I would elevate as a high priority if elected to the Board.

Further I have been working on and would advocate for:

Educator diversification and support – research shows that when students of color have a teacher of color, attendance, academic achievement, enrollment in GT courses, and lower disciplinary action result. Teachers of color also tend to stay longer in high-needs schools, which brings more stability to the school.

Implicit bias training and community building – African American, Native American, Latinx, and special education children are disciplined at much higher rates. Training will help correct these inequitable rates of suspension.

Engaging, reflective curriculum – students do better when they can see themselves and their cultures in the curriculum. As a professor, I've seen firsthand how transformative this relatively simple effort can be in awakening a student's curiosity, engagement, and academic success.

Liaisons - supports like Hispanic liaisons that would improve the educational experience.

Any redistricting plans the board entertains should include equity in its calculations.

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I understand the issues facing your schools and find it unacceptable. I would advocate for the access to equitable, safe, and modern facilities regardless of the capacity issues in the school.

3. The recent budget debate over the Elementary School Model and the sudden elimination of World Language left students with gaps in their educational experiences and left the school system without a full cohort of students upon which a complete evaluation of the program could have been performed. What will you do as a member of the Board of Education to ensure that HCPSS initiatives receive enough funding stability to allow for proper evaluation of their efficacy and to support the students who were part of these initiatives through their academic careers in the school system?

When the world language program was being implemented at some of our more vulnerable schools, the community was supportive of the program for the value it provided in building relationships. A cohort of teachers strongly advocated for the continuation of the program and in my view made a case for its value. Rather than drop the program as an expedient budget-saving measure, I would have recommended first assessing the benefits in relation to the cost. Given the relatively small cost of the program, I would revisit what was lost when we dropped the program and reach out to students who were part of the program to learn more.

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I'm running for Board of Education because I believe we need to invite more communities into the decision-making process. The decisions the board takes must reflect the county's community voices. Though the board now seeks input through various mechanisms, I would encourage the board to more proactively reach out to those whose voices too often go unheard.

Decisions should be based in research supported by data validated by community. I find it dismaying that the Oakland Mills community came to the Board questioning the veracity of its data only to have its claims dismissed. As soon as the board and school administration became aware of the community's concerns, staff should have reviewed the data in question as soon as possible and been much more transparent about how the decision-making process was unfolding. This is the type of scenario

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where I believe it is incumbent on the board to postpone conversations that are relying on questionable data until the differences have been reconciled. When questions are raised at board meetings or related venues, the resolution of such questions should be reported back to the community as soon as practicable at future board meetings.

1. The demographics of Howard County schools can be very different. Schools in Oakland Mills tend to have much higher proportions of minority students, students speaking a primary language other than English, and students from economically disadvantaged families. As a member of the Board of Education, what will you do to ensure that the needs of these students and their schools are addressed properly and equitably? Additionally, what will you do as the school system considers future redistricting and capacity decisions to help alleviate the disparity we see in the numbers of economically disadvantaged students (as measured by such data as students receiving FARMS assistance) in school populations between schools that are often just a few miles apart?

ANSWER: The school system should provide sufficient resources to assist different schools based on their different and unique needs, such as how many social workers and counselors are required for the school. For example, different schools should have different student-counselor ratio to provide adequate help to our students. We want to make sure when students come to school and the school provides the nurturing environment for them. The students can feel the sense of stability and are taken care of and they have the motivation to learn and grow themselves.

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ANSWER: Deferred maintenance is a big issue for HCPSS. Estimated deferred maintenance cost is around 500 million dollars. HCPSS should continuously examine what are the yearly minimal maintenance cost and build a dynamic, timely chart such that each project has the opportunity moving into the capital project pipeline. HCPSS needs continuously evaluate the need of building new schools and fixing the existing schools. HCPSS should always monitor the health of all facilities and prioritize the need in all facilities. We should try our best to build a new Talbott Spring elementary school, otherwise we need renovate it as proposed.

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full cohort of students upon which a complete evaluation of the program could have been performed. What will you do as a member of the Board of Education to ensure that HCPSS initiatives receive enough funding stability to allow for proper evaluation of their efficacy and to support the students who were part of these initiatives through their academic careers in the school system?

ANSWER: The board member should always ask tough questions when the school starts a new initiative, for example, whether there is a sustained financial channel to support the program, how to evaluate the performance of the program, when to sunset the program or ramp up the program. I would like to see the school improve our world language programs since the world economy is more interconnected than ever before. We need get our students prepared for this new economy dynamics.

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Answer: The board need always push the superintendent and school staff to answer our students, parents and community's concerns. At the same time, the board should try their best to communicate with the community and channel their concerns back to the school system. If somebody in the school fails to do their job right, they should be held accountable. I have not seen accountability in this communication failure yet.