

Listed below are the four (4) questions that each candidate was asked to answer prior to the October 15th BOE Candidates' Forum in Oakland Mills.

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?

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?

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?

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?