

The People's Voice, LLC

Ethics Ballot™

3205 B Corporate Court Ellicott City, MD 21042

March 5, 2018

2018 Howard County Candidate Questionnaire

Board of Education Candidates

Thank you for taking the time to fill out The People's Voice (TPV) / Ethics Ballot 2018 Candidate Questionnaire which will be used in the TPV endorsement process.

Publication: Your answers are considered "on the record." They will be circulated to our members and may be published on the [TPV website](#).

Endorsement Process: See www.EthicsBallot.com for more information on Board Members and click "Ethics Ballot" tab for endorsement criteria details.

Please return questionnaires via email to ethicsballot@gmail.com by **Thursday, March 15, 2018 at 1:00PM**. Please email any questions you have about this questionnaire. A Board Member will respond.

Candidate Information

Name	Vicky Cutroneo
Website	Click here to enter text.
Phone	443-604-2547
Campaign Account Name	Committee to Elect Vicky Cutroneo
Treasurer	Shannon Drury
Chairman	Vicky Cutroneo
Campaign Manager	Click here to enter text.
Funds Balance	0

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2018 Howard County Questionnaire Board of Education Candidates

1. Why are you running for this office? What qualifications do you uniquely bring to hold this office?

An unresponsive Board of Education compelled my campaign for Board of Education in 2016. As a vocal community advocate who helped bring the mold cover-up and public information noncompliance to the forefront, I felt my presence on the campaign trail could help change the composition of the Board of Education, whether I won or lost.

After the 2016 election, I decided that I would run again if I were confident that I could contribute in a meaningful way. When it became clear that no incumbents would be re-filing, I became deeply concerned about the loss of institutional knowledge and experience, especially given that remaining BOE members are also new.

Though I would not consider my knowledge "institutional", my 3 years of advocacy have provided me with a deep understanding of fiscal challenges, policies and issues related to facilities, large class sizes, special education, the budget, APFO, redistricting, equity, overcrowding, policies, school climate and more. I already enjoy productive working relationships with both HCPSS and HCEA leadership, as well as with elected officials at both the local and state levels. More importantly, thru my position as PTACHC President, I have had the opportunity to develop relationships and collaborate on initiatives with many community based advocacy groups such as the NAACP, TCOE, CAC, SECAC, The Family Center and HCDrugFree. It has also familiarized me with many school specific issues that often go under the radar.

Now more than ever before, we need BOE candidates who possess an understanding of both the day to day operations of the school system and the historical context of the many hot button issues facing our community today. I am prepared to hit the ground running if elected; this is what makes me uniquely qualified.

2. Describe why you feel you have a viable campaign.

-I have name recognition thru prior campaign in which I advanced thru primary and placed 5th out of 11 candidates with 17,200 votes and 5th out of 6 candidates in the general election with 43,935 votes.

-Wide social media presence through mold and air quality advocacy, multiple news stories and as seen as part of the grassroots effort to change the Board of Education and culture of the HCPSS in 2016.

-I have remained active and engaged in the school system, attending or watching almost every BOE meeting and work session as well as education and APFO related County Council Meetings. I am currently serving as President of the PTA Council of Howard County, which connects me to the people and issues of 73 PTA local units.

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3. How do you believe one eliminates the appearance of conflicts regarding campaign contributions?

The best way to eliminate the appearance of conflicts of interest is to learn what that means in the context of the BOE and avoid it.

Make it publicly known that you do not accept these types of contributions at forums, on your website and social media. Return any contribution that is questionable. Make your list of donations easily available on an ongoing basis in an easy to understand format. The average citizen should not have to comb the campaign database for information. The burden should be on candidates, not constituents.

Some potential conflicts of interest are easier to delineate, for example, vendors who have established business relationships or compete for bids and contracts. Relationships that are less clear are companies that benefit from a policy or procedural change, especially as it relates to housing development. Each year, the Board prepares the open/closed charts that predict school overcrowding years into the future. This affects the number of housing units county officials allocate to developers. The board can also impact a development project's viability by increasing available capacity thru redistricting, increasing class size, programmatic changes at certain schools and reassessment of facilities.

Example: A few years ago, a former board member received over \$17,000 over a 2-year period from developers. Decisions were made at the time that increased capacity at some schools. Was there a conflict of interest? There is no proof (unknown if it was questioned) but there certainly is an appearance. BOE members and candidates should hold contributions up to this standard: does this give the appearance of a conflict of interest?

4. If you are elected, what are your top priorities for 2019? Discuss at least three areas of concern for The Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) and how you would you address them?

My top 3 priorities: budget, equity and school climate/support

Budget:

After years of financial mismanagement and operating beyond our means, we finally are beginning to understand how much it costs to run the school system. To maximize educational program delivery with shrinking and limited resources, it is imperative that we:

- Develop a 3 to 5-year Strategic Plan that lays out HCPSS's direction and goals, with clearly defined performance measures.
- Reevaluate organizational structure. Currently we have the 5th highest non- instructional staff to student ratio in the state (27.5:1)

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-The annual budgeting process should connect to the Strategic Plan by aligning financial resources to measurable student outcomes. Without a built-in process to weigh relative costs and benefits to budget items, it is difficult to make strategic adjustments and reallocations in the budget. The budget should be driven by the financial plan.

Priorities continued: Budget

-Link program/debt budgets to performance measures and student outcomes so that when a program manager presents their budget to the BOE during work sessions, they are prepared with supporting data and outcome measures.

-Build and improve the real-time analysis and reporting for each program/dept. This avoids chaos of last minute budget cuts and perceived lack of educational strategy. As part of their reports, department managers should be able to present their budgets with multiple revenue scenarios (what's added and what's cut for each scenario).

- Given that the Strategic Manager's position has recently been eliminated, reconsider funding for the BOE budget analyst position to facilitate continuous cost analysis and savings strategies.

- Rather than a budget based on what's been funded before, explore prioritizing programs and operations based on what matters most to the community. Priority based budgeting using surveys and forums to collect input.

- Explore alternative financing methods to generate funding for capital projects. Using a public-private partnership (P3), leverage private investment with public funds for building design, construction, operation and maintenance. Currently legislation (Knott Commission) being considered, 21st Century School Facilities Act would allow an alternative financing method.

Equity

Achievement levels in the HCPSS have consistently been among the highest in Maryland and we love to call ourselves world class. I believe this has created a "culture of complacency" that has kept the district from digging too deeply into rising issues, like disparity in test scores and suspension rates. High average scores mask variations across students and groups that are falling behind.

There are disparities in opportunity and access to educational programming that can lead to tracking or designate students for separate educational paths based on their academic performance when they were younger.

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In 2017 the Baltimore Sun reported that HCPSS advanced classes (honors, GT and AP) are disproportionately white while regular and remedial classes are disproportionately black. In elementary school, 5 times as many white students as black students are enrolled in GT classes. I have had many conversations with parents of black students who shared how hard it was to have their student moved up a level. Despite some recent gains thru identifying students thru testing, challenges remain.

If students aren't in class, they cannot learn and addressing the disparity in the suspension rates for minority students has become a priority for the school system. As PTACHC President, I collaborated with other stakeholder groups (NAACP, CAC, Special Ed Citizens Advisory Committee, The Council of Elders) and HCPSS leadership on a forum dedicated to discussions about the reasons students are suspended, effective discipline and restorative practices. I believe that simply reducing the suspension rates should not be the objective. This effort was about addressing the root cause of the suspension, whether it is student behavior, implicit bias by staff, or both. For example, students with special needs are suspended at a higher rate than the general education population. Are they being suspended for behavior that is a manifestation of their disability?

At a Howard County ES, the total percentage of students who are African American is 52 percent; however, the percentage of students who are suspended is 86 percent. (60 out of 70 students). At a HS, 108 out of 128 students who were suspended were African American, or 84%, while they make up just 45% of the total student body. Our interventions and support should be targeted at schools with disproportionality.

A growing body of literature suggests that the demographic match between teachers and students affects outcomes such as test scores, attendance and suspension rates. Even more compelling is the growing evidence suggests that black teachers expect more from black students than white teachers do. This goes back to early tracking with GT, honors and AP placements. In order to start closing the opportunity gap for African American students, we must prioritize recruiting, training and retaining African American teachers, while improving cultural competency training.

Interventions:

- Do away with early tracking and separating students by academic achievement
- Funding strategies to guarantee access to PreK
- Recruit minority teachers, highly skilled and experienced at schools with most need. Publicize incentives like grants (TEACH Grant Program), tax credits, teacher tuition reimbursement and loan forgiveness programs.
- Explore alternative route programs like Maryland Approved Alt Prep Programs: data often shows higher number of participants from minority groups.
- Suspension data analysis by school for a targeted approach. Continue restorative practices training.
- Mandatory cultural proficiency training for all teachers and continuing education.

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Priority #3: School Climate- engagement, inclusion, emotional health

High stakes testing, the pressures to take multiple AP classes, SAT score as a measure of school improvement, college talk that begins in kindergarten, relentless social media, bullying—the prevalence of anxiety and depression is at never before seen levels at younger and younger ages. Recent news highlights the disconnection and isolation many students feel. Many feel disconnected as they learn from a computer screen, instead of engaging with their teacher. I believe we have the right Superintendent to lead us to more healthy and holistic schools.

Specific ideas:

- Remove class rank, PSATs for freshmen.
- Reconsider using parameters for what we consider “school improvement”. Focus more on student engagement and moral character, not SAT scores or sheer volume of AP classes taken. A landmark study found that the most important predictor of college success is GPA, not SAT scores. SAT scores did not provide any predictability. Many colleges do not even accept AP classes. They have worth for many students, but we have created an environment where students feel pressured to take 3 and 4 AP classes at a time. The new homework guidelines are no match for these schedules.
- We need more social workers, more wrap around care.
- Smaller class sizes, especially K-3.
- Parent involvement necessary for success, need to make our schools more welcoming to parents. Currently working on PTA inclusion/diversity initiative with Dr. Gilbert’s office to try and diversify PTAs and improve community outreach.
- More social workers, I do not believe it is nurses we need at every school, maintain cluster school model for nurses
- Comprehensive anti-bullying program, Grace’s Law education, cultural competency for students.

5. What do you believe are the strengths and weaknesses of the current Board of Education, and Superintendent?

The current board is independent, transparent and collaborative. They put a lot of thought into decisions and consider community input. There is a lot of diversity of thought with very different backgrounds and I think this is the Board’s biggest strength.

Weaknesses: At times the Board has strayed from policy when making decisions.

Superintendent: opened up communication channels with community, is very collaborative with his staff; he has done much to change the culture of the school system; however, I believe in the interest of maintaining good will, he has avoided making unpopular decisions—redistricting.

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6. How would you provide oversight of the HCPSS budget once it has been approved?

I addressed this question in part in #5. Continuous and ongoing analyses by department managers, and measurable outcomes and performance measures that would enable board members to make educational programming decisions based on data. I would advocate for hiring of BOE budget analyst who could help provide continual oversight by providing monthly budget to actual reports, evaluating categorical transfers, monitoring spending and extrapolating relevant data. An initial expenditure, I believe this position would pay for itself thru cost savings and improved efficiency.

7. The HCPSS has experienced less socio-economic diversity of population in schools. Discuss related concerns and how you would address them. Include your ideas about how to provide equity in the HCPSS.

I answered much of this question under my priorities if elected. One only needs to look at the PTA budgets across the school system to get a quick glimpse of the economic disparity in our county. With budget cuts, schools need to rely more and more on their communities to make up the difference (supplies, programming, incentives) and this affects our poorer schools the most.

How this plays out in academic performance and opportunity is reflected in the statistics. Schools with higher FARMS percentage also have higher suspension rates and lower test scores: 83.1 percent of non-FARMS met the College and Career Readiness standards by SAT, while on 44.2 percent of FARMS did. Of course there are many factors at play, but a 50 percent difference is significant. Studies have shown that low-income students who attend more economically diverse schools boost their chances of attending college by 70 percent.

When drawing boundary lines, the Board of Education must keep this in mind. Though we cannot adjust lines based solely on FARMS data, BOE members must consider this as decisions are made. Our students with the most economic need should not be concentrated at just a few of our schools and conversely, ALL students benefit from socioeconomic, racial, and cultural diversity.

I believe that the focus on test scores as a measurement of school success helps contribute to this inequity. More affluent students will have access to expensive test prep classes, tutoring and other resources than students from lower socio-economic backgrounds; publicizing this data as a measure of college and career readiness on school websites can influence opinion.

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8. Do you believe the HCPSS budget should have a lower level of increase, or be fully funded? If fully funded, where do you suggest the County budget cut elsewhere to accommodate? If lowered, where do you suggest the HCPSS budget be cut?

Contentious redistricting, more and more kids learning in portables, severe overcrowding, budget shortfalls, school siting controversies that pitted neighbors against each other and now another increase in class size—all of this is taking a toll on the educational experience of our children, teacher morale and on the reputation of our premier school system-- the economic engine of the county. The Board of Education has presented a “bare bones” budget and I believe that it should be fully funded but not at the expense of public services—police, fire/rescue/hospital. I believe that the County needs to look for new ways to generate revenue, like increasing APFO mitigation fees.

We are at a critical juncture and it is important for the county to demonstrate its commitment to prioritizing public education. The Board made good faith effort with this budget, made many cuts and balanced it prior to presentation to the County Executive. Unlike years past, they did not ask for more than we need. We asked for less than we need; in turn, the County Executive should show his commitment to prioritizing education and fully fund.

Moreover, I have provided written testimony requesting that the County Executive explore securing additional funding to restore class size to 2016 levels. No other budget decision affects every single student and teacher as much as increasing class size. The impact on our most vulnerable students can follow them for years. We are already far above recommended student teacher ratio recommendations and this latest increase will only further dilute the quality of educational programming and overburden our teachers. We will lose even more funding as parents continue to transfer their students to private school. The number one reason that teachers leave their school system is overcrowded classrooms

9. Where do you think the next high school(s) should be build? Why? In what order?

Even if constituents do not agree with a decision, they must have faith that you came to your decision in a fair and objective way, that you did your due diligence in research and that you did not allow your personal feelings or outside pressure to guide your vote.

In 2004, Marriottsville was chosen as the site for HS #12. It was a challenge to fill the seats at MRHS because in addition to those 1332 seats, Glenelg HS was also set to receive a 400-seat addition. The office of planning stated that they originally expected enrollment based on projected housing slated for Turf Valley. The Board Chair stated that it will reach capacity by 2010. It has yet to reach capacity while the northeast part of the county suffers from severe overcrowding. This demonstrates the risk of selecting a site based on projections of future development. Students had to be redistricted from other areas to help fill the school.

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We are dependent on state funding for capital projects for new construction. Per the Interagency for School Construction, enrollment projections of the subject and adjacent schools must show that the school will be at least 50 percent occupied at the completion of the project and fully utilized within seven years of the date of the project submission. MRHS opened at 43 percent and at seven years was at 91.8 percent capacity.

Procedures also state that the majority of the enrollment for a proposed new school should be in the attendance area at the time of proposal.

Policy 6000 states that school sites should be as central as possible to the ultimate area to be served by the school.

Though Mission Road is a great site for a school, and Troy Hill is not ideal, I would select Troy Hill for HS #13, and ask to land bank Mission Road for potentially ES #43 and HS #14. I find it unfathomable that our only choices were an active quarry and a site that requires a land swap and that the school system has to resort to eminent domain in order to secure a school site. We must be more aggressive and proactive in site acquisition. Both the disjointed process and political influence set the stage for the community strife over this decision and it should be priority for the Board to reevaluate how we make these decisions.

My decision is based on following:

-Lessons learned from Marriottsville HS: siting a school prior to the development that would bring students to it is risky and costly. In addition, it causes redistricting from longer distances in order to fill the seats; for example students who attended Mt. Hebron were redistricted to Marriottsville because of the lack of students from Turf Valley and the Glenelg renovation. This means longer bus routes and more challenges to creating strong feeds

-The IAC procedures for siting a school: build where the current enrollment will support. I would have had concerns with state funding being held up because of IAC questions.

-Policy 6000 states that schools should be central to the area to be served by the school.

10. How would you remediate overcrowding in schools?

-Continue to actively advocate for legislation to increase revenue thru impact and surcharge fees and no developer buy-ups. Work with County Council to address the issues caused by zoning regulation amendments/ increased density and infill projects.

-Continue to engage with local and state elected officials towards ways to increase our capital funding. Explore alternative financing for capital project thru P3 initiatives. We will need 2 elementary schools, in the north and east. Our current process is setting the community up for another battle for a school site when the feasibility study is released in June. This is unacceptable. I will work hard to ensure this is accomplished.

-The current levels of overcrowding are stressing our core facilities, are unsafe and negatively impact the educational experience of our students in too many ways to mention. It is not equitable. The BOE has a responsibility to ensure a safe and healthy learning environment for all students and the most impactful way to accomplish this is to follow our established policy and redistrict. I do not believe redistricting should be the norm as developers and some legislators have suggested. By addressing the cause of school overcrowding (listed above), we can work towards long-term solutions. In the short term, for the sake of student safety and equity, we need to redistrict.

11. What time do you think Elementary, Middle and High Schools in the HCPSS should start the day? If any changes are proposed, how would you accommodate funding needs to implement?

I support the research-based recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics, American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and CDC that recommend middle and high schools starting no earlier than 830am. There is no guidance for elementary school students but I do not support sacrificing reasonable start times for that age group.

-We should first develop a plan for implementation and a cost analysis to determine financial viability. Consider re-engaging with UMD Engineering Dept. to pinpoint smallest bus fleet needed to serve school district under start and dismissal time schedules.

Potential funding source: Analysis of bus contracts to look for more savings. Ensure HCPSS is fully using its automated routing software to more efficiently plan bus routes on a system wide basis. Bus capacity goals as a performance measure.

Prior to implementation: Forums for parents and students, information sessions led by subject matter experts.

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12. Do you believe that local Boards of Education in MD should have the right to terminate their Superintendents for cause? If the law changes, what procedures do you suggest for retaining due process?

Yes, I believe that local boards should have the right to terminate their Superintendent for cause. Boards of Education are charged with appointing a superintendent and supporting him/her in discharge of duties, yet have no power to hold him/her accountable. Ultimately this means that there is no direct line of accountability between the Superintendent and the citizens who elect the members of the Board of Education.

My own dissatisfaction with the lack of response by the State Superintendent to the multitude of voices asking for intervention led to my support of legislation to remedy it. I testified before the House Ways and Means Committee in 2017 and 2018 on a bill sponsored by Del Vanessa Atterbeary and will continue to advocate for local control until it passes. Maryland is the only state that does not allow its local Boards of Educations to fire their only employee.

To ensure due process, suggest that a Superintendent can file appeal with neutral third party (Office of Administrative Hearings).

13. Do you believe the Board of Education members should be elected countywide or by district? Why? If by district, which type of districting system is best? Do you believe concerns about accountability are more easily addressed with districting?

I believe our current system of countywide BOE elections dissuades qualified individuals from running. A countywide race for a down ballot can be an overwhelming endeavor and without major endorsements, challenging to win. I support parts of the current legislation that call for representation by district (and 2 at large) but do not support the fact that the election is still countywide. I hope to work on amending this law. Districts to align with council.

I live in District 5. Over the last 3 years, I have worked with member of County Council who do not represent my own district on education related issues. It didn't matter to me. I advocate on issues all over the County and have worked with Democrats and Republican alike. For me, there is no room for politics in education this will continue if elected to the Board. Being elected by district does not change the fact that I would work for the people of Howard County.

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What does change is that I would be held more accountable as I live where the people who elected me live. It's a lot harder to hide from issues if you are more visible--constituents see you in the community, you can be more present in the schools. If a Board member cannot be objective on issues in own district and advocate with equal attention to all schools, then they should not be serving on the BOE

14. What percentage of overcapacity do you think should close schools to development in the Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance? The maximum number of years of halting development in an overcrowded school is 4, should that number be changed? If so, why?

I have been actively engaged in collaborating and advocating for a more restrictive APFO and educating local PTA units. I have testified numerous times before County Council and the State Delegation. My position is 100 percent capacity limit for all schools and no opportunities for developer buy up. We have also lobbied our delegation for mitigation that addresses the true cost of development. A buy up punishes students for the continued incompetence of adults to solve the problem. No development should proceed unless there is capacity for students.

15. What is your position on the burden of proof in Special Education litigation

I support burden of proof and requiring school districts to show that they are providing a student with the appropriate education. It is easier for school districts to bear the burden than families as districts have access to all of the data regarding placement. It ensures that tax dollars are being spent on effective programs and enhances accountability.

16. What is your position regarding cell phone usage by students in school?

There was never opportunity for public input on the policy when this was first introduced. I believe we need to re-evaluate the policy at the middle school level and allow for stakeholder input. I believe that the issue not only speaks to concerns about health issues related to screen time, but also to equity (if the device is expected to serve as a learning device). Not every student has a cell phone. We sometimes forget that in wealthy Howard County. My position is that I believe we need to properly vet this policy and also consult subject matter experts.

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17. Describe positions you have taken, or votes you have made which you feel are the most important with regard to the position you seek. Describe how you championed these causes or how you publicized your position. Please also include information on any position or vote you made that you regret, or about which you feel differently.

October 2015: Testified to BOE asking for an independent environmental investigation of Glenwood MS. Facebook page dedicated to mold, air quality issues county wide and media coverage.

December 2015: Testified at Education Town Hall regarding BOE transparency and accountability issues.

May 2016 and March 2017: testified before Governor Hogan, the Board of Public Works about facility and maintenance issues at various schools. I asked in March 2017 for the BPW not to approve HCPSS request for funding to cover HVAC renovations at 3 schools because there was deep concern that mold had not been properly remediated. In Governor Hogan withheld the money (it was released May 2017). I am very proud of these efforts as it prevented contamination of new HVACs with residual mold. Schools have been remediated and set for new HVACs this summer. I am very proud of myself for testifying twice before Governor without throwing up....:)

HB1105: Maryland Public Information Act Legislation passed unanimously. Testified before the Ways The bill called for an audit of HCPSS MPIA responses while Dr. Foose was superintendent. Collaborated with special education and bullying advocate. The audit revealed serious noncompliance with law and revealed the lack of an implemented records retention policy. There is now an MPIA Database and an implemented policy. I'm very proud of this work.

CB61-2017: APFO, Mobilized PTACHC to take formal position and testified on behalf of. 100 percent capacity at all schools and to support the BOE's position. Though it was deemed null and void, I'm proud of how PTACHC rallied and made voices heard. Publicized at PTACHC meetings and social media, email.

HB1105: Maryland Public Information Act, audit HCPSS responses to requests for information. I am most proud of this legislation and the follow up work with the MPIA Ombudsman. This was a true collaborative effort that made an impact and had an effect on HCPSS MPIA and records retention policies. Publicized on social media and covered in the news.

CB61-2017: APFO, Mobilized PTACHC to take formal position and testified on behalf of. 100 percent capacity at all schools and to support the BOE's position. Though it was deemed null and void, I'm proud of how PTACHC rallied and made voices heard. Publicized at PTACHC meetings and social media, email.

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CB1-2018 APFO, part 2, maintained same position as CB61.social media, email.

HB103: Removal of County Superintendent: testified in 2017 and 2018 in support.

HB577: Election of School board by district: I was originally supportive of this bill and testified before Delegation and the House Ways and Means committee; however, it passed with an amendment that I do not support. Ultimately, I do not support the bill now and this may be one I regret.

HB845: Public School Indoor Air Quality: brought to Del Miller to sponsor inspired by my experiences advocating for healthy indoor air quality. I testified in support of, bill did not advance.

18. What specific actions have you taken that benefited the community, either as an elected official or as a county resident? Have you ever testified before the Howard County Board of Education? If so, describe positions you have taken.

-2015 Friend of Education Award nominee.

-2015-16, helped lead a grassroots community wide effort to change the Board of Education from rubber-stamp of former Superintendent's agenda to an independent majority.

-Mold and air quality advocacy led to legislation, community awareness, improved communication and transparency, the establishment of an Indoor Air Quality Committee and the hiring of a Certified Industrial Hygienist. I believe this work has made a real difference in improving indoor air quality in our schools and in turn the health of building occupants.

-Collaborated with other parent advocates to bring issues of non-compliance with Maryland Public Information Act requests and lack of an implemented records retention policy to the public. This led to legislation that was unanimously passed by the House and Senate and signed by Governor in April of 2016. It called for the MPIA Ombudsman to review HCPSS's compliance with the law under the former Superintendent. The findings of non-compliance from this audit led to overhaul in how the HCPSS handles MPIA requests, a new MPIA database establishment of a records retention policy and schedule.

-During my term as elected President of the PTA Council of Howard County:

1. Worked with Director of Equity, Inclusion and Diversity Dr. Kevin Gilbert on PTA Diversity Committee Initiative-- establishment of committees at every PTA, supported by his office. In addition, working on a cultural arts guide that provides information on diverse programming options and cultural competency training for parents.
2. In collaboration with Community Advisory Council, Special Education Community Advisory Council, the NAACP and the Council of Elders, worked with HCPSS Leadership on a community forum dedicated to suspension rate disparity, effective discipline and restorative practices.

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3. Elevated PTACHC's legislative advocacy; for the first time, invited the Howard County Delegation to present legislative platform. PTACHC took several official positions and became outspoken voice for APFO reform.

4. Several HCPSS initiatives result of PTACHC advocacy: online staff phone directory, translation of website into other languages, reconvening of the Sexual Harassment policy committee, PBIS reform.

5. Establishment of Grace's Closet: a resource for needy students and planned expansion to include school supplies and a Teacher Swap

19. If you had to make School Budget cuts, what are the top three things you would NOT cut and the top three things you would? Why?

Budget cuts I would not make:

1. I would not increase class size: dilutes the educational experience of students and overburdens teachers and staff.
2. I would reinstate the budget analyst position for the BOE and Board Attorney: an initial investment that will pay for itself quickly. The Board would benefit from expert guidance and data analysis support. I believe the Board gets bogged down in details because they do not know what budget data is available or what is relevant. Budget analysis could look for cost savings and efficiencies.
3. Special education staffing.
4. I would keep World Language portion of ESM and look for ways to make it more cost efficient. Clearly this program is very important to the schools that have had it in place. The benefit and worth of early language programs is well researched and documented. As we climb out of this deficit, would like to plan for expansion but would need plan and financial strategy and funding in place. That being said, I do not believe the program was as cost effective as it could be and would look to other programs.

Budget cuts I would consider:

1. Category 3201, number of employees the same, but salaries increased 800K, would ask for review.
2. I would put hold on conferences and travel to/from.
3. I would re-evaluate contracted services for technology for \$503,823, it is more than double years prior.
4. Staff technology teachers like other RA teachers (art, music, media), which account for 1:25 teacher student ratio across the board.

20. How would you improve detection and response to bullying?

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Our current bully-reporting platform, Sprigeo is not well known to students and a report on its effectiveness has never been presented to the Board. We need to consider a more comprehensive approach and students need a user-friendly way to report. They do not want to fill out a form. Text2StopIt is anonymous 2way text messaging that has had great success in Calvert County. Legislation was passed last year recommending that BOEs evaluate 2-way text messaging to report bullying. It can also be used to report emergencies, suicide threats, etc.

Title IX training for students.

Increased mental and emotional supports with wrap around services. I believe it is more important to have a social worker at each school than a nurse.

Explore programming that teaches cultural competency empathy and compassion-- It Starts With Hello, a lunchtime program, is currently in a few of our schools

Education on Grace's Law 2.0

First week of school should be for student engagement activities, educators getting to know students, forming relationships.

School climate, culture is one of my top priorities

By Authority, The People's Voice PAC, Lisa Markovitz, Treasurer