

Public Testimony on Educational Equity Policy 1080

My name is Lisa M. Gray and I live in polygon 3143. Good evening and thank you for this opportunity to give public testimony in support of Educational Equity Policy 1080. I've been a resident of Howard County since I moved here with my daughter 10 years ago. I moved here because of our school system's reputation for providing all its students with an academically rigorous and inclusively excellent education. As a proud parent and active Wilde Lake High School PTSA leader, a Policy 1080 Committee member, and a Community Advisory Council member, I am testifying to give voice to the urgent need for the final approval of Policy 1080 - especially in this defining moment of history for our county, nation and world.

As the Board is well aware, the system's Strategic Call to Action defines Equity as "providing the access, opportunities and supports needed to help students, families and staff reach their full potential by removing barriers to success that individuals face. It does not mean equal or giving everyone the same thing." This definition informed the Board's new Policy 1080 Committee's work. As evidenced by the deep, thoughtful efforts of our diverse group, facilitated by Razia Kosi and Tim Guy, this policy must drive ALL of our system's decision making processes and practices going forward. In addition to providing better educational outcomes for our students, educational equity will produce greater socioeconomic, racial, national origin, gender, religious, gender identity, and sexual orientation integration.

With all this in mind, a policy is only as good as the resources and actions that support it.

Therefore, I implore you to make the following actions as you move to approve Policy 1080:

1. Create a data-informed equity budget

2. Ensure that Black, Hispanic, and other Student Access and Achievement Liaison positions growth keeps pace with student population growth
3. Increase and fund the number of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) positions
4. Provide more mental health resources to meet current and emerging student needs

As I mentioned during the Wilde Lake High School PTSA's Redistricting testimony, I am trusting that the Board's passage of this policy will be based on both/and, not either/or decision making. I know now more than ever that there would be no winners, only losers if you fail to do so and those losers would be our children, including my daughter. As the noted Brazilian Educator, Paulo Freire stated "Washing one's hands of the conflict between the powerful and the powerless means to side with the powerful, not to be neutral." Please do not side with individualistic forces and risk endangering the collective futures of our children.

I implore you as public servants to have the mental fortitude and moral courage to speak up and do the right thing. Approve Policy 1080 so that our county can heal, move forward and begin to provide a truly equitable education for ALL our children now and in the future. Thank you.

-Respectfully submitted by Lisa M. Gray

June 11th 2020
Chair, Board of Education
Howard County Public School System
10910 Clarksville Pike
Ellicott City, MD 21042

In Favor of Policy 1080

My name is Risa C. Washington and I live on Shaded Leaf Court in Columbia, Maryland. This letter is to express my support for policy 1080 with revisions. I support enhanced language necessary to accurately reflect a clear movement toward long term change in educational disparity. We need an educational equity policy that transforms the system once and for all.

Some recommended revisions include:

Section I. **Policy Statement** - Paragraph 2, sentence 4, should be clear and unequivocal such as, "We mandate addressing disparities in educational outcomes as a priority in each school, including but not limited to...."

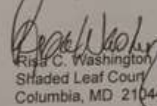
Section II. **Purpose** - the word "reduction" should be changed to "elimination". No student deserves to be taught in an environment where some amount of disparities is acceptable.

Section IV. **Standards** - item B, School Climate and Culture Affecting School Success #7. We must remove uniformed police from all school campuses and replace them with HCPSS security personal.

Section IV. Item C #1 should read...and retain a diverse workforce of highly qualified educators that reflects the diversity of the student population.

Policy 1080 must be strengthened because several racist and hate filled incidents have happened at schools across the county. The pandemic of racism on which the public-school system was built, maintained and supported has created disparities among children and must be eliminated. It is imperative that the Howard County Board of Education adopt and fund a strong policy to codify the moral imperative of equity in our school system.

Sincerely,


Risa C. Washington
Shaded Leaf Court
Columbia, MD 21044

From: WANDA R BURT <wburt32@verizon.net>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2020 1:06 PM
To: BoE Email <boe@hcpss.org>
Cc: wburt32@verizon.net
Subject: [External] Support Revisions to Policy 1080

! CAUTION: This email originated from outside of HCPSS. Do not click links or open attachments, unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

1 / 1

June 11, 2020

Chair, Board of Education

Howard County Public School System

10910 Clarksville Pike

Ellicott City, MD 21042

In Favor of Policy 1080

My name is Wanda Burt and I live at 9677 Hastings Dr, Columbia MD 21046. This letter is to express my support for policy 1080 with revisions. I support enhanced language necessary to accurately reflect a clear movement toward long term change in educational disparity. We need an educational equity policy that transforms the system once and for all.

Some recommended revisions include:

Section I. **Policy Statement** - Paragraph 2, sentence 4, should be clear and unequivocal such as, "We mandate addressing disparities in educational outcomes as a priority in each school, including but not limited to...."

Section II. **Purpose** – the word “reduction” should be changed to “elimination”. No student deserves to be taught in an environment where some amount of disparities is acceptable.

Section IV. **Standards** – item B, School Climate and Culture Affecting School Success #7. We must remove uniformed police from all school campuses and replace them with HCPSS security personal.

Section IV. Item C #1 should read...and retain a diverse workforce of highly qualified educators that reflects the diversity of the student population.

Policy 1080 must be strengthened because several racist and hate filled incidents have happened at schools across the county. The pandemic of racism on which the public-school system was built, maintained and supported has created disparities among children and must be eliminated. It is imperative that the Howard County Board of Education adopt and fund a strong policy to codify the moral imperative of equity in our school system.

Sincerely,

Wanda S. Burt

Trudy M. Grantham

From: Hazel Domangue <hdgowtr@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, June 12, 2020 10:29 AM
To: BoE Email
Cc: AACR President
Subject: [External] Policy 1080 revisions

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

! CAUTION: This email originated from outside of HCPSS. Do not click links or open attachments, unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Chair, Board of Education

Howard County Public School System

10910 Clarksville Pike

Ellicott City, MD 21042

In Favor of Policy 1080

My name is Hazel A. Domangue, and I live 6548 Pennacook Court, Columbia MD 21045. This letter is to express my support for Policy 1080 with revisions. I support enhanced language necessary to accurately reflect a clear movement toward long term change in educational disparity. We need an educational equity policy that transforms the system once and for all.

Some recommended revisions include:

Section I. **Policy Statement** - Paragraph 2, sentence 4, should be clear and unequivocal such as, "We mandate addressing disparities in educational outcomes as a priority in each school, including but not limited to...."

Section II. **Purpose** – the word "reduction" should be changed to "elimination". No student deserves to be taught in an environment where some amount of disparities is acceptable.

Section IV. **Standards** – item B, School Climate and Culture Affecting School Success #7. We must remove uniformed police from all school campuses and replace them with HCPSS security personal.

Section IV. Item C #1 should read...and retain a diverse workforce of highly qualified educators that reflects the diversity of the student population.

Policy 1080 must be strengthened because several racist and hate filled incidents have happened at schools across the county. The pandemic of racism on which the public-school system was built, maintained and supported has created disparities among children and must be eliminated. It is imperative that the Howard County Board of Education adopt and fund a strong policy to codify the moral imperative of equity in our schoolsystem.

Sincerely,

June 23, 2020

To: Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) Board of Education

RE: Policy 1080 Educational Equity Vote on June 25, 2020

Dear HCPSS Board of Education:

I am writing this letter to you both as a representative for Peers Not Perps: Collective for Police Free Schools and as a collective group of community members, stakeholders, nonprofit organizations, current and former Howard County students, and community members who care deeply about the Policy 1080 that is before you to revise and vote upon this week. Policy 1080 is necessary in order to for Howard County schools to truly lead this country in education. Racial equity and dismantling white supremacy in all of its expressions is the way of the present and future. Ironically, the current process of rushing through with a vote on June 25, 2020 perpetuates the inequities the policy seeks to end by failing to critically evaluate and modernize the framework and language of the policy, disregarding the valuable input of stakeholders, and proceeding as if the COVID-19 pandemic and racial justice movements around the country are not happening. The additional July 9th voting date does not do much better around promoting an equitable look at the policy.

Therefore, we request that you:

1. Table the vote for Policy 1080 Educational Equity for at least 60 days past June 25, 2020.
2. Commit to and transparently work collaboratively with contributing partners/stakeholders of the Policy 1080 committee and other community agencies to modernize and transform the policy.

Stakeholders need more time to re-evaluate both Policy 1080 itself in light of the current state of our country, and the policy's adoption procedures in order to ensure authenticity and justice are interwoven within the processes, implementation, outcomes, and accountability measures. An educational policy that addresses racial equity and justice should not be adopted in haste, particularly if it is designed to dismantle systems and structures that maintain the status quo. We are all living in a time of great opportunity for transformation and are responsible for ensuring that Howard County schools provide the best opportunities for everyone -not just certain people.

Thank you for your serious attention and consideration.

Sincerely,

Peers Not Perps: Collective for Police Free Schools
Maya Carey, Founder



June 19, 2020

To: Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) Board of Education

From: Equity4HC Non-Profit

RE: Voting on Policy 1080 Educational Equity

Dear HCPSS Board of Education:

This communication is to request that the HCPSS Board of Education table the vote for HCPSS Policy 1080 Educational Equity for at least 60 days past June 25, 2020, and commit to collaboratively working with contributing partners/stakeholders of the Policy 1080 committee and other community agencies to transform Policy 1080. This is necessary so that we can most effectively achieve racial equity in Howard County public schools. The current process of proceeding with a vote on June 25, 2020 perpetuates the inequities the policy seeks to combat by proceeding during a time when stakeholders are simultaneously looking for ways to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and racial justice movements around the country. Stakeholders not only need the time to re-evaluate this policy in light of the current state of our country, but also need time to re-evaluate the policy's adoption procedures by ensuring authenticity and justice are included in the processes, implementation, outcomes, and accountability measures. An educational policy that addresses racial equity and justice should not be adopted in haste, particularly if it is designed to dismantle systems and structures that maintain the status quo.

Equity4HC is committed to being an essential member of this team and to providing leading, innovative and thoughtful policy decision-making expertise to the HCPSS, that will potentially establish a model for the nation. At the same time, we are not willing to jeopardize our organization's reputation by being included in a process and outcome that lists our organization's name as a contributor but neither upholds our values and mission nor incorporates our contributions. If our request is denied, we are prepared to publicly present a dissenting view of HCPSS Policy 1080 and its adoption process in order to ensure transparency in our communities about equity issues in Howard County public schools.

Thank you for your serious attention and consideration.

Sincerely,

Daniel Burns

Daniel Burns,
Executive Director



June 29, 2020

To: The Members of the Howard County Board of Education

RE: Delay the Voting on Educational Equity Policy 1080

The purpose of the letter is to request that the Howard County Board of Education delay voting to approve Educational Equity Policy 1080 and the implementation procedures that is scheduled for July 9, 2020.

The work on this important policy and the implementation plans began over a year ago with a committee that included representation from a wide spectrum of the Howard County community. However, it is apparent to us, based upon the number of individuals that presented oral and written testimony at the June 11, 2020, Board of Education Hearing on this subject that additional time is needed to fully address the outstanding questions, concerns, and perspectives.

We are in support of the letters and other communications you have received from Equity4HC and other groups requesting a delay in moving forward to allow time for additional dialogue and discussion to improve the effectiveness of this new policy and the implementation procedures. Your decision at this point in the process will be a first step to showing the community that the work of Policy 1080 isn't done, and that the School Board really does recognize the diversity of our school system and county – including racial, ethnic, religious, language, cultural, and gender (just to name a few). A true collaborative effort is needed at this time that will bring the stakeholders together to improve the existing proposed policy and the implementation plans. This will provide the Howard County Public School System with not only a Board of Education-approved document, but with a plan for moving forward that the community is behind and can support.

The outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic and the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis (just last month) have shone a light on longstanding inequities in a wide range of policy issues impacting the lives of all minorities throughout our country; Howard County is no exception. The Board of Education and the Howard County Public School System now have an opportunity to make a significant difference in the lives of our community members for many years to come. We hope that by allowing more time and committing to a serious process for review and input, a more meaningful, comprehensive, responsive, functional, effective, and efficient document will be approved.

We look forward to continuing to work with you, Dr. Martirano, and his staff on this and other programs and initiatives to address and improve the school system's response to educational diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Sincerely,

Betsy Singer Marcus

Betsy Singer Marcus, Chair
Jewish Community Relations Council

cc: Ralph Grunewald
Yale Stenzler

From: [Beth Stolte](#)
To: [BoE Email](#)
Subject: [External] Policy 1080 Testimony
Date: Wednesday, August 5, 2020 8:12:13 AM

! CAUTION: This email originated from outside of HCPSS. Do not click links or open attachments, unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

The schools that have been called out for disproportionately suspending students have all been students with disabilities. This shows a systemic bias against students with disabilities.

The draft update to Policy 1080 does not include references to bias training on disabilities for teachers and staff. It needs to explicitly say that.

The draft update to Policy 1080 does not include references to hiring of staff with differing abilities. It needs to explicitly say that.

Everywhere race or cultural is called out, disability or differing ability needs to be as well.

Beth Stolte

[https://go.boarddocs.com/mabe/hcpssmd/Board.nsf/files/BR9KN95103C0/\\$file/07%2009%202020%20Policy%201080%20Equity%20BR.pdf](https://go.boarddocs.com/mabe/hcpssmd/Board.nsf/files/BR9KN95103C0/$file/07%2009%202020%20Policy%201080%20Equity%20BR.pdf)

From: betsysingermarcus@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of [Betsy Singer](#)
To: [BoE Email](#)
Subject: [External] We Need a Stronger Educational Equity Policy!
Date: Tuesday, August 11, 2020 4:38:08 PM

! CAUTION: This email originated from outside of HCPSS. Do not click links or open attachments, unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Board of Education of Howard County,

The Howard County Public School System is one of the top school districts in Maryland; however, our education system in both the county and across the country is failing students of color. Significant racial/ethnic disparities persist in achievement, discipline, teacher diversity and more, and these disparities create barriers for students of color to achieve their full potential. Howard County is set to vote on a new policy to improve equity in education but the current draft of the policy falls short and needs significant strengthening. Policy 1080 should eliminate racial inequities across the system and foster more inclusive school communities. The Howard County Equity Collaborative suggests the following key changes to strengthen the policy:

1. Set yearly, achievable, equity goals and a line-item budget to achieve them. At least one of the goals should be racial equity related.
2. Use a transparent process to gain public input on goal setting and to measure annual progress towards achieving them.
3. Hire, retain and promote teachers who reflect the racial/ethnic makeup of the student population.
4. Implement a culturally relevant curriculum that includes perspectives of marginalized and underrepresented groups and require annual equity training for all teachers.
5. Collect and report relevant data that is disaggregated by race and other factors.

We want to see deep, meaningful changes to policies and practices in our schools to better serve all of our students – particularly our students of color. We urge the Howard County Board of Education to implement the changes suggested by the Howard County Equity Collaborative, which will better eliminate racial inequities across the system and foster more inclusive school communities.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Ms. Betsy Singer
6180 Devon Dr Columbia, MD 21044-3821



To: Members of the Howard County Board of Education

August 13, 2020

From: Jewish Community Relations Council, Jewish Federation of Howard County

RE: Testimony for Policy 1080 Educational Equity and Implementation Procedures
Board of Education Hearing August 18, 2020

The Jewish Community Relations Council of the Jewish Federation of Howard County recognizes the ongoing efforts of Dr. Michael Martirano, Dr. Kevin Gilbert, and their staffs to develop and implement initiatives, programs, and services that advance and improve the school system's environment focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion for all students, teachers, staff, and families in Howard County.

We have reviewed the revisions proposed by staff following the hearing that was held on June 11, 2020. While the changes do address some of the comments, questions, and concerns, there are still some aspects of the policy and implementation procedures that could be improved.

Please accept this written testimony in support of the suggested amendments to the revised Policy 1080 Educational Equity and Implementation Procedures as submitted by the Howard County Equity Collaborative.

We believe that after careful review and consideration you will recognize that the suggested amendments will enable the Howard County Public School system to develop and implement a more meaningful, comprehensive, responsive, functional, effective, and efficient document to better meet the needs of the entire community.

Our Jewish values are consistent with the objectives of the HCPSS programs, initiatives, and services that further and improve the teaching and learning environment for all of the students and teachers through diversity, equity, and inclusion. We endorse and recognize that diversity (as stated in part in the policy) includes, but is not limited to, race/ethnicity, gender, gender identity, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, language, culture, religion/beliefs, mental and physical ability, age, and national origin.

We look forward to continuing to work with you, Dr. Martirano, and his staff on this and other programs and/or initiatives to address and improve the school systems response to educational diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Submitted:

Betsy Singer Marcus
Betsy Singer Marcus, Chair
Jewish Community Relations Council

cc: Ralph Grunewald, Executive Director, Jewish Federation of Howard County
Yale Stenzler, Member, Jewish Community Relations Council

Dear Board of Education,

I want to start out by apologizing for being unable to speak in person today. I am writing to you to say that something needs to be done. The events brought to light in these times of isolation expose the fact that things cannot stay the same. It would be detrimental to go back to the way things were before. We all need to do better, and you need to be the ones who set an example. As the Board of Education, who makes decisions that impact the lives of each student in the county, it is your responsibility. Howard County is a county that preaches inclusion and prides itself in listening to its constituents, to its students. According to Mr. Chao Wu, “The primary job for a school board is to advocate for the school system at all levels,...make the right school policy and listen to students, parents, teachers and the community.” So, open your ears. Hear the voices of students from all around the county. Lean in, and listen to every single cry, from the masses of people protesting in Howard County streets to the child crying in a corner because he or she feels alone, isolated, and lost. When asked for events in which students experienced racism, in a county as developed as our own, we should have received 0 responses. Zero tolerance for bullying should equate to zero experiences of racism. Sadly, that was far from the case. Many heartbreaking accounts of discrimination and hate came to light. You may feel that these experiences are isolated, that these experiences are the problems of an individual. That’s where you’re wrong. Racism is a problem for every single person in the county, let alone the nation. When not just one but many people have been discriminated against, it becomes everyone’s problem to fix, especially those elected to prevent these very events from occurring. Even if it was one person, one person not feeling welcome in Howard County is everyone’s problem. It is the responsibility, the duty of every single person in the county to make sure people feel welcome here, and it starts with you. On the front page of the Howard County Public School System website, a quote from Dr. Martirano tells us that “If we take care of our children and their well-being, and nurture and believe in them, academic achievement will take care of itself. We must understand our children first, because in order to teach a child well you must know a child well.” So, hear the cries. Listen to the people asking for help. Understand the struggles of your students. Answer the call. Take care of all the children in Howard County, and make it a better, safer environment for all by taking action. Enact effective change, so that Howard County truly lives up to its expectations and becomes an inclusive place that welcomes every single parent, teacher, and child with open arms. Please do not turn away from your constituents. Don’t leave any child standing alone. Let Howard County be a community that stands together against racism, and do something about it.

Sincerely,

Jackie Palmer



ALPHA PHI ALPHA FRATERNITY, INC. KAPPA PHI LAMBDA CHAPTER

P.O. Box 321
Columbia, MD 21045

Bruce E. Nelson
President

J. Craig Bailey
Vice President

Brandon Barrett
Recording Secretary

Anthony Johnson, Jr.
Corresponding Secretary

Rodney G. Hawkins
Financial Secretary

Elliott D. Harvey
Treasurer

Rickey Harvey, Jr.
Chaplain

Mark Cummings
Sergeant-At-Arms

Vaughn Bradley, Jr.
Director of Educational Activities

Stacey Taylor, Sr.
Historian

Gerard Charlot
*Chapter Dean of Membership
Development*

Kerry G. Johnson
Associate Editor to the Sphinx

Calvin R. Austin
Parliamentarian

Lionel Perron
Immediate Past President

Kenneth Jennings
Chapter Elder

Dennis G. Kemp, Sr.
*Chairman, Alpha Foundation of
Howard County, Inc.*

Board of Education
10910 Clarksville Pike
Ellicott City, MD 21042
August 18, 2020

Dear Madame Chair Ellis,

Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Incorporated, Kappa Phi Lambda Chapter is a recognized partner with the Howard County Public School System and a friend to the Board. Our organizations have a twenty-three-year relationship of service since 1997 when our first Alpha Achievers chapter was chartered to give African American student and ability to be youth leaders while pursuing a high school education and college acceptance. Since 1997, Alpha Achievers has become one of the flagship student programs in the nation mainly due to our focus on our scholars.

Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Incorporated supports the proposal presented by the Howard County Equity Collaborative. Overall, we feel that the amendment provides language that aligns Educational Equity policy 1080 with other board policies. Even though we support the overall concept of the proposal we are offering some considerations for your review. The policy states that the Board recognizes that societal factors create disparities in student outcomes but does not provide the disparities, a list of affected groups or recommended interventions and resources that can provide positive results. These recommendations should provide a platform for research, budgeting and a tract for continuous improvement. All the suggestions toward increased cultural competency is a step in the right direction. The recent reactions to redistricting demonstrated that as a community there is a lot of work that needs to be done to prepare our youth and communities for the future. The idea to strategically incorporate this work in the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion is the appropriate action. The policy emphasizes professional development for staff, but it does not mention a similar training or engagement-training component for parents, students and community partners.

It may be a good consideration to provide one final review of the policy draft before the board votes. Thank you for reviewing our submission.

Sincerely yours,
Bruce E. Nelson
President
Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.
Kappa Phi Lambda Chapter

! CAUTION: This email originated from outside of HCPSS. Do not click links or open attachments, unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Respectable Members of BoE:

My name is Shuping Zhang, a resident of Howard County. I respectfully submit the following written testimony on the draft of Policy 1080.

In particular, I would like to register my objection to clause III.B.5 of the draft policy, which reads: “Establish a diverse, equitable, and inclusive student population at all schools. Assuch, Policy 6010 School Attendance Areas, utilizes demographic data as a factor for setting school attendance areas.” I think this clause should be deleted for the following reasons.

- 1) Policy 6010 is not only, or mainly, about equity. In fact, in the main body of Policy 6010, Section IV.B, three factors are listed to guide the school attendance area adjustment. “Demographic equity” is the last of them. The clause in Policy 1080 does not accurately characterize Policy 6010.
- 2) School attendance area adjustment is an ineffective way to achieve educational equity.
 - a. Attendance area adjustment is a lengthy and highly disruptive process. Therefore, it is supposed to happen infrequently, not fit to serve the continued goal of educational equity.
 - b. Policy 6010 prescribes several triggering events for the attending area adjustment in its Section IV.A. Lack of educational equity is not one of them. Therefore, attending area adjustment is, at best, an opportunistic tool to improve equity, not something we can depend on. The current clause, however, gives the impression that this tool is available as needed.
- 3) As a tool for achieving equity, Policy 6010 is not only ineffective but also defective. It does not align with the State of Maryland’s vision of educational equity.
 - a. The State does not identify demographic differences in schools as a root cause of inequality. In the State Regulation 13A.01.06.04, thirteen measures were listed for the local school systems to address disparities. None of them involves attending area adjustment. The booklet “Equity and Excellence, a guide to educational equity in Maryland,” published by the Maryland State Department of Education, provides a comprehensive discussion of the current status of educational equity and actions to improve it, including a focus on “school climate and culture affecting school success.” However, the school attending area is not discussed in the booklet. Therefore, evoking Policy 6010 is not consistent with the State’s vision of equity.
 - b. In the State Regulation 13A.01.06.03, “educational equity” is defined as “every student has access to the opportunities, resources, and educational rigor they need throughout their educational career to maximize academic success and

social/emotional well-being and to view each student's individual characteristics as valuable." Therefore, equity is defined across "individual characteristics," not demographical groups. Furthermore, the same section defines "individual characteristics" as including 11 aspects, whereas Policy 6010 defines the demographic groups as (Section IV.B.3 therein) race, socioeconomic status, academic performance, and English learner. Therefore, Policy 6010 has a much narrower scope and, as such, significantly deviates from the State guideline when it is used as a tool for educational equity.

- 4) Policy 6010 is impractical for achieving equity because there is no well-established measure. What the demography has to look like to be considered "equal?" How would such "diversity" help students in the educational outcomes? Without quantitative prescriptions that are supported by research and data, the idea of using attendance area adjustment to achieve equity will inevitably lead to gridlock and division in the community.
- 5) There are better alternatives. All Howard County schools are great schools and are capable of providing an excellent education to all types of students. Instead of forcing a redistribution of students to the schools, it is far more effective and far less disruptive to allocate HCPSS resources appropriately to the schools to address the unique needs of their students. I support getting more teachers and facilities to the schools with larger disadvantaged populations for the goal of educational equity.

All in all, I believe that the clause in Policy 1080 concerning school attendance area adjustment should be removed. As a tool for educational equity, Policy 6010 is mischaracterized, ineffective, defective, and impractical. Invoking Policy 6010 in the context here is more of a distraction than augmentation. Removing the clause will make Policy 1080 better to serve its purpose.

I really appreciate your consideration!

Sincerely,
Shuping Zhang

Sent from my iPhone

Policy reviewers,

Upon review of the latest version of the Policy 1080 – Education Equity – shared with the committee members, I would like to submit dissent opinions. My dissent opinions are related to the implementation procedure.

Dissent opinion #1

Implementation Procedures – EDUCATIONAL EQUITY – Policy 1080

In the section that reads:

“II- Funding and Allocation of Resources

B. HCPSS schools and offices shall seek grants and partnerships that fund innovative programs and supports to decrease opportunity gaps”.

I want to delete the statement B. I strongly disagree with the premise that external funding is needed and necessary for the implementation and viability of programs to ensure that ALL the students in Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) received the support required to reach their full potential. The statement weakness the school financial responsibility to support equity programs and, consequently, decrease the achievement gap present in the HCPSS. Furthermore, grants have a limited time frame, which leaves any initiative created with this support unfunded after a certain period. Additionally, partners, the private sector, and the nonprofit agencies have their agenda and goals, and they might not coincide with the HCPSS and community vision. We should not compromise our view of a publicly funded education and protect the independence of HCPSS.

My suggestion is to create an Educational Equity line item on the HCPSS budget to guarantee the viability of programs that addresses inequities and achievement gaps.

Added the statement:

An educational equity line will be included on the HCPSS Budget to support the programs to decrease the achievement gap and inequality.

Dissent opinion #2

Implementation Procedures – EDUCATIONAL EQUITY – Policy 1080

In the section that reads:

“V. Data Reporting/Accountability

- A. SST will establish/maintain a school improvement planning process that requires school leadership teams to:
 - a. Analyze trends within disaggregated student data to identify:
 - I. Gaps in opportunities and access resulting in inequitable educational outcomes.
 - II. Disproportionality in discipline practices.
 - III. Under representation in advanced course enrollment.
 - IV. Disproportionality in special education identification rates.
 - V. Staff professional development needs.
 - b. Perform root cause analysis that includes cultural and structural factors.
 - c. Strategize solutions that focus on educational equity.
 - d. Track targets and milestones to close equity gaps”

The policy implementation should include an item that reflects actions to be taken by the HCPSS to mitigate the equity gaps that go beyond monitoring and leadership deliberation on what should be done. Above we have a list of actions on how to monitor trends; however, the implementation procedure lacks a transparent, actionable process in response to the continuous failure of students. Moreover, the decision of when and where to intervening should not be a sole HCPSS leadership decision, but we should delimitate a trigger of when an intervention is warned.

I suggest adding a new topic (e.)

- a. In the case of two consecutive years of no improvement, the ODEI will design and implement a remediation plan in collaboration with the school to ensure the achievement gap will be closed.

Dissent opinion #3

Implementation Procedures – EDUCATIONAL EQUITY – Policy 1080

In the section that reads:

“V. Data Reporting/Accountability

B. School based leadership teams perform equity-focused data analysis to identify current gaps in educational outcomes, programming, supports, and interventions in order to develop and implement school improvement plans.”

D. The Sup/designee develops a Local ESSA Consolidated plan that will utilize disaggregated student data to determine school system needs, identify areas of focus, and track progress towards equity goals.

The public should access information about the equity-focus analysis and the about disaggregated student data in each school easily. It is imperative to add a statement to assure the transparency of the information gathered by the HCPSS.

Add the following sentence to the end of statement B:

- The equity-focus analysis will be available on the HCPSS website.

Add the following sentence to the end of the statement D:

- The analysis will be available on the HCPSS website.

Respectfully,

Thais Moreira, PhD, PharmD

thaismoreira@gmail.com

410-530-8515

August 18, 2020

RE: Policy 1080 Educational Equity

Dear Board of Education Members,

As a parent of four (now adult) children who graduated from Howard County public school high schools, I believe that all children should thrive both inside and outside the classroom and be able to access the necessary resources and opportunities in school they need to achieve their goals. However, significant racial/ethnic disparities persist in achievement, discipline, teacher diversity and more, and these disparities create barriers for students of color to achieve their full potential., even now, long after my children graduated in 1986, 1992, 1999, and 2001.

These challenging times continue to expose the racial inequities in our country and community. Now more than ever, we need an equity policy that will eliminate barriers that prevent children of color from achieving good health, opportunity and other determinants of wellbeing.

I support the Howard County Equity Collaborative suggestions for key changes to strengthen Policy 1080 as have been outlined.

1. Set yearly, achievable equity goals and a line-item budget to achieve them. At least one of the goals should be racial equity-related.
2. Use a transparent process to gain public input on goal setting and to measure annual progress towards achieving them.
3. Hire, retain and promote teachers that reflect the racial/ethnic makeup of the student population.
4. Implement a culturally relevant curriculum that includes perspectives of marginalized and underrepresented groups and require annual equity training for all teachers.
5. Collect and report relevant data that is disaggregated by race and other factors.

I urge you to strengthen Policy 1080 with the suggested changes. Doing so will better eliminate racial inequities across HCPSS and foster more inclusive school communities. Together, we can help ensure that Howard County remains a top school district and position ourselves to be a leader in educational equity in Maryland and the rest of the country. Hopefully, my grandchildren will have a better public-school experience.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Vivian M. Lawyer

Vivian M. Lawyer
11510 Homewood Road

Ellicott City, MD 21042