

Highland Elementary School

**3100 Medway Street
Silver Spring, Maryland 20902-2297
(240) 740-1770**

**Montgomery County
Public Schools**

Dear County Council Members,

As a Linkages to Learning principal for 13 years, I have witnessed firsthand how vital our Linkages Community School Coordinator is to the Highland Elementary School Community. Our Linkages Community School Coordinator implements annual community needs assessments that identify the unique assets and needs of our school community so they can work effectively with me in supporting students and families. They connect with our local businesses, churches, synagogues, universities, non-profits, and volunteers, bringing in much needed services at no cost to our families and students. They have built long-standing relationships with these organizations and residents, thus enabling our school to provide things such as ELD and Computer Literacy Classes for our parents and after-school activities and summer camp programming for students. In addition, the parent coffees implemented by the Linkages Community School Coordinator have served as de facto support groups for our parents, which address a variety of topics ranging from how to navigate the Montgomery County Public School System to domestic violence. Our Linkages Community School Coordinator has been the “glue” for many of these families, especially post-pandemic when our community needs are greater than ever. They have even established a Parent Governance Committees at Highland, which recognizes that our parents have great strengths and would be vital leaders in our school and community once given the appropriate knowledge and resources.

Our school will no longer be able to provide many of these much-needed programs and services once the Linkages Community School Coordinator position is eliminated. This is especially impactful at a time when more resources than ever are required to service the needs of our school community. As you consider the County Executive’s budget for FY24, I urge you to consider re-instating the Community School Coordinator position as part of the Linkages to Learning Initiative.

Sincerely,

Scott R. Steffan

Scott R. Steffan, M. Ed

Principal

Highland Elementary School