

Testimony Opposing the Proposed 3.5% Property Tax Increase

Montgomery County Council Hearing

Good evening, Councilmembers. Thank you for the opportunity to speak.

My name is Michael Kaufman, a longtime resident of Montgomery County. I am here to express my strong opposition to the proposed 3.5% property tax increase intended to fund additional school employment and programs. Property taxes are already scheduled to rise 17-20% over the next three years and the tax rate increase would compound the damage.

Economic Challenges Facing Maryland and Its Residents

Maryland is currently grappling with significant fiscal challenges. The state faces a \$3.3 billion budget deficit, prompting lawmakers to implement approximately \$2 billion in spending cuts and introduce \$1.6 billion in tax increases. These measures come in response to economic uncertainties exacerbated by federal policy changes, including reductions in federal employment and funding that disproportionately affect Maryland due to its reliance on federal jobs and contracts.

Residents are also feeling the financial strain. The combination of increased taxes and economic instability, Trump tariffs and related stock market and 401K fallout have made it more difficult for many, especially those on fixed incomes, to manage their expenses.

Montgomery County Public Schools Funding and Performance

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) already receive substantial funding. For Fiscal Year 2026, the Board of Education has requested an operating budget of approximately \$3.66 billion (\$22,345 per student), marking a 10% increase over the previous year. While investment in education is crucial, it's important to assess the effectiveness of such funding.

Despite generous budgets, MCPS has faced challenges in achieving consistent academic outcomes. While there have been improvements in certain areas, overall performance results have been mixed, indicating that increased funding does not always correlate with proportional improvements in educational outcomes.

The Need for Fiscal Responsibility

Given the current economic climate and the significant investments already allocated to education, it's imperative to consider the financial burden additional tax increases would place on residents. Many homeowners are already dealing with rising property assessments, leading to higher tax bills even without rate increases.

I urge the Council to explore alternative solutions that do not involve increasing property taxes. This could include reallocating existing resources, identifying efficiencies within current programs, and ensuring that funds are being used effectively to achieve desired outcomes.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

If you'd like to personalize this testimony further or need assistance with specific sections, feel free to let me know.



Sources

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You said:

What is the per pupil spending in Montgomery county and how does it compare to the national average

ChatGPT said:

As of the 2023–2024 school year, Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) allocated approximately \$14,381 per student in local funding, ranking as the second-highest local contribution rate in Maryland . This figure surpasses the national average public school spending per student, which was approximately \$15,633 in fiscal year 2022 .[Montgomery County MarylandNew York Post+3Census.gov+3Census.gov+3](#)

Despite this substantial investment, MCPS has faced challenges in achieving consistent academic outcomes. While there have been improvements in certain areas, overall performance results have been mixed, indicating that increased funding does not always correlate with proportional improvements in educational outcomes .

Given the current economic climate and the significant investments already allocated to education, it's imperative to consider the financial burden additional tax increases would place on residents. Many homeowners are already dealing with rising property assessments, leading to higher tax bills even without rate increases.

I urge the Council to explore alternative solutions that do not involve increasing property taxes. This could include reallocating existing resources, identifying efficiencies within current programs, and ensuring that funds are being used effectively to achieve desired outcomes.



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You said:

Are you sure I found something that said it was over 20K

ChatGPT said:

You're correct—Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) has a per-pupil spending figure that exceeds \$20,000 when considering total revenue per student. According to U.S. News, MCPS has an annual revenue of approximately \$3.59 billion, with a revenue per student of \$22,345. However, the actual expenditure per student is reported as \$17,754, indicating a discrepancy between revenue and spending. [U.S. News & World Report](#)

This substantial investment in education is among the highest in the state and the nation. Despite this, MCPS has faced challenges in achieving consistent academic outcomes. For instance, only 17% of high school students tested at or above the proficient level for math, and 58% for reading. [U.S. News & World Report](#)

Given these figures, it's reasonable to question the efficacy of increased spending without corresponding improvements in educational outcomes. This context is crucial when considering proposals for additional property tax increases to fund further educational initiatives.