



## BARRY GLASSMAN

HARFORD COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 7, 2022

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### **Harford County Executive Glassman Urges Town of Bel Air to Allow New Homestead-Wakefield Elementary School to Move Forward, Opposes Public Road Through Campus**

**BEL AIR, Md.,** (June 7, 2022) - County Executive Barry Glassman sent the attached letter dated June 2 to the Bel Air town commissioners, urging them to allow the new Homestead-Wakefield Elementary School to move forward. Town officials have conditioned their final approval on the inclusion of a public road through campus. The Harford County Board of Education opposes the new road due to safety concerns and other issues.

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## HARFORD COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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6/2/2022

Mayor and Town Commissioners  
Town of Bel Air  
39 N. Hickory Ave  
Bel Air, MD 21014

### **RE: Homestead Wakefield Elementary School**

Dear Mayor Bianca and Town Commissioners,

As a partner to both the Town of Bel Air and Harford County Public Schools, I believe our shared goal is a modern facility to continue the tradition of excellence at Homestead-Wakefield Elementary School. I write to express concerns about the timely completion of this project.

I am aware that the Town would like to construct a public connector road through the property owned by the school system; however, the Board of Education has determined they need the property for an appropriate redevelopment of HWES. This redevelopment could include an emergency access road, which I understand is a desire expressed by the Town.

In addition, the Town's suggested road placement as noted on its website appears impractical. While it suggests that a road could run around the school facility, construction of such a road would require a very large amount of the Board of Education's property. It would also raise safety concerns and fail to provide an efficient route through campus.

I understand that HCPS has asked for relief in the courts; however, I ask that your Planning Department staff reconsider their recommendation to require the public road. The educational needs of our students and families, as indicated by the plan approved by the Board of Education and Maryland state authorities, outweigh the convenience of a public road.

To avoid further delay, I also ask that the Planning Commission address this issue quickly and take measures to amend its conditional approval of the HWES project plan to remove the public road requirements.

Until this issue is resolved, our shared goal of a modern facility for HWES is at risk. My administration has funded the first year of construction for the project in our budget that begins on July 1, 2022, and we expect it to be completed on time. Even if the school system's educational needs were to be pushed aside, changing plans at this late date would subject the project to additional administrative hurdles and delays that in turn would add to its cost - a burden by our taxpayers.

Therefore, I urge you to allow this project to move forward. The students, parents, and staff of HWES have waited long enough.

Sincerely,

A blue ink signature of Barry Glassman, Harford County Executive.

Barry Glassman  
Harford County Executive

CC: Dr. Sean Bulson, Superintendent, Harford County Public Schools

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