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August 25, 2004

The Honorable Janet S. Owens
Anne Arundel County Executive
44 Calvert Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21404

The Council recently passed Bill No. 56-04 which appropriated \$3,502,700 of the Board of Education's fund balance to the Board for various programs, including funds for the Van Bokkelen summer program, the gifted and talented program, and library media materials. We strongly support these programs and the purposes articulated by the Board of Education, Superintendent Eric Smith, and the school system staff for the additional funds.

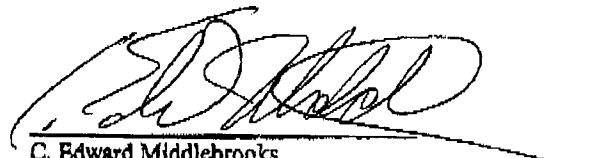
However, since passing Bill No. 56-04, we have become aware of the raises the Board recently awarded to its administrative staff. Funding for these raises was not included in Bill No. 56-04. Therefore, we assume funding was included in the Board's original fiscal year 2005 budget.

We do not support raises of this magnitude for any employees, nor do we support raises based on "years of experience" versus longevity with the Anne Arundel County Schools. Further, we are concerned with the growing disparity between salaries for County employees and salaries for school system employees.

Accordingly, we ask you to use your veto power to reduce the additional funds appropriated in Bill No. 56-04 by \$625,000. We want to make it clear that the purpose of the reduction is to show that the County Council and the County Executive do not support an appropriation for the recent raises to the administrative staff. If you exercise your veto power, my fellow Council and I will sustain your veto. (Mrs. Beidle will recuse herself from this matter for personal reasons.)

Finally, we fully support those programs for which funds were appropriated in Bill No. 56-04. Therefore, we are willing to consider a transfer bill that would transfer funds from the Administration category to the budget categories you reduce by exercising your veto power.

Thank you very much.



C. Edward Middlebrooks
County Council Chairman

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