

Board of County Commissioners

**Doug Howard**  
County Commissioner



Carroll County Government

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Commissioner Howard Proposes School Funding Without a Tax Increase**

Westminster, Tuesday, March 22, 2016 – In light of the significant gap between the county’s operating plan for education in FY16 and the requested funding from the Board of Education for FY17, Commissioner Howard has proposed a strategy to bridge the funding gap without a tax increase.

Stating that the gap between the Board of Education budget needs and funding revenues is significant, Commissioner Howard notes that the Board of Education has made the first step towards closing this gap with the very difficult school closure process. Spanning two years and five schools, this process will result in approximately \$7.2 million in annual cost reductions.

Governor Hogan has made the bold step to put \$4 million in “hold harmless” funding in his FY17 budget to combat the effects of declining enrollments on the state funding formula. Generally, one-time only funding cannot be used toward the county’s primary challenge – teacher pay. This strategy consists of the county guaranteeing the anticipated state funding in future years. The guarantee would be supported by one-time funds put into reserve for future state shortfalls, should they occur. This strategy is made possible because of the Governor’s commitment to put “hold harmless” funding in the state’s budget again next year, and the work being done by legislators to improve the state funding formula.

Commissioner Howard reaffirmed his stand on taxes. “I have been and continue to be opposed to a tax increase. I believe it will cost more than it will gain and negatively impact our sustained effort for economic growth.” If improvements are not made to the state funding formula and no additional supplemental funds are forthcoming, the county may need to revisit additional revenue in future years in order address education needs.

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