



December 15, 2025

The Honorable Governor Wes Moore
100 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Governor Moore,

Thank you for your recent statement highlighting the importance of the new Community Schools Rental Assistance Program (CSRAP), which has already prevented hundreds of Maryland children from being evicted. Unfortunately, the need for eviction prevention funds for children in community schools is far greater than the FY 2026 funds available, with more than \$23 million in requests received in the first few weeks of CSRAP's existence. Renters United Maryland and the Maryland Eviction Prevention Funds Alliance urge your administration to allocate at least \$25 million to CSRAP in the FY 2027 budget to further strengthen this bulwark of housing stability for Maryland children.

For Katherine, her partner, and their young children residing in Baltimore City, CSRAP has been the difference between safe housing and a homeless shelter. Katherine had received disability benefits, but due to an administrative mix-up, her benefits were temporarily revoked. At the same time, her partner was laid off. Katherine's children, however, go to a community school, and with the help of CSRAP and legal representation, Katherine and her landlord negotiated a settlement that will keep her kids out of a shelter and in the neighborhood school they love.

CSRAP is a game-changer for the families like Katherine's who are lucky enough to receive it. [Students facing eviction are six times more likely to be chronically absent and four times more likely to not complete high school](#), and students who experienced housing insecurity were more likely to have a lower GPA as well as poorer mental health outcomes.¹ Further, fewer than 25% of [children experiencing homelessness](#) graduate from high school.

Jessica Shiller, Director of the Maryland Center for Community Schools, applauds the impact CSRAP is already having: "The Maryland Center for Community Schools celebrates Governor Moore's efforts to address childhood poverty in Maryland. We know from our research that tackling issues impacting

¹ Mariah Kornbluh, et al., Exploring Housing Insecurity in Relation to Student Success, J Am Coll Health, Apr. 2022.

students outside of school, like food and housing insecurity, can change their trajectories long term. In a year where so many have lost employment and benefits, we support the effort to expand rental assistance to more families so that we can ensure the continued success of Maryland's children and the initiative to mitigate the harsh impact of poverty on them."

As one CSRAP recipient from Overlea put it: "Thank you so much for helping our family during this difficult season in our life." We have attached a letter from Shannon Ament, Community Schools Coordinator at Sandalwood Elementary School, describing further the critical impact of CSRAP.

Ongoing federal chaos reinforces the need to support stable housing and quality education for our children. [Marylanders lost over 15,000 federal jobs](#) even before the recent shutdown, forced furloughs, SNAP benefits freeze, and deportations. Families experiencing these financial shocks need the short-term support that CSRAP is well-positioned to provide. Without support, many will be unable to pay their rent or mortgage. Students will be forced to transfer in the middle of a school year or take a 2-hour bus ride from a homeless shelter to their old school. Beyond the most recent round of federal cuts, what happens to the kids when working-class parents hit the inevitable financial setback—a stolen car, lost hours at work, or a former partner who stops paying child support?

CSRAP received \$5 million for FY 2025 and another \$5 million for FY 2026. Having just launched in October 2025, CSRAP is projected to spend well over \$5 million by Dec. 31, 2025 alone, because of the incredible demand. **Beyond CSRAP, there are virtually no state or federal funds available for eviction prevention, and local funding is spotty at best.**

Investing more in community schools and eviction prevention also helps right past racial wrongs. [One in four Black children in rental households face the threat of eviction in a typical year](#). Maryland's history of discriminatory policies means that Black and brown Marylanders are more likely to be at risk of eviction. Ensuring that these families have access to the vital lifeline of eviction prevention, and that they can avoid the poverty, unemployment, and suppressed educational and health outcomes that often follow an eviction, will help offset the systemic racial disparities of old through an expansion of new opportunities.

According to a [research report from Stout Risius Ross](#), **investing \$25 million in CSRAP could help 9,375 residents avoid eviction and provide consistency with their children's education.** Based on Stout's analysis, this \$25 million investment would yield approximately \$57.5 million in cost savings or avoidance by reducing homelessness and state-funded safety net expenses related to sheltering and educating students experiencing homelessness, providing health care, foster care costs as well as the decreased incarceration rates and the economic impacts of increased employment and income stability.

CSRAP's early success also highlights the importance of a collaborative, cross-sector approach to tackling the greatest challenges facing Maryland residents, and we want to thank the Department of Housing and Community Development, State Department of Education, and the General Assembly including bill sponsors Sen. Shelly Hettleman and Del. Vaughn Stewart, and the budget committees.

Our children cannot show up ready to learn if they spent the prior evening in a homeless shelter. If Maryland is going to end childhood poverty and execute on the Blueprint for Maryland's Future, we will need additional schools-based eviction prevention funds. We urge your administration to allocate \$25 million to CSRAP for FY 27 and advance your ambitious goal of creating a world-class education system while ending childhood poverty and developing sustainable communities.

Regards,

Renters United Maryland and the Maryland Eviction Prevention Funds Alliance

RUM and MEPFA members include Advance Maryland, Baltimore Healthy Start, Beyond the Boundaries, CASA, CASH Campaign, Catholic Charities of Baltimore, Community Development Network, Chesapeake Physicians for Social Responsibility, Community Legal Services, Disability Rights Maryland, Economic Action, Everyday Canvassing, Health Care for the Homeless, Housing Our Neighbors, Jews United for Justice, Latino Economic Dev. Center, Long Branch Housing Action Team, Maryland Catholic Conference, Maryland Center on Economic Policy, Maryland Legislative Coalition, Montgomery County Renters Alliance, NAACP of Maryland, Our Revolution MD, Pro Bono Resource Center, Public Justice Center, Progressive Maryland's Enclave Tenant Association, Progressive Maryland, 1199 SEIU, Shore Legal Access, Santoni, Vocci, & Ortega, LLC, and Youth Action Board.

cc

Senate President Bill Ferguson

House Speaker Adrienne Jones

Secretary Jake Weissmann, Dept. of Budget and Management

Secretary Jacob Day, Dept. of Housing and Community Development

Dr. Carey Wright, State Superintendent of Schools

Senator Guy Guzzone, Chair, Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

Delegate Ben Barnes, Chair, House Appropriations Committee

Tony Bridges, Deputy Legislative Officer, Governor's Legislative Office

Sandalwood Elementary School

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12/5/2025

The Honorable Wes Moore
Governor of Maryland

Dear Governor Moore,

On behalf of Sandalwood Elementary School, I am writing to express our strong support for continued and expanded CSRAP funding. Our school serves one of the highest-poverty communities in Baltimore County and faces a transiency rate of 61%—one of the highest in the county. Housing insecurity is the single greatest barrier impacting our students' stability, academic progress, and overall well-being.

Even with these significant challenges, our students and staff have worked tirelessly to create a stable, supportive environment that promotes learning and growth. As a result, Sandalwood has achieved remarkable gains: chronic absenteeism has dropped from 45% to 21%, behavior referrals have decreased from more than 1,000 to fewer than 200 annually, and our MCAP scores have steadily improved over the past five years. These outcomes demonstrate what is possible when students experience stability and sustained support.

The CSRAP program plays a vital role in making that stability possible. By helping families avoid eviction and remain housed, CSRAP prevents the frequent, disruptive moves that undermine academic progress, break essential school-family relationships, and jeopardize the sense of safety and continuity students need to thrive. When students are able to stay in their homes, they are able to stay in their school community—resulting in stronger attendance, better behavior, and improved academic achievement.

For the children and families we serve, CSRAP is not just a housing support program—it is an educational lifeline. Continued investment in this program is essential to sustaining the progress our students have made and to building a stronger, more equitable future for the Sandalwood community.

We would be honored to welcome you to Sandalwood Elementary to see firsthand the incredible resilience of our students, the dedication of our staff, and the profound impact that housing stability has on learning. Our community would be grateful for the opportunity to share our experiences and hopes for the future with you.

Thank you for your commitment to Maryland families and for considering this critical funding need.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Shannon Ament", written in a cursive style.

Shannon Ament
Community School Facilitator
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Creating a Culture



of Deliberate Excellence

"Developing Lifelong Learners Through Literacy"