



MEDIA ADVISORY | PHOTO OPPORTUNITY

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Howard County Library System Annual BATTLE OF THE BOOKS

- WHO:** Howard County Library System staff and trustees, Howard County Public School System staff, elected officials, community VIPs, parents and more than 1,700 costumed Howard County fifth graders from every public elementary school plus private schools. HCLS President & CEO Tonya Aikens, Howard County Executive Calvin Ball, and HCPSS Superintendent Bill Barnes will make remarks.
- WHAT:** An academic competition that tests fifth graders' knowledge of 9 pre-assigned books in a lively arena setting.
- WHEN:** **Friday, April 25, 2025, beginning at 7 pm**
- WHERE:** **Merriweather Post Pavilion**
- WHY:** To improve reading comprehension and build vocabulary among fifth grade students in a unique and exciting way that also teaches leadership, teamwork and good sportsmanship. One of the Library's signature A+ Partners in Education initiatives, Battle of the Books continues to grow and attract more students each year.

Additional information:

- 352 teams of fifth grade students will compete in this reading competition that has become a rite of passage in Howard County.
 - Teams pick names, dress up in costumes, and answer questions about a set of nine books they have been reading since the fall. Each team received one set of books, courtesy of generous sponsorships.
 - Battle of the Books has grown from 66 teams when it began in 2008 to more than 350 teams. Since moving to Merriweather in 2022, the event has become one of the most popular events in the county.
- Spelling Bee Winner, Luke Noblezada, and runner-up, Meqdim Abera, will be honored on-stage at the event
- **Sponsors:**
 - Presenting Sponsor: Howard Community College

- Platinum Sponsors: Educational Systems Federal Credit Union, Friends & Foundation of HCLS, Howard County Public School System, Jessie-Bell Family Giving Fund, Merriweather Arts and Culture Center
- Gold Sponsor: Howard Hughes Corporation
- Silver Sponsor: M&T Charitable Foundation
- In-Kind Sponsor: National Media Production, LLC
- **Testimonials:**
 - ***“Battle of the Books was epic! Our youngest child participated this year and we don’t want it to be our last. We’re thinking we may need to have more children.”***
 - *“I saw my son, who is a reluctant reader and at times struggles with reading comprehension, become a more engaged reader throughout the year. He grew in confidence as we read and practiced as a team and remembered lots of important details and themes from the books.”*
 - *“... since BOB started in November, my daughter has read a lot more, aside from the BOB’s books, and her grades have all gone up, too. I think the creativity and self-discipline required by BOB definitely added to the growth of our team.”*
 - *“My current 5th grader was beside herself excited for the event. When we arrived, it was like she never knew something could possibly be this cool. Thousands of kids her own age dancing, bonding, having fun, all for the love of reading. Thank you so much for all of the hard work and planning that went into this.”*
 - ***“But seriously, how many American fifth graders can say they had their Battle of the Books at one of the nation’s premier concert venues, where some of the world’s greatest artists have performed?”***
- **Sizzle Reel:** <https://youtu.be/mVAC3EjHKFA>
- **Selected photos from 2024:**
 - The Bob Ross team: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/hocolibrary/53703561369/in/album-72177720316372996>
 - Teams waiting for the Battle to begin: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/hocolibrary/53669738434/in/album-72177720316372996>
 - Teams in the Merriweather pavilion: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/hocolibrary/53669375731/in/album-72177720316372996>
 - A view from the lawn: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/hocolibrary/albums/72177720316372996/with/53703655850>
 - A happy team: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/hocolibrary/53669832285/in/album-72177720316372996>
 - Teams in the mosh pit during a break: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/hocolibrary/53669730464/in/album-72177720316372996>