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# BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS

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## Public Comments

Meeting Date

Wednesday, July 1, 2026

BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS  
80 Calvert Street  
Annapolis MD 21401

# Department of General Services

## Agenda Item: 15-CGL

### Matt Hugel: Support

Dear Governor Moore, Comptroller Lierman, and Treasurer Davis: My name is Cecilia M. McCormick, and I serve as President of the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA). On behalf of our students, faculty, and the City of Baltimore, I write in strong support of Item 15-CGL, and I respectfully ask the Board to certify MICA's matching funds and approve the grant agreement.

This year, MICA marks its 200th anniversary. Chartered in 1826, we are the oldest continuous degree granting college of art in the nation, and for more than a century, our home has been the Main Building on Mount Royal Avenue. It is worth remembering that the State of Maryland helped build it in the first place: after the Great Baltimore Fire of 1904 destroyed the Institute's downtown home, the State, the Carnegie Foundation, and the citizens of Baltimore came together to construct the Main Building, which opened in 1907. The grant before you today continues a partnership that is more than 120 years old.

The Main Building is a Maryland landmark, listed as a contributing property in the Bolton Hill Historic District. Designed by the architects Pell & Corbett and inspired by the architecture of Venice's Grand Canal, it was built from Beaver Dam marble quarried in Cockeysville - the same Maryland marble used for the Washington Monument in Baltimore and for the Washington Monument in our nation's capital. Its grand marble staircase, stained-glass skylight, and Renaissance detailing make it one of Baltimore's architectural treasures.

But the Main Building is far more than just a historic façade. It is the working heart of MICA and a civic asset for Baltimore. It is where every MICA education begins and where the College is run. The building houses the Offices of the President, the Provost, and Admission; the First Year Experience that welcomes every incoming student; the Photography department; painting and drawing studios; darkrooms; and the student-run Main Gallery. Each spring it becomes a public exhibition hall for ArtWalk, our senior thesis show, and throughout the year it hosts events that bring visitors from across the city through its doors. Generations of artists, designers, and educators have begun their careers on its marble staircase.

This matters to Maryland because MICA is an economic and cultural engine for Baltimore and the region. Through initiatives such as the Design & Innovation Hub and our Center for Creative Impact, MICA connects students with community and industry partners and helps power a creative economy that supports jobs in design, film, technology, education, and social

enterprise. The historic Main Building is the foundation for our work and our mission to “thrive with Baltimore.”

The grant will fund essential capital repairs, including the replacement of the building’s aging roof and skylights. A failing roof endangers the structure itself, the students and faculty who learn and work inside it, and the artwork it holds. The total project is \$5,085,000, and MICA is contributing \$3,085,000 - including the full \$2,000,000 match the State requires, which we have documented with the Department of General Services. We will also fulfill the project’s historic preservation conditions in consultation with the Maryland Historical Trust.

On behalf of MICA - and in our 200th year - I respectfully urge the Board to approve Item 15-CGL and help preserve a building that has served Maryland for more than a century and will serve it for generations to come. Thank you for your time and for your continued investment in Baltimore and in the arts.

Respectfully submitted,

Cecilia M. McCormick, JD

President, Maryland Institute College of Art

## Secretary

### Agenda Item: 37

#### Daniel Meyers - Athletic Sportswear Associates Inc: Oppose

I have been in the business of supplying college and university bookstores around the country with emblematic sportswear for 45 years. I have seen many stores go lease to third party companies. Barnes & Noble is by far the worst of them all. If you look at how many schools have walked away from their contracts with B&N that will tell you everything. Also if you look at their stock it will show how unstable they are. This company will probably end up in either chapter 11 or 13. I believe this will prove to be a horrible decision for both the students and the school. I’m hoping that smarter decisions are made regarding approving the outsourcing. The current bookstore is extremely well run.

## Shannon Nabors: Oppose

Dear Members of the Maryland Board of Public Works, I am writing to express opposition to the proposed outsourcing of SMCM's Campus Store and Daily Grind operations to Barnes & Noble College (BNC). This initiative raises concerns regarding fiscal oversight, the absence of transparency and shared governance, and the additional financial burden that may be placed on students.

**Lack of Transparency and Shared Governance:** This transition was finalized behind closed doors by the Board of Trustees without any consultation with the campus community. This bypasses the principles of transparency and shared governance essential to a public institution and leaves faculty, staff, and students with no mechanism to address the operational risks of this handover.

**Regressive Impact of "First Day Complete" Programs:** Based on BNC's very ambitious revenue forecast (35% higher than Follett's), we anticipate the College will implement BNC's "First Day Complete", as seen at Morgan State University, driven largely by BNC's efforts to artificially inflate revenue through its "inclusive and equitable access" growth strategy. These auto-enrollment programs function as a regressive tax on our student body. Because these costs are bundled into mandatory fees, they are often excluded from tuition-based financial aid discounts, disproportionately burdening low-income students.

**Workforce Displacement:** The transition to a private corporate model prioritizes external bottom lines over our local campus workforce. Long-term staff members are being effectively cast aside, with only vague, non-binding intentions from BNC and the College to "consider them for positions". Furthermore, this shift will result in the loss of vital student employment opportunities that provide not only income, but also professional experience on campus.

**Pattern of Fiscal Mismanagement:** The College has demonstrated a concerning inability to monitor complex service contracts. Most notably, the recent transition of our Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system was marked by significant budget overruns and operational failures, necessitating a pivot from Anthology to Workday. Given this history, the College lacks the necessary oversight infrastructure to manage a transition to a private corporate retail model without risking further fiscal instability.

**Unresolved Operational Deficiencies:** The College is currently struggling to maintain basic service levels under existing contracts. With the campus janitorial contract expiring on June 30, 2026, and reports of persistent facility cleanliness issues remaining unaddressed, the administration's capacity to manage a high-stakes transition of bookstore operations is highly questionable.

Lack of Institutional Support: Several administrative decisions have created operational and financial challenges for the Campus Store and Daily Grind. The introduction of a Starbucks café on campus, athletics merchandise website, and recurring delays in textbook adoptions and course material requests have all contributed to reduced opportunities for the Campus Store and Daily Grind to effectively serve students and generate revenue. Rather than working collaboratively to identify opportunities for growth, improve financial performance, and address operational challenges, the College appears to have focused primarily on outsourcing as the solution.

Given these factors, I respectfully urge the Board to delay approval of this contract until the College can provide a transparent assessment of the extent to which the College itself has contributed to the financial challenges facing these operations. It is difficult to conclude that privatization is necessary when there is little evidence that all reasonable efforts were made to support, strengthen, and invest in the success of existing campus-operated services.

#### Matthew Galka: Oppose

I believe that all students currently employed at the daily grind and at the campus store, should maintain their current job positions as the changes with Barnes and Nobles is implemented. The current staff of both of these places are integral to daily life for many people on campus. As they always deliver professional, polite and efficient services every single day. Personally in my first two years here at St. Mary's College of Maryland, I have never had a bad experience with either the daily grind staff or the campus store staff and I have never heard of anyone having bad experiences. The students that work at these places put in so much work each day to make sure others around campus can have a better/easier day with positive interactions. Which is why they absolutely deserve to keep their jobs through the transition and after it.

#### Eavan Douglas: Oppose

The student body has extensively expressed our opposition to this transition to the Board of Trustees.

The Daily Grind and Campus Bookstore mean so much to me and my friends at St. Mary's, and without them, the school truly would not have the same charm that drew me to the campus in the first place.

If I were to have visited the campus as an admitted student and seen a Barnes and Noble, I would have continued to look for another liberal arts school that better expressed their value for small businesses. Seeing a large corporate logo slapped across the campus center would have sent an unappealing message to me.

It would be far less likely that I would have chosen St. Mary's as the college to attend.

The close-knit community at SMCM is strengthened by the current Daily Grind and Campus Bookstore, but the college has failed to support their operations. We need greater support, not more large corporations (like the newly added Starbucks conveniently placed by student housing) entering the picture.

Thank you for considering the community's voice.

### Sophie Reed : Oppose

Dear Members of the Maryland Board of Public Works,

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed outsourcing of the St. Mary's College of Maryland (SMCM) Campus Store and Daily Grind operations to Barnes & Noble, given the College's lack of transparency. While I understand that the Board of Trustees may have been limited in what information can be shared with the student body, the proposal came as a shock to the student body. Students responded with confusion, fear, and disappointment. It has been nearly a month now and the Board has yet to address student concerns. This behavior is extremely disappointing.

Additionally, as a student, I see daily what the Campus Store and Daily Grind give to our campus community. I love seeing my favorite student-baristas behind the bar and laughing with them before rushing off with much-needed caffeine to my next class. The Campus Store and Daily Grind employ a significant number of students. Without this operation, an estimated 40 students will lose their main source of income. If outsourcing truly is the best solution, student employees must be protected.

Once again, I strongly oppose the outsourcing of the Campus Store and Daily Grind at St. Mary's College of Maryland. Thank you for your consideration.

## Megan Chee: Oppose

Dear Members of the Maryland Board of Public Works,

I am writing to express my formal opposition to the proposed outsourcing of St. Mary's College of Maryland's (SMCM) Campus Store and Daily Grind operations to Barnes & Noble College (BNC). This initiative raises serious concerns regarding fiscal oversight, the absence of meaningful transparency and shared governance, and the additional financial burden that may ultimately be placed on students.

**Lack of Transparency and Shared Governance:** This transition was finalized behind closed doors by the Board of Trustees without any consultation with the campus community. This bypasses the principles of transparency and shared governance essential to a public institution and leaves faculty, staff, and students with no mechanism to address the operational risks of this handover.

**Regressive Impact of "First Day Complete" Programs:** Based on BNC's very ambitious revenue forecast (35% higher than Follett's), we anticipate the College will implement BNC's "First Day Complete", as seen at Morgan State University, driven largely by BNC's efforts to artificially inflate revenue through its "inclusive and equitable access" growth strategy. These auto-enrollment programs function as a regressive tax on our student body. Because these costs are bundled into mandatory fees, they are often excluded from tuition-based financial aid discounts, disproportionately burdening low-income students. Such an increase in the total cost of attendance threatens our enrollment goals and our commitment to accessibility, as higher fees consistently discourage prospective students from lower-income backgrounds.

**Workforce Displacement:** The transition to a private corporate model prioritizes external bottom lines over our local campus workforce. Long-term staff members are being effectively cast aside, with only vague, non-binding intentions from BNC and the College to "consider them for positions". Furthermore, this shift will result in the loss of vital student employment opportunities that provide not only income, but also professional experience on campus.

**Pattern of Fiscal Mismanagement:** The College has demonstrated a concerning inability to monitor complex service contracts. Most notably, the recent transition of our Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system was marked by significant budget overruns and operational failures, necessitating a pivot from Anthology to Workday. Given this history, the College lacks the necessary oversight infrastructure to manage a transition to a private corporate retail model without risking further fiscal instability.

**Unresolved Operational Deficiencies:** The College is currently struggling to maintain basic service levels under existing contracts. With the campus janitorial contract expiring on June 30, 2026, and reports of persistent facility cleanliness issues remaining unaddressed, the

administration's capacity to manage a high-stakes transition of bookstore operations is highly questionable.

Lack of Institutional Support: Several administrative decisions have created operational and financial challenges for the Campus Store and Daily Grind. The introduction of a Starbucks café on campus, athletics merchandise website, and recurring delays in textbook adoptions and course material requests have all contributed to reduced opportunities for the Campus Store and Daily Grind to effectively serve students and generate revenue. Rather than working collaboratively to identify opportunities for growth, improve financial performance, and address operational challenges, the College appears to have focused primarily on outsourcing as the solution.

Given these factors, I respectfully urge the Board to delay approval of this contract until the College can provide a transparent assessment of the extent to which the College itself has contributed to the financial challenges facing these operations. It is difficult to conclude that privatization is necessary when there is little evidence tha

#### Clay Kiesel: Oppose

SMCM has lacked transparency throughout this entire process. The first public word of outsourcing the Campus Store & Daily Grind came from an investigative article which I wrote in October of 2025. That was followed by a student speak-out that the SGA put on. In May of 2026, SMCM put out an "Update" to the RFP and the outsourcing, but I believe that was an update to my article and not to anything the college has put out, because the college put out nothing to my knowledge. SMCM has made no attempt to reach the general SMCM community for opinions about the situation before and after my article was published in the student newspaper. The VP of Business and Chief Financial Officer of SMCM told me that "We value transparency and will seek input and provide updates to the campus community at appropriate moments during the process." The only appropriate moment they sought to inform the community was after the contract had been signed by B&N. Coming from a public college, this has broken trust between students and admin and is extremely disappointing.

#### Shawna Hemphill: Oppose

This version is tighter, more direct and more persuasive while avoiding Oxford commas:

As the parent of a student at St. Mary's College of Maryland, I am writing to oppose the proposed outsourcing of the Campus Store and Daily Grind to Barnes & Noble College. Like many families, I chose St. Mary's because of its strong community, student-centered culture and commitment to affordability.

My eldest daughter attended another college where Barnes & Noble managed the bookstore. Students were required to participate in a textbook rental program that added costs regardless of whether less expensive options were available. Students had fewer opportunities to buy used books or seek lower-cost alternatives, and faculty had less flexibility to use free or low-cost materials. In some cases, course readings and online articles were placed behind a paywall.

Based on that experience, I worry that a similar model at St. Mary's would increase costs while reducing choice. Programs like these are often marketed as improving access to course materials, but they can require students to pay fees whether they need all of the materials or not. At a time when college costs continue to rise, additional mandatory expenses place an unnecessary burden on students and families.

I also share the concerns raised by students, alumni, faculty and community members about the impact on campus employees and student workers. Long-serving staff members who have dedicated years to supporting students now face uncertainty about their future employment. Student workers may lose valuable on-campus job opportunities and mentoring relationships.

St. Mary's College has long been known for its close ties to the local community. Replacing locally operated businesses with a large national corporation would weaken those connections and move the College away from one of the qualities that makes it unique.

Equally troubling is the lack of transparency surrounding this proposal. A decision with significant implications for students, employees and educational costs should involve meaningful input from those most affected. Instead, what appeared to be a final decision was announced after the spring semester had ended, when relatively few students and staff were on campus.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Board to postpone approval of this contract until a more transparent review can take place. Students, families, faculty, staff and taxpayers deserve a clear understanding of how this proposal was developed, what alternatives were considered and whether this decision is truly in the best interest of the St. Mary's community.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

## Campbell Walsh: Oppose

Dear Members of the Maryland Board of Public Works, I am writing as both a current student at St. Mary's College of Maryland (SMCM), but also as a student employees current working at The Daily Grind/Campus Store. As an involved party I oppose the outsourcing of The Daily Grind/Campus Center to Barnes & Noble College (BNC) for a myriad of reasons ranging from the loss of jobs for students who have federal work study positions to the way the decision was made behind closed doors without consideration from the community.

Throughout this transition process there was a serious lack of transparency between the Board of Trustees and campus community, though the administration has attempted to claim otherwise. The transition was finalized behind closed doors and over the summer, while during the past semester students had multiple speak outs that were heavily attended to tell the administration that we overwhelmingly opposed the idea of outsourcing to any company. Without transparency and shared governance, faculty, staff, and students will have no mechanism to address the operational risks of this handover. This has been even more so stressed, because when impacted student workers have not been updated on the status of our positions, and we were only informed 30 minutes before the rest of the student body about the decision to sell.

The administration has been claiming that The Daily Grind/Campus Store has been suffering from operational and financial challenges yet has been refused institutional level support. For example, the introduction of a Starbucks café on campus and an athletics merchandise website has affected the ability of The Campus Store to generate revenue, as there are simply more streams for community members to purchase from. Rather than working collaboratively to identify opportunities for growth, improve financial performance, and address operational challenges, the College appears to have focused primarily on outsourcing as the solution.

Additionally, the two main selling points for a school like SMCM is the unique community that can be found at SMCM and the financial incentives that are available for in state residents. The fact that SMCM is a public national honors college has allowed me, a Maryland resident, to reach my academic goals without going into deep debt to pay for school. The transition to BNC will bring additional financial burden to students while also taking away a strongly student supported aspect of our unique community. Not only will student job opportunities disappear (jobs that help students like me pay for school), but BNC also charges all students a flat cost for textbooks, even when students could get their books for cheaper or when students don't need to purchase books at all. Overall, these changes will disproportionately burden low-income students.

Finally, while I love my school, the administration has for past years made huge mistakes in fiscal management and operational organization. The College has not been able to monitor complex service contracts in the past, as shown by our recent transition of our Enterprise Resource Planning system that led to significant budget overruns and necessitating a pivot from Anthology to Workday. The College has also struggled to maintain basic service levels under existing contracts, as seen with the campus janitorial contract expiring on June 30, 2026, and reports of persistent facility cleanliness issues remaining unaddressed. Ultimately, the administration's capacity to manage a high-stakes transition of bookstore operations is highly questionable.

This is why students like me are asking you to deny this transition, or at least wait until more details can be determined on how to protect the students that need it most.

### Marie Taylor : Oppose

The Campus Store and Daily Grind are more than retail operations; they are student-centered spaces shaped by and for the SMCM community. Unlike Barnes & Noble College, these operations are closely connected to the students they serve and have the flexibility to accommodate their needs. They understand the unique character of SMCM and can quickly adapt to student feedback, special requests, and changing campus needs. Whether accommodating dietary restrictions, introducing new products, or creating merchandise that reflects campus culture, their decisions are driven by the community rather than corporate policies and profit margins. A transition to a large corporate vendor will reduce the availability of unique, student-driven products and affect the affordability and accessibility of certain items for students with limited financial resources. Additionally, the Campus Store and Daily Grind employ 30-35 student workers, providing valuable on-campus employment with scheduling that aligns with academic demands. On a rural campus where the nearest town is 20 minutes away and many students lack transportation, accessible on-campus jobs are especially important. These positions offer adaptable hours and individualized scheduling, helping students balance work, academics, and other commitments in a way that many external employers cannot consistently provide. In addition, there are limited on-campus employment opportunities that employ as many students as the Campus Store and Daily Grind. Barnes & Noble College will not be able to maintain the same level of student employment or scheduling flexibility, as they operate under standardized staffing models and cost-efficiency goals that prioritize reducing costs. As the Board of Public Works considers the future of these beloved campus institutions, it is important to recognize the value they provide beyond financial metrics alone. The Campus Store and Daily Grind represent student engagement, creativity, accessibility, and community. They are positioned to serve the needs of the SMCM community because they have been built

around those needs. This decision reflects a serious breakdown in transparency and shared governance, principles that are fundamental to the integrity of a public institution. The lack of meaningful consultation with the campus community has left faculty, staff, and students with little to no visibility into how or why this decision was made. As a result, there is a growing and justified sense of concern and distrust within the community regarding the process by which significant operational decisions are being determined and communicated. Rather than engaging in a collaborative process to identify growth opportunities, strengthen financial performance, and address operational challenges, the College defaulted to outsourcing as the primary solution, without adequately considering alternative approaches or the broader impact on the campus community.

### Laura Howe: Oppose

The proposed outsourcing of St. Mary's College of MD's Campus Store and Daily Grind to Barnes and Noble College demonstrates a lack of shared governance and threatens the needs of our student body as well as our dedicated managers.

As a recent graduate who worked at the Daily Grind and Campus Store my four years, I am incredibly disappointed by this proposal, and I am empathic toward those who are not yet graduated from SMCM — and especially toward our wonderful, hardworking managers: Richard Wagner, Taylor Graves, and Ronald Stone. I share their anger about this proposal with more concerns listed below.

1) Lack of Transparency and Shared Governance: This transition was finalized behind closed doors by the Board of Trustees without any consultation with the campus community. This bypasses the principles of transparency and shared governance essential to a public institution and leaves faculty, staff, and students with no mechanism to address the operational risks of this handover.

2) Regressive Impact of "First Day Complete" Programs: Based on BNC's very ambitious revenue forecast (35% higher than Follett's), we anticipate the College will implement BNC's "First Day Complete", as seen at Morgan State University, driven largely by BNC's efforts to artificially inflate revenue through its "inclusive and equitable access" growth strategy. These auto-enrollment programs function as a regressive tax on our student body. Because these costs are bundled into mandatory fees, they are often excluded from tuition-based financial aid discounts, disproportionately burdening low-income students. Such an increase in the total cost of attendance threatens our enrollment goals and our commitment to accessibility, as higher fees consistently discourage prospective students from lower-income backgrounds.

3) Workforce Displacement: The transition to a private corporate model prioritizes external bottom lines over our local campus workforce. Long-term staff members are being effectively cast aside, with only vague, non-binding intentions from BNC and the College to "consider them for positions". Furthermore, this shift will result in the loss of vital student employment opportunities that provide not only income, but also professional experience on campus.

4) Pattern of Fiscal Mismanagement: The College has demonstrated a concerning inability to monitor complex service contracts. Most notably, the recent transition of our Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system was marked by significant budget overruns and operational failures, necessitating a pivot from Anthology to Workday. Given this history, the College lacks the necessary oversight infrastructure to manage a transition to a private corporate retail model without risking further fiscal instability.

5) Unresolved Operational Deficiencies: The College is currently struggling to maintain basic service levels under existing contracts. With the campus janitorial contract expiring on June 30, 2026, and reports of persistent facility cleanliness issues remaining unaddressed, the administration's capacity to manage a high-stakes transition of bookstore operations is highly questionable.

6) Lack of Institutional Support: Several administrative decisions have created operational and financial challenges for the Campus Store and Daily Grind. The introduction of a Starbucks café on campus, athletics merchandise website, and recurring delays in textbook adoptions and course material requests have all contributed to reduced opportunities for the Campus Store and Daily Grind to effectively serve students and generate revenue. Rather than working collaboratively to identify opportunities for growth, improve financial performance, and address operational challenges, the College appears to have focused primarily on outsourcing as the solution.

Brooklyn Kimball: Oppose

I am a rising senior at SMCM and have worked as a student manager at the Daily Grind and Campus Store for the past three years. During that time, I have seen firsthand the important role these spaces play in building community and supporting student life. Because of concerns about transparency and shared governance surrounding the decision to outsource these operations, several other students and I organized a petition opposing the transition. To date, the petition has received more than 700 signatures, demonstrating the significant value the Campus Store and Daily Grind hold within the SMCM community. Despite the profound impact this decision will have on students, faculty, staff, and alumni, the decision to proceed with the transition was finalized by the Board of Trustees behind closed doors, without meaningful

consultation or shared decision-making with those most affected. The timing of the announcement, coming after the departure of the Class of 2026 and following major community events such as the staff picnic, further intensified concerns that the decision was communicated at a moment when student presence and collective input were minimized. Student employees and management were informed of the decision only 30 minutes before the rest of the campus community. Even then, we were given no information about the future of our employment, what to expect during the transition process, or when the changes would take effect. The announcement was made on May 28, and as of June 24, no additional information has been provided despite repeated efforts by student employees to seek answers regarding our job status and the transition's impact on our employment. The lack of transparency extends beyond the decision-making process itself, as student employees who were excluded from meaningful consultation before the decision was made, continue to be denied basic information about their employment and the transition process. Nearly a month after the announcement, approximately 30 student employees remain uncertain whether they will have jobs when the fall semester begins in just two months. For many students, campus employment is not simply a convenience but a critical source of income used to pay for tuition, housing, books, and daily living expenses. By failing to provide timely information or a clear transition plan, the administration has left student employees in an unacceptable state of uncertainty at a time when they should be preparing for the upcoming academic year. Regardless of intent, the manner in which this decision was communicated has been widely perceived as limiting accountability and restricting meaningful engagement with those most affected. This approach raises serious concerns about governance practices within a public institution, as it appears to bypass established norms of transparency, shared governance, and stakeholder participation. As a result, the SMCM community has been left without a clear mechanism to evaluate or respond to the operational and financial risks associated with the transition. This process has damaged trust between the College and its community, as decisions of significant impact are increasingly viewed as predetermined rather than collaborative.

The link to our petition is: [link omitted by BPW staff]

### Tiffany Kalota: Oppose

I am a 2025 alum of SMCM and a former student employee of the Campus Store and Daily Grind. I strongly oppose the decision to outsource these beloved campus institutions. Students and management have invested countless hours over many years to build the welcoming environment, community connections, and quality of service that made the Daily Grind and Campus Store such important parts of the student experience. Myself and other long term employees spent our free, unpaid time developing ways to improve the Campus store and Daily

Grind as well as increase its popularity as a community gathering place all students could enjoy and feel welcome. These spaces are more than retail operations; they are integral to the culture and identity of the College. Outsourcing the Campus Store and Daily Grind would not only render hours of student labor, passion and creativity useless, but destroy a pillar of the campus community, making campus feel less and less like it exists FOR students, and more like it's sole purpose is to attract investors and larger corporations.

As someone who worked there, it was frustrating to watch the College describe the Daily Grind and Campus Store as special and essential parts of campus life while providing limited resources and support to help them succeed. The Campus Store and Daily Grind were expected to improve performance and increase revenue, but those expectations were not always matched with the investments necessary to achieve them. Despite these challenges, student workers and management have done everything possible to make these spaces successful, welcoming, and responsive to the needs of the campus community. The dedication, creativity, and hard work have rarely received the recognition they deserve.

From researching, Barnes & Noble College has faced sustained financial pressure and operational volatility in the early-to-mid 2020s, driven by declining traditional textbook demand, rapid shifts toward digital course materials, and ongoing restructuring efforts, including store consolidation and cost-cutting initiatives. In that context, aggressive revenue forecasts and multi-year commission guarantees, particularly projections that significantly exceed competitor assumptions, raise legitimate questions about risk realism and long-term reliability. Responsible evaluation requires more than comparing headline financial promises; it should have included rigorous stress-testing of vendor assumptions against historical performance, industry headwinds, and their demonstrated ability to sustain commitments under shifting market conditions.

The College should be willing to have an open conversation about its budget priorities. Many members of the community have questions about how resources are allocated across campus and whether sufficient effort was made to support the Campus Store and Daily Grind before deciding to outsource them. Before concluding that these operations could not succeed, the College should demonstrate that it fully explored every reasonable opportunity to strengthen them.

From the perspective of many SMCM community members, the Campus Store and Daily Grind were not given the support needed to reach their full potential. That is why this decision feels less like a necessary last resort and more like the culmination of years of underinvestment that management worked tirelessly to sustain. The concern is not only what happens to these spaces now, but whether other valued parts of the College could face the same fate if they are allowed to struggle without adequate support and then judged solely on their financial performance.

### Sarah Lang: Oppose

As the mother of a student who works in the school bookstore, I believe outsourcing operations to Barnes & Noble would be a significant loss for both students and the campus community. The current bookstore provides valuable employment opportunities for students, allowing them to earn income while developing a strong work ethic, responsibility, and important customer service and communication skills. In addition, several long-term staff members who are not students have become tremendous assets to the store and mentors to the students they work alongside. The bookstore is more than a retail space—it is a learning environment that supports student growth and community connection.

### Andrew Lichty: Oppose

As a fourth-year biology student at SMCM, transparency between the attending students and the administration running the institution is something I highly value; secretive decision-making like this creates distrust amongst the student body of those running the college. The administration established the Shared Governance Working Group in Fall 2025 as a direct response to a call for better institutional transparency. Yet, while that group was meeting to build trust, the administration was simultaneously conducting a secret, closed-door RFP process to outsource the SMCM bookstore. This is the definition of bad faith: creating a mechanism for transparency with one hand, while dismantling the possibility of it with the other. There was no offer of input to any of the faculty, staff, or students on this matter that very clearly affects everyone at the college.

### Ariel Stevenson: Oppose

As a student I'm concerned for my fellow students with the lack of transparency about the matter of outsourcing at our campus bookstore and our campus store "the grind". As a member of the St. Mary's College community we want our voices to be heard and to feel that we are valued within this community.

### Anne Bacon: Oppose

Please consider the local student population, and how important a job while at school is for them, not only financially but socially. Please consider the impact of another big chain like Starbucks would have on the community feel at St. Mary's College, let alone the inability to leverage them on keeping prices in line and keeping wages fair. thank you

Katie Whelan: Oppose

Opposed

Kylie Leeks: Oppose

I am a former student of SMCM and look back at my time at the college with some bittersweetness. One thing that I always loved about SMCM was the campus store and staff.

Though, it seems SMCM has a great knack for gutting the parts of campus that students greatly enjoy.

SMCM has shown time and time again to the students and administrators that they're ability to handle large budgets, manage a college-wide transition, and communicate with the campus community is embarrassingly poor, especially compared to what is expected of a 4-year university.

I was forced to leave SMCM (besides the bare minimum support that exists for disabled students) because my entire program, Sum Primus, was suddenly gutted without warning to the students. Many mentors were suddenly fired, and the students were left with little to no communication from SMCM. Despite multiple repeated attempts to reach out to proper channels, all we got were shrugs. Eventually, when SMCM hired random people whom we had not spent our bonding time with, and the students were able to organize a meeting with the new leadership of their program, we were told this was all due to budgeting issues.

I paid so much money to have that program, to support me when I needed it, and they gutted it without warning, leaving me and the students to pick up the pieces of whatever we had left. Students who had to have lessons on how to contact an academic counselor were left trying to figure out how they are supposed to meet with the Dean of Students. By themselves.

If SMCM cannot do something as simple as letting students know that the program they are enrolled in is going to be gutted and restructured (without any input from the students involved) how can the community expect true transparency during this process?

It has already been reported in the Point News, the lack of transparency is already evident.

Additionally, this decision seems to be made so that B&N can bring in more revenue for SMCM, after the disaster with Anthology. From a community members perspective, it seems that the student and faculty are the collateral for SMCM's poor practices. I do not believe that the only way SMCM can make enough money is to continue to take things away from students and faculty. Or maybe it is, since nothing else is left.

They've "restructured" program after program, cut funding for clubs, cut funding for academic programs, and now they want to take away the bookstore and coffee shop.

I check in on SMCM because I care about the community, but it's decisions like these that make students like me (and many others I've met) unenroll from SMCM.

### Peekay Than: Oppose

RE: outsourcing of St. Mary's College of Maryland's (SMCM) Campus Store and Daily Grind operations to Barnes & Noble College (BNC)

Dear Maryland Board of Public Works,

I strongly oppose that St. Mary's Campus Store and Daily Grind are outsourced to Barnes and Noble. The current system is profitable and is great experience for student workers, as it was for me for almost 6 years. I gained valuable skills that I use in my current job in higher education accounting.

This change is happening behind closed doors without input and transparency to student and staff workers. As an alumnus of St. Mary's, my time at the Campus Store and Grind was made great as it was student run and independent. Many folks' livelihoods and financial security are at stake here. Please reconsider and thank you for your time.

### Alexandra Agarunov: Oppose

As a current student at St. Mary's College of Maryland, I oppose replacing the Campus Store and Daily Grind with a Barnes and Noble College. While corporate bookstore chains may be efficient, they do not reflect the character or needs of smaller college communities like ours. The Campus Store is more than a retail space; it is part of daily student life and the campus identity. A corporate-run model risks shifting it toward a standardized retail experience that prioritizes branding and profit over student-centered service, flexibility, and campus-specific needs. There are also ongoing concerns about outsourced services on campus, particularly in how visible

facilities are maintained, cleaned, and cared for. We regularly experience inconsistent upkeep in shared spaces, which raises questions about whether expanding outsourcing will truly improve quality or accountability. The Campus Store and Daily Grind are important community spaces that contribute to the College's close-knit environment. Replacing them with a national corporation could weaken that sense of identity and connection. The Campus Store and Daily Grind fought to become profitable over the years, but administrators ignored their requests and concerns. Rather than offering a helping hand to the store, their decision to outsource entirely feels like a slap to the face. I urge the Board of Public Works to oppose outsourcing these spaces and prioritize preserving student-focused services that reflect the character of the SMCM community.

### Anita Graves: Oppose

I am a former employee of the College and had the privilege of working interdepartmentally with the staff and students in both the Campus Store and the Daily Grind. I know firsthand the dedication and commitment of the management team. They have devoted years of service to SMCM, and one member of management is even an alum of the College. It is disappointing to learn that these long-term employees were not offered opportunities to remain employed by the College at their current salaries. While it has been stated that they may apply for other positions within the College, this opportunity is available to any applicant and comes with no guarantee of employment. Likewise, suggesting they apply to Barnes & Noble College simply means they can compete for jobs with a new employer, again without any assurance of being retained. The College emphasizes its commitment to employee retention and to fostering a strong campus community. However, in this situation, three dedicated, long-serving employees appear to be left without meaningful support or a path to continued employment. Towson University and East Carolina University included requirements in their bookstore contracts that Barnes & Noble College retain the existing bookstore staff. If the College is willing to create new positions or reassign employees in other departments to preserve institutional knowledge and retain valued staff, it is difficult to understand why the same consideration was not extended to the Campus Store and Daily Grind employees. These employees have served the College faithfully for years. They deserve more than the opportunity to compete for jobs; they deserve genuine consideration for continued employment at their current salaries and recognition of their longstanding contributions to the College community.

## Sarah Hill: Oppose

Please do not take away the Daily Grind and Campus bookstore from students hands. It is an essential community pillar and provides jobs for students and community members. Why would we put a privately traded company in a public school? Do not transition to B&N.

## Erin Daneker: Oppose

I am writing to express my strong opposition to an upcoming item before the Board of Public Works pertaining to St. Mary's College of Maryland (SMCM) and an outsourcing contract to Barnes and Noble College (B&N) for bookstore operations (Secretary's Agenda Item Number 37 for the July 1, 2026, meeting). I am requesting that the Board disapprove the forthcoming contract, or, at the very least, defer the item and require SMCM to engage in gaining meaningful feedback from students, faculty, staff, and alumni.

My understanding is that this procurement lacked input from students and faculty. According to the past president of the faculty senate, "The Faculty Senate inquired about this last Fall and was told that the college was just exploring options and that 'We plan to provide updates to the campus community at appropriate moments during the process.'" To my knowledge, no feedback or input was solicited from the people who would be most directly impacted by such a shift—the students, including current student employees. The RFP for this contract states, on pg. 8, that St. Mary's fosters "...a community dedicated to honesty, civility, and integrity." Yet none of the honesty or integrity outlined in the RFP was upheld on campus. I understand that procurement policies require confidentiality and strict legal compliance to uphold the integrity of the procurement process, but that is no excuse for not soliciting feedback from the student body before releasing the RFP. Not only did campus leadership fail to solicit student, faculty, and staff feedback, but the notice of the change to B&N occurred after students had left for the summer, effectively insulating the college from constructive feedback.

As an SMCM alum, I understand that colleges and universities face significant financial pressures and must continually evaluate their operations. However, this decision feels like another step toward replacing a unique campus institution with a corporate model that prioritizes standardization over community.

What is particularly frustrating is the message this decision sends. Rather than investing in and improving a campus resource that belongs to the SMCM community, or even discussing the problems surrounding the Campus Store's profitability and brainstorming potential solutions, the institution has chosen to outsource responsibility to an outside company whose primary obligation is to its shareholders. While the financial rationale may appear compelling on paper, I question whether the long-term costs to campus culture, student experience, and alumni

engagement were given equal consideration. Although many SMCM contracts that come before the Board likely do not need input from the campus community, one that has the potential to negatively transform the campus environment, such as this one, deserves intentional and meaningful input and feedback.

I recognize that SMCM leadership likely moved forward with this contract after their own careful deliberation. Nevertheless, I urge the Board to request transparency regarding the factors that drove this decision, the alternatives considered, and the safeguards that will be in place to ensure that students are not subjected to higher costs, reduced services, or a diminished campus experience.

Aynslee Laird: Oppose

N/A.

Sophie Dingman: Oppose

The way they went about this outsourcing is incredibly shady, keeping employees mostly in the dark. And realistically, how successful would a big corporation be at a small liberal art's college? Corps off our coffee!

Skye Bowman: Oppose

This item blatantly disregards SMCM's community values. The lack of information available to students, staff, and other employees (especially regarding employment status when entering the new school year) is incredibly concerning, and going through with this decision without the input of the community should not be tolerated. Students do not wish to have their beloved student-run bookstore and coffee shop outsourced to a corporation that does not have an interpersonal connection with the community. Until President Rhonda Phillips and her administration find a way to properly incorporate student opinions and promote transparency regarding decisions such as these, I firmly believe this item should be denied. Thank you.

Emily Freese: Oppose

I am writing this in opposition to Barnes & Noble taking over the St. Mary's College of Southern Maryland Bookstore and the Grind. Due to the lack of transparency and governance provided to

students—especially to the student workers who rely on jobs at the Grind and Bookstore to maintain an income and support their college education—I am firmly opposed to this change.

In addition, one of St. Mary's many slogans is to "Keep St. Mary's weird," and the addition of a large corporate company to our unique college would go against this very phrase, making St. Mary's more of a cookie-cutter institution.

Although I am only entering my second year at St. Mary's, I have grown very fond of the Grind and of seeing so many people come and go. The themed drinks, the punch cards, and the endless options have made it a place I consider home—a space where I can sit down, work, and study while enjoying a drink made by one of my peers.

As student job security has come into question, I fear the loss of these simple, everyday interactions that have helped me grow into being a St. Mary's Seahawk. I strongly urge a reconsideration of this shift in management in order to uphold one of the most important values of St. Mary's—one that I believe the college depends on to foster expression, individuality, and a safe space for everyone: "Keep St. Mary's weird." Do not let it become a cookie-cutter college that so many students and staff have worked to avoid.

### Samantha Cooper: Oppose

As a senior in college, I have had so many late days running just off of Grind coffee. I have bought fun little things from the bookstore to keep me going. They were all equally as inexpensive for the student body which gave me a little win nearing the end of a long day. I enjoyed running into the bookstore to look at the art products that they had (that were cheaper than stuff from main hobby stores when you include gas money) and I would get inspired. It is so hard to get inspired when everything constantly feels sad and depressing. The world I am working so hard for is slowly disintegrating before my eyes. I am an environmental studies student, I may not have a job by the time I get out of school in the next year. And I got happy looking and cheap oil pastels.

It is honestly so difficult to deal with that the college has decided to do this after already contributing to several other hardships the student body must endure. Parking fees are higher, getting into contact with Public Safety is hard when you email (because why would I call when it comes to a parking ticket and take up the line if someone needs help?), half of the handicap buttons on doors don't work, I pay an arm and a leg to go to college here and the food gives me food poisoning at least twice a month, and yet we get rid of the one thing that actually sparks joy??? Maybe we should worry about any of the other things listed here. As a disabled student, it is so important that the college gets on top of prioritizing the accessibility of buildings. Not just boilerplate things like, oh yeah there is a bathroom on the first floor and all the things that

are upstairs are also on the first floor so we don't need an elevator (which is how PG housing works), you need to prioritize accessibility in terms of able bodied vs non able bodied. If someone is disabled, they should have a way to get to the same place with minimal to no extra effort than someone who is able bodied. I will further write to the President on this matter and the other people who need to know about this to get this to at least be a topic of discussion. At least fix the buttons guys, jeez its not that hard its some basic wiring. If I could do it myself I would.

All of that being said, taking away one of the staples, a highlight of so many peoples days, a keystone for friendships, is truly heartbreaking and rather callous of you. Honestly, I am sure the college can afford to keep the Grind and the Bookstore here if they swap around funds and properly reallocate funds. Obviously it might be more complicated than that, if that is the case, state so! You can keep writing some vague emails saying its financial and its better long term financially, but if you don't have specifics, we dont believe you. We are college students after all. We need evidence. Sell us on why we should keep paying a ridiculous tuition when we still have to pay for some Starbucks coffee that is going to cost \$7 a cup of coffee and a paperback, 100 page, book that is gonna cost \$170. It is honestly kind of insulting when the college seems so money hungry and won't even give us a simple, PowerPoint made graph on why. Do better.

### Audrey Wilkerson: Oppose

I am a current student at St. Mary's College of Maryland, as well as a current worker at the Campus Store/Daily Grind. I heavily oppose the outsourcing of the campus store as I feel it will negatively affect the school. Many other small liberal arts institutions have tried to outsource their bookstore, and have had it fail due to disorganization and public dissatisfaction. I think this decision should be reevaluated for the betterment of the college and the community. Additionally I think there should be more transparency especially within the students workers, as the job is our livelihood and some of us it's how we afford to go to college.

### Gwenllyn Mackey: Oppose

I am writing in opposition to the proposed transition of our college-run bookstore and Grind to Barnes & Noble management. This change raises several concerns regarding affordability, student autonomy, and the preservation of the unique character of our campus space.

First, I am deeply concerned about the likelihood of increased prices under a corporate retailer. Barnes & Noble is known for standard pricing structures that may not reflect the financial realities of college students. Many students already rely on more affordable alternatives, such

as purchasing textbooks through online retailers like Amazon. If prices are raised, it is likely that students will simply buy elsewhere, ultimately harming both accessibility and sales within the campus store.

Additionally, there is a lack of clarity about what aspects of the store will be affected by this transition. Will Barnes & Noble take over the entire space, including the Grind and other student-centered areas? If so, will the store be redesigned to match a typical corporate Barnes & Noble aesthetic? The current space reflects student creativity and campus culture, including the display and sale of student-made art for example, on the Grind signs. This atmosphere is an important part of our campus identity, and it is unclear whether it will be preserved or replaced.

I am also concerned about the future of student-created and campus-specific merchandise, such as “Meatball” merch and other items that reflect our community. Under a corporate structure, will these items still be allowed, or will they be subject to stricter approval processes that limit student expression and participation?

Overall, this transition risks prioritizing corporate uniformity over student needs, affordability, and campus culture. I urge decision-makers to consider the potential negative impacts on students both financially and creatively before moving forward with this change.

### Sophia Stone: Oppose

The Daily Grind and Campus Bookstore are cornerstones of the St. Mary’s College community. As a student, I would hate to see it outsourced and lose the genuineness that is brought from being student run. The Daily Grind and Campus Bookstore is a service for students, and it should be run by students. Profit margins are not as important as campus culture, because if there is not a strong campus culture—which the Daily Grind and Campus Bookstore provides—then a college is less appealing. I myself committed to St. Mary’s in part due to the close knit campus, and the Daily Grind especially is a crucial part of that. Student enrollment is more economically valuable than the extra cash gained from outsourcing the beating heart of the college.

### Tina Zeller: Oppose

As a St. Mary’s parent( Natalie class of 2029) I firmly oppose outsourcing the Campus bookstore to Barnes and Noble as well as closing The Daily Grind. Doing so would impact on campus jobs for many students and also remove beloved unique community spaces on the SMCM campus cultivated by SMCM. Please reconsider and listen to the students, faculty and SMCM community.

Kind regards,

Tina H. Zeller

Towson, MD

Parent of Natalie Zeller, class of 2029

### Joyce McMahon: Oppose

Hello, I am writing as the parent of a 2026 SMCM graduate, to oppose the proposal to sell the two campus small businesses, the Daily Grind coffee shop and the Campus Store.

These two small businesses are owned by Richard Wagner, and they've been part of the school community for literally decades.

My daughter, who was the speaking valedictorian of her class, worked at the Daily Grind for all 3 years she attended SMCM.

She let me know the student body strongly opposes the sale of these businesses.

The SMCM Board met to reach their decision on May 15th, with Commencement the next day. This gives an appearance of the board avoiding the student body reaction, by presenting their decision after students were dismissed for the year.

Given how strongly opposed the student body is to this sale, I suggest that the SMCM board at the very least delay a sale for a year for better understanding of the issues.

I believe the SMCM has undercut the success of the Campus Store by allowing athletic equipment to be sourced through an online competitor, as well as other school supplies.

Your alumni are your chief asset. I would ask that you show by your actions that you value their feedback in this area.

### Presley Pickeral: Oppose

I'm a recent SMCM graduate and a former student employee of the Campus Store and Daily Grind. During my time at the Daily Grind, I worked alongside other student employees and our manager to completely redevelop our Drink-of-the-Month program and create the Astrolatte menu. These drinks were designed specifically with the student body in mind and became highly successful in increasing business and student engagement. I also helped develop the sparkler menu over the summer, featuring drinks named after SMCM icons. These initiatives are

just a few examples of the creativity, dedication, and student-driven innovation that have made the Daily Grind such a unique and successful part of campus life.

One of the greatest concerns surrounding the outsourcing of the Campus Store and Daily Grind is its impact on student employment. The Campus Store employs 30–35 students, making it one of the largest student employers on campus. While the College has stated that student employment opportunities will continue under Barnes and Noble College, there has been no guarantee that current student positions will be retained. This uncertainty is troubling, given the important role these positions play in supporting students. The Campus Store and Daily Grind offer flexible employment opportunities that allow students to balance work with academic and extracurricular activities. For many students, these jobs are not simply a convenience but a critical source of income used to pay for tuition, housing, books, and daily living expenses. By failing to provide timely information or a clear transition plan, the administration has left student employees in an unacceptable state of uncertainty at a time when they should be preparing for the upcoming academic year. They have not been transparent during any step of this process. It is especially disheartening to see the College leave dedicated student workers and longtime employees without answers about their future, despite the significant contributions they have made to the success of these operations. The College claims to foster a sense of social responsibility and community among its students through curriculum and campus life. I disagree with this statement, considering the College made decisions behind closed doors and ignored student voices.

### Mia Cary: Oppose

The President stated in a June 26, 2026 email to the campus community that this proposal underwent a "comprehensive review" by multiple Board committees. If that is accurate, I have one straightforward question for this Board: Where are the public agendas and minutes for those committee meetings?

### Ryan Knight: Oppose

I am a 2025 SMCM graduate and former student employee of the Campus Store and Daily Grind. Barnes & Noble College's projected revenue should be compared to what the Campus Store and Daily Grind are expected to generate this year. What specific changes will Barnes & Noble College make that the Campus Store could not? For Barnes and Noble College to profit, they will outsource textbooks and push their "First Day Complete" program. It's worth noting that the Campus Store proposed outsourcing its textbook operation years ago to reduce costs and improve revenue, but that proposal was not pursued. Why was that proposal ignored?

From my perspective and having worked elsewhere on campus, the lack of communication and support between the administration and campus departments is concerning. Departments are expected to solve complex challenges with limited support, and their concerns often appear to go unheard. At the same time, many in the community see continued administrative salary increases, raising legitimate questions about the College's priorities and whether resources are being directed where they are needed most. The College has yet to show that it made every reasonable effort to support the Campus Store and Daily Grind before deciding to outsource them. It seems that they did not consider how to balance current students' needs with the College's future and expansion. Instead they prioritized the growth and modernization of the school even when it hurt current students, like the absence of support for the DeSousa Brent Scholars program.

### Marjorie Murphy: Oppose

A few months ago, my daughter and I ended our tour of the beautiful St. Mary's campus with a trip to the Daily Grind and the campus bookstore. It's just the cutest place, especially compared to the massive bookstore where my son goes to school, which feels completely generic and greedy. No one greets you or helps you, they almost seem annoyed by you, but the second we walked into the St. Mary's bookstore, the staff was so friendly and welcoming that it felt surreal in the best way possible. They even gave us a coupon for a free smoothie because my daughter officially decided to attend St. Mary's! That decision was based on how amazing this visit was - from the campus and the waterfront to the bookstore itself. She even got her picture taken for their Instagram page, which made her feel special and like this was the place for her. You simply do not get that kind of personal touch at a corporate chain like Barnes & Noble, where you are just another face in the crowd. The campus bookstore, the Daily Grind, and the people who work there are a huge part of the magic that makes St. Mary's what it is. It would be really sad and disheartening to ruin that unique vibe for corporate greed or some other agenda. Once you bring in a giant like Barnes & Noble, what gets taken away or replaced next? I urge the committee to protect the beautiful, small-town feel of this campus and keep our bookstore local.

### Luca Fairbank: Oppose

I chose Saint Mary's for its charm and uniqueness. Students do an excellent job running the daily grind, please do not replace it with a characterless chain supplier.

### Pamela Brookbank: Oppose

Please keep it local at St Mary's College of MD. There are enough big corporate stores and coffee shops elsewhere. Please keep the rural small town feel at St Mary's. It is the reason I attended over 35 years ago and part of the reason I stayed in St Mary's county.

### Paul Shreyer: Oppose

I am an alum and owner of a small business and I am asking this Board to delay approval of this contract due to two major financial red flags.

First, St. Mary's has provided no baseline data for current bookstore operations. They are asking you to approve a five-year contract based on financial projections, yet they have failed to provide the bookstore's actual, verified sales for the most recent year. Without this data, the Board cannot verify if these projections are realistic or simply inflated to win this bid.

Second, Barnes & Noble's sales projection is 35% higher than the projection submitted by their only competitor for this RFP, Follett. This is an extreme financial outlier. How does B&N plan to achieve these sales? If they are not projecting a corresponding increase in student enrollment or product volume, this contract is likely predicated on extracting significantly more revenue from students than they currently pay.

St. Mary's should explain how these targets will be reached and provide the baseline data to prove they are grounded in reality.