

THE NORTHEAST CONSORTIUM

A Consortium of the Blake, Paint Branch and Springbrook Clusters

Comments on the FY 2012 Capital Budget and the FY 2011-2016
Capital Improvements Program

**On behalf of The NEC Middle Schools
November 11, 2010**

**Benjamin Banneker
Briggs Chaney
William H. Farquhar
Francis Scott Key
White Oak**

Good Evening Superintendent Weast, President O'Neill and members of the Board.

My name is Reva Gambrell. I am the Springbrook Cluster Coordinator and I will be speaking on behalf of the five middle schools of the Northeast Consortium (NEC): Benjamin Banneker, Briggs Chaney, William H. Farquhar, Francis Scott Key, and White Oak.

Tonight I am representing a "commonality of purpose" for the NEC Middle School community. Our common purpose is to advocate for the best possible learning environment for all of our children. An important component to an effective learning environment is the physical location where the learning takes place.

In the NEC there have been several improvements to our learning environments:

- **Francis Scott Key** – At Francis Scott Key the community recently welcomed the completion of a beautiful new school. We thank you for the completion of this middle school.

- **Benjamin Banneker MS** – At Benjamin Banneker a building modification was made to support their Learning for Independence (LFI) program.
- **White Oak MS** – At White Oak a building modification was made to support their art program (FAC lab conversion into an art room).

We are grateful for this support. However, there is still more work to be done.

The most immediate concerns ring with a **theme of commonality: recurring physical location maintenance issues and safety.**

Under the Restroom and Heating/Ventilation/Air Conditioning category
Restrooms and HVAC

- **Briggs Chaney** – At **Briggs Chaney** the **HVAC** is difficult to maintain and to regulate. This has been an issue for the past 10 years. The school requests repairs to ensure their school has an environment conducive to teaching and learning. Their **bathrooms** have a ventilation issue. The boy's restrooms have recurring plumbing backups. Students frequently note the bathroom issues as a problem in the school climate survey.

Under the Security and Safety category

Security and Safety

- **Briggs Chaney** – At **Briggs Chaney** there is a need for **outside security cameras**. There have been a few incidents of graffiti vandalism for which police reports were filed and cases remain open.
- **William Farquhar** - At William Farquhar the school community continues to ask that **traffic concerns** be addressed at Batchellors Forest Road. There is also a lighting issue at the school. Upgraded lighting is requested as replacement parts are unavailable. As a result of the lighting

issues safety and effectiveness of the learning environment is compromised.

The final comments that I would like to make are:

1. The Northeast Consortium fully supports the MCCPTA Resolution on the FY 2012 CIP Budget and Amendments to the FY 2011-16 CIP and MCCPTA Resolution on the Restroom Renovation Project in the FY 2011-2016 Capital Improvement Program; and
2. The Northeast Consortium fully supports the recommendations to the Modernization Policy (Policy FKB) put forth by MCCPTA. The revisions to the policy, if accepted, will create a path forward for addressing the aforementioned restroom, heating/air conditioning /ventilation (HVAC), security and safety issues in a more timely manner.

A revised policy will help guide the shift to a more sustained method of building system maintenance and replacement. While this shift will not eliminate the need to ultimately modernize schools, it will enable all schools to be in good condition.

MCCPTA recommendations:

- The recommendations put forth by the MCCPTA addresses strengthening the policy to include meaningful goals to guide MCPS's activities. The revised policy should identify the specific targets for maintaining schools in good working condition. Further, the policy should establish criteria for determining when modernization, as opposed to systemic maintenance, would be appropriate.

- With regard to systemic maintenance, the policy should identify the major system components that will be replaced and should identify a target useful life for replacement of the assets. (Similar to what MCPS does today with respect to school computers).
- With regard to modernization, the policy should establish general standards for when modernization is preferred for a school.
- The Board's current CIP priorities should be rescinded or revised to be consistent with the new renewal and modernization policy.

In closing, I would like to reiterate our appreciation for the work completed in the NEC community. We look forward to the continued progress to be made.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on behalf of the NEC Middle Schools.

Respectfully,

The Northeast Consortium Cluster Coordinators

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