

Seneca Valley Cluster

Testimony before the Board of Education on the Superintendent's Recommended FY 2012 Capital Budget and Amendments to the FY 2011-2016 Capital Improvements Program

The Seneca Valley Cluster, in Germantown, is comprised of Seneca Valley High School, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle School, Roberto Clemente Middle School, Lake Seneca Elementary School, S. Christa McAuliffe Elementary School, Dr. Sally K. Ride Elementary School and Waters Landing Elementary School.

When the Superintendent's Recommended FY 2012 Capital Budget and Amendments to the FY 2011-2016 Capital Improvements Program was released in October we were pleased to see that funding for the Seneca Valley High School Modernization was still planned, that the Waters Landing Elementary School Addition was back and we were surprised to see a request for funding for facility planning for an addition at S. Christa McAuliffe Elementary School. These are all very needed and appreciated plans for our cluster.

The main issues that concern the Seneca Valley Cluster are still the “modernization of Seneca Valley High School” the “overcrowding at our elementary schools”, and the “safety and well being of our schools and students”.

So just how does the Amendments to the MCPS FY 2011-2016 CIP align itself with the concerns of the Seneca Valley Cluster?

Modernization of Seneca Valley High School

We are sure that many of you are aware that the main problems with Seneca Valley High School continue to be lead in the water, asbestos in the ceilings and floors and the layout of the classrooms. Since the school was designed as an open school, the A/C duct work was not designed for small contained classrooms, but was designed for large open spaces. To fix these problems Seneca Valley needs to be rebuilt from the ground up and the old school torn down.

Academically all of our students, not just the IB and academy students, are at a disadvantage to the other high schools in the Germantown area as our technology and science labs throughout the building lag far behind due to the “projected modernization”. This limits the programming available to our students and there does not appear to be a logical fix - as no significant improvements will be made with a modernization on the books. Every year this modernization is delayed, there are more and more students who are denied access to better equipment and programming to prepare them for the future.

We are pleased to see the continued request for Modernization funds in this amendment year, but we also recognize the stark reality of the economic situation facing the county and the harsh reality of having one of our projects denied funding last year. PTSA members throughout the

Seneca Valley cluster — from our elementary schools on up through our middle schools — are watching the capital improvement process with great interest, hoping to see that Seneca Valley's modernization remains on schedule

Overcrowding at our Elementary Schools

Two of our four elementary schools are severely overcrowded, and the other two are operating slightly above capacity. All four of our elementary schools are focus schools and this puts a premium on classroom space. Waters Landing is 141 students over capacity and is projected to increase by 30% over the next three years. S. Christa McAuliffe is 96 students over capacity and is projected to increase by 68% over the next three years. Sally K. Ride and Lake Seneca are expected to remain at 108% capacity over the same time period. Overall the four elementary schools in the cluster are operating at 114% utilization with a projected 8% increase over the next three years. Last year to address these issues MCPS recommended an 11 room addition to Waters Landing and was planning on building a future Seneca Valley Cluster elementary school at Waring Station, thus splitting some students off from S. Christa McAuliffe.

However that was last year. When the final master plan was released for the FY 2011-2016 CIP in June, the Waters Landings Addition was denied funding and pushed back a year.

We now see that amendment funds are being requested for Facility Planning for an addition at S. Christa McAuliffe which can only mean something has happened to the future Waring Station Elementary School that was proposed to alleviate the overcrowding at McAuliffe.

Safety and well being of our Students and Schools

Safety is always a concern at our schools and we are please to see that all of our cluster schools now have some form of visitor control. Be it computerized sign in programs or front door camera/buzzer systems.

The well being of our students and staff has been a recurring theme during our cluster meetings this fall. During these meetings principals at three of our elementary schools report dozens of HVAC work orders that remain open and unanswered. Seneca Valley High School and Waters Landing Elementary School continue to struggle with thermostats and controllers; Roberto Clemente Middles School continues to have issues with their chiller. However the problem is trying to understand just what projects fall under the MCPS HVAC CIP and which projects fall under maintenance.

We still have hope

It is a bit difficult to have hope during this economic downturn and after having one of our much needed projects denied funding last year and the fear that the Seneca Valley High School Modernization will be pushed back again, but we do. We have hope that this Superintendent's Recommended FY 2012 Capital Budget and Amendments to the FY 2011-2016 Capital Improvements Program will be fully funded so that the Seneca Valley Cluster is not disappointed yet again with denied approvals and delayed improvements that our students sorely need.

Clearly in the Seneca Valley High School cluster we recognize the importance of both new seats and modernization and ask that planning no longer balance one against the other but rather find a way to meet the needs of both groups.

SENECA VALLEY CLUSTER

2012 CIP

Projected Enrollment and Space Availability

Effects of the Recommended Amendments to the FY2011–2016 CIP and Non-CIP Actions on Space Available

Schools		Actual 10-11	Projections							
			11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	2020	2025
Seneca Valley HS	Program Capacity	1311	1311	1311	1311	1311	1311	1311	1311	1311
	Enrollment	1325	1347	1379	1387	1415	1404	1427	1500	1500
	Available Space	(14)	(36)	(68)	(76)	(104)	(93)	(116)	(189)	(189)
	Comments		Facility Planning for Mod	Planning for Modernization	Modernization in Progress	Mod Complete				
Roberto Clemente MS	Program Capacity	1193	1193	1193	1193	1193	1193	1193	1193	1193
	Enrollment	1140	1131	1151	1141	1159	1175	1204	1250	1250
	Available Space	53	62	42	52	34	18	(11)	(57)	(57)
	Comments	-1 SCB -1 LFI +1 LAD								
Martin Luther King, Jr. MS	Program Capacity	888	888	888	888	888	888	888	888	888
	Enrollment	601	613	604	637	639	666	668	700	700
	Available Space	287	275	284	251	249	222	220	188	188
	Comments									
Lake Seneca ES	Program Capacity	417	417	417	417	417	417	417		
	Enrollment	392	417	437	450	461	475	474		
	Available Space	25	0	(20)	(33)	(44)	(58)	(57)		
	Comments									
S. Christa McAuliffe ES	Program Capacity	495	495	495	495	495	495	495		
	Enrollment	591	609	629	656	643	648	637		
	Available Space	(96)	(114)	(134)	(161)	(148)	(153)	(142)		
	Comments		Facility Planning for Addition							
Dr. Sally K. Ride ES	Program Capacity	491	491	491	491	491	491	491		
	Enrollment	539	542	533	527	524	507	517		
	Available Space	(48)	(51)	(42)	(36)	(33)	(16)	(26)		
	Comments									
Waters Landing ES	Program Capacity	488	488	488	488	736	736	736		
	Enrollment	629	662	677	670	681	686	674		
	Available Space	(141)	(174)	(189)	(182)	55	50	62		
	Comments		Planning for Addition			Addition Complete				
Cluster Information	HS Utilization	101%	103%	105%	106%	108%	107%	109%	114%	114%
	HS Enrollment	1325	1347	1379	1387	1415	1404	1427	1500	1500
	MS Utilization	84%	84%	84%	85%	86%	88%	90%	94%	94%
	MS Enrollment	1741	1744	1755	1778	1798	1841	1872	1950	1950
	ES Enrollment	2151	2230	2276	2303	2309	2316	2302	2300	2300