

Recommended FY 2012 Capital Budget and Amendments to the FY 2011-2016  
Capital Improvements Program

CIP Testimony on behalf of Sherwood Cluster

My name is Virginia Twombly and I am one of the cluster coordinators for the Sherwood Cluster. Thank you so much for allowing us the opportunity to comment on the amendments and recommendations for the capital improvements program. We are grateful and appreciative of the beautiful new addition at Sherwood Elementary School. It is lovely asset that enriches the entire community. We are also excited about the modernization of Farquhar Middle School which is currently in the planning stage and remain hopeful that there will not be any delays to this critically needed improvement. The approval for restroom modernization at Sherwood High School and Rosa Parks Middle School scheduled for 2013-2014 is an important step to maintaining the high quality environment that our students expect and deserve.

The Sherwood Cluster is hopeful that there will be adequate funding in this next program to allow for updates or modernization to the HVAC systems at Sherwood Elementary School and Belmont Elementary School. As you know both schools were originally designed with an inefficient, costly, antiquated "open space" concept. Reconfiguring the classroom space to maximize student learning has occurred over the years without addressing the HVAC systems. The HVAC system at Belmont is 38 years old and the maintenance and repair costs are prohibitive as well as often inadequate – leaving staff and students to deal with wide variations in temperatures depending on which room they are in and the system to absorb exorbitant electric bills for the two schools.

Rosa Parks Middle School remains concerned about the increased incidents of vandalism and crime in the neighborhood and are exploring ways to fund the outdoor cameras that would greatly enhance the school's ability to ensure student safety.

The last point that we'd like to stress is the continued concerns for student safety along Rte. 108 near Sherwood High School. The High School has been pleading with Montgomery County to install sidewalks along rte 108 and a crosswalk at the exit to the school to address the reality of student behavior before and after school. Every day dozens, perhaps hundreds, of students walk to and from the shopping center located an eighth of a mile from the school – both before and after school. Students cross Rte 108. There is no crosswalk to signal drivers of a pedestrian crossing and students feel free to cross traffic randomly. Particularly in the morning hours when darkness adds additional hazards, student safety is at significant risk. This is not an MCPS problem however, your advocacy with the County Council would be appreciated.

