

THE NORTHEAST CONSORTIUM

A Consortium of the Blake, Paint Branch and Springbrook Clusters

Comments on the FY 2009 Capital Budget and Amendments to the FY 2009-14 Capital Improvements Program (CIP)

The NEC Elementary School Needs

Feb 10, 2009

Broad Acres, Burnt Mills, Burtonsville, Cannon Road, Cloverly,
Cresthaven, Dr. Charles Drew, Fairland, Galway, Greencastle,
Jackson Road, Roscoe Nix, William T. Page, Sherwood, Stonegate, Westover

Written testimony given by Dawn Dolan, one of the Blake Cluster Coordinators, on behalf of the CIP needs of our 16 elementary schools.

The NEC is grateful for the recognition of our community's unique needs —and for the effort to maintain the project path for our schools within a restrictive fiscal environment. The modernization of Galway ES is complete and Key MS is almost complete, and the ribbon cutting for the Cloverly Gym occurred with great fanfare. Cresthaven ES has recently moved into the holding facility while it's modernization gets underway. The balance of the funding needs to be approved for this project to finish on time.

The fiscal crises we are now facing can most certainly have a severe impact on our schools. We believe our 16 schools specifically characterize the Capacity & Safety Criteria of an off-budget year. Equally, they are models of the Objectives outlined for Facility Planning — especially in the areas of early education, reduced class size, and special education programming. *We cannot afford to fall behind!*

The NEC serves 7,633 elementary age students — 2nd only to the DCC — and currently 11 of our 16 schools are overcapacity (*882 additional students* based on the published CIP book). 7 of our 16 elementary schools built between 1952 and 1988 have never been modernized. The elementaries have 32 portables. The NEC has a vital stake in this year's CIP.

Only **Cannon Road** (107 overcapacity) is on the Approved Modernization Schedule (2012). Of the 3 schools Recommended for Additions, **Fairland** (208 overcapacity) and **Jackson Road** (201 overcapacity) are delayed one year, though we thank you for the inclusion of additional classrooms. This leaves only **Sherwood Elementary** (95 overcapacity) on the Recommended Schedule for 2010, but without any consideration for their request for modernization. Please see attachment from the Sherwood ES PTA.

The delay of these projects is a cause for much anxiety in the NEC, given the example of our urgent need for Paint Branch's modernization. Will these delays only serve to further backlog the High School Schedule? *The NEC cannot afford to fall behind!*

Projected enrollment shows a continued increase in our highly diverse community and the service needs of the NEC continue to grow. Our elementaries have the 4th highest FARMS, 3rd highest mobility and 6th highest ESOL rates amongst the MCPS Clusters.

In addition, 11 of our elementaries are part of the Reduced Class Size Initiative (CSR), with 147 classes impacted; we have increased from 2 to 4 Linkages to Learning (including school-based health center); and there are 39 separate classes of Special Ed programming, 10 classes of PreK/HS, and 2 classes of METS. The positive relationship between successful programming and appropriate & safe facilities is established. *We cannot afford to fall behind!*

We ask that you consider the addition of 4 more schools to the modernization schedule. Sherwood is 31-years-old and Stonegate, 37. Broad Acres & Burnt Mills, while partially modified, have been subject to age and/or overuse.

Broad Acres, built in 1952, received additional classrooms and a reconfigured admin area, but has never been fully modernized. Burnt Mills' facility, while modernized in 1990, was subject to years of overcrowding (prior to the opening of Roscoe Nix).

Burtonsville, Cloverly, Drew, Page, Greencastle and Stonegate need to be watched for rising enrollments. The reduction in portables has added further pressure to accommodate the students.

Thank you for the Tech Mod projects for Cannon Road, Cresthaven, Galway, and Westover. Further needed projects noted by our schools include:

- Fairland continues to request additional lighting in its parking lot for safety, *especially near the handicapped area*;
- Roscoe Nix is worried about the safe access of students arriving and departing and asks that the sidewalks and bus area be reconfigured;
- new and safer playground equipment at Burnt Mills, along with a retaining wall around the play area.

We respectfully request that all planned projects receive their full appropriations and that a common sense approach to long-term planning be followed for our wonderful elementary schools. *Our Children Cannot Afford to Fall Behind!*

Thank you.

Respectfully,

The Northeast Consortium Cluster Coordinators

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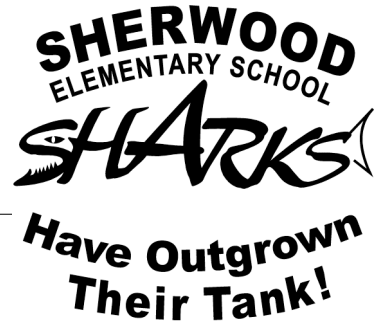
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**Testimony Supporting an Addition to Sherwood ES
Presented to the Montgomery County Council
FY09-14 Capital Improvements Program Amendments Public Hearing
February 10, 2009**

The Sherwood Elementary School PTA urges the Montgomery County Council to approve construction money to build the planned school addition, slated to begin this spring. Sherwood Elementary School is the only MCPS proposed elementary school addition project in the construction queue ready to break ground within the next 3 months. We respectfully ask that the construction funding be appropriated in this amendment year of the Capital Improvements Program.

Sherwood Elementary students have been in portable classrooms for over a decade, since the early 1990's. The entire Sandy Spring community has been transformed from rural village to residential haven, and the overcrowding at Sherwood Elementary is proof of it. The school continues to have actual student enrollment figures that exceed the MCPS projections year after year. Sherwood parents and staff look forward to the day when teachers can hold classes in classrooms, not closets.

Sherwood Elementary is in line to receive a technology modernization as part of the countywide upgrades to the school system. The staff and school community suggest coordinating the installation of the technology equipment throughout the school with the installation of equipment slated for the addition. This may result in an efficient work plan for technology staff, as well as minimizing disruption to the learning environment.

Additionally, we respectfully requests that the current schedule for restroom renovations at Sherwood Elementary be maintained. Sherwood Elementary has been on the restroom renovation schedule since 2003 and renovations are due to be implemented in FY 2010.

Sherwood Elementary parents, administrators, students and staff join together in urging the County Council to approve this much needed school expansion. We appreciate the many opportunities we have had to discuss this matter with the Council and the Board of Education over the past five years. We ask the Council to maintain the current schedule for completion of the Sherwood Elementary addition by August, 2010. Thank you for your concern of the Sherwood Elementary addition.