



The Montgomery County Council of Parent-Teacher Associations

**MCCPTA Testimony Before the Montgomery County Council  
FY 2010 Capital Budget and  
Amendments to the FY 2009-2014 Capital Improvements Program  
February 10, 2009**

Good evening, President Andrews and Members of the County Council. I am Kay Romero, President of the Montgomery County Council of PTAs. On behalf of our more than 50,000 members, I want to thank you for the opportunity to testify before you this evening.

Tonight you will hear from our clusters throughout the county. They will describe a continued need for adequate school facilities, as well as the state of their current school facilities.

We continue to support all efforts to ensure that Montgomery County obtains from the State of Maryland its fair share of funding for school construction. Maryland schools, and MCPS schools in particular, have earned a nationwide reputation as among the best quality public education available. We urge you to remember that excellence in learning requires excellent learning facilities.

We are pleased that the Recommendation increases the HVAC repair item by \$4.4 million in 2010. County-wide programs such as these have been very successful in the past and can, over the long term, lessen the need for extensive renovations or modernizations as our newer facilities age. MCCPTA supports the expansion of existing programs and the development of new systemic replacement programs.

Cluster comments the past few years suggest the following areas of need for new or expanded county-wide programs: (1) HVAC upgrades, (2) renewal of the restroom renovation program after FY 2010, (3) security cameras/security upgrades, (4) roof replacements and (5) climate control in gymnasium facilities. We would like to have an open discussion of these projects in the time between now and the development of a new six-year CIP next fiscal year. We are pleased to see that the Recommendation does not delay any additions and modernizations due to budgetary concerns.

For several years, we have asked the MCPS and the County Council to work with us to address long range capital needs. The failure to make meaningful progress with a CIP task force has been disappointing. We need to both modernize and maintain in a smarter, faster and cost effective way.

For years, MCPS has struggled to keep up with repairs and little room for preventive maintenance. If MCPS wants its buildings to last longer, plans must be made to maintain them better. Maintenance is not considered until the Operating Budget. This makes it difficult to evaluate the adequacy of either the capital budget or the level of maintenance needed to support the CIP. For example, when new schools or additional capacity are added, do we need to increase the maintenance capacity as well? How much, and where? We urge the Council to obtain additional information of the burden that the Recommendation will place on maintenance capabilities.

As you confront the difficult task of setting priorities in a very tight budget year, we urge you not to compromise on our goal. Every child in the system deserves a safe, secure and modern classroom that enables him or her to achieve the high standards that we set.

Thank you.

Kay Romero  
Montgomery County Council of PTAs