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Testimony to the Board of Education
for the Churchill Cluster
Proposed MCPS Operating Budget FY 2012
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I am Geri Shapiro, PTSA President at Winston Churchill HS, and MCPS parent for over 16 years. I am here representing over 6,600 students that learn in the Churchill Cluster. Thank you for providing an opportunity to hear from the families affected by the budget. While we are fully aware that funds are tight, we respectfully ask that all efforts be made to maintain the quality of education our families, and families across the County, have depended on. We have sacrificed so many teaching positions, have compromised our course selection, have sustained class sizes that continue to exceed the capacity of both our rooms and our staff, and have had to eliminate or drastically reduce special learning and specialty programs that so benefit our kids.

In addition, the condition of our buildings needs to be maintained to provide a safe learning environment. Repairs must be made properly and on time. Lighting must be repaired or replaced without delay. Temperature control is essential for our students and staff to be able to teach and to learn. One of our elementary Schools has indicated a rodent problem that has not been eradicated by MCPS. How can we provide a quality education in a substandard environment? If this a funding issue, what takes priority?

Please let our students and our staff use the resources to maximize the education experience for our students; please see what re-directing of funds can permit our continuation of learning academies at our high school, permit teaching of more specialties at our middle and elementary schools, help support activities after the school day, and do not continue to compromise the safe environment for learning.

We have now seen that so many of the learning opportunities are being closed down, at the expense of so many. If we do not offer an enriched education, so many of our students, and their teachers, will not become involved in their learning. Please, if funding needs to be suspended for some administrative functions, if new curricula or expensive initiatives must be postponed, please do not continue to erode the learning environment. Please support our children, our classroom teachers, our programs now.