

## **Seneca Valley Cluster**

### **Testimony before the Board of Education on the Superintendent's Recommended FY 2013 Capital Budget and the FY 2013-2018 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 2013 Capital Budget and the FY 2013-2018 Capital Improvements Program was released in October we were very disappointed to see that funding for the Seneca Valley High School Modernization was again delayed. This setback dampened the cluster's enthusiasm over the planned Waters Landing Elementary School addition and proposed funding for facility planning for an addition at S. Christa McAuliffe Elementary School.

#### **Capacity Issues**

All four elementary schools are above capacity, two of them severely overcrowded. All four of our elementary schools are focus schools, which puts a premium on classroom space. Waters Landing is 179 students over-capacity and its enrollment is projected to increase by 15% over the next three years. S. Christa McAuliffe is 125 students over-capacity and its enrollment is projected to increase by 50% during the same period. Lake Seneca is overcrowded with three portables added in the past two years and its projected enrollment is expected to increase by 25% over the life of the CIP. Sally K. Ride is expected to operate at 108% of capacity during the same period. Overall, the four elementary schools in the cluster are operating at 118% utilization with a projected 8% increase over the next three years.

#### **Modernization**

Seneca Valley needs to be rebuilt from the ground up and the old school torn down. As 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 dated layout of the classrooms. Since the school was designed as an open school, the A/C duct work was not designed for smaller, contained classrooms, but rather for large open spaces.

Walk around the school and you will find drinking fountains that cannot be used due to lead in the water. You will find ceiling tiles missing all over and you will not be able to distinguish between the old "asbestos tiles" and new "non-asbestos tiles." Walk around when it is raining and you understand the missing ceiling tiles as you will have to dodge buckets and trashcans collecting water from leaks in the roof.

As a cluster we are now concerned that with the current economic climate the modernization will continued to be delayed and worry that this will lead to Seneca Valley High School falling into the, “black hole of disrepair.” Our high school finds itself in the difficult situation of needing some basic repairs, yet those repairs being questioned because the entire building is soon slated for modernization. Every year we delay the modernization, these needed repairs and their impact on the school worsens.

### **Capacity without Construction**

The recommended CIP has put a premium on capital capacity projects while delaying modernization projects. Capacity projects are a great idea if there were not so many nearby schools under capacity. We think MCPS is overlooking a less costly method to alleviate overcrowding. There is available capacity now in area Middle Schools and High Schools that are less than 5 miles from each other. While additions might help future students, it does nothing to help the current students who are the ones that are actually experiencing the overcrowded conditions.

Capacity projects would also be a great idea if MCPS could figure out the alchemy of enrollment forecasting. However, looking back 10 years at old CIPs, one can see that the current forecasting method leaves much to be desired.

And there is a connection in this issue to Seneca Valley’s much-delayed modernization. Redistricting might be much more palatable to the community if Seneca Valley was a brand new school. Of course this less costly method involves redistricting and heaven forbid if some parent wants their children to be redistricted into the Seneca Valley Cluster where they have an old school. It is just not acceptable that parents would rather move to another high school, then attend Seneca Valley High School because of this poor environment.

It would be very ironic if it was not just plain sad that parents do not want to send their children to Seneca Valley High School when only 12 years ago it was the only high school in the Germantown area. However since that time the cluster has been redistricted twice and two new high schools have been built right nearby. Northwest is 2.5 miles west and Clarksburg is 5 miles north. During that same timeframe, both these newly built high schools received additions to handle overcrowding, while Seneca Valley languishes, its modernization delayed time and again.

We all need to entertain the idea of an UpCounty Consortium.

### **Red Light — Green Light**

The Seneca Valley Cluster is currently trying to make sense of the perceived CIP “Red Light, Green Light” game that seems to be played by MCPS.

- Two years ago to address the capacity issues at Waters Landing - MCPS recommended an 11-room addition – Green Light.
- Last year in the Amended CIP MCPS delayed the Waters Landing capacity project – Red Light.

- Also in last year Amended CIP MCPS asked for feasibility dollars for a capacity project at McAuliffe – Green Light.
- In this year’s CIP we see MCPS recommending the Waters Landing addition again – Another Green Light.
- MCPS has also proposed an addition for McAuliffe sometime in the future with a recommendation of additional portables as needed. We do not even understand what this means.

Seneca Valley high school is also caught in this same CIP “Red Light Green Light” game.

- In the 2010 CIP Seneca Valley High School modernization was penciled in for Facility Planning in 2010-2011 – Green Light.
- In the 2011 CIP Seneca Valley High School modernization was now penciled in for Facility Planning in 2011-2012 – Red Light.
- In the 2012 CIP Seneca Valley High School modernization was given a completion date– Green Light.
- In the 2013 CIP Seneca Valley High School modernization is delayed – Red Light.

Through all of these CIPs and all of these starts and stops - one thing remains constant – the conditions of the facility at Seneca Valley High School is getting worse every day – Red Light.

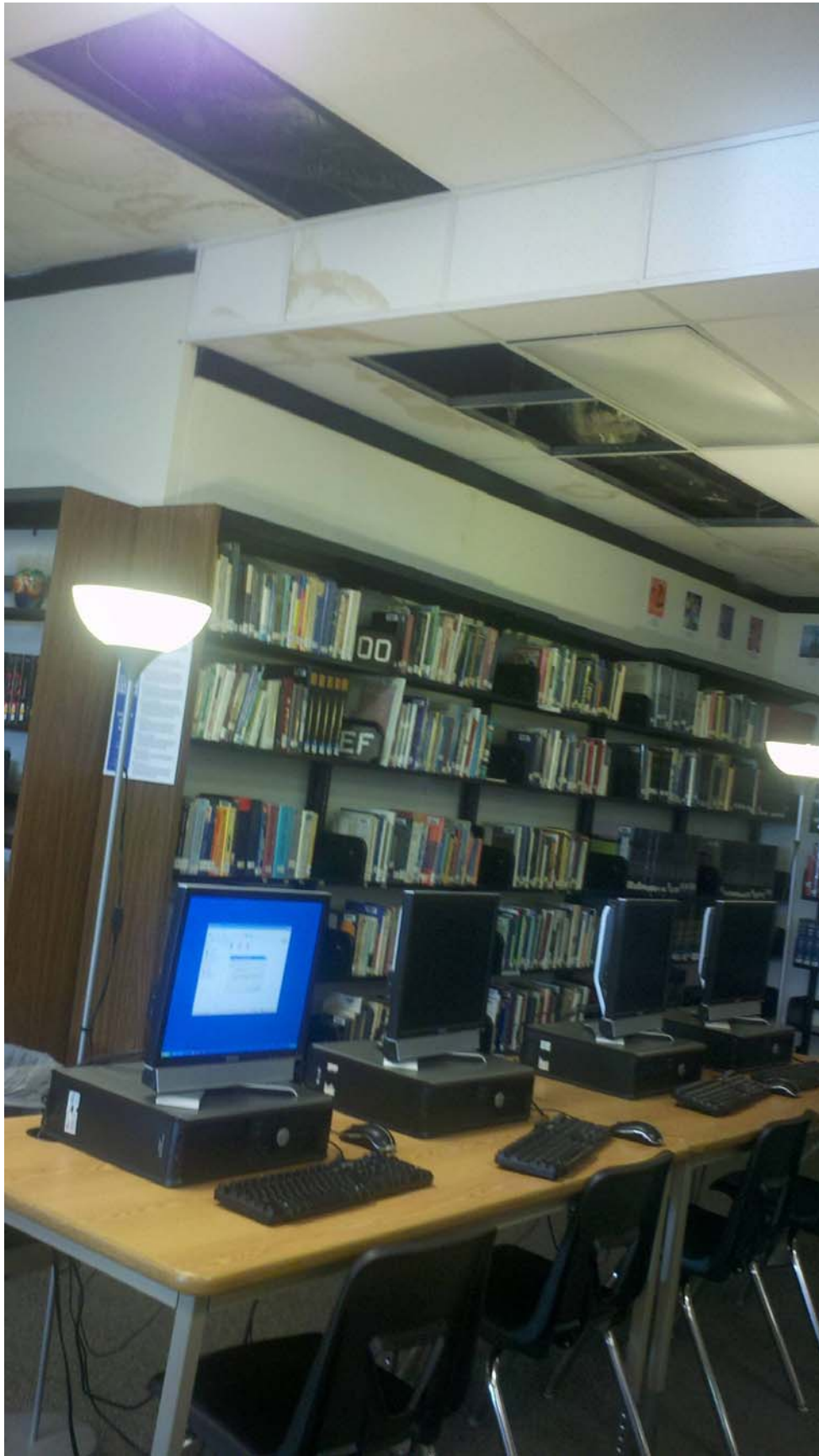
We think our students, their families and our community deserve better.



There are many water fountains with signs like this throughout Seneca Valley High School because of the lead in the water.










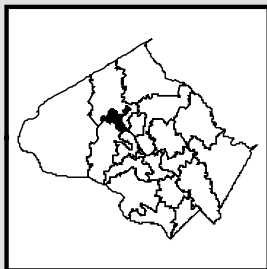
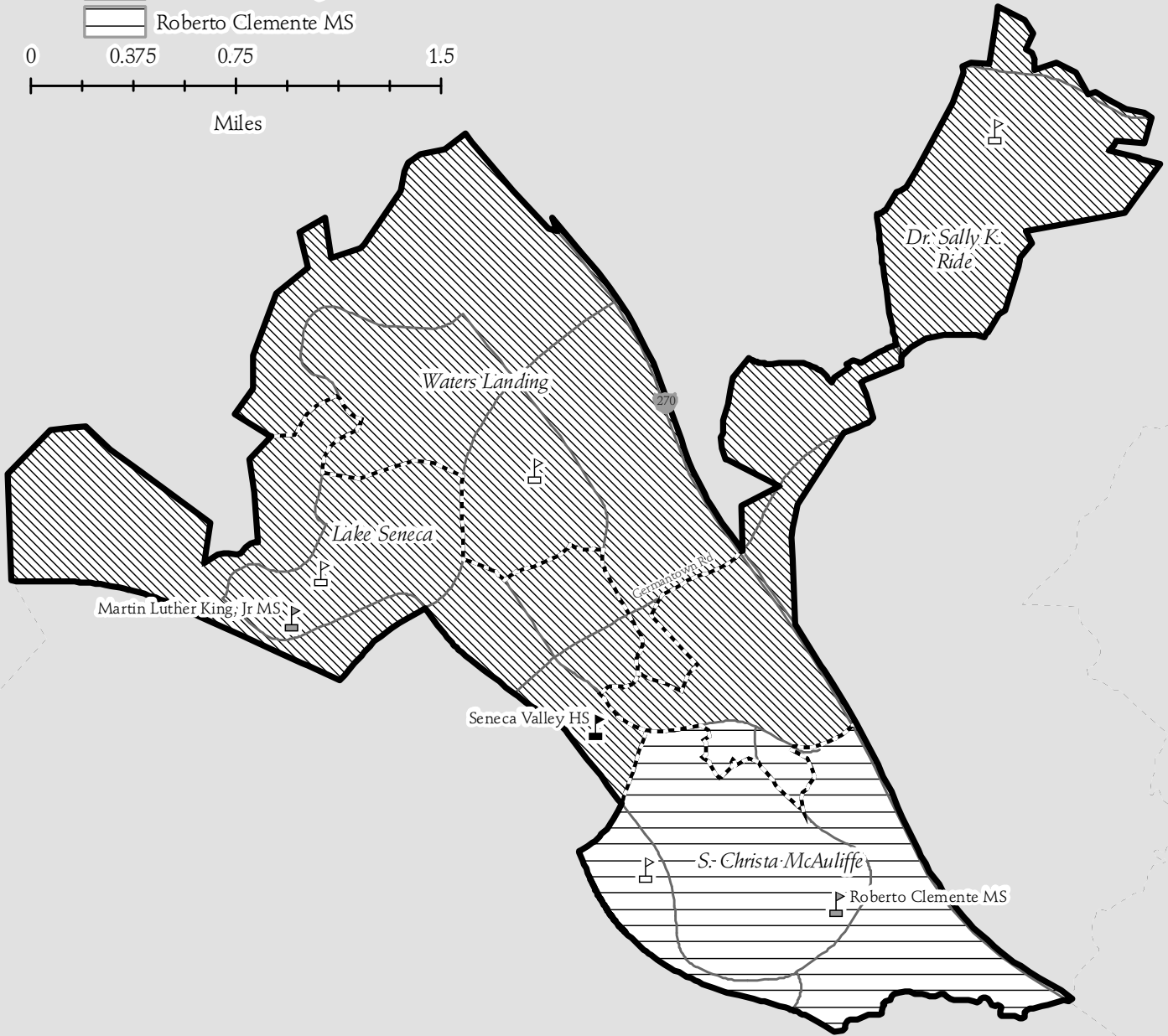
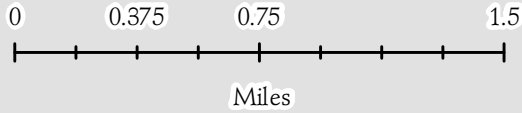
This is the scene that greets visitors to Seneca Valley when it rains.



This is the media center on a rainy day.

# Seneca Valley Cluster

-  Elementary School
-  Middle School
-  High School
-  Elementary School Service Area
-  Cluster Boundary
-  Martin Luther King, Jr MS
-  Roberto Clemente MS



## CLUSTER PLANNING ISSUES

### Seneca Valley High School

**Capital Project:** A modernization project was previously scheduled for this school for completion of the facility in August 2016 and the completion of the site work in August 2017. However, due to fiscal constraints in the county, as described in Chapter 1, the completion date for the modernization has been delayed by one year to August 2017 for the facility and August 2018 for restoration of the site. An FY 2013 appropriation is recommended for planning funds to begin the architectural design for the modernization. In order for this project to be completed on schedule, county and state funding must be provided at the levels recommended in this CIP.

### S. Christa McAuliffe Elementary School

**Capital Project:** Projections indicate enrollment at S. Christa McAuliffe Elementary School will exceed capacity by four classrooms or more by the end of the six-year period. An FY 2012 appropriation was approved for facility planning to determine the feasibility, scope, and cost for a classroom addition. A date for the addition will be considered in a future CIP. Relocatable classrooms will be utilized until additional capacity can be added.

### Waters Landing Elementary School

**Capital Project:** Projections indicate enrollment at Waters Landing Elementary School will exceed capacity by four classrooms or more by the end of the six-year CIP planning period. An FY 2013 appropriation for construction funds is recommended for the addition. The scheduled completion date for the addition is August 2014. In order for this project to be completed on schedule, county and state funding must be provided at the levels recommended in this CIP.

## CAPITAL PROJECTS

School	Project	Project Status*	Date of Completion
Seneca Valley HS	Modernization	Recommended	Aug. 2017, building Aug. 2018, site (delayed)
S. Christa McAuliffe ES	Classroom addition	Proposed	TBD
Waters Landing ES	Classroom addition	Recommended	August 2014

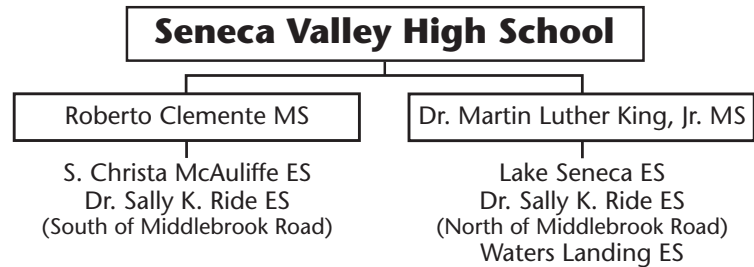
\*Approved—Project has an FY 2012 appropriation approved in the Amended FY 2011–2016 CIP.

Recommended—Project has an FY 2013 appropriation recommended in the FY 2013–2018 CIP.

Programmed—Project has expenditures programmed in a future year of the CIP for planning and/or construction funds.

Proposed—Project has facility planning funds approved in the Amended FY 2011–2016 CIP for a feasibility study or recommended in the FY 2013–2018 CIP.

## Seneca Valley Cluster Articulation\*

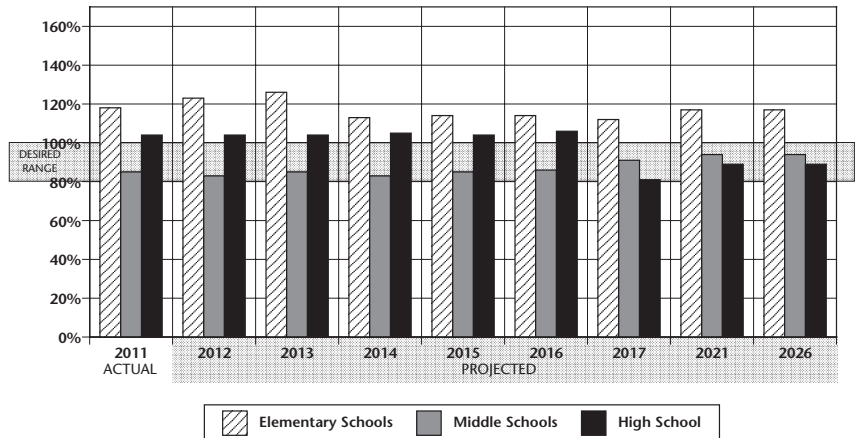


\* "Cluster" is defined as the collection of elementary schools that articulate to the same high school.

\* Clopper Mill, Germantown, and a portion of Great Seneca Creek elementary schools also articulate to Roberto Clemente Middle School, but thereafter articulate to Northwest High School.

## Seneca Valley Cluster

School Utilizations



Note: Percent utilization calculated as total enrollment of schools divided by total capacity. Projected capacity factors in capital projects.

SENECA VALLEY CLUSTER

**Projected Enrollment and Space Availability**  
Effects of the Recommended FY2013–2018 CIP and Non-CIP Actions on Space Available

Schools			Actual	Projections							
			11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18	2021	2026
Seneca Valley HS		Program Capacity	1298	1298	1298	1298	1298	1298	1694	1694	1694
		Enrollment	1344	1344	1352	1367	1351	1371	1376	1500	1500
		Available Space	(46)	(46)	(54)	(69)	(53)	(73)	318	194	194
		Comments	Facility Planning for Mod.	Planning for Modernization			Modernization in Progress		Mod Complete Aug. 2017		
Roberto Clemente MS		Program Capacity	1193	1193	1193	1193	1193	1193	1193	1193	1193
		Enrollment	1160	1141	1147	1120	1117	1144	1171	1200	1200
		Available Space	33	52	46	73	76	49	22	(7)	(7)
		Comments									
Martin Luther King, Jr. MS		Program Capacity	888	888	888	888	888	888	888	888	888
		Enrollment	612	593	624	617	645	637	716	750	750
		Available Space	276	295	264	271	243	251	172	138	138
		Comments									
Lake Seneca ES	CSR	Program Capacity	399	399	399	399	399	399	399		
		Enrollment	413	452	468	479	499	499	481		
		Available Space	(14)	(53)	(69)	(80)	(100)	(100)	(82)		
		Comments									
S. Christa McAuliffe ES	CSR	Program Capacity	507	507	507	507	507	507	507		
		Enrollment	632	659	692	690	704	690	682		
		Available Space	(125)	(152)	(185)	(183)	(197)	(183)	(175)		
		Comments	Facility Planning for Addition								
Dr. Sally K. Ride ES	CSR	Program Capacity	503	503	503	503	503	503	503		
		Enrollment	523	540	535	542	535	546	541		
		Available Space	(20)	(37)	(32)	(39)	(32)	(43)	(38)		
		Comments									
Waters Landing ES	CSR	Program Capacity	488	488	488	736	736	736	736		
		Enrollment	667	681	691	717	713	710	697		
		Available Space	(179)	(193)	(203)	19	23	26	39		
		Comments	Planning for Addition			Addition Complete Aug. 2014					
Cluster Information		HS Utilization	104%	104%	104%	105%	104%	106%	81%	89%	89%
		HS Enrollment	1344	1344	1352	1367	1351	1371	1376	1500	1500
		MS Utilization	85%	83%	85%	83%	85%	86%	91%	94%	94%
		MS Enrollment	1772	1734	1771	1737	1762	1781	1887	1950	1950
		ES Enrollment	118%	123%	126%	113%	114%	114%	112%	117%	117%
			2235	2332	2386	2428	2451	2445	2401	2500	2500





**Facility Characteristics of Schools 2011–2012**

Schools	Year Facility Opened	Year Reopened/ Modernized	Total Square Footage	Site Size Acres	Adjacent Park	Reloc-atable Classrooms	Linkages to Learning Program	Home School Model
Seneca Valley HS	1974		251,278	29.4		1		
Roberto Clemente MS	1992		148,246	19.9				
Martin Luther King, Jr MS	1996		135,867	19				
Lake Seneca ES	1985		58,770	9.4		3		
S. Christa McAuliffe ES	1987		77,240	10.6	Yes	3		
Dr. Sally K. Ride ES	1994		78,686	13.5		4	Yes	
Waters Landing ES	1988		77,560	10		5		Yes