

The Northeast Consortium

A CONSORTIUM OF THE BLAKE, PAINT BRANCH & SPRINGBROOK CLUSTER SCHOOLS



Comments to the Montgomery County Council Regarding the MCPS FY2008 Capital Budget and Amendments to the FY 2007–12 Capital Improvement Program (CIP)

May 1st, 2007

THE JAMES HUBERT BLAKE CLUSTER SCHOOLS

HIGH SCHOOL: James Hubert Blake

MIDDLE SCHOOL: William H. Farquhar

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS: Burnt Mills, Fairland, Wm. T. Page, Sherwood, Stonegate

Good evening. My name is Dawn Dolan, here to represent the Blake Cluster schools.

Thank you for hearing us this evening. Unfortunately for the Blake Cluster, none of our schools seems to have made this year's Amended Budget list. However, please accept our thanks for those schools in the Consortium which are seeing great improvements as a result of the Council's efforts.

We ask that the Council keep an eye to the effect of significant development in the NEC/Sherwood Quad-Cluster. We truly look to the Council to help us forestall an impending crisis for our schools and our children.

Both Fairland and Sherwood Elementary Schools have outgrown their facilities. Fairland exceeds enrollment by 150 students and Sherwood by 95 students. Fairland is conducting its Feasibility Study, while Sherwood ES has completed its Design Phase — which conceded that rapid growth warrants an even larger addition than initially proposed.

Farquhar Middle School needs acceleration to its modernization date of 2015. Farquhar's defunct facility design has already exacerbated its program and cannot facilitate the anticipated housing growth.

In March of 2006, a count was completed of proposed and approved developments in the Ashton and Olney Master Plans with a potential of 649 new homes within the Farquhar boundary. A week later this figure was already outdated. These numbers do not include another 40 homes that were in the preliminary planning stages in the Cloverly Master Plan. These numbers are NOT included in the enrollment projections for affected schools. A ripple effect will certainly be created throughout the Quad-Cluster.

Blake High School is requesting an addition to the school and expansion of its gymnasium. This will be needed to accommodate an anticipated swell in the base area population, and to maximize the advantages of the Choice Process provided Consortium students.

Burnt Mills too is looking to be added to the modernization list, to best deliver its specialized programming to a changing population.

The safety and well being of our students is of utmost value. Blake has a need for additional security cameras and we cannot stress the inadequacy of its outdoor lighting, particularly at its front entrance. Fairland ES has a similar security concern for lighting.

A common sense maintenance plan for all our schools is paramount – which Melissa has characterized so well. While the full list of Cluster needs is attached, it seems appropriate to emphasize the need to maintain the schedule for Restroom Renovations that affect 3 of our schools — Burnt Mills, Stonegate and Sherwood Elementary.

And — as a prime example of some school needs falling in the realm of quirky, but very real — Blake is in serious need of netting at either end of its athletic stadium to stop stray balls from hitting attendees at sporting events and from landing in the surrounding woods.

Guaranteeing our children a Safe, Secure and Healthy Learning Environment is a legacy we can and should build for our children.

**Summary of Blake Cluster Schools
Capital Improvement Project Needs – June 2006**

Blake Cluster Enrollment Figures

BLAKE HS		FARQUHAR MS		BURNT MILLS ES		FAIRLAND ES		PAGE ES		SHERWOOD ES		STONEGATE ES			
Capacity	Current Enrollment	Capacity	Current Enrollment	Capacity	Current Enrollment	Capacity	Current Enrollment	Capacity	Current Enrollment	Capacity	Current Enrollment	Capacity	Current Enrollment		
1733	1859	838	735	393	337	354	505	348	381	377	472	428	448		
+126						+151		+33		+95		+20			
Projected															
07-08	1849		698		357		497		362		470		459		
08-09	1781		683		362		513		341		476		477		
Year Opened		Ren/Mod		O		R/M		O		R/M		O		R/M	
1998				1968				1964		1990		1992		2006	
				1968				1965		2003		1977			

Of the 7 Blake schools, 5 have 28 portables, while the NEC as a whole has 66 (at 14 of the 24 schools) — the second largest # of portables following the DCC (at 22 of the 33 schools).

Burnt Mills Elementary

- **Modernization** – Burnt Mills requests to be added to the modernization schedule.
– *Thank you for repairing the gravel walkway from the school to Prelude Drive with cement/asphalt for both safety and erosion concerns!*
 - **Bathroom Doors** need repair/replacement. Doors swing out into hallway presenting a danger of hitting someone as they walk past.
 - **Restroom Renovation** scheduled for 2008 must be maintained.
 - **Playground Equipment** needs replacement and play area needs a retaining wall.
 - **Water Fountains** throughout school need replacement.
- Currently has 4 portables.

Fairland Elementary

- **Addition** – Fairland requests an accelerated date on the CIP schedule for completion of an addition to accommodate overcrowding of its facility, which is now at 150 students above capacity.
– *Thank you for the new gymnasium!*
 - **Lighting Improvements** in the parking lot are needed for Security.
 - **Replace Carpeting** in the media center which is original to building!
 - **Storage Units** or Closet added to Resource Teacher's room.
- Currently has 7 portables.

William T. Page Elementary

— *Thank you, Page is happy that its current needs are being met!*

With the change from a LAD program to a Home School Model (School), the space for the music program has now been returned and is no longer being delivered on the stage from a cart!

Sherwood Elementary

- **Addition** – Sherwood requests an accelerated date on the CIP schedule for completion of an addition to accommodate overcrowding of its facility, which is now at 95 and anticipates an additional 261 homes feeding into its boundaries. The feasibility design and plan are complete.
 - **Restroom Renovation** scheduled for 2010 must be maintained.
- Currently has 7 portables.

Stonegate Elementary

— *Thank you for the new gymnasium scheduled for 2008!*

- **Restroom Renovation** scheduled for 2008 must be maintained.
- Currently has 3 portables.

Farquhar Middle School

- **Modernization** – Farquhar requests acceleration of its modernization schedule for 2015 to accommodate growth anticipated prior to its date on the CIP schedule and to alleviate an outdated and overburdened facility.
- **Asbestos Abatement & Indoor Air Quality** – the majority of the facility still houses damaged and deteriorating asbestos ceiling tile that needs abatement. The growth of black mold within the walls and ceilings needs treatment.
- **Improved Access to Schools** –
 - Hazardous traffic conditions along Batchellor Forest Road.
 - Improved Bus Entrance and Parking Lot for safety.
- **Lighting Replacement** – interior lighting needs to be replaced throughout the building. Replacement parts are no longer available. “Zig-zag” placement of lights in administrative hallway needs correction.
- **Stairwells** – linoleum and stair treads need repair as they pose a safety hazard.
- **Water Fountains** – replacement of non-functioning hall fountains and surrounding tile/mouldings permanently mildew damaged.
- **Music Room Sound Proof Door** – original sound-proof door between music room and piano lab was removed to enlarge door frame and never replaced
- **Storage Shortages** – Photography Lab; Music and Choral for instruments and robes; and Health Room for additional locking medicine cabinet, files, and shelving.
- **Photography Lab** – Does not have Negative Cabinet, Chemical Splash Table, Safety Station and is short Enlarger Carrels.
- **Instrumental Music** – short musical instruments.
- **Music and Choral Program** – not enough chairs.

Blake High School

- **Addition** – Blake requests a Feasibility Study to explore an addition to address anticipated overcapacity.
 - **Expansion of Gymnasium** – Capacity of the gymnasium is well-below current student population size.
 - **Permanent Amphitheater Seating** – An enhancement to Blake’s Signature Program, permanent seating is essential to allow for the Amphitheater’s use as classroom space.
 - **Modification to Science Labs** – Assistance is needed to convert existing space into labs. While an upgrade was made to one room, it did not include lab stations or plumbing for an effective laboratory space.
 - **Replacement Floor Tile and Carpet** – Tiles for both foyers to Blake’s main entrance are separating, damaged and the color is no longer produced, they now need complete replacement.
 - **Athletic Field Netting** – Netting is needed at either end of the Athletic Stadium (at the goal posts) to prevent stray balls from hitting attendees or landing in the dense surrounding woods.
 - **Lighting** – Outdoor lighting at Blake is inadequate. Poor lighting is a Security Concern particularly at the front entrance and along the access road leading to the Athletic Stadium.
 - **Security Cameras** – While the school continues to purchase these on their own, additional cameras are needed both indoors and outside the building for safety.
 - **Lockers** – An additional 400 lockers are needed — many students must go without or find someone to share with.
- Currently has 7 portables.

