

# SHERWOOD CLUSTER

## Cluster Comments on the FY 2011 Capital Budget and the FY 2011-2016 Capital Improvements Program

November 12, 2009

Dr. Jerry Weast, Superintendent  
Montgomery County Public Schools  
850 Hungerford Drive  
Rockville, MD 20850

Dear Dr. Weast:

We are very appreciative of the funding and support we receive in the Sherwood Cluster. Currently Sherwood ES is looking forward to enjoying its new addition which all the students, parents and staff can watch as it takes shape under construction. Farquhar Middle School is eagerly awaiting their place on the list of modernizations. We do understand the challenging budget issues confronting the county however we are here to strongly advocate that this not be allowed to delay Farquhar's desperate needs from being met. Indeed, given the cost savings of construction bids we are urging the board to consider pushing Farquhar's modernization ahead of schedule to take advantage of these possible cost savings.

Currently, Rosa Parks Middle School has no indoor or outdoor security cameras. Even though the middle school is fortunate to be located in a quiet residential neighborhood, there has been a disturbing increase in vandalism and crime in the neighborhood over the last few years. Indoor and outdoor security cameras would greatly enhance the school's ability to ensure student safety which is such a high priority for Rosa Parks and Montgomery County.

Safe access to schools is a big concern of parents and staff at Sherwood High School, Rosa Parks Middle School and Farquhar Middle School. The lack of sidewalks and sufficient crossing guards places too many of our students at risk. Many parents who would be otherwise inclined to encourage their students to walk, as they are expected to do, are reluctant because of the risks from traffic.

Technology modernizations across the county have inadvertently resulted in disturbing inequities amongst schools within the Sherwood Cluster. Some schools have numerous promethean boards with the accompanying software while others are left unable to prepare 5<sup>th</sup> grade students for the technology demands of middle school.

These are only a few of our pressing needs. The list that follows summarizes the requests from the Sherwood Cluster schools. Thank you for your time and consideration of our requests.

Sincerely,

Sherwood Cluster Coordinator  
Virginia Twombly

<b>Sherwood Cluster</b>	
<b>Individual Projects</b>	
<b>Additions</b> (new classrooms, new wings, more space needed in current facility)	
<b>Sherwood Elementary School</b>	Sherwood Elementary School is grateful for the addition to address overcrowding currently under construction.
<b>Modernizations</b>	
<b>Farquhar Middle School</b>	While Farquhar Middle School has received a modernization date of 2015, it faces an ongoing challenge of operating in a facility that is disastrously outdated, riddled with health and safety concerns, and unable to accommodate the anticipated community growth. We ask that you give a sense of urgency to Farquhar's condition and accelerate the modernization date. The Northeast Consortium adds its voice of support.
<b>New Schools</b>	
	None at this time
<b>Core/Signature Improvements</b>	
	None at this time
<b>County-wide Projects</b>	
<b>ADA Compliance</b>	
	None at this time
<b>Asbestos Abatement</b>	

<b>Farquhar Middle School</b>	Asbestos is still a problem. It gets worked on each year but is still present in the building. This serious health concern serves to keep Farquhar on schedule for its desperately needed modernization.
	<b>Building Modifications and Program Improvements (new foreign language labs, science, etc)</b>
<b>Farquhar Middle School</b>	Arts and Electives classes such Photography, Music, and Computer labs are held in old utility closets, storage areas, and old tech rooms. These important programs are in desperate need of real classrooms to provide students with a healthy, well-lit, and well ventilated learning environment.
	<b>Fire Safety Code Upgrades</b>
	None at this time
	<b>HVAC Replacement (heating, ventilation, air-conditioning)</b>
<b>Sherwood Elementary School</b>	The original Sherwood ES was constructed with an all-electric heating, ventilation and air conditioning system. Sherwood ES may be the only school in the county with such an outdated type of HVAC system, which results in exorbitant utility bills year after year. The Sherwood ES PTA is aware the Board of Education examined “green” building technologies this spring, including cutting-edge geo-thermal HVAC systems and zero-purchase leasing of solar panels. Given its unique utility configuration, we respectfully request that MCPS consider Sherwood ES as a candidate for these new technologies. New components were provided however there is not yet enough data to indicate whether this measure was sufficient.
	<b>Improved (Safe) Access to Schools</b>
<b>Farquhar Middle School</b>	Farquhar Middle School asks that traffic concerns be addressed at Batchellors Road. Additionally, the school asks that the bus circle and parking lot be reconfigured to address serious safety concerns. We are strongly advocating that the modernization be kept on schedule or pushed ahead and that new developments in the area which will affect traffic patterns are taken into consideration when the bus circle, parent drop off and parking lots are designed.
<b>Olney Elementary School</b>	Olney ES has great need for a fence to be put up between the school borders and the shopping center behind us. Previously, there were shrubs there but they were removed when a new building and parking lot was put up. MCPS security has been made aware of this security issue and the threat to student safety.
<b>Rosa Parks Middle School</b>	Rosa Parks has worked closely with the Olney Mill Homeowners Association to try to resolve significant problems with the drop off/pick up loop. Parents park on side streets in all directions and continually turn left exiting the loop, against posted signs, because of the current ineffectual configuration. Students are in danger daily from threats of poorly regulated traffic and lack of adequate crossing guards. The PTA is advocating an additional crossing guard and/or the relocation of a stop sign to address these very serious safety concerns to our middle school age children.

	<b>Planned Life Cycle Asset Replacement (PLAR)</b> - This project includes repair or replacement of building systems, exterior resurfacing, interior partitions, doors, lighting, windows, security gates, bleachers, communications systems, and flooring.
<b>Farquhar Middle School</b>	The lighting throughout Farquhar is original to the building and is so old that replacement parts cannot be found. New parts must be rigged to the old fixtures. Hallways and classrooms are very dimly lit causing an unsafe and unhealthy learning environment for our students and staff. At a minimum, it is imperative for the safety of the students to update the lighting in the dark hallways and corridors.
	<b>Relocatable Classrooms</b>
	None at this time
	<b>Restroom Renovations</b>
<b>Sherwood High School</b>	Restroom renovations are recommended for this school for completion by 2013-2014 school year. Any possibility to accelerate the process would go far to ensure a sanitary and healthy environment.
<b>Rosa Parks Middle School</b>	Restroom renovations are recommended for this school for completion by 2013-2014 school year. Any possibility to accelerate the process would go far to ensure a sanitary and healthy environment.
	<b>Roof Replacement</b>
	None at this time.
	<b>School Gymnasiums</b>
	None at this time
	<b>School Security Systems</b>
<b>Rosa Parks School</b>	Rosa Parks Middle School desperately needs indoor and outdoor security cameras. Currently, Rosa Parks has no security cameras at all.
<b>Sherwood High School</b>	Requests that the school remain on track with the upgrade of the security cameras.
	<b>Technology Modernization</b>

<b>Sherwood Elementary School</b>	Sherwood E.S. saw that their graduating 5 <sup>th</sup> graders were unprepared to meet the technology needs of middle school and requests that they be supplied with at least one promethean board to meet their students' needs. To have such marvelous technology be distributed inequitably creates a problem that needs to be addressed.
<b>Olney Elementary School</b>	Olney E.S. also saw that their graduating 5 <sup>th</sup> graders were unprepared to meet the technology needs of middle school and requests that they be supplied with at least one promethean board to meet their students' needs as well. Again, within a cluster, some school should not have resources that others do not. Everyone is charged with the same challenge and should have the same tools to meet their goals.
	<b>Water and Indoor Air Quality</b>
	None at this time.
	<b>Additional Requests</b>
	None at this time

Respectfully submitted,

*The Cluster Coordinator from Sherwood Cluster*

Attachments:

- Letters from individual schools:
- a. Sherwood Elementary School
  - b. Farquhar Middle School

**SHERWOOD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PTA, INC.**  
1401 Olney-Sandy Spring Road Sandy Spring, Maryland 20860

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June 1, 2009

Dr. [Jerry D. Weast](#)  
Superintendent  
Montgomery County Public Schools  
Carver Educational Services Center  
850 Hungerford Drive, Room 122  
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Dear Dr. Weast,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments regarding Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) capital projects for fiscal 2011.

First and foremost, the Sherwood ES PTA wishes to thank you, MCPS and the Board of Education for supporting the construction of the 8 classroom addition to Sherwood Elementary. Further, we thank County Executive Leggett for including the proposal in his budget and ultimately the County Council for maintaining the project in the fiscal 2010 budget under unprecedented budget circumstances. Sherwood administrators, staff and parents appreciate your leadership in guiding this effort. We, therefore, respectfully request that the addition project be completed on schedule and request any necessary fiscal 2011 funds be expended to bring the project to completion.

Sherwood ES was constructed with an all-electric heating, ventilation and air conditioning system. Sherwood ES may be the only school in the county with such an outdated type of HVAC system, which results in exorbitant utility bills year after year. The Sherwood ES PTA is aware the Board of Education examined "green" building technologies this spring, including cutting-edge geothermal HVAC systems and zero-purchase leasing of solar panels. Given its unique utility configuration, we respectfully request that MCPS consider Sherwood ES as a candidate for these new technologies.

The Sherwood ES community asks that you please consider these comments as you prepare the MCPS FY 2011 capital improvement recommendations.

Sincerely,

Tony Zagami  
Sherwood ES PTA President

# Farquhar Middle School

## Request for Accelerated Modernization:

As of the 2008-09 CIP year, Farquhar Middle School has been placed on the modernization schedule for 2015. **Farquhar remains the oldest middle school in Montgomery County waiting to be modernized, and we respectfully request that this date be accelerated for the following reasons:**

### AGING FACILITY

**The design of Farquhar's facility does not support or benefit the educational expectations of today's students.** Significant portions of the building's design represent safety hazards for our students. Outdated staircases, ramps, elevators, and hallways prove non-conducive to our staff and students. In addition, the existing layout of the building does not facilitate use of technology throughout the curriculum. With the addition of computers, imaging equipment, laboratory equipment, and other technological tools, we are hampered by cement walls, asbestos floor and ceiling tiles, and isolated areas of the building that have become classroom spaces.

While every new facility improvement project is gratefully accepted, the infrastructure is simply not there to support our current enrollment. The lighting throughout Farquhar is original to the building and is so old that replacement parts cannot be found. New parts must be rigged to the old fixtures. Hallways and classrooms are very dimly lit causing an unsafe and unhealthy learning environment for our students and staff. **At a minimum, it is imperative for the safety of the students to update the lighting in the dark hallways and corridors.**

Arts and Electives classes such Photography, Music, and Computer labs are held in old utility closets, storage areas, and old tech rooms. **These important programs are in desperate need of real classrooms to provide students with a healthy, well-lit, and well ventilated learning environment.**

### INCREASED GROWTH & TRAFFIC ALONG BACHELLORS FOREST ROAD

The Greater Olney and Sandy Spring/Ashton area is experiencing a surge of new housing developments, including many new housing communities on Batchellors Forest Road. According to the Olney Master Plan, the extension of Old Vic Boulevard directly onto Batchellors Forest Road will occur with the development of 40 new homes on the Casey Property. This development is currently in the preliminary planning process with Park & Planning. **The extension of Old Vic Boulevard, which will provide access to Good Counsel and the Casey Housing Development, will open directly in front of the school's main bus entrance causing a great deal of chaos with the current bus and vehicular access to the school.**



### **UNSAFE ACCESS TO FARQUHAR**

**A complete reconfiguration of Farquhar's bus circle and parking lot will be required with the extension of Old Vic Boulevard on to Batchellors Forest to ensure the safety of bus, vehicular, and pedestrian traffic.**

Batchellors Forest road is designated a "Rustic Rural" road and will remain as such. To that end, there are no sidewalks, no crosswalks, no street lighting. The road is only 18 feet across making it nearly impossible for a car and a school bus to fit on the road together. The paradox is that Batchellors Forest will forever be deemed "rustic rural", yet the area is neither rustic nor rural due to the growth in housing developments and the building of two new high schools on Batchellors Forest Road, Good Counsel High School and Washington Christian Academy. **Consequently, the increased traffic from the high schools and the new homes on this rustic road will make an already precarious journey to Farquhar an even more unsafe and stressful occurrence.**

Farquhar is a non-walking school. There are no sidewalks leading into the school property at any point. The only sidewalk exists immediately around the school building leading to the buses and the parking lot. The lower portion of the school is comprised of a parking lot and a bus line-up. Entrance is to the cafeteria. The upper portion of the school is strictly a bus circle with a guardrail at the road. Entrance is to the main hallway. Any person crossing the street to the school at either point would be required to walk through the bus circle to enter. **There is currently no safe pedestrian access to Farquhar. We urge MCPS to be as proactive as possible with Park & Planning in following the developments of Old Vic Boulevard through to Batchellors Forest. This very imminent growth in traffic at the crossroads of the school entrance will be a major safety issue.**

**To ensure the continued safety of the community and the student body, MCPS must accelerate the modernization date of Farquhar.**