

THE SHERWOOD CLUSTER CIP TESTIMONY

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

On behalf of Sherwood Cluster Schools

February 16, 2010

Good evening President Floreen and members of the Council. My name is Virginia Twombly and I am the Sherwood Cluster Coordinator. I am here tonight to speak on behalf of the CIP needs of the eight schools in our Cluster.

The Sherwood fully supports the MCCPTA Resolution on the FY 2011 Capital Improvement Program Budget and FY2011-2016 CIP and the MCCPTA Resolution on the Restroom Renovation Project in the FY 2011-2016 Capital Improvement Program. We also fully support MCCPTA President Kay Romero's testimony.

The Sherwood Cluster does appreciate that you have an incredibly difficult task: to find the balance between the short-term and the long-term, to react to crisis's, such as unforeseen snow or other natural disasters, without losing sight of your responsibility to the future, and to meet the needs of the present without sacrificing the future.

The CIP is all about the future. Regardless of what is going on today, we cannot lose sight that if we do not plan for tomorrow, when tomorrow comes, as it surely will, problems will be even larger.

Everyone in our cluster is grateful that Farquhar Middle School is on the schedule for desperately needed modernization and hopes that nothing will derail it. We do want to lend our support for other schools trying to get on the schedule so that all children in the county can have equal access to safe, secure and technologically appropriate facilities. The facilities our children need to be prepared for the future must include the technology that will not be a luxury for them but required tools.

While maintenance is currently an Operating Budget item, we feel it is important to mention that it really is a critical issue for our aging buildings, and it would make sense to link it to the CIP Budget. Maintenance plays an important role with the issues focused on by MCCPTA advocacy. We need well defined preventative maintenance programs for our schools that lessen the need for costly repairs and remediation.

My last comment is that my cluster really does appreciate that this council bears profound responsibilities for services to all Montgomery County Residents (transportation, housing, parks, libraries and not just schools). However our society must put the needs of the most vulnerable, our children, first. Schools are often the first to catch problems children bring from home,

providing a safe haven that not only protects and nurtures them in the present but gives them their only real chance for a future.

We very much appreciate your giving us the opportunity to speak on behalf of our schools tonight. Thank you for your time and your consideration.

Respectfully,

Sherwood Cluster Coordinator
Virginia Twombly