

The Northeast Consortium

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



Comments to the Montgomery County Council Regarding the MCPS FY2009 Capital Budget and Amendments to the FY 2009–14 Capital Improvements Program

February 6, 2008

THE NEC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Broad Acres, Burnt Mills, Burtonsville, Cannon Road, Cloverly,
Cresthaven, Dr. Charles Drew, Fairland, Galway, Greencastle,
Jackson Road, Roscoe Nix, William T. Page, Sherwood, Stonegate, Westover

Good evening President Knapp and members of the Council. My name is Dawn Dolan and I am here tonight to speak on behalf of the 16 elementary schools within the Northeast Consortium. [As a brief clarification to our testimony method tonight, The Northeast Consortium is composed of 24 schools within the Blake, Paint Branch and Springbrook High School Clusters. Given the size of the NEC, we find it effective to separate our Testimony by elementary, middle and high school concerns.]

We were grateful to see several of our most critical projects budgeted in this year's *initial* Superintendent's Recommendation. After years of advocacy, these funds would bring a much needed boost to our *delapidated* and *underserving* classroom buildings.

The opening of Roscoe Nix, the modernizations of Key Middle and Galway Elementary underway, and the inclusion of several new projects in FY09, promised to bring the forward cycle our schools have desperately been waiting for.

Mr. Leggett's Recommended Budget asserts a commitment to education "... by supporting critical school capacity, modernization, capital maintenance, and health and safety projects in our public schools."

Currently, 10 of our 16 elementaries are overcapacity. 7 of 16 built between 1952 and 1988 have never been modernized. The elementaries have 64 portables with reductions at some overcapacity schools. [In addition, 11 are Focus Schools; 2 have Linkages to Learning (including 1 health center); and there are 37 separate classes of Special Ed programming.] *Please see Attachment.

We respect the fiscal constraints that our County is facing and attempting to responsibly address. However, we are obliged to address the *shortfall* that our NEC schools receive in the latest CIP budget proposals.

Thankfully, modernization of Cresthaven and Cannon Road is currently preserved — serious health and safety concerns make these projects critical.

Most distressing however, is the removal of addition projects for severe overcrowding at Jackson Road, Fairland, and Sherwood Elementaries.

As the first Consortium Model, we are designed as a cluster of schools with a culminating choice between our 3 High School Signatures. *Paint Branch's needs are the Consortium's needs and are critical to the fabric of its success.* Our high schools are the pinnacle of our children's academic career and each should be a premier reflection of that achievement. Each elementary school should provide a healthy and safe environment designed to nurture a path of success [for our laudable programs.]

The NEC needs school facilities that reflect the quality of its place within this County. The NEC cannot afford postponements or reductions in scope. We HAVE ALREADY waited for our inclusion to project lists and through delays, while changes and growth in other areas has been addressed. We have aged, we have changed, and we are growing. *We ask that this budget reflect priorities brought with a common sense approach and toward equity in its delivery.*

We know that our County Executive and Council hold our educational priorities with the highest regard. To paraphrase Kafka — who died a young and unmarried man — “accepting all the children that come [is] the utmost a human being can succeed in doing at all.”

Respectfully,
The Northeast Consortium Cluster Coordinators

Area Vice President
Ellen Salins

Paint Branch Cluster
Patti Twigg

Blake Cluster
Dawn Dolan
Lee Ann Doerflinger

Springbrook Cluster
Pamela Johnson
Naghma Husain

Attachments:

1. Chart of NEC Elementary School CIP Items Schedule
2. Individual FYO9 Elementary CIP Requests
3. Sherwood Elementary School PTA Letter
4. Cresthaven/Roscoe Nix Schools PTA Letter

NEC Elementary Individual CIP Requests FY09

Broad Acres

- ADD TO MODERNIZATION SCHEDULE

Burnt Mills

- New and safer playground equipment at Burnt Mills, along with a retaining wall around the play area.

Cannon Road

- MAINTAIN ON MODERNIZATION SCHEDULE FOR 2012

Cresthaven

- MAINTAIN ON MODERNIZATION SCHEDULE FOR 2010
- Improved handicapped access including ramps, wheelchair accessibility
- Upgrade stage lighting so stage light can be used.
- Redesign storm drains in the bus lanes to prevent flooding.
- Convert to forced air-heating system from convection system.
- Upgrade to exterior building – woodwork & trim needs caulking and painting.
- Entryways and exterior doors need upgrading
- Ceilings are stained from leaks and tiles need replacement.
- Repair/replace lighting throughout building
- Plumbing/bathroom fixtures need replacement, sinks are cracked.

Fairland

- REINSTATE ADDITION FOR 2010 IN SCHEDULE
- Additional lighting in its parking lot for safety,
- Replacement of carpet in the Media Center;

Galway

- MAINTAIN COMPLETION DATE AND SCOPE OF MODERNIZATION

Greencastle

- ADD TO MODERNIZATION SCHEDULE

Jackson Road

- REINSTATE ADDITION FOR 2010 IN SCHEDULE

Roscoe Nix

- Concerned for safe access of students arriving and departing and asks that the sidewalks and bus area be reconfigured or relocated.

Sherwood

- REINSTATE ADDITION FOR 2010 IN SCHEDULE

Stonegate

- ADD TO MODERNIZATION SCHEDULE