

Good Evening.

My name is Carol Van Dam Falk. I am Wootton High School Cluster Co-Coordinator.

As an aside, I just like to say, on behalf of MCCPTA and West Montgomery County Citizens Association, of which I'm a board member, how much we're going to miss Councilwoman Marilyn Praisner. She was one of the smartest, most dedicated local politicians I've ever met. Hopefully, she will be a role model to young women everywhere in Montgomery County and across the state.

It's a pleasure to be here, to break bread with you, and share with you our thoughts on our requested future capitol improvements. We appreciate the help we've received in the past.

We are truly grateful that our guidance suite was renovated last summer to accommodate our larger staff. Believe it or not, with our continued growth, we're already one office short.

Wootton is by far the most overcrowded school in Montgomery County. We are more than 500 students over capacity, and that is an indisputable fact.

With that in mind, we urge the Board to keep in place the funding for several projects; the first and foremost being the new science labs and the auditorium. If our students are to be challenged and excel in science, they need the space to do their work.

We also need to relocate the registrar office to handle the overcrowded conditions.

Additional safe playing fields is another top priority of Wootton and Frost Middle School. The Frost field is barren and bumpy, and what many parents label as downright dangerous.

The only outstanding issue in need of funding is our pathetic weight training room. From the decrepit equipment to the rotting floor, we need a new weight room.

More than 25-hundred students utilize this room in gym class on a daily basis, not to mention the hundreds of Varsity and JV male and female athletes who need this room to work out and be competitive in their sport: be it football, soccer, lacrosse, field hockey, or track.

On rainy days, it's simply impossible for most athletes to access the weight room.

And quite honestly, most don't want to step in there due to the deplorable conditions.

We urge the board to take a look for yourself, then find the money necessary to bring this weight room up to the standard of every other public high school weight room in Montgomery County. Our athletes are at a distinct disadvantage without it.

As for Frost, its top priority, aside from the practice field, is a new music wing.

Nearly 400 students participate in band. Kids are often forced to store their instruments in the hallways, subjecting them to additional bumps and scrapes with other kids rushing to their next class.

There is also an issue with mold in the current storage area and I don't have to tell you the kind of danger that poses to our children and teachers.

Cabin John Middle School, as you know, is slated for renovation in 2011. That project must not be delayed, as Cabin John is also facing severe overcrowding and outdated accommodations for students.

Finally, Dufief Elementary is in desperate need of an outside paint job due to graffiti on the walls and mismatched paint on various sections of the building.

We appreciate your understanding of these very necessary projects and strongly urge you to keep them on track.

Thank you for taking the time to listen to our needs and responding in kind.