

Clarksburg Cluster thanks Dr. Weast and the Board of Education for this opportunity to testify this evening about the new FY2009 Capital Improvement Plan. Let me start off by killing an ugly rumor that Clarksburg's growth has nearly stopped. The 43 portables at our 8 cluster schools prove that our growth is not only in our future but is here *now*!

Please follow along as we connect the dots regarding our concerns for the future of Clarksburg High School and Rocky Hill Middle School. Note, these developments have been approved by the Planning Board. To help you visualize Clarksburg's growth we have brought several site maps proudly displayed by some of our Coyotes.

To begin, 15 years ago, Clarksburg began as a "sleepy little town" of 1500 people. County residents used to fill up their gas tanks and pack a picnic lunch to explore the beauty of our wonderful farms and country living. Within the last five years, our population has grown to about 9000 and the Master Plan has the area expanding to a city with a population of 35,000 - 40,000! That's a lot of Coyotes!!

We thank you for the "forward thinking" put forth on behalf of the Clarksburg Cluster and we request MCPS continue on this path. The Clarksburg cluster is excited that Fox Chapel ES restroom renovations will be completed this year and the much anticipated 10-room addition has been recommended for funding and completion by August 2011. We are just as pleased to open Clarksburg ES #8 next fall. We appreciate the CIP and operating costs associated with the opening of this school, especially during these tight budget times. Now **we can't afford to fall behind**. We need to accommodate the seating capacity and have the new MS built in Aurora Hills and the addition at Clarksburg High School.

This rapid northern expansion has brought new families to our area and these families are exponentially increasing our school population. As one can see from current student enrollment and future enrollment growth projections our families have a wide range of school aged children and our cluster is certainly feeling the change

Our Cluster PTA has stayed in close contact with the developers. As stated earlier, we're expanding and that's with only 22% percent of the approved residential units in existence and 77% have building approval with construction under way. This does not include the additional sites within the 15,000 residential units in the approved Master Plan.

Rocky Hill Middle School is bursting at its seams. We house 8 portables with no relief in sight. Portables are utilized as a short term solution and we'd like to keep their usage as such. But, as portables are added, so are the core needs within the facility. Rocky Hill is challenged at lunch, holding four lunches of 300+ students. The facility is challenged to supply enough lockers for the growing population. Finally, team teaching is difficult since parts of each grade level or subject teams are located outside the core facility. Looking at our approved housing development in Clarksburg, we truly hope this Board will include a new middle school facility within the upcoming CIP. After spending the past summer on a feasibility study for the new facility, we think it proved itself as a necessity. Rocky Hill needs relief!

Clarksburg High School is bulging. Into year number three, we have four (4) portables on site, our incoming ninth grade classes are significantly larger-with 478 students compared to our 260 first graduating seniors, creating the need for more seats in our core facility.

This summer, we received a report from the Dept of Long Range Planning compiled of Montgomery County Cluster PTA needs, and the foremost need came within Maintenance, Preventive, and Routine Repair. The Board has created a systemic maintenance program to address these needs, yet the Clarksburg Cluster would like this Board to act proactively work towards putting this program in place NOW to extend the life of new facilities too. The program should be established at Rocky Hill, Clarksburg HS, Little Bennett, and Clarksburg #8 to ensure all equipment is maintained and thus fewer dollars will be required for replacement and repairs down the road. And this start will make it easier to incorporate the other schools within our cluster. The creation of this "punch-list" allowing principals, building services, county maintenance, etc. to remain proactive vs. reactive to the maintenance.

We want to acknowledge and thank Dr. Weast for listening and understanding the numerous concerns and challenges that parents in the Clarksburg cluster expressed regarding the boundary recommendation for Clarksburg Elementary #8.

Dr. Weast's recommendation stabilizes Little Bennett's families that have already been moved from Clarksburg Elementary School. A priority that we repeatedly identified throughout the boundary committee meetings was to allow room for our continued growth in all our schools (which is obviously a challenge). We are concerned about the drop in enrollment Cedar Grove ES will experience, since 70% of their students will be walkers to the new Clarksburg Elementary School #8. As Aurora Hills community continues to develop (conservative estimate given by the developer is 100 homes per year), this school will certainly fill back up over the next few years. In the interim, we ask the Board of Ed to support Cedar Grove's teachers and staff so all our students will continue to have the same services they're currently offered.

Now that the feasibility study for Clarksburg Village Elementary Site #1 was completed this Fall, we ask the board to keep a watchful eye on the continued growth in Clarksburg Village. This large community currently has approximately 500 homes built, with 2,654 residential units approved by the Planning Board! Growth is here NOW and will continue to be our future over the next 10 years.

If you build it, we will fill it!

*This would help the following school needs within our clusters:*

*Cedar Grove ES requests:*

*Replacement of the HVAC unit, particularly the heat pumps in Rooms 6, 8, 10, and 11;*

*Replacement of the exhaust fan in the kitchen/APR to properly vent the propane;*

*Replacement /repair of fencing around the playground;*

*Repainting of bus lanes.*

*Fox Chapel ES requests:*

*Replacement of the HVAC unit*

*Neelsville MS:*

*New gymnasium floor since the floor has 3 large holes, is warped in several places. The floor plates are not meshed with the floor.*

*Completion of the new gymnasium lights*

*Security cameras required on the lower level near lockers*

*New lockers needed. Current lockers have not been replaced since the school opened 28 years ago.*

*Exterior lights focused on the loading dock. (The loading dock backs up to a large wooded area and is very isolated and vulnerable. It has been vandalized, most recently as July 4<sup>th</sup> of this year resulting in extensive damage to the rear doors.*

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Clarksburg Cluster  
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