

**OPEN COMMENTS BEFORE THE MCPS BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2007      9:04 P.M.**  
**Don Hauprich, Paint Branch High School PTSA President**

In preparation for tonight, I received countless pieces of advice, most of which fell into 3 categories. First, pound my fist and demand our high school now; second, seek some funding for initial site work now, along with full appropriation in future budgets; and third - "don't say anything which would make the Board angry."

I won't make you angry. I'm a glass-half-full person. I work at a church – if I didn't believe in holding out hope, if I didn't ascribe to the ideals of justice and equality and doing what was right for the entire County, then my comments to you would be less than truthful, as would my commitment to my profession and to my neighbors.

I believe our glass is indeed half-full – I watched all 2+ hours of the Board's Budget Meeting on November 8<sup>th</sup>. The comments expressed by Dr. Weast and President Navarro gave me hope that this project could and would continue as close to on-schedule as possible. And in seeking to do what is right for Paint Branch now, they also sought to do what is right for the County and for all the high school modernizations which are to follow. Their comments, along with those raised by other Board members seeking discernment and understanding, allows me to stand here hopeful that the time has now come to begin the process of filling the glass the rest of the way.

As we all know . . . the need is there for a new Paint Branch High School now. That's not the debate – the answer to that question was given long ago when its modernization was placed in queue. We're no longer discussing *if* we should build it, but *when and with what funds*. So tonight, I ask nothing more of you than to be diligent in your efforts to make this new building a reality, and to do so in a timely manner, even beginning with some site work in fiscal '09 if possible. Our community stands alongside you and offers you our help, knowing full well that other County and State officials will need to be called upon to play their part in finding the funding.

One of the Board Members recently told me "You can't get blood from a turnip." I agree. Please don't think for a moment that the Paint Branch Community neither respects the difficult fiscal decisions you face, nor is less than compassionate towards Redland, Ridgeview, or any of the others who have very real needs. We just ask that the turnip you've already planted continues to be tended – so that in 2011 – at the very latest – we can bring in the harvest . . . and so that all of the stakeholders of our diverse East County may enjoy the fruits of our patience, our sacrifices, our commitment, and our labors. Thank you.