

CLARKSBURG CLUSTER

Clarksburg High School
Rocky Hill Middle School (split articulated)
Neelsville Middle School (split articulated)

Clarksburg Elementary School
Fox Chapel Elementary School
Little Bennett Elementary School
William B. Gibbs Elementary School
Capt. James E. Daly Elementary School
Cedar Grove Elementary School (split articulated)

The Clarksburg Principals and PTAs agree whole heartedly to not ask for anything under these challenging times, we only request you maintain the current level of gains made within our school system for the last 10 years. We want to express that we heard loud and clear at a joint meeting with PTA leaders, County Council members, and Board of Education members that this is a difficult fiscal year and cuts are necessary but we want to express that when and if you find the cuts, please keep our teachers in our schools.

Stating Clarksburg's priorities:

1. Keep current services & programs in place.

Thus far, Dr. Weast's recommendations for the major strategic initiatives have proven beneficial to our students. We ask that you do everything within your power to keep these initiatives in place. MCPS's focus on reducing class size throughout all schools is a powerful testament toward Fox Chapel Elementary seeing a difference in academic success. In addition, Daly elementary school sees reduced class sizes as aiding them in differentiated instruction to meet student needs as well as assisting with the needed support for MSA.

2. Protect gains the school system has made.

MCPS initiatives require we keep qualified, knowledgeable teachers that connect with students inside the classroom. We are concerned for funding and staffing for Clarksburg High School's signature programs; Capstone and APPS Programs. Projects such as these foster problem solving and critical thinking in a real world environment. They reward collaboration, initiative, and entrepreneurship and have helped many of our students define the field of study they want to pursue in college. Being mindful of what administrators, teachers, and staff require to meet the rigorous requirements for 21st Century education, our Rocky Hill Middle School Principal Steve Whiting put it best, "If we maintain what we have, we'll be able to continue to give our kids an excellent program. If we're cut, then we lose pieces that help us give every student what they need. I'm aware of the economic climate and so I wouldn't ask for anything more."

3. Protect taxpayer's investment with quality education.

In Montgomery County, we have managed our budget well and have taken necessary actions early on to save money and control costs. We have delivered excellent results for every dollar invested in our children. In order for us to preserve and improve upon the student achievement

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gains we have made, we must commit to maintaining the services and programs that have brought us to this point and support the staff that has made it happen.

4. Commitment to work together & attend PTA organized trips to Annapolis this Spring & ask for support from our state legislators.

We will support you and will use our strong partnership with our elected officials, which we have developed over the last four years. We look forward to our annual trip in February to Annapolis to visit our Legislators and continue to strengthen our advocacy

Our cluster wants to reiterate Nancy Floreen's statement that "Education is key to Montgomery County success."

We support the Superintendent's Maintenance of Effort level of request. As he stated, "For FY 2011, in accordance with state law, I am submitting a "maintenance of effort" budget. We are requesting funds that allow us to keep our current level of programs and services. This budget does not include any new or expanded initiatives. The only increase in the budget-about 1 percent-is to accommodate our continued growth.

We support the MCCPTA's Operating Budget Priorities

Thank you Dr. Weast, President O'Neill, and Members of the Board, for giving us this opportunity to speak on the Superintendent's recommended Operating Budget on behalf of the Clarksburg Cluster.

Jaimie Jacobson, Donna Pfeiffer and Sonya Leaman

Clarksburg Cluster Coordinators