

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 respective principals and PTA groups of the Clarksburg cluster are fully aware of the difficult fiscal year we are currently experiencing and we recognize the unique challenges the County Council are under in balancing the upcoming county's budget. Therefore, we express our support and gratitude to all the members of the County Council for their hard work. We also would like to do our part by asking for one main thing....and that is to maintain the significant educational gains our cluster has achieved in the past 10 years by keeping the current staffing and programs in place for our existing students.

Stating Clarksburg's priorities:

1. We strongly believe that the county's top priority includes student safety therefore please keep Education Facilities Officers (EFO) in place. The Clarksburg Cluster believes EFOs SHOULD be at every high school. EFOs in general patrol an average of 1300 students at each high school and giving support as needed at the clusters middle and elementary schools. These officers play an integral role through their proactive stance in deterring poor, inappropriate and dangerous behavior within the student body of a school. The county also benefits because EFOs can be utilized to help principals discern upcoming anti-bullying legislation and provide adequate legal support to enforce swift action. Many parents share the concerns that County Council has addressed about proper reporting of serious incidences in our schools and an EFO brings strong, independent, needed oversight. We ask you not to cut any of the EFO positions.
2. 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.
3. Protect gains the school system has made.
MCPS initiatives require we keep qualified, knowledgeable teachers who engage students during instructional time. 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

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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."

4. 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 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.

5. Commitment to work with legislators in Annapolis to obtain funding support from our state legislators.

We will utilize our strong partnership with our elected officials. We attended our annual trip March 1st 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 MCCPTA's Operating Budget Priorities

Thank you President Floreen and Members of this County Council 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