

**Cold Spring Elementary School-DuFief Elementary School
Fallsmead Elementary School-Lakewood Elementary School
Stone Mill Elementary School-Travilah Elementary School
Cabin John Middle School-Robert Frost Middle School
Thomas S. Wootton High School**

**Testimony to the Montgomery County Public School
Board of Education
By Stuart Levin, MCCPTA Wootton Cluster
November 11 2010**

Good evening, I am Stuart Levin, and my role is Wootton HS Vice President representing the Wootton Cluster.

In our current economic climate, we appreciate the MCPS' commitment to maintaining and improving the infrastructure for our county's schools. Specifically, we applaud the request for an FY 2012 appropriation to increase funding for HVAC replacement and the Planned Life Cycle Asset Replacement (PLAR) programs. DuFief ES is on the HVAC schedule for FY 2012 and is in desperate need of a new system as significant mold formed again this past summer due to both the HVAC and roofing issues. Funds for the PLAR program are sorely needed as well to replace DuFief ES's 35 year old gymnasium floor, and repair, or preferably replace, the Wootton HS track, which is in such terrible condition that it is only partially functional at this time. We are also hopeful that Cold Spring ES's programmed new gymnasium for FY 2012 will be supported as the Superintendent has recommended. Finally, we expect that the planned restroom renovations (affecting Cold Spring, Stone Mill, and Travilah Elementary Schools) will remain on schedule.

We thank the Board for developing the draft Renewal and Modernization Policy as we agree that it would be helpful to implement a systemic approach to both replace building systems and modernize schools as appropriate. The Cluster would like to express concerns that the Board's draft policy is not specific enough in identifying targets and timelines for maintenance and replacement of system components or in determining when modernization would be appropriate.

Perhaps of greatest concern to the Cluster over the next 5-10 years is the overcrowding in Wootton HS. While our elementary and middle schools are projected to have adequate capacity through 2016, our high school remains the most overcrowded in Montgomery County. According to the Wootton Administration, the school is 369 students above capacity this year. The Superintendent's CIP recommendations contain a continued projection of overcrowding (nearly 108% of capacity) for 2015-16, the only high school in fact that triggers payments from developers due to the subdivision staging policy. This issue is not new; ten portables have been at Wootton HS for years.

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While the Wootton Administration has done an incredible job managing the school despite the overcrowding, the school simply cannot accommodate any significant increase in students. The addition of students resulting from new developments is of the utmost concern to the residents of the Wootton Cluster. The schools of our cluster have joined together to support several principles, which are attached. It is important to note that we are not taking a position for or against any development, rather, our concern is with the impact on our schools if more students are added to the cluster when WHS is so overcrowded. All schools in the cluster steadfastly believe that no community in the cluster should be moved out by a boundary study to make room for students from any new community. We all believe this should be dealt with before there are people living in new developments who might go to the Wootton Cluster . Furthermore, we are not trying to push new students to other clusters if they will become overcrowded like Wootton. We would like the BOE and County Council to appreciate the impact of new development on existing schools and proactively address this issue. The cluster offers these principles in an affirmative and constructive spirit and wants to express our willingness to work with the MCPS to prevent a foreseeable problem.

Finally, the cluster reiterates its strong support for the planned modernization of Wootton HS. Recently celebrating its 40th anniversary, it is essential that Wootton's modernization remain on schedule (starting FY 2014) and a priority for MCPS. We commend the MCPS and the Board of Education for working with the City of Rockville in an effort to improve working relationships and provide consistency regarding school capacity policies as they relate to school modernizations. We're happy to work with you and the City of Rockville to successfully modernize Wootton.

Thank you for the opportunity to bring the Wootton cluster's concerns to your attention.

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The Wootton Cluster PTA's and PTSA's have agreed to the following several principles:

1. We have serious concerns about assignment of students from substantial new developments/neighborhoods/communities (such as those over 1000 units) to Wootton Cluster schools which are overcapacity in their enrollment at such time. Of particular concern, is Wootton High School which has been overcapacity for many years and enrollment is projected to continue to be over capacity (without the addition of students from new developments) for the next fifteen years as per MCPS projections. Students from substantial new developments/neighborhoods should not be added to Wootton Cluster schools if they will increase student populations above current levels, regardless of whether the tracts of land involved are within the present geographic boundaries of the Cluster.
2. We strongly oppose any boundary change that would remove any established neighborhood/community from the Cluster in order to accommodate students from a new development/neighborhood/community regardless of whether the tract of land involved is currently within the present geographic boundaries of the Cluster. All Wootton Cluster PTAs and PTSAs commit to maintaining a unified position in support of all current Cluster communities/neighborhoods remaining in the Cluster in preference to addition of any new development/neighborhood/community.
3. These positions represent the affirmative views of the Wootton Cluster communities. We anticipate that our elected officials in the County government and on the Board of Education will support our viewpoint during the planning process before any building begins on any currently undeveloped tracts of land within or adjacent to the present the geographic boundaries of the Cluster.