

# Quince Orchard Cluster of Montgomery County Council of Parent Teacher Associations

Brown Station Elementary  
Fields Road Elementary  
Jones Lane Elementary  
Rachel Carson Elementary  
Thurgood Marshall Elementary  
Diamond Elementary

Lakelands Park Middle  
Ridgeview Middle

Quince Orchard High

November 14, 2011

## Testimony before the Montgomery County Public Schools Board of Education Regarding the FY2013 Capital Budget and the FY 2013 -2018 Capital Improvements Program (CIP)

Dear President Barclay, Dr. Starr, and Members of the Board of Education,

It's an honor to meet with you tonight on behalf of the parents of more than 6,300 students attending public schools in the Quince Orchard Cluster. We appreciate your efforts on their behalf, and we support the Superintendent's recommended FY2013 Capital Budget, and the FY2013 – 2018 CIP. We also support the MCCPTA testimony provided last Thursday, including the need for keeping all modernizations on track.

In the proposed CIP, the Quince Orchard Cluster thanks you for:

- The funding required to complete the Ridgeview Middle School improvements by August 2012. We appreciate the Board's continued support in achieving a more modern and healthy learning environment that welcomes both students and staff to the school each day.
- Keeping Brown Station Elementary School on schedule for its modernization completion in 2016. We appreciate your recognition of its significant enrollment growth and your plan to expand its capacity by 244 as a part of the modernization. The next few years will be difficult for these students and staff, but we know the finished product will be worth it.
- Continuing to monitor the increasing overcrowding in our cluster, with particular attention to Quince Orchard High School and Rachel Carson.

While these are important to the Quince Orchard Cluster, we also have two fiscally small issues that need to be addressed.

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The first concerns our high school which was re-programmed to expand its capacity this year. This differentiation released eight classrooms for regular secondary use and significantly reduced the overcrowding. We would appreciate one of these classrooms restored as a computer lab. Currently the high school is operating with fewer than its allotment of computers, with an increasingly technical curriculum. If the classroom conversion is not doable, portable computer stations would similarly satisfy this need. We would greatly appreciate your help in this regard.

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The second concern is the long standing pedestrian safety issue at Thurgood Marshall Elementary School.

“We have repeatedly asked for your help on the Thurgood Marshall pedestrian safety issue, and over the years a number of Board members have directed MCPS to research the issue and get back to them. I don’t know whether MCPS has ever responded to you, but neither the principal nor the PTA has ever been contacted to discuss it. We again solicit your support in the interest of student safety.”

The last paragraph was taken from my CIP testimony last year. Two Board members requested the MCPS staff provide feedback to them on this issue. While we appreciated the support, today we know no more than we did then. This is not a big financial issue. It involves modifying the entrance to a parking lot to facilitate drivers entering the lot legally, and to minimize the risk to student pedestrians. Dr. Starr, we appreciate and support your efforts to improve communications between MCPS and the school communities through your “Listen & Learn” events. We’re hoping you can offer some assistance in this area, too.

As always, thank you for the hard work you do for all Montgomery County students. We know it is another tough budget year, and we’ll continue to do what we can to secure both County and State financial support. Thank you for looking out for our children!

Sincerely yours,

Jim Keenan  
Quince Orchard Cluster Coordinator

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