

WHEATON CLUSTER

Wheaton High School
Parkland Middle School
Loiderman Middle School

Brookhaven Elementary School
Harmony Hills Elementary School
Sargent Shriver Elementary School
Viers Mill Elementary School
Weller Road Elementary School
Wheaton Woods Elementary School

Testimony to Montgomery County Board of Education
Superintendent's Recommended
FY 2013 Capital Budget and the FY 2013-2018 Capital Improvements Program
November 10, 2011

There is a lot of variability in what we think all children need in order to receive a quality education. Children, as well as the teachers and staff deserve to be in a learning environment that is healthy, safe and up to date on design and code standards. *Our Call to Action: NOW and not LATER.*

Good evening Dr. Starr, President Christopher Barclay, and Members of the Board. My name is Shebra Evans and I am one of two Wheaton Cluster Coordinators. I currently have two children attending school in the Wheaton Cluster thus motivating my participation in PTA.

On behalf of our cluster we want to thank you for the classroom additions at both *Brookhaven* and *Harmony Hills ES*. Both projects were completed on schedule (August 2011), an example of good management and careful planning. Everyone is appreciative for the additions.

Parkland MS is grateful for their modernization/renovations in recent years.

These improvements were done NOW and not LATER thus providing the basic infrastructure needed for our children to be successful. While we have been fortunate that many of our cluster's capital needs have been addressed, or are being considered, we do not fully support the recommendations in the 2013 CIP.

In the current CIP our cluster supports:

Viers Mill ES being approved for funding to move on to the construction phase beginning in January 2012 for their addition. We look forward to the project staying on schedule with a completion date of August 2013.

Weller Road ES moving into the construction phase for their modernization with a scheduled construction completion in August 2013, NOW and not LATER.

Wheaton Woods ES staying on track with planning and their modernization continues with an August 2016 completion date.

Brookhaven and *Viers Mill ES* are both approved for funding of restroom renovations for completion SY 2015-2016. We look forward to the projects staying on schedule, NOW and not LATER.

Sargent Shriver ES being on the slate for a classroom addition due to enrollment projections. Please do not overlook this need, as currently it appears that this is on hold with a "TBD" indicated for when a feasibility study would be funded.

Loiederman MS wants to maintain the quality of their performing arts school and request a feasibility study for a black box/studio. Also, they want to continue ensuring the safety of their students and staff and are in need of external security cameras. In addition, they want to use resources wisely and replace bathroom towel dispensers with hand dryers.

Furthermore, we support the positions of MCCPTA, as you've heard from President Kristin Tribble. Safe and secure school environments are vital to our children's education. We support keeping all planned additions and modernizations on track NOW and not LATER.

*In the current CIP our cluster **does not** support:*

Wheaton HS being delayed by an additional year, thus totaling a 3rd year and impacting two schools. Completion is proposed for August 2016, August 2018 for the Thomas Edison HS of Technology and August 2019 for restoration of the site.

We are not fully in support of the Superintendent's 2013 recommendations for capital improvement programs for our cluster because it doesn't advance the priority of our feeder high school. Our issues fall into four of the six categories used to decide CIP priorities.

We do recognize the Board has a daunting task. You all have the responsibility to ensure schools function within budget, while providing a quality education in a safe environment. With that being said, our cluster is most appreciative of the decision made in the last CIP to build both Wheaton High School and Thomas Edison High School of Technology on time in two new buildings. The modernization would give Wheaton HS the competitive edge in the DCC Choice process and give Thomas Edison High School of Technology updated programs to compete in high-demand fields. Also, the Bioscience and Engineering Magnet program at Wheaton HS affords our students the opportunity

to stay within the cluster and attend an application program. However, *Wheaton HS* was built in the early 50's with renovations/modernizations done in the early 80's. When buildings are aged we add unnecessary burdens and challenges to our students learning environment making it less conducive for success. This coupled with the socioeconomic barriers in our community could have an adverse effect on student performance, surroundings matter; school infrastructure matters. Not to mention older buildings can also bring about health, safety, and environmental issues.

Leaders develop solutions and apply those solutions through actions. Here is my solution: Don't delay! Our cluster high school is a priority that is necessary NOW and not LATER.

Our community thanks you for listening and allowing us the opportunity to give every child one voice.