

November 14, 2007

THE NORTHEAST CONSORTIUM

A consortium of the Blake, Paint Branch and Springbrook Clusters

Comments on the FY 2009 Capital Budget and Amendments to the FY 2009-2014 Capital Improvements Program

Middle School Needs

For

Benjamin Banneker

Briggs Chaney

Farquhar

Francis Scott Key

White Oak

Good evening. My name is Naghma Husain and I am one of the Springbrook Cluster **Coordinators**. I am here to speak about the capital needs of the Consortium's five middle schools -- Benjamin Banneker, Briggs Chaney, Farquhar, Francis Scott Key and White Oak.

We thank you for several projects in the NEC that have either been completed or are currently underway. We are pleased that the **Francis Scott Key Middle School** modernization is still on schedule for August 2009 completion. This is a very necessary and essential modernization for this forty year old school.

We are pleased to have **Farquhar Middle School** programmed for a modernization. However, since its completion date is programmed for August 2015, Farquhar has essential interim repairs that must be addressed as quickly as possible for the continued safety of our students and staff. Farquhar remains *the oldest, continually operating middle school in the County never to be modernized!* The community has serious concerns relating to remaining asbestos in the building and mold growth in ceiling tiles. The Farquhar PTSA has addressed several of the schools needs by purchasing equipment at its own expense. It is imperative that Farquhar's modernization be accelerated to address the increasing impact of development on Batchellors Forest Road and the surrounding community. Bear in mind that thousands of staff and students will be working and learning in an unsafe environment until this modernization is complete.

We encourage you to read through the supplementary letter provided by the Farquhar PTA that includes important details about items in need of repair and replacement. In order to ensure the health and safety of students and staff, the Farquhar modernization must be accelerated.

Specific areas of concern for **Farquhar** include:

*asbestos floor and ceiling tiles

*traffic concerns at Batchellors **Forest** Road. The bus circle and parking lot also need to be reconfigured to address serious safety concerns.

*mold growth in the building.

*PLAR requests including repair and/or replacement of lighting, stairwell treads, rusting windows in the media center, broken water fountains, and a soundproof door between the music and piano rooms.

Benjamin Banneker requests to be put on the modernization schedule. They immediately need two additional portable classrooms to address overcrowding. Please consider making an exception for schools such as Banneker in respect to portable classrooms. This building is not designed to hold so many students, yet MCPS continues to apply the same formula to Banneker that applies to all schools – even new ones. Banneker also asks that its restroom renovations be expedited to address the wear and tear of age and overcapacity as well as repairs to its new lockers which will not close securely. The school also requests a new riding lawn mower.

The major area of concern for **Briggs Chaney** is its HVAC system which has been difficult to maintain and regulate for several years. The school requests repairs or replacement for this system for the increased comfort and better learning environment for its staff and students. Please see the attached letter from the Briggs Chaney PTSA.

White Oak Middle School requests a safety railing along the sidewalk where school buses pick up and discharge students at the south end of the school. They also need new TV studio equipment because current equipment is old and incompatible with anything new.

Respectfully submitted,

The Cluster Coordinators of the Northeast Consortium

- Attachments:
1. Summary of Middle School Needs
 2. Letters from individual schools:
 - a. Farquhar Middle School
 - b. Briggs Chaney Middle School