

February 3, 2024

Testimony of Minal Patel in support of: **Replacement Burtonsville Elementary School Project**

I urge Montgomery County Council to fully fund the Executive's CIP request for the replacement Burtonsville Elementary School major capital project.

The County has pushed off this critical funding for more than 10 years since the project was first identified. This project can not be pushed off any longer. The County Council must provide the remaining funding to complete this project.

The current Burtonsville Elementary School building infrastructure is inadequate to support the current elementary school population; it has no capacity to meet the needs of a growing elementary school population. For example, my third grader rarely wishes to buy school lunch because she says it takes too long to buy lunch and there isn't enough time for her to finish eating. On some of the days she has bought lunch, she's come home hungry and at times cranky. This is directly due to the inadequate cafeteria space that continues to have a daily impact on the Burtonsville Elementary student population.

Additionally, the parking lots and entrances into the school are not safe and are no longer functional to accommodate the daily traffic of buses and personal vehicles coming into and out of the school. It is substantially worse when there is a school event for families and friends of Burtonsville students. When I participated in our annual Trunk or Treat event this October, I personally spoke with numerous frustrated families trying to find parking at the school. Many parent volunteers helped direct pedestrians and vehicles along narrow lanes that could not accommodate both. The current location and configuration of the school grounds pose grave safety concerns.

Burtonsville is a community in East County, a growing and vibrant area of Montgomery County. Our community needs continued investment to meet the needs of the growing population. Funding the Burtonsville Elementary School project is one of many steps the County Council must take to support our community.