

# Sherwood

## Cluster Schools

SHERWOOD HS  
WILLIAM H. FARQUHAR MS  
ROSA PARKS MS  
BELMONT ES  
SHERWOOD ES  
OLNEY ES  
BROOK GROVE ES  
GREENWOOD ES

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April 8, 2024

Montgomery County Council  
100 Maryland Ave  
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Dear Councilmembers

I'm Henriot St. Gerard, co-Cluster Coordinator for the Sherwood Cluster and AVP of the Northeast Consortium. As a parent with three children in MCPS, I appreciate the chance to discuss the FY25 operating budget.

While this year's budget includes significant investments important to my cluster, particularly in children's mental health through dedicated funds for social worker and psychologist positions, I am disappointed by the reduction of approximately \$430K for contractual services, one (1) HVAC technician, and other HVAC maintenance services. Though seemingly insignificant, given the persistent HVAC issues in our county's schools, every dollar is crucial for ensuring an efficient system for repairs and replacements. It is imperative that we prioritize and invest in streamlined approaches to manage HVAC concerns, ensuring a safe learning environment for our students.

More importantly than asking you this evening to be mindful to not significantly reduce this year's budget, is my request to hold MCPS accountable for spending their money correctly and not putting it to waste. For too long I have come before this Council and the BOE seeking results on issues around equity, school safety, and HVAC matters. The ongoing lack of action, particularly regarding seemingly mundane issues such as HVAC, underscores this systemic failure. While MCPS is not in dire straits, the trajectory towards relying on press releases and strongly worded statements as solutions, is concerning.

It is imperative that the Council comprehends the gravity of the situation. Let us collectively prioritize the needs of our students and commit to delivering the highest quality education in Montgomery County. This entails addressing instances of unreported and ignored misconduct with the gravity they warrant and implementing processes and procedures to ensure our financial investments in schools are utilized effectively.

Thank you.

Henriot St. Gerard  
Sherwood Cluster Coordinator