



To the President and Members of the County Council,

I'm Deborah Kornbluth Berger, the School Chair for the Luxmanor Citizens Association, the LCA. The LCA was established in 1938 and we represent over 950 homes in the Luxmanor, Windermere and the Oaks Communities. We were surprised and dismayed to learn about the last minute change to the Woodward High School construction plan that would delay building an auditorium until a new Phase 3 without a specific timeline. As of now, if the county council approves this budget, it is likely that Woodward High School will be the only high school in the county that does not have an auditorium. This negatively impacts both our community and the Northwood High School Community. The current plan is for Woodward to open as a holding school for Northwood in August 2024 and then to open as a new high school to alleviate crowding at Walter Johnson and other area schools in fall of 2027. This new plan would mean that when the school opens in 2027 it would not have an auditorium, a standard amenity at all other current MCPS high schools. We want parity with other high schools in the county. Thankfully in Northwood's construction plan, they have an auditorium in their rebuilt school and we would like one just as they will have. It is also critical that they build the auditorium now, so Woodward has parity with our current neighborhood high school, WJ.

Auditoriums are important features at all other MCPS high schools for music and drama performances, assemblies, parent and community meetings, elementary and middle school promotion ceremonies, elementary and middle school music performances and more. They are the heart of a high school community. Think about the awesome school performances that you have seen — I know I have seen great WJ Stage performances over the years. Think of the concerts, the plays, the musicals, the community events, the music and drama and dance classes that use WJ's auditorium every day. These won't happen the same way at Woodward unless WE ACT NOW!

MCPS delays and decisions to split construction into phases has increased the cost of construction - this should not fall on the backs of our children who have been living with a substantially overcrowded Walter Johnson while waiting for Woodward to be built.

Imagine the disruption and added anxiety to our community and the communities that may feed into WJ and Woodward if there is significant disparity between these schools in the future boundary decision making. The LCA requests that the auditorium be built at the same time as the rest of the building so our community high school has parity with other schools in our county.

Thank you,  
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