

Cold Spring Elementary School – DuFief Elementary School
Fallsmead Elementary School – Lakewood Elementary School
Stone Mill Elementary School – Travilah Elementary School
Cabin John Middle School – Robert Frost Middle School
Thomas S. Wootton High School

**FY27-32 Capital Improvements Program Testimony to
Montgomery County Council**

**By Junhua Liu, Vivian Xu, Alexandra Chusid MCCPTA Wootton Cluster Coordinators
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Good evening, Councilmembers.

I'm Junhua Liu, Wootton Cluster Coordinator, representing the Wootton community's concerns and frustration about the Superintendent's FY27–32 CIP recommendation and his proposal to move Wootton High School to Crown Farm in 2027.

1. Wootton has been removed from the CIP—again.

For more than a decade, Wootton's renovation or rebuild has been delayed. Now, despite overwhelming evidence of facility failure, Wootton remains absent from the FY27–32 CIP, with no funding and no timeline. That is unacceptable.

2. Safety failures demand funding—not displacement.

The recent Facility Condition Assessment confirms that Wootton has one of the worst Facility Condition Index scores among MCPS high schools. Even more alarming, Wootton is the only high school rated “Poor” in both HVAC and Plumbing systems. These are core life-safety systems. Students should not have to change schools to be safe.

We are urging the Council to designate specific funding now to address these safety issues—regardless of any future boundary decisions.

3. Boundary study recommendation raises serious concerns.

Relocating an entire high school community four miles away—while leaving the existing Wootton building behind—was proposed without meaningful community engagement and without addressing the underlying capital responsibility. Even if labeled a “relocation,” the practical effect is the loss of a neighborhood high school.

Wootton is not an average school. It is consistently ranked among the top high schools in Maryland and serves as an academic anchor for the county. Strong neighborhood high schools stabilize property values, attract families, and support the county's tax base. Displacing a high-performing school creates uncertainty and erodes confidence in long-term county planning.

Most troubling, allowing a boundary change to replace a capital solution sets a **dangerous precedent**—that deferred maintenance can be resolved by moving students instead of fixing buildings. That precedent does not stop with Wootton. It affects every school community in Montgomery County.

Boundary changes cannot and should not be used as a substitute for capital investment.

4 (Finally). Equity concerns cannot be ignored.

Wootton serves a highly diverse population, with nearly 40% Asian students, one of the largest Asian student populations in MCPS. When a high-performing, diverse school is repeatedly denied capital investment and then proposed for relocation instead of repair, it raises serious equity concerns that deserve county council oversight.

Equity does not mean moving students to solve a facilities problem.
Equity means investing in communities that have been deferred for years.

We respectfully ask the County Council to:

1. Designate immediate CIP funding to address Wootton's critical safety and infrastructure needs.
2. Hold MCPS accountable for long-delayed capital obligations
3. Require transparency and community engagement before any decision that would effectively close a neighborhood high school.

Wootton students have waited long enough.

They should not have to move to receive safe facilities.

And our community should not lose its high school because fixing it is inconvenient.

Lastly, Cold Spring Elementary School's flawed open classroom design causes excessive noise, distractions, and safety concerns. The school must stay on the CIP list with a clear commitment to resolve these issues.

Thank you for your time and for standing up for safety, equity, and accountability in Montgomery County.