

Good afternoon, Councilmembers. My name is Kristen Quinn. I am the parent of two current students at Cashell Elementary School, a community healthcare provider, Montgomery County Maryland taxpayer, and current Greater Olney Civic Association Board member.

I am here today to on behalf of families, students, and educators in our community to urge the Council to support inclusion of **Magruder High School** in the Capital Improvements Program. Despite repeated requests, Magruder has not been prioritized for meaningful capital investment, and your support is needed now to ensure the safety, health, and stability of our school infrastructure.

Magruder serves **more than 1,600 students** and has a diverse student body — roughly **41% Hispanic, 18% Black, 24% White, and 13% Asian** — representing families across a broad range of incomes. It reflects the type of diversity Montgomery County prides itself on valuing.

Yet the building tells a different story.

Constructed over 50 years ago and with repairs repeatedly deferred, Magruder recently received a FCI of 64% Facility Condition Index Value of .6486, ranking it among the most depleted high school in the county. This aligns with ongoing reports of inoperable locker rooms, inadequate HVAC systems, unreliable elevators, hazardous walkways and sports field conditions, and readily visible mold and moisture issues. These conditions have a clear impact on health and safety, while also straining the educational impact achieved. MCPS high schools which have fully modernized labs, collaboration spaces, and proficient building systems are far better positioned to prepare students for post-secondary success.

Magruder students are asked to learn in a building that is literally crumbling around them. As a parent, the health of my children is my top priority, and I will not enroll them in a school which knowingly puts their health at risk.

In a diverse, mixed-income school like Magruder, prolonged facility neglect has a predictable and well-documented effect: families with the most flexibility, generally those who are the most resourced, quietly opt out. When families with the most flexibility and resources leave a school like Magruder, it doesn't just affect enrollment — it changes the political reality. These families often provide advocacy, volunteer leadership, and community engagement that amplify a school's needs. Without them, schools can appear less viable, and it becomes harder for elected officials to justify timely investments, even when the need is urgent. Inaction, in this context, is not neutral — it compounds both inequities and the political risk. The Council has a responsibility to protect the Magruder community.

From a fiscal perspective, deferred maintenance accelerates deterioration and increases long-term costs. It also weakens community engagement, making future investment more

difficult. We have a timely opportunity to use **Crown High School as a holding school**, allowing for efficient and comprehensive modernization or rebuild. This is the most cost-controlled and least disruptive approach.

I personally attended two holding schools in Howard County — once during the construction of Ilchester Elementary and again during the rebuild of Ellicott Mills Middle School. This approach allows the County to fix systems once and correctly, avoid duplicative repair costs, reduce long-term operating expenses, and deliver a building that supports a healthy learning environment for years to come.

I urge the Council to prioritize Magruder High School for full modernization or rebuilding using a holding school strategy, rather than pursuing years of inefficient, costly repairs. This approach protects students, stabilizes enrollment, and respects taxpayers who expect long-term value from public investment.

Thank you for your time and your stewardship of County resources.