

County Council Budget Hearing Testimony, with LINKS added

Monday Feb. 9, 2026, 6:30 p.m.

Hello, I'm Sally Stolz,

I'm here to urge you to take every action possible to preserve Wootton HS on Wootton Parkway in Rockville, MD.

On Thursday, Feb. 5, Superintendent Taylor recommended Option H, the only boundary study option which permanently closes Wootton High School.

This is a short-sighted, fiscally irresponsible choice which sabotages the county's decades of work to establish the successful and fast-growing "Great Seneca Science Corridor", or "Biotech Corridor", and directly defies the goals of Thrive Montgomery 2050.

Option H closes Wootton High School and sends some of its students, to Churchill High School and some (including ALL of its walking students), to be part of the new Crown High School.

The Wootton Facilities Condition Assessment (FCA) lists only \$82,300 (p. 8) of "immediate needs" to the building and site. "The school is functionally equitable. All students in this school have access to safe, well-maintained, and appropriately equipped learning environments as students in other MCPS schools." (p.6) "The FCA depleted Value of this school is 0.624582." (p. 7) Overall the report recommends the building remain in service, using standard capital improvement planning. Please put Wootton back on the CIP.

For 55 years the Wootton Community has grown and coalesced. At Crown the transferred students and parents would join with two other communities and begin again. Wootton as we know it would be gone. It's close relationships with Frost would also be gone. And it's approximately 551 walking students (p1) would need to be bused to Crown. This is probably the most blatant violation of Montgomery County's Thrive 2050, which prioritizes "corridor centered growth (which) facilitates walking, biking, and transit use and reduces emissions from motor vehicles" (Thrive Montgomery 2050 p. 36)

But the fiscal damage gets worse. Loss of school capacity means loss of growth and loss of tax revenues for the Biotech Corridor..

The Maryland Building Industry Association, (MBIA), rarely takes a public stance, so their January 26th letter to the BOE and Dr. Taylor should be seriously studied. Here is part of what the MBIA wrote in an extensively researched letter to the Board of Education and Dr. Taylor on January 26th:

Quote

“After reviewing MCPS capacity, adopted master plans, and planned residential development in the Rockville-Gaithersburg corridor, we are concerned.....

From a growth-management perspective, reducing long-term capacity in a high-growth area is inconsistent with sound planning principles...

... projects planned and approved under existing assumptions face increased uncertainty, potential delay, and additional regulatory friction. These effects undermine Montgomery County's stated goals...

MBIA respectfully urges the Board of Education to reject Option H and pursue alternatives that preserve long-term school capacity, align with adopted growth plans, and support Montgomery County's shared objectives of housing supply, affordability, fiscal responsibility, and sustainable development.” End Quote

Please listen to this dire warning. Do not let MCPS close Wootton HS on Wootton Parkway! Please urge the BOE to keeps both Wootton and Crown available for the Biotech Corridor growth! This will provide needed revenue for the county and for MCPS!

Thank you!

Sally Stolz
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