

Good afternoon! Thank you for the opportunity to provide a testimony today.

I am a resident of Rockville and a member of Wootton High School cluster community. Even though the Superintendent has already made a recommendation of permanent closure of Wootton High School (Wootton). I am here to respectfully ask the council to urgently return Wootton to the Capital Improvement Program (CIP).

I am a novice on how CIP works but know that Wootton was removed from CIP twice in past, when I asked within my community, the answers have a common theme, it was political.

For what I know, politics or bad decisions of that time, it has had a long-term effect on a stable community that is now grappling with MCPS' decision to close their high school, although it is wrapped in a blanket of relocation.

What does Wootton provide to the community and MCPS?

- Wootton is a high performing MCPS school, academically and in extracurricular activities
- MCPS proudly published on August 20, 2025, that at the National level, Wootton is on top of the list among its high schools. The second best on the list from MCPS was 81 rankings behind.
- Among MCPS's own rankings, Wootton is currently 3<sup>rd</sup> on the list and has been at the top and in top five for many years.
- Wootton is among the top few in every academic metric.

What does Wootton get from the council and MCPS?

- Repeated delay in renovating its facilities and ultimately a recommendation to close the school. This is unjust and unfair.

Wootton is a contributor to society not a taker, based on the past CIP recommendations (which did not occur) and the current reasoning for closure, it is evident that the council and MCPS have put bare minimum resources in the school, highlighted by face-lift not infrastructure improvement in the past year. The above academic excellence of Wootton is a product of decades of sustained effort by its educators, administrators, the past and current families, and collaborative measures with its feeder schools.

It appears that everyone, other than MCPS planners (maybe they know it too), knows that the new upcoming school will be overcrowded due to planned expansions in Rockville and Gaithersburg. Overcrowded schools struggle with meeting every aspect of students' academic and extracurricular needs. Traffic will be a nightmare, apparently that is not a concern for MCPS, but it should be for the council and Rockville City.

I request the council to correct their prior decisions regarding repeated removal of Wootton from CIP and urgently recommend an immediate total repair and renovation of the school facility. It is not an unprecedented ask; this council has done the same for other schools even when they were not originally on CIP, by replacing Wootton's needs with those of the others. This is the time that you do it for Wootton.

In short, recommendations and actions of this council that would ultimately close a thriving, high-performing school to cover for earlier planning mistakes is a second and far more damaging blunder.

Thank you for your time and for listening to the Wootton community.

Respectfully,

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