

TESTIMONY OF  
Bonnie M. Borsa, Vice President  
BOARD OF EDUCATION OF FREDERICK COUNTY

BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS HEARING  
JANUARY 30, 2008

Greetings from Frederick County. I am Bonnie Borsa, Vice President of the Board of Education of Frederick County. Accompanying me today are Superintendent Dr. Linda Burgee and Executive Director of Facilities Services Ray Barnes.

We are here to appeal several school construction projects, all of which are very important to the Board of Education and to the parents and students of Frederick County.

Frederick County has been growing rapidly, and enrollment increases in the school system since 1990 have been greater than at any time in our history. Even though we have, with the State's help, engaged in an aggressive school construction program, twenty-two of our schools continue to operate at over 100% of capacity. Due to this overcrowding, we are providing instruction in 157 portable classrooms. In addition, our schools are aging. We have more than 23 schools over 40 years old and another 12 that are over 30 years old. We cannot forget the needs of students in our older schools while we add seats to address overcrowding. Frederick County is committed to ensuring that there is a balanced school construction program that takes into consideration the needs of *all* students.

At the local level, we are doing our part to address the many issues associated with rapid growth and development. The County Commissioners and Board of Education

have jointly supported a six-year program of school construction that will help reduce the number of overcrowded schools. The County Commissioners have adopted an "Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance" to regulate new development, impact fees have been instituted to raise local revenues for school construction, and the County Commissioners regularly "forward fund" projects so that they can stay on schedule. In addition, we have recently completed our first developer-funded school addition project. We believe that we are a leader in the State in our efforts to leverage additional funds for school construction.

We feel strongly that our ability to provide a proper academic and instructional program and our students' ability to achieve to high standards depend on adequate school facilities. We are doing our part. The State needs to continue as an active partner with us toward providing the classroom space we sorely need. Toward this goal, the projects submitted for review today should be given your fullest consideration and support.

As a testimony to the priority our County places on school construction, we present a joint letter signed by the Board of Education, Frederick County Chamber of Commerce, Frederick County Office of Economic Development, PTA Council of Frederick County Inc., Frederick County Commissioners, Frederick Community College, and the Delegation in support of our requests.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Dr. Burgee will now present our specific project appeals.

TESTIMONY OF  
DR. LINDA BURGEE, SUPERINTENDENT  
FREDERICK COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS HEARING

JANUARY 30, 2008

I appreciate the opportunity to meet with you and request **CONSTRUCTION FUNDS** for the replacement of Linganore High School as well as the renovation of West Frederick Middle School. We are also requesting **PLANNING APPROVAL** for the Lincoln Elementary School renovation/addition and additions to Yellow Springs and Waverley Elementary Schools.

Frederick County is faced with the challenge of making a substantial investment in new buildings and additions to address our enrollment growth, while at the same time addressing the renovation needs of our older schools, especially at the secondary level. FCPS is operating at 104% of State-Rated Capacity at the high school level with 42 portables at five high schools. The average age of our high schools is 35 years old. The new Oakdale HS is under construction and will add 1600 seats to our school system. I thank you for your ongoing funding of this project and look forward to the remainder of the funding in future fiscal years.

The replacement of Linganore HS, first built in the early 1960's, is under design and will be ready to begin construction this summer as is the renovation of the 49 year old West Frederick MS. These are essential projects if Frederick County Public Schools is to address our capacity and renovation needs at the secondary level. But we cannot solve

the school overcrowding problem and address our renovation needs without strong State support. I urge you to give favorable consideration to these projects.

We also have significant capacity and renovation needs at the elementary level. Even with the aggressive program of elementary school construction that we have instituted in recent years, many of our students are still receiving instruction in overcrowded schools. Currently, there are 90 portables at 24 of our elementary schools. Six elementary schools have 6 or more portables each. This is unacceptable. In addition, our elementary schools are aging and in need of renovation to ensure our ability to provide the same high quality educational program at all our schools. I urge you to grant planning approval for the renovation of Lincoln ES as well as the additions to Yellow Springs and Waverley elementary schools.

We realize that the funding request we submitted this year is substantial, but each project reflects a real need at different schools in the County. We understand that funding may be limited, but the needs of our schools in Frederick County remain. We have submitted our requests in priority order and hope you will consider them in this way.

1. **Linganore HS replacement** - Construction Funds are requested in FY 2009. Linganore HS was originally built in the early 1960's and has had only minor improvements. It is currently operating at 140% of SRC with 27 portables. This project will replace the existing 1,254 SRC high school with a modern 1,600 SRC high school. A feasibility study was approved by the IAC in 2005. Planning approval was granted in April 2006. Design is almost complete, and construction is ready to begin in 2008. An August 2010 opening is planned.

2. **West Frederick MS renovation** – Construction Funds are requested in FY 2009.

West Frederick MS was originally constructed in 1958 and has had only minor improvements. The 49 year old school is in need of modernization in order to provide the required curriculum of a middle school and to address air quality issues. This school is the top priority middle school for modernization in our systemwide needs analysis. Design of this project is almost complete.

Construction is ready to begin in 2008. An August 2010 opening is planned.

3. **Lincoln “B” ES Addition/Renovation** – Planning approval is requested for this

project in FY 2009. Lincoln ES, originally constructed in 1922, is currently located in two buildings: “A” building and “B” building, located on opposite sides of Madison Street in Frederick City. While additions have been constructed in 1938, 1953 and 1974, this 85 year old building has had only minor renovations. The project will demolish approximately 56% of the “B” building, leaving only the historic Lincoln HS portion of the building. The historic portion of the building will then be renovated and an addition constructed that will allow the entire school to be housed in one building. A feasibility study was completed in August 2006, and this concept was approved by both the Frederick County BOE and the IAC.

4. **Yellow Springs ES addition** – Planning approval is requested in FY 2009. This

project will provide additional capacity to address full day kindergarten needs as well as growth from large developments recently approved in Frederick City as well as growth at Fort Detrick. Yellow Springs ES is currently operating at 97% of SRC with one portable. This project will also help to address capacity issues

at adjoining Whittier ES through redistricting. Whittier ES is currently operating at 107% of SRC with 7 portables.

5. **Waverley ES addition** – Planning approval is requested in FY 2009 for this project. This project will provide additional capacity for Waverley as well as adjoining Orchard Grove ES and possibly Whittier ES through redistricting. Additional capacity is needed due to growth in Frederick City and Fort Detrick. Waverley is currently operating with 6 portables due to special program requirements while Orchard Grove has 2 portables and Whittier has 7 portables.

We are trying hard to keep up with student enrollment growth during the last 10 years. We anticipate that enrollment growth will continue due to rising birth rates, housing development and growth at Fort Detrick due to BRAC. Four of the projects that we are appealing, West Frederick MS, Lincoln ES, Yellow Springs ES and Waverley ES, serve the Fort Detrick Community either directly or indirectly and will aid FCPS in dealing with growth pressures due to BRAC.

The Board of County Commissioners has assumed a substantial financial burden in forward funding these essential construction projects as well as major renovations, repairs, and maintenance of existing school facilities in our county. In addition, FCPS and the County Commissioners have worked with developers to secure funding for additions to our schools. We recognize the importance of their efforts to help us cope with the influx of students. However, we also need the State to maintain a balanced partnership by increasing its financial commitment to Frederick County. We strongly urge your support of the projects we've submitted to you today.



January 30, 2008

State of Maryland  
Board of Public Works  
80 Calvert Street  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Governor O'Malley and Members of the Board of Public Works:

The undersigned advocates for public schools in Frederick County would like to thank you for your support in recognizing the importance of adequate public school facilities and your commitment of \$300 million to the FY 09 state budget. The Frederick County Delegation, Board of County Commissioners, Board of Education of Frederick County, PTA Council of Frederick County, Frederick County Chamber of Commerce, Frederick Community College, and the Frederick County Office of Economic Development, are united in their support for full funding of Frederick County's request of \$72.9 million (list attached) for public school construction.

To date, the Interagency Committee on School Construction (IAC) has awarded our county \$12.2 million to apply toward eight of 20 projects requested. We appreciate your approval of our high priority projects, and hope you will provide the rest of the funds necessary to address our school facilities needs.

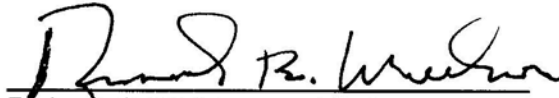
We recognize the fiscal constraints for dwindling state resources. However, as pointed out by the state's Task Force to Study Public School Facilities, school construction needs are great throughout the entire state. Since the report was commissioned in 2003, construction costs have risen approximately 50%, thereby increasing dramatically the need for additional resources for school facility needs.


In Frederick County we have seen rapid growth demanding new school facilities and additions. We expect this growth to continue with the increase in jobs at the Fort Detrick Military Base and other scientific research support services associated with the base. This year we have 37% of our public schools over 100% capacity. We are also plagued with older schools badly in need of renovation and modernization efforts. Over half of our schools (55%) are older than 30 years, with 36% of them over 40 years of age.


In addition, increased academic requirements under the Bridge to Excellence Act (Thornton) and the No Child Left Behind Act dictate the need for additional resources to build more instructional areas. Full day kindergarten classrooms, smaller class sizes, and remedial teaching efforts have furthered the demand for additional school facilities. With these increased standards for our students, we expect excellence in their performance. They should expect no less from their elected officials when it comes to funding in education.

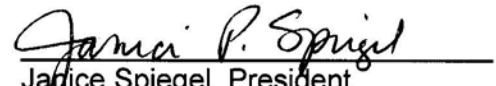
We are optimistic about the Governor's pledge to fund public school construction. We support your efforts and hope that you are able to increase school construction funding for Frederick County.

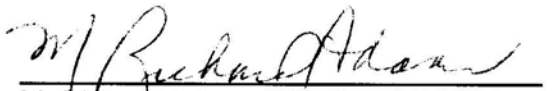
Sincerely,

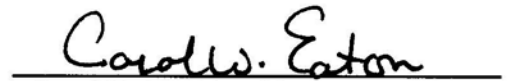
  
Richard B. Weldon, Jr., Chair  
Maryland House of Delegates

  
Jan H. Gardner, President  
Board of County Commissioners

  
Daryl Boffman, President  
Board of Education of Frederick County

  
Janice Spiegel, President  
PTA Council of Frederick County

  
M. Richard Adams, President & CEO  
Frederick County Chamber of Commerce

  
Carol Eaton, President  
Frederick Community College

  
Laurie Boyer, Executive Director  
Frederick County Office of Economic Development

Attachment

cc: Dr. Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools, Maryland  
Department of Education  
David Lever, R.A., Executive Director, Interagency Committee on School  
Construction, Maryland Department of Education  
Frederick County Delegation  
Frederick County Commissioners  
Frederick County Board of Education  
Dr. Linda D. Burgee, Superintendent of Schools, Frederick County Public  
Schools (FCPS)  
Raymond V. Barnes, Jr., Executive Director, Facilities Services Division, FCPS