

Testimony – Board of Education Community Forum- Operating Budget
FY 09 Operating Budget Priorities
September 18, 2008

Good evening President Navarro, Dr. Weast and members of the Board of Education. My name is Carolyn Camacho and I am pleased to have the opportunity as a parent at Watkins Mill High School, to comment on priorities in the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) Strategic Plan.

The Watkins Mill Cluster needs to offer a variety of school programs because of its diverse student population. According to MCPS demographic characteristics, the Watkins Mill cluster substantially exceeds the county norms in the diversity of its student population and in the proportion of needy families and ESOL students. Many of our students have responded to the challenges of the rigorous AP and IB curriculums we offer here at Watkins Mill High School. Our graduates in 2008 were awarded 4 million dollars in scholarships including two Gates Millennium Scholars. However, some additional programs are needed to assure success for **all** our diverse student population. These include programs in:

- Comprehensive Technical Education
- Art and music
- Wellness and mental health
- Social service support for our families
- After school recreational and academic programs

For example, our cluster would benefit from a Wellness Center here at the high school as well as Linkages to Learning programs in our feeder middle schools.

In these tough times our school system should explore opportunities to partner with other government agencies, institutions of higher education, businesses and private charities to provide these services. Thank you for your consideration of our comments this evening.

Demographic Characteristics of Schools 2007-2008

Schools	Total enrollment	African American%	American Indian%	Asian American%	Hispanic %	White %	FARMs %	ESOL%	Mobility Rate%
Watkins Mill HS	1710	36.6%	0.2%	10.3%	30.6%	22.3%	33.1%	9.2%	20.0%
Montgomery Village MS	656	36.6%	0.3%	8.1%	33.1%	22.0%	42.8%	9.0%	19.9%
Neelsville MS	871	36.6%	0.3%	14.2%	29.3%	19.5%	44.0%	10.1%	23.9%
South Lake ES	549	35.0%	0.4%	11.3%	44.3%	9.1%	66.5%	32.8%	42.1%
Stedwick ES	576	36.6%	0.2%	11.6%	27.3%	24.3%	46.9%	22.9%	21.4%
Watkins Mill ES	529	39.9%	0.8%	11.7%	32.9%	14.7%	52.4%	28.2%	24.1%
Whetsone ES	586	29.7%	1.0%	12.5%	38.1%	18.8%	47.6%	27.1%	25.6%
Elementary Cluster Total	2240	35.2%	0.6%	11.8%	35.6%	16.9%	53.2%	27.7%	27.9%
Elementary County Total	61710	22.6%	0.3%	15.7%	23.0%	38.5%	30.4%	18.5%	17.5%