April 25, 2016

The Honorable Isiah Leggett  
Montgomery County Executive  
Executive Office Building  
101 Monroe Street  
Rockville, Maryland 20850

The Honorable Nancy Floreen, President  
and Members of the Montgomery County Council  
Stella B. Werner Council Office Building  
100 Maryland Avenue  
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Dear Mr. Leggett, Ms. Floreen, and Members of the Montgomery County Council:

At its April 19, 2016, business meeting, the Board of Education approved a resolution to request your support in the development and implementation of a permanent solution for the relocation of all Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) school buses from their current location at the Shady Grove Transportation Depot (Depot) prior to release of the property for its newly intended use.

During the past several weeks, the Board has received significant correspondence from community members expressing their concerns regarding the negative impacts associated with the proposed interim solution to relocate approximately 100 school buses to the Carver Educational Services Center (CESC) parking lot. The concerns raised are primarily focused on operational logistics, environmental impacts, and increased traffic flow within the surrounding communities. At our business meeting, Mayor Bridget Donnell Newton presented a letter from herself and the Rockville Council outlining these and other concerns and asked that the CESC site be removed from consideration as an interim solution.

While MCPS continues to work with our community and the City of Rockville to alleviate the concerns identified for the CESC location, we are still challenged by the indeterminate timelines associated with the interim solutions. We must consider as well the significant costs of the CESC and other interim solutions that will compete with limited resources that are needed to accommodate our growing enrollment and aging schools. We should also anticipate that if any other interim sites are identified that are located near residential communities, there may be additional community opposition.

The Board has been fully engaged with this critical project for many years and has proactively sought solutions for the relocation of the Depot, as well as the overutilization at our other bus

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depots. As development continues in the county, finding solutions for the Depot has become increasingly challenging and complex. MCPS was notified by the county to vacate the current Depot site, located at Crabbs Branch Way, by January 2017. While an interim solution, including parking buses at CESC is being developed and implemented, the interim solution has not identified locations for all of the buses, nor has a permanent solution been identified. This certainly raises questions regarding compliance with the county’s requirement of “Declaration of No Further Need” prior to disposition of county property.

Please know we fully support the county’s Smart Growth Initiative; however, we are requesting a delay in the issuance of the Declaration of No Further Need on the Shady Grove Transportation Depot until a permanent solution for relocation of the current Depot is identified and implemented. As the Board is committed to working collaboratively with the county executive and County Council to further explore all viable options for the permanent relocation of our school buses in consultation with our community, MCPS will continue to work with the County on the development and implementation of an interim solution should the implementation period of a permanent solution require some degree of temporary relocation of buses from the Depot.

Your consideration of our position is greatly appreciated, and we look forward to working as county partners to accomplish the goals set forth in the Smart Growth Initiative, including the relocation of the Shady Grove Transportation Depot.

Sincerely,

Michael A. Durso
President

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Copy to:
   Members of the Board of Education
   Mr. Bowers
   Dr. Navarro
   Dr. Statham
   Dr. Zuckerman
   Mr. Song
   Mr. Ikehloa