



Testimony Before the Montgomery County Council  
FY22 CIP Program for Montgomery County Public Schools  
Link Hoewing, President  
Fair Access Committee for Western Montgomery County

Members of the Council, our community appreciates the approval of the major construction project for a new Poolesville High School (PHS). We believe two critical elements of the plan for the school have been left out. Without them, we believe the plan is deficient.

The current plan does not include a new, competition size gym that can meet all current and future needs. Our school has as many, and in some cases more student athletes than other much larger high schools. Our current gym is nearly fifty years old. It cannot accommodate crowds for major games like playoffs. We need and deserve a new gymnasium.

We also believe the plan must include a Wellness Center. If the current Pandemic has taught us anything, it is that student mental health has suffered tremendously over the last year. The county itself recognizes this and MCPS even approved a pilot program to focused on helping students who have suffered during the Pandemic. A Maryland State report in 2018 showed that even then, a large portion of students suffered from mental health problems. Our school is 10 miles or more from virtually all county services and mental health support programs. We need this Center.

The Fair Access Committee was established to ensure that the Western County receives fair treatment in county programs and capital investments. We appreciate the approval of a new high school building, but our experience shows that attention is rarely paid to the needs of our area and we need to finish the job of making our high school building work for all students. The commitment from the overall CIP budget is tiny (only .0008 percent of the \$1.7 billion budget) but the impact it will have on Western Montgomery County is HUGE. We appreciate your support and commitment to Fair Access for the Western portion of our County.