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Fairfax County School Board Public Hearing, Thursday, January 18, 2024

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Place	Fairfax County School Board, Virginia
Length	21m (video)

- Official meeting video (YouTube): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-UR9wj44Mcc
- Official School Board page (FCPS): https://www.fcps.edu/about-fcps/leadership/school-board

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Speech-to-text: whisper.cpp, model large-v3-turbo. Produced 2026-11-02. Each paragraph starts with its time [HH:MM:SS] in the meeting video.

[00:00:32] The January 18, 2024 public hearing on the capital improvement plan is now called to order. Ms. Sizemore-Heiser has submitted a written request to attend virtually this evening's public hearing due to personal reasons.

[00:00:48] All those in favor of granting these requests, please raise your hand. I don't know if I need to name everybody, but everyone, do I need to name everybody? Okay, Mr. Moon, Ms. Anderson, Dr. Anderson, Mr. Frisch, Mr. McElveen, Ms. St. John Cunning, Ms. Marin, Mr. McDaniel, Ms. Lady, all approved.

[00:01:08] Mr. Dunn has submitted a written request attend virtually this evening's public hearing due to medical reasons. All those in favor of granting these requests, please raise your hand. Mr. Moon, Ms. Anderson, Dr. Anderson, Mr. Frisch, Mr. McElveen, Ms. Lady, Ms. St. John Cunning, Ms. Marin, and Mr. McDaniel. And finally, Ms. Dixit has also submitted a written request to attend virtually this evening's public hearing due to personal reasons. All those in favor of granting these requests, please raise your hand. Mr. Moon, Ms. Anderson, Dr. Anderson, Mr. Frisch, Mr. McElveen, Ms. Lady, Ms. St. John Cunning, Ms. Marin, and Mr. McDaniel. Well with that good evening and welcome to the public hearing on the capital improvement plan. On behalf of the entire school board I would like to thank you for sharing your

[00:01:48] comments with us. This hearing is being broadcast on channel 99 and live streamed at fcps.edu/tv/ch99. We have 10 registered speakers who will address the board at this public hearing. Speakers are allotted two minutes and we ask that you stay within that time limit.

[00:02:06] The timer will start when you begin to speak and the timer will sound after two minutes. please ensure that your remarks are limited to the capital improvement plan or cip if you have not registered to speak but would like to address the board please see the clerk or deputy clerk to sign up for one of the five extra reserve speaker slots madam clerk please call our first speaker samad karashi good evening my name is samad karashi i'm here tonight as a student

[00:02:43] representative of the voters initiative a youth advocacy group i rise in support of the proposed Capital Improvement Program for fiscal 25 to 29. I commend FCPS for taking into account student membership, facility data, and coordination over the next five years. As a lifelong student of FCPS, I find emphasis on sustainability in the CIP especially encouraging. Climate change focuses cannot be underscored enough, and as the impact on the next generation of students grows, it's imperative that FCPS fund programs like this one. Furthermore, the consideration of infrastructure

[00:03:20] renovations is commendable. Our facilities must continue to grow and adapt to reflect the student body. We appreciate FCPS's dedication to enhancing the educational environment for students, but we continue to urge FCPS in continuing collaboration with students to better shape policy to benefit the student body transparency and accountability are key only when true collaboration occurs can meaningful policies truly rise that benefit the entire student body on behalf of the students of the voters initiative we thank you for your proposed uh plans for fiscal 25 to 29 and look

[00:03:58] forward to seeing it implemented thank you robin olson hi thank you for your time today my name is robin olson i'm the team lead for the faith alliance climate solutions fairfax county public schools team i also have two children in fcps elementary school in the drainsville district and i want to acknowledge first that the capital improvement program for fiscal years 25 through 29 includes essential components for making progress on the joint environmental task force

[00:04:33] jet requirements these important activities that are included are using energy saving performance contracting expansion of get to green and launching of the fleet of electric school buses i urge the school board to ensure that there is more coordinated planning among the different elements of the school system to achieve the jet mandates outlined in the capital improvement program the jet targets for carbon reduction are substantial and require a change in the way fcps does business single projects implemented over a long period of time will not get it done for instance planning for the charging infrastructure for electric school buses could be coordinated between the office of transportation office of facility services

[00:05:12] similarly recycling composting food sharing may require specific equipment and or design of workspaces importantly new types of green career and economy related programs will require flexible learning spaces especially for hands-on learning while it's too late to address these concerns in this fiscal year 2529 at cip we urge the district to factor them into future physical planning efforts thank you very much for the opportunity to address you on fcps efforts to address climate change and to provide climate solutions will benefit current and future fcps students and

[00:05:44] their families robert jordan good evening my name is bob jordan i'm speaking on behalf of the faith alliance for climate solutions more resources are needed to meet the jet energy mandates the fcps

capital budget is restricted to new school construction and renovations this greatly limits progress toward meeting the jets energy mandates many electrical energy management and hvac systems

[00:06:22] in FCPS schools are past their useful life they can and should be replaced with much more energy efficient systems these upgrades will generate substantial savings in energy costs limited funding for energy equipment upgrades is provided from the operations budget and transfers from the county budget but the replacement back backlog for this equipment is increasing each year this is not acceptable facts urges the school board members to be proactive in seeking solutions to this funding issue to make material progress toward achieving the jet energy efficiency and

[00:06:59] renewable energy mandates by 2040. some solutions may include aggressive use of the inflation reduction acts tax credits i.e rebates of up to 40 percent of eligible costs of renewable energy projects contracts with energy efficiency companies that can receive very significant tax deductions and pass the savings on to fcps if they implement projects that reduce energy consumption by in schools by at least 25 percent

[00:07:31] and energy savings performance contracts in which the contractor assumes project risk and guarantees the resulting energy savings. Members of the Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions look forward to discussing these possible options as well as others with school board members in the near future.

[00:07:52] Thank you very much. Melissa Morrison.

[00:08:10] My name is Melissa Morrison, a taxpayer in Fairfax County, a CPA for over 25 years and a concerned parent and PTA board member at Herndon and former FCPF substitute. My four points tonight to address Herndon Middle. Number one, correct the gerrymandering of boundaries where affluent homeowners and developers requested to be bused to Cooper and Langley and away from Herndon.

[00:08:32] The demographics at Herndon Middle are very lopsided with significantly economically disadvantaged and English learners at 55 and 32 percent respectively. 36 percent and 62 percent respectively above the next closest middle school. However, the boundaries haven't been redrawn in over two to three decades. Has anyone looked at how many students are bused out of previously identified Herndon boundaries?

[00:08:55] Cooper is projected at 92 percent capacity while Herndon is at 77 percent. Number two, address student placement. Parents continue to place out of Herndon middle they claim there isn't enough level four studies or quite simply they want to go to Cooper or Hughes which received over 50 million and CIP renovations give those advanced academic programs to Herndon as anyone reviewed how many students are actually districted to go to Herndon middle but do not number three fields our soccer and multi-use fields are the most used in the county and desperately need renovation the Park Authority tried to get involved and got bond approval back in 2019 to fully renovate but it's

[00:09:34] fallen off their list and never was on the CIP list. Number four, the renovation CIP queue needs to be stopped and reassessed. With the new budget and further budget restrictions, we cannot go on another minute with the current queue. There's no way Armstrong Elementary should receive 40 million renovation projected at 44% capacity and is meeting or exceeding all of its academic metrics.

[00:09:57] How is this fair and who in the CIP staff is missing this? It's a case of the have and have not in the CIPQ and boundary lines is where FCPS needs to start treating all schools more equitably thank you David Conover hi I'm Dave Conover representing

[00:10:32] the Great Falls Citizens Association GFCA appreciates the opportunity to provide oral remarks tonight on the CIP these remarks highlight more detailed input provided to the board in our written submission we recognize the challenges facing the board and county staff in addressing the very dynamic facility needs of our community-based schools across the county. We believe the county has a responsibility to provide a proposed CIP in a more timely fashion and urge the board to ensure more timely availability of relevant content

[00:11:09] associated with planned capital improvements in the future. More transparency in the development of the renovation queue is needed to foster a better understanding of how facilities are selected for renovation in the range and relative importance of criteria driving those renovation decisions for example given uneven growth and other challenging needs like security do factors such as overcrowding student safety or other functional requirements have more or less weight than the length of time since the last renovation of a school we understand the board is supporting a re-evaluation of the

[00:11:47] current queue during 2024 and support such an effort data such as capacity and student population by school contained in the cip are key to making informed decisions that said the methodology behind those data and the variables applied and their values should also be made available the board One should explore establishing lifecycle cost as a metric for making future CI decisions in providing the most cost-effective school infrastructure.

[00:12:25] Having a separate budget for design construction and then a separate budget for O&M means that you're going to pay less upfront, but over the life of the structures.

[00:12:46] Joe Dumbia. Good evening. I'm Joe Dumbia. I'm here on behalf of FACTS as well. And I want to premise my intervention by acknowledging the additional information on the report sustainability section and also highlighting that later is too late for meeting the county next zero percentages commitments for 2030 and 2050.

[00:13:16] The section includes lots of definitions related to sustainability and includes could, should, needs to be part of the CIP project. However, while the CIP report includes detailed, effective, and clear analysis along with sufficient rationale for the 2025-2029 programs actions for each school listed to deliver the best infrastructure options for our kids in the county, it does not at all detail how the numerous sustainability possibilities identified are being or will be deployed.

[00:13:56] It does not, for instance, state what the schools identified in the report that will undergo either modifications, modular buildings, or renovations will specifically or even generally include to curtail carbon pollution.

[00:14:13] It does not indicate the energy efficiency and/or clean energy status for the schools recently built but neither does it for those that are and undergoing renovation planning design or permitting construction stage therefore folks ask it is for the sustainability the cop document to prepare a sustainability supplement indicating for each school listed in the report either on

[00:14:47] their ongoing renovation planning design stage or permitted and construction stage to specify the energy Patti Kartchner hello I'm the parent of a twice exceptional parent a student in Springfield

[00:15:23] District I want to say thank you for this no day we're super excited I wanted to talk today about the need for sensory friendly design in our schools when we're doing construction and renovation the facilities design guidelines and the school board policies need to be updated to require sensory friendly

design and the provision of calm spaces in our schools at all grade levels these spaces should be available to every student with and without disabilities the cafeteria holy moly you guys have you

[00:15:58] been in the cafeteria recently it is loud there are noises there are smells there are commotions and it should be a fun break for students but it is overwhelming for some of our students so there needs to be an alternative for our students in all schools especially the elementary school is a real problem my son has an accommodation to get out of the cafeteria if he needs to but there's no place for him to go he has to tell someone he's overwhelmed go to the main office they have to find someone to have lunch with him they have to go to the

[00:16:37] place where they're going to have lunch which they don't have a set place to have lunch and then go there so that's a big ask for someone who's overwhelmed or anxious right we need a plan to sort this out FCPS right now has no consistent way of providing alternatives to the cafeteria there are schools with kids eating in the libraries there are kids eating in the hallways outdoor courtyards in classrooms if they can find a teacher who will let them eat in the classroom or in the main office and at the elementary level like I just said is really hard to get

[00:17:15] that. So we need a plan. Joanne Walton. Good evening chair Frisch and school board members Dr. Reed and staff. Welcome back Mr. McElveen and Mr. Moon. It's so nice to have you back here. My name is Joanne

[00:17:54] Walton. I'm the parent of two students with anxiety autism and ADHD as am I as well as a special education teacher. Many people with anxiety, autism, ADHD, and trauma have difficulty with sensory regulation, which impacts their ability to attend school, among other things. When planning new school construction and renovations of two old schools, it is imperative that the architects are mindful not only of ADA accommodations and accessibility, but the implications of the designs for students and staff with significant regulation needs due to a disability and/or

[00:18:32] trauma. When my daughter was a student at Robinson Secondary, which is a very large school, she was unable to cope with the sheer size of the building, the amount of the noise, the fluorescent lighting, etc. The school staff had to create many accommodations that are actually now best practice for students with anxiety and self-regulation challenges, which actually my son now benefits from. But in fact, he has told me that there's not enough space in the library for students when they are unable to attend the pep rally due to over stimulation or intolerance to

[00:19:10] the noise level and there is a small room off the cafeteria that my daughter was able to access for lunch but now that room is not sufficient for the amount of students that are unable to you know participate as the former speaker mentioned in the cafeteria for lunch you may have also heard that some schools have created self-regulation spaces for students who need structured support to help them regulate recharge and reflect these are expensive to outfit and are often paid for by PTAs and grants so not all

[00:19:44] schools have the resources to create them. Michelle Wyss, Vanessa Hall, Mr.

[00:20:01] McElveen that's the last public speaker. Thank you madam clerk and thank you to everyone for sharing your comments with us this evening. The board is scheduled to vote on the decision to choose to move forward with approval of the Capital Improvement Plan or CIP at a regular meeting on Thursday, February 8th, 2024.

[00:20:20] If you wish to provide any feedback to the board before this vote, please do so by sending your comments to communityparticipation@scps.edu. Thank you for your participation and have a wonderful evening. The public hearing is adjourned.