



Oakland Mills Community Association
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August 12, 2021

Oakland Mills Community Association Testimony on the HCPSS Capital Budget and Capital Improvement Program

Good evening and thank you for this opportunity to discuss the school system's capital budget and capital improvement program. My name is Jonathan Edelson, and I am representing the nearly 10,000 members of the Oakland Mills Community Association.

During a recent Oakland Mills village board meeting, we were advised to be succinct and direct in our capital budget message. We were also told we must speak with a larger voice

Quite simply, over \$160 million dollars in deferred maintenance on two buildings, Oakland Mills Middle and Oakland Mills High, in the same cluster is unacceptable. These buildings have consistently been kept under capacity while the school system and county celebrate acquisition of land and new construction to expand capacity.

In Oakland Mills, we proudly proclaim that we are OM; we are strongest together. However, we have a smaller voice despite being surrounded by overcrowded middle and high schools. We don't determine how many families attend our schools. This is a disservice to both those who attend Oakland Mills schools and those who continue to attend neighboring overcrowded schools.

It would be fiscally responsible to use your existing facilities to their maximum capacity and to prevent your structures from declining to the point that the deferred repairs cost more than entirely new buildings.

The deferred maintenance on Oakland Mills Middle and Oakland Mills High represents 20 percent of all deferred maintenance across the system. The students of Oakland Mills Middle and Oakland Mills High represent 3 percent of the HCPSS student body. The students of Oakland Mills Middle and Oakland Mills High are also more likely to be from racially and ethnically underrepresented backgrounds and are twice or more as likely to have financial challenges than the rest of the HCPSS student body. It is also morally responsible to stop making this 3 percent carry 20 percent of the burden of the deferred maintenance burden.

So, to put it very succinctly: Oakland Mills Middle and Oakland Mills High: you have a fiduciary and moral responsibility to fill them and fix them.