



Oakland Mills Community Association
The Other Barn • 5851 Robert Oliver Place
Columbia, MD 21045
410-730-4610 • oaklandmills.org



February 6, 2024

Dear Acting Superintendent Barnes, Members of the Howard County Board of Education, County Executive Ball, Members of the Howard County Council, and the Maryland District 13 Delegation:

The Oakland Mills Community Association (OMCA) is extremely concerned that for the second time this school year, instruction at Oakland Mills High School has been interrupted because of the condition of a building that has been deferred for major maintenance and renovations since 2009.

Yesterday, OMHS was closed because of an HVAC failure and a flood. Earlier this school year, the Media Center closed for several days due to mold from an insufficient HVAC system. OMHS students deserve the same educational opportunities as their colleagues from throughout the county, and yesterday they received no formal education at all.

OMCA requests immediate responses to the following questions:

- Given OMHS has already been plagued by mold in multiple areas this year, what independent assessments will be performed on the building to ensure that yesterday's incident has been fully repaired and remediated with appropriate humidity levels throughout the building and no growth of mold or other airborne irritants? How frequently will the building be assessed to ensure nothing was missed?
 - How will these assessments be shared with the community so parents, teachers, and students know it is safe to return to the building?
- Given a 2017-2018 assessment of OMHS noted the deferrals since 2009 and concluded the HVAC system could no longer provide a conducive learning environment and recommended a full renovation, what assurances will you make that OMHS will no longer be deferred in future capital planning cycles?
- Will each of you spend at least a full day at OMHS touring the facility and meeting with students and teachers who have bravely spoken up about the

condition of their building and the physical and psychological tolls they have paid as they watched their hOME get deferred year after year, and now decade after decade?

It is unacceptable that this is happening as it could have been avoided. The blatant disregard for the emotional and endless pleas of students and parents for years is inexcusable. An immediate response to all of the questions posed is warranted.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jon L. Edelson".

Jonathan L. Edelson
Chairperson, Oakland Mills Community Association