
From: d Joyce-Griffin <djoyce410@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 30, 2025 11:10 AM
To: Bill_Barnes@hcpss.org; boe@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail; guy.guzzone@senate.maryland.gov; vanessa.atterbeary@house.maryland.gov; pam.guzzone; jen.terrasa@house.maryland.gov
Subject: Oakland Mills High School - Howard county

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Dear Superintendent Barnes and Members of the Board of Education,

The Oakland Mills Community Association and the greater Oakland Mills school community have taken comfort in the prioritization of Oakland Mills High School renovations after years of deferral and hours of first-hand testimony from teachers and students about conditions within the building. We trust that its place in the priority order will be maintained to ensure that a building, described in an independent assessment nearly ten years ago as, “unable to provide a conducive learning environment to both students and staff,” will be renovated.

In the past couple of years, portions of the school, including science rooms and the media center have been closed due to mold growth. For one day, the entire school was closed due to a pipe break. The auditorium temporarily closed when raw sewage flowed into it. This is the experience students and teachers have in the building. Not only is it not conducive to learning, but it’s also prohibitive to learning when key rooms or the whole building must close.

Over the past two summers, the building has been closed for emergency HVAC repairs. Our understanding is these repairs are meant to keep the system going for a few more years until there can be a full renovation. That system was described in the assessment referenced above as:

“When originally deferred, this was a major HVAC renovation project; however, it has been nine years since the project was deferred. Current conditions at the school now require a full renovation. It’s not practical and cost effective to maintain the system any longer. Due to the fact that the system is old, obsolete and continues to be problematic we are unable to provide a conducive-learning environment to both the students and staff.”

That nine years of deferral is now 16 years and counting.

These emergency repairs, while potentially helpful, have not fixed all the problems. A few weeks ago, when the weather was still warm, there was a mechanical failure in the system that has been under repair for two summers. The band/orchestra room dropped to the 50s and the teachers were worried the string instruments would crack. Meanwhile, another classroom hit 88 degrees. But you don’t need us to tell you that; you can verify it with Central Office because part of the emergency repair was to put

monitoring devices in each room. You no longer have to rely on anecdotal information about the extremes in the building. We also noted that OMHS was reassessed by the state out of cycle during the emergency repairs.

While these repairs were desperately needed to keep the building habitable until it can be renovated, we hope this temporary fix to an ancient system followed by an out-of-cycle reassessment hasn't produced a misleading facilities score for the building. The bottom line is that the core of the building opened in 1973 and has never had a full systemic renovation in its history. Every high school opened before OMHS has either had a full systemic renovation or replacement. A high school opened after OMHS has also had a full systemic renovation.

It has been time to take care of OMHS for years, as evidenced by the assessment done in the mid 20-teens. We can't push this out any longer.

Sincerely,

Oakland Mills Community Association Board of Directors

Thanks,

d. Joyce-Griffin

From: Chelsea Broschart <chelseabroschart@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 29, 2025 4:33 PM
To: Bill_Barnes@hcpss.org; boe@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail; guy.guzzone@senate.state.md.us; vanessa.atterbeary@house.state.md.us; pam.guzzone@house.state.md.us; jen.terrassa@house.state.md.us
Cc: jledelson.omca@gmail.com
Subject: Concern: Howard County Facilities

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Good afternoon,
As a resident of Oakland Mills Village, I am happy to see that construction has begun on the Oakland Mills Middle School (OMMS) Campus for those long-awaited improvements. Thank you for not deferring those projects further!

I am writing to express my support and expectation that the renovations to Oakland Mills High School (OMHS) will continue to be prioritized to begin in Fiscal Year 2027. The OMHS HVAC system was recommended for a major overhaul in 2009 (16 years ago), and it was never completed. Every high school opened before OMHS has either had a full systemic renovation or replacement. A high school opened after OMHS has also had a full systemic renovation.

I grew up in Howard County and am proud of my education experience. The thought of current students learning in these substandard environments is appalling. The OM Board of Directors' recent letter to the Board of Education can be [reviewed here](#), where you can find more details about issues with the building.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Chelsea Broschart

From: Christine Pyers <cypyers@mac.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 5, 2025 11:03 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: OMHS renovation

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Dear Board of Ed ,

I am a proud graduate of OMHS class of 1982. I graduated in the first 10 years of the school's existence. I am now in my 60s- almost near retirement age.

The school is old and needs attention.

I have not followed the whole saga of the renovations but it seems that OMHS keeps getting moved to the back of the line-getting patched up and now limping along.

Please work to address the OMHS situation in an equitable way. Many students have graduated from here and many more students deserve a healthy, renovated environment so they can reach their maximal potential.

Thank you for all your hard work and attention to this matter.

Christine Pyers
OMHS graduate 1982
Sent from my iPad

November 6, 2025

HCPSS Board of Education

Superintendent Bill Barnes

County Executive Dr. Calvin Ball

Howard County Council

Dear Sirs & Madams:

Oakland Mills High School is located in a densely populated area of Howard County with built-in county and community infrastructure (eg bike paths) that allows a significant number of students to walk/bike to school. This makes it easier for students without personal transportation to participate in afterschool sports and other activities, especially important for many in our community with both parents working &/or our families of limited means. OMHS was designed as a community-based school, something that I wish all of our Howard County students could experience.

Over the course of the 20 years that we have lived in the OMHS district, we have watched as renovations were postponed and maintenance deferred. Initially, I did not object to these delays, as I supported building new schools to seat all students. But in these 20 years the county has not made significant progress in reducing school overcrowding and it is unacceptable to defer the renovation of our oldest schools indefinitely. I have seen neighborhoods redistricted away from OMHS only to have the resulting reduced capacity overload count against the school in terms of funding priority.

My children were born the day we moved into the OMHS neighborhood; they are now in college. They have never attended a school not in need of renovation. I ask that you not abandon our oldest schools most in need of renovation and keep OMHS in the long-range plan as currently proposed.

Thank you –

Allyson Rogan

From: Amina Sailab <asaila2557@inst.hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, November 6, 2025 1:33 PM
To: BoE Email; Bill Barnes; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail; guy.guzzone@senate.maryland.gov; pam.guzzone; vanessa.atterbeary@house.maryland.gov; pam.guzzone; jen.terrasa@house.maryland.gov
Subject: OMHS Renovation

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Good Afternoon,

Today I want to convince you to vote YES for a full renovation of Oakland Mills High School. I am a 9th grader, and we deserve a safe building and environment like any other school in this county. It is difficult to learn because our classrooms are too hot in summer and too cold in winter. Most of our bathrooms are broken and mold is a huge problem. How is this possible and acceptable in one of the richest counties in the USA? There is not a large space for all of the buses to fit so most buses, including my bus, have to come really early. We have to wake up earlier than the other kids and come to school and stand outside in the cold weather. Thankfully, my parents can afford proper clothing, and I am able to withstand the cold. However, what about the families who can't afford it? This can cause colds and make students unable to attend school. This is not only an issue in the morning but in the afternoon as well. All of the students are leaving at the same time, there are cars, buses, and people everywhere and it is very dangerous and difficult for us to get to our buses.

I hope this finds you well and convinces you to vote YES for a full renovation of Oakland Mills High School.

Sincerely,
Amina Sailab

From: Barbie Johnson <barbiejill@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 6, 2025 5:46 PM
To: Bill_Barnes@hcpss.org; boe@hcpss.org
Cc: CouncilMail; guy.guzzone@senate.maryland.gov; vanessa.atterbeary@house.maryland.gov; pam.guzzone; jen.terrassa@house.maryland.gov; Ball, Calvin
Subject: Oakland Mills Renovation

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Dear Super Bill Barnes and Members of the Board of Education,

My name is Barbie Johnson, and I have been a proud resident of Oakland Mills for over 20 years. My daughter attended Oakland Mills community schools from elementary through high school, where she received an excellent education. She graduated in 2021, and went on to earn her college degree in 2025 from the prestigious Parsons New School of Art and Design in New York. And she has stated that living in the Oakland Mills community, and its schools have provided the foundation of her educational success.

I live in the Thunder Hill neighborhood, and I am deeply saddened and disappointed by how the school board continues to delay and deny the much needed renovation of Oakland Mills High School. While other schools in Columbia have received financial support for renovations, OMHS has repeatedly been overlooked. This renovation is long overdue, and our students deserve the same opportunities to learn in a safe, well maintained environment, free from the conditions that disrupt their education.

Each year, social media, school board meetings are filled with debates about which schools deserve funding for upgrades. Unfortunately, the coded language often used in these discussions suggests that OMHS is less deserving because many of its students are Black and Brown, and have a higher percentage of FARM recipients compare to other high schools. It is far too easy for institutions like HCPSS to overlook communities that some deem less worthy which is a reflection of systemic racism that continues to harm our students. I raise this point because there is simply no other reasonable explanation for why OMHS has been denied the renovations it has needed for more than 16 years.

"Over the past two summers, the building has been closed for emergency HVAC repairs. Our understanding is these repairs are meant to keep the system going for a few more years until there can be a full renovation. That system was described in the assessment referenced above as: "When originally deferred, this was a major HVAC renovation project; however, it has been nine years since the project was deferred. Current conditions at the school now require a full renovation. It's not practical and cost effective to maintain the system any longer. Due to the fact that the system is old, obsolete and continues to be problematic we

are unable to provide a conducive-learning environment to both the students and staff." That nine years of deferral is now 16 years and counting.

These emergency repairs, while potentially helpful, have not fixed all the problems. A few weeks ago, when the weather was still warm, there was a mechanical failure in the system that has been under repair for two summers. The band/orchestra room dropped to the 50s and the teachers were worried the string instruments would crack. Meanwhile, another classroom hit 88 degrees. But you don't need us to tell you that; you can verify it with Central Office because part of the emergency repair was to put monitoring devices in each room. You no longer have to rely on anecdotal information about the extremes in the building.

We also noted that OMHS was reassessed by the state out of cycle during the emergency repairs. While these repairs were desperately needed to keep the building habitable until it can be renovated, we hope this temporary fix to an ancient system followed by an out-of-cycle reassessment hasn't produced a misleading facilities score for the building. The bottom line is that the core of the building opened in 1973 and has never had a full systemic renovation in its history. Every high school opened before OMHS has either had a full systemic renovation or replacement. A high school opened after OMHS has also had a full systemic renovation. It has been time to take care of OMHS for years, as evidenced by the assessment done in the mid 20-teens. We can't push this out any longer.

*Sincerely,
Oakland Mills Community Association Board of Directors"*

It is OMHS turn to be given the financial support to renovate our school, and to show that the Oakland Mills community matters.

Sincerely,

**Barbie Johnson
barbiejill@yahoo.com
bjohnsonlewis@yahoo.com
443-995-5045**

From: Colleen Cotton <cmarie cotton@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 6, 2025 12:56 PM
To: bill_barnes@hcpss.org; boe@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail
Subject: OMHS Renovations

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Good afternoon Mr. Barnes, the HCPSS Board Members, and the County Council,

I hope this email finds you well. I am writing to ask you to please prioritize OMHS renovations to begin in Fiscal Year 2027.

Since my daughter started at OMHS she has had chronic allergies and cold-like symptoms. She is allergic to dust and mold and has to take allergy medicine everyday just to go to school.

She has said that when she goes to fill her water bottle she has to let it run first so that it will come out clear and "not taste as bad". This is scary. Water isn't supposed to have a taste.

In the words of independent experts "OMHS is unable to provide a conducive learning environment to both students and staff."

Howard County is supposed to be one of the best school systems in the country and yet my daughter, the other students, and their staff can't get clean air or fresh water at the **school**, where she is required to be 7 hours out of each school day. Yesterday only 1 boys bathroom was working.

These issues have persisted for years, even decades. The inequity when you go from school to school in the county is absolutely unacceptable. OMHS students and staff deserve a safe place to go to school. How do we ever expect them to excel if we can't even provide that for them?

Please don't listen to the loudest people in the room tonight, please listen to the folks that have been pleading with the board for the past 9 years to simply have fresh air to breathe.

Thank you,
Colleen Cotton
Parent of OMHS 9th grade student

From: Erica Davis <mcgowaer@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 6, 2025 10:05 AM
To: boe@hcpss.org; bill_barnes@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail; guy.guzzone@senate.maryland.gov; vanessa.atterbeary@house.maryland.gov; pam.guzzone; jen.terrasa@house.maryland.gov
Subject: OMHS Renovation - PLEASE

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Good Morning,

Today I need you to vote **YES** for a full renovation of Oakland Mills High School. As a Howard County alumna, an Oakland Mills “baby,” and now a teacher serving the very community that raised me, I have witnessed the disparities across our county for over 40 years. I’ve watched other neighborhoods receive new schools or the renovations their aging buildings required or simply wanted as if it were a wish list item—while Oakland Mills continues to be overlooked.

The pride we have as an Oakland Mills community shines through despite the conditions we face daily. But pride alone cannot patch leaky ceilings. It cannot stop mold from growing in our classrooms. It cannot replace the HVAC system from 1973 or remove asbestos that was found and dismissed. Our students and staff deserve better.

We teach and learn in a building with:

- **Persistent mold and unsafe air quality**
- **Leaky ceilings and no natural light**
- **Overcrowded classrooms and outdated infrastructure**
- **No secure entry for visitors, compromising safety**
- **Water quality concerns and a building that predates current COMAR standards**

These are not minor inconveniences. They are systemic failures. And they send a message—intentional or not—that our students and teachers are not worthy of the same safe, modern, and inspiring environment afforded to others.

It is deeply unfair to allow numbers and money—especially from another school lobbying to take our renovation spot—to outweigh the urgent needs of our students and staff. You wouldn’t live in a house with mold, asbestos, unsafe air and water, and no secure entry. So why would we send the Nation’s Best—Howard County, consistently ranked number one in the nation and one of the wealthiest counties—to a school with these conditions? Why do we continue to ignore what is obvious? Why do we apply band-aid fixes to deep structural wounds? Why do we delay action when the need is urgent and the

consequences are real?

It is with this heavy heart that I implore the Board of Education and our Superintendent to not only consider renovating Oakland Mills High School—but to vote YES and honor the promise made to our community.

We are important.

We are the legacy of Jim Rouse.

We are worthy.

We are here.

We should NOT be ignored.

Sincerely,

Erica Davis

Howard County Teacher

Howard County Alumna

Howard County Parent

Howard County Advocate

From: Jessica Shoop Williams <jlshoop@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 6, 2025 8:09 AM
To: Bill_Barnes@hcpss.org; boe@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail; guy.guzzone@senate.maryland.gov; vanessa.atterbeary@house.maryland.gov; pam.guzzone; jen.terrasa@house.maryland.gov
Subject: Advocating for OMHS, again.

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Good Morning,

I am writing because yet again, Oakland Mills High School is at risk of being moved from on the HCPSS budget plan. I moved into the OMHS community 15 years ago, and nearly every year the community has been set into a panic as the incredibly needed school renovations have been pushed off to accommodate other, less urgent needs in the county. My children were not born when I began to hear about the issues at OMHS 15 years ago, but as it stands they will still go to a high school that has not seen major renovations since it was built in 1973. This is absurd. How am I supposed to keep my children in a school that has had major and very well known mold problems, ceiling tiles falling down, frequent classroom flooding, major air quality concerns, lead, and a long list of other issues? The truth is I will not, and many others feel the same way. We will be looking into other options for schooling if this goes on any longer.

While I don't have enough time to write a long email detailing the issues, and you probably don't have time to read it, I wanted to send something to let you know how very tired I am of being told that the disgusting school my children are slated to attend is "good enough" for our community, while other renovations are prioritized. And I am tired of being told I need to advocate AGAIN for this school that is obviously in great need. Please keep OMHS where it is on the budget plan, beginning in 2027, so that at least my children will be able to count on a year or two of education without the disruptions of a derelict school building.

Thank you for reading,

Jessica Williams

From: Jordon Schulman <jordonschulman@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 6, 2025 11:39 AM
To: bill_barnes@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail; pam.guzzone; Jen Delegate; guy.guzzone@senate.maryland.gov; Vanessa.Atterbeary@house.maryland.gov
Subject: Oakland Mills High School Renovations Vote

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Good afternoon,

I'm writing as a parent of a freshman at Oakland Mills High School to urge you to move forward with the full renovation of OMHS. Hearing my daughter say that their library no longer has many books because they had to be discarded due to mold is deeply upsetting. This should never be the reality for any school in our county.

The school has been closed multiple times for HVAC and mold issues, and it is unacceptable for this to have become the norm. My daughter, who is also a student-athlete, reports that there is mold in the locker rooms as well. No student should have to encounter these conditions on a daily basis.

Students at OMHS deserve the same opportunities as every other student in Howard County—to learn in a safe, healthy environment with reliable HVAC systems, clean facilities, and a library full of books. These renovations are long overdue and have been delayed far too many times.

Oakland Mills is a special community with dedicated students, teachers, and staff who deserve better. Please do the right thing for them and vote to move forward with the long-awaited renovations.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to seeing positive changes ahead.

Sincerely,
Jordon Schulman

From: Karen Jack <Karen_Jack@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, November 6, 2025 1:47 PM
To: BoE Email; Bill Barnes; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail; vanessa.atterbeary@house.maryland.gov; pam.guzzzone; jen.terrasa@house.maryland.gov; guy.guzzzone@senate.maryland.gov
Subject: OMHS Renovations as Scheduled

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Dear Board Members --

The thought of badly needed renovations at OMHS being shelved indefinitely by members in other communities is awful! I do not know where these members reside and why they would conclude that one of the oldest high schools in the county is not in need of renovation. I recently attended a celebration at my old high school, Joppatowne High School in Harford County. This year it turned 50 -- a few years younger than OMHS and has recently had a major renovation done. The need was recognized and the improvements made are outstanding. Oakland Mills High School, the students, staff, and community deserve no less than an outstanding, safe, healthy, and up-to-date learning environment. You've heard about our mold issues, plumbing issues, HVAC issues (which even after repairs were done over the last two summers, the temperature variations throughout the building leave us wondering what kind of work was done), rodent issues, out-of-date layout, ridiculous overcrowding in the hallways, and I am sure much more, from the very people who spend time in this school, so why are you considering the desires of people outside of this community? Why is this becoming an Us vs. Them contest? I am sure other schools have issues as well, but OMHS's renovation is constantly being shelved, constantly put on the backburner, constantly band aided. Why? How far behind does this school have to be before work is done to make needed improvements?? Personally, when my family comes to the school to see a play or attend a concert, I have to have my husband half carry my 90-year-old mother up and down stairs while I carry her wheelchair, because there is no safe way to access the auditorium if you need assistance. That's nuts. In this day and age of disability awareness how has this not been addressed and rectified?

I could go on, but you've heard our arguments and pleas before. We know our issues are not going away, and piecemeal fixes only cost more in the long run. This vote feels like a slap in the face. HCPSS is better than this.

Please, please VOTE TO RENOVATE OMHS AS SCHEDULED.

Thank you,
Karen Jack
OMHS In-house Substitute Teacher and Community Member

From: AESPTA President <aesptapresident@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 6, 2025 11:50 AM
To: Bill_Barnes@hcpss.org; boe@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail; guy.guzzone@senate.maryland.gov; vanessa.atterbeary@house.maryland.gov; pam.guzzone; jen.terrasa@house.maryland.gov
Subject: Advocacy for Timely Renovation of Oakland Mills High School

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Dear Superintendent Barnes and Members of the Board of Education,

On behalf of the Atholton Elementary School PTA, we are writing to express our strong support for the long-overdue renovation of Oakland Mills High School (OMHS). As one of the feeder schools to OMHS, our families and students are directly connected to the future of that building and the learning environment it provides.

The mission of the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) is to *make every child's potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children*. In keeping with that mission, we believe it is our responsibility to speak up for our future Scorpions—the students who will soon walk the halls of Oakland Mills High School.

Over the past few years, OMHS has faced increasingly serious facility issues that directly affect students and staff. Portions of the building, including science rooms and the media center, have been closed due to mold growth. The entire school had to close for a day because of a pipe break, and the auditorium was temporarily shut down after raw sewage entered the space. These are unacceptable conditions for any school community, and they are not conducive to—or even compatible with—safe and effective learning.

We understand that Oakland Mills High School is currently prioritized to begin renovation in Fiscal Year 2027, and we appreciate that the Board recognizes the urgent need. However, given the school's long history of deferred maintenance, we urge the Board to protect and uphold that commitment and to ensure the project is not delayed again. Every year of postponement worsens existing inequities and sends a message that our community's needs are not valued equally.

Our students, teachers, and families are deeply proud of the Oakland Mills community. We want our future Scorpions to enter a high school building that reflects their worth, potential, and promise—not one defined by aging infrastructure and emergency closures.

We respectfully urge the Board to:

1. Reaffirm the Fiscal Year 2027 start date for OMHS renovations and ensure it remains on schedule.
2. Provide transparent updates to the community on progress and funding.
3. Engage with feeder school communities like ours to keep families informed and involved.

Thank you for your continued commitment to equity and excellence for all Howard County students. We look forward to seeing meaningful progress toward a safe, modern, and inspiring learning environment for the Oakland Mills High School community.

Sincerely,
Atholton Elementary School PTA Executive Board
Feeder School to Oakland Mills High School

Kesha Plummer on behalf of Atholton Elementary School PTA Executive Board
PTA President | Atholton Elementary School
Feeder School to Oakland Mills High School
aesptapresident@gmail.com

"When schools, families, and communities work together, great things happen."
— Unknown

From: Laura Tunney <laura.jtunney@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 6, 2025 10:27 AM
To: bill_barnes@hcpss.org; boe@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail; guy.guzzone@senate.maryland.gov; jen.terrasa@house.maryland.gov; vanessa.atterbeary@house.maryland.gov; pam.guzzone
Subject: OMHS Renovations
Attachments: OMHS Renovation Prioritization 10-25.pdf

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Greetings Superintendent and members of the Board,

Please see the attached letter from the Oakland Mills Community Association regard the renovations due for Oakland Mills High School.

My children are currently attending Talbott Springs Elementary with plans to stay in OM through Middle and High Schools. We love our community and hope to see the board hold true to the promises of the decades past due much needed renovation.

Thank you,

The Tunney Family
Laura, Alex, AJ & Dylan



Oakland Mills Community Association

The Other Barn | 5851 Robert Oliver Place
Columbia, MD 21045
410-730-4610 | oaklandmills.org

October 29, 2025

Dear Superintendent Barnes and Members of the Board of Education,

The Oakland Mills Community Association and the greater Oakland Mills school community have taken comfort in the prioritization of Oakland Mills High School renovations after years of deferral and hours of first-hand testimony from teachers and students about conditions within the building. We trust that its place in the priority order will be maintained to ensure that a building, described in an independent assessment nearly ten years ago as, “unable to provide a conducive learning environment to both students and staff,” will be renovated.

In the past couple of years, portions of the school, including science rooms and the media center have been closed due to mold growth. For one day, the entire school was closed due to a pipe break. The auditorium temporarily closed when raw sewage flowed into it. This is the experience students and teachers have in the building. Not only is it not conducive to learning, but it’s also prohibitive to learning when key rooms or the whole building must close.

Over the past two summers, the building has been closed for emergency HVAC repairs. Our understanding is these repairs are meant to keep the system going for a few more years until there can be a full renovation. That system was described in the assessment referenced above as: **“When originally deferred, this was a major HVAC renovation project; however, it has been nine years since the project was deferred. Current conditions at the school now require a full renovation. It’s not practical and cost effective to maintain the system any longer. Due to the fact that the system is old, obsolete and continues to be problematic we are unable to provide a conducive-learning environment to both the students and staff.”**

That nine years of deferral is now 16 years and counting.

These emergency repairs, while potentially helpful, have not fixed all the problems. A few weeks ago, when the weather was still warm, there was a mechanical failure in the system that has been under repair for two summers. The band/orchestra room dropped to the 50s and the teachers were worried the string instruments would crack. Meanwhile, another classroom hit 88 degrees. But you don’t need us to tell you that; you can verify it with Central Office because part of the emergency repair was to put monitoring devices in each room. You no longer have to rely on anecdotal information about the extremes in the building.

We also noted that OMHS was reassessed by the state out of cycle during the emergency repairs. While these repairs were desperately needed to keep the building habitable until it can be renovated, we hope this temporary fix to an ancient system followed by an out-of-cycle reassessment hasn't produced a misleading facilities score for the building. The bottom line is that the core of the building opened in 1973 and has never had a full systemic renovation in its history. Every high school opened before OMHS has either had a full systemic renovation or replacement. A high school opened after OMHS has also had a full systemic renovation.

It has been time to take care of OMHS for years, as evidenced by the assessment done in the mid 20-teens. We can't push this out any longer.

Sincerely,

Oakland Mills Community Association Board of Directors

Cc: County Executive Dr. Calvin Ball
Howard County Council
Howard County State Delegation

From: Leilana Edelson <ledels6074@inst.hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, November 6, 2025 12:24 PM
To: BoE Email; Bill Barnes; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail; jen.terrassa@house.maryland.gov
Subject: OMHS student concers

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Greetings,

The building of Oakland Mills High School is unacceptable and needs renovation. Would you want your kid experiencing tight spaces, hardly any windows to let sunlight in, lead infested water sources, mold in the ceilings, and leaks throughout their school?

I am a freshman at Oakland Mills High School, throughout the first quarter I have already noticed how terribly supported our school is. The building is simply too small to hold so many students. When I walk through the halls it's like trying to go against tight D.C. traffic during rush hour on a Monday morning. If you want to put so many students in a school, then make the school larger and acceptable. Stepping in the school and breathing in the air immediately just gives me a headache. The air quality is terrible, the ventilation/HVAC has been modified but putting a bandaid on an open wound just stops bleeding, not heals it.

Logically, all people including students, are equal, so why are we not receiving equal resources and building standards? Before I started high school the first thing I heard were warnings. "I'm sorry you have to go to OMHS"..."Good luck in that dump"..."I wish you well surviving the mold and headaches". Not only did I get these warnings from my sister who graduated from OMHS, but also my older friends who are now Sophomores and Juniors in OMHS. All different ages, races, genders, but one issue. Promise us renovations all you want, but why give us false hopes when you change the date and push it back every single time.

Why leave students hopeless that their worries, struggles, and issues will be fixed in the school? When I talk to peers who do not go to OMHS and they ask me what school I go to, I share it. Immediately I hear words like "Yikes"..."Sorry"..."Terrible"..."Sucks"..."Bad". If Howard County wants to remain in the status of being a great county, then let's fix what ruins the picture, let all the negative comments be resolved. Renovating my school, my peers school, my friends school, my teachers school, all these people affected over one building that can be fixed with the right work. There are approximately 1,422 students at Oakland Mills High School. Now let's picture 1,422 students in one tight building with only about 2-4 bathrooms (girls + boys). Hardly any working water fountains and security systems. While almost all other schools have a second entrance for security when entering the building, OMHS has no

second vestibule. Any person can barge in the school building and do whatever harm they want, putting our lives at risk, our friends at risk, and importantly our teachers. Our teachers have had to work in such a terrible environment due to the condition of the buildings, oftentimes much longer than any student will endure. Vote yes, vote to improve the lives of so many people!

Leilana

From: keshaplummer00@yahoo.com
Sent: Thursday, November 6, 2025 9:21 AM
To: Bill_Barnes@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail; guy.guzzone@senate.maryland.gov; vanessa.atterbeary@house.maryland.gov; pam.guzzone; jen.terrasa@house.maryland.gov; boe@hcpss.org
Subject: Urgent Need to Prioritize Deferred Renovations at Oakland Mills High School

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Dear Superintendent Barnes and Members of the Board of Education,

I am writing as a concerned parent and community member to urge the Board of Education to prioritize the long-overdue renovations at Oakland Mills High School (OMHS). Our community has waited patiently through years of deferred maintenance and broken promises, but the situation has now reached a point where it directly jeopardizes both safety and learning.

In the past couple of years alone, portions of the school – including science rooms and the media center – have been closed due to mold growth. The entire building had to be closed for a day because of a pipe break, and raw sewage flowed into the auditorium, forcing it to close temporarily. These are not isolated incidents; they represent the daily reality for students and staff who are trying to teach and learn in a deteriorating facility.

This environment is not only unconducive to learning, it is often prohibitive to learning when essential classrooms or the whole school must shut down. It's disheartening to see our dedicated teachers and students work so hard under conditions that no other community in the county would tolerate.

As a parent of two OMHS alumni (Classes of 2021 and 2023) and with two future Scorpions (Classes of 2032 and 2034), I am deeply invested in this school and its future. Our family has experienced firsthand the pride, resilience, and excellence that define the Oakland Mills community. Yet it is impossible to ignore the feeling that our community is often looked down upon throughout the county, and the continued deferral of necessary maintenance and renovation projects only reinforces that perception.

I understand that Oakland Mills High School is currently prioritized to begin renovation in Fiscal Year 2027. While that acknowledgment is appreciated, it is difficult to feel confident given the long history of deferrals that have kept OMHS waiting for years. Our students and teachers cannot afford another delay. Every additional year spent in this

deteriorating building deepens inequities and undermines the quality of education our children deserve.

Oakland Mills High School has a proud legacy – of academic excellence, artistic creativity, and community spirit – but our building no longer reflects that excellence. The repeated delays in renovation have created inequities that must be addressed. Every student in Howard County deserves a safe, healthy, and modern learning environment.

I urge the Board to:

1. Reaffirm and protect the Fiscal Year 2027 start date for OMHS renovations, ensuring it is not deferred again.
2. Increase transparency regarding the renovation plan and funding status so our community can remain informed.
3. Engage directly with the Oakland Mills community through public updates or town halls as the project moves forward.

We recognize the complexity of funding and scheduling capital projects, but it is long past time for the Board to take decisive action. Oakland Mills High School deserves a facility that matches the strength, dedication, and pride of its students, teachers, and families.

Thank you for your time, your service, and your attention to this urgent matter. Our students cannot wait any longer.

Sincerely,
LeKesha L Plummer
Parent of OMHS Alumni (Classes of 2021 & 2023)
Parent of Future OMHS Students (Classes of 2032 & 2034)
Oakland Mills Community Member

From: Matthew J. Kreitzer <Matthew_Kreitzer@hcpss.org>
Sent: Thursday, November 6, 2025 1:10 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Help keep Oakland Mills High School on the 2027 HCPSS Renovation Plan

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Our Respected County Council Members,

I am writing to ask you to strongly urge the Howard County Board of Education to keep Oakland Mills High School on its current renovation schedule with work to begin in 2027. The Board will be discussing and voting on this topic at today's (11/6) Board of Education meeting, so your immediate attention to this is appreciated.

The renovation of schools is not a topic that should be at the whim of public opinion. The facts are that Oakland Mills HS is a building that was designed over fifty years ago with classrooms, public spaces, and offices that do not meet the basic standards of modern education. No amount of retrofitting, modifying, or fixing the school changes the underlying problems with too narrow hallways, inadequate instructional spaces, constant plumbing and HVAC issues, the incredibly outdated theatre and cafeteria spaces, the inefficient and unprotected main office area, the lack of modern instructional technologies, and the list goes on.

Take a look at schools around the state and you'll find that many of our schools in Howard County are an outright embarrassment. We are one of the wealthiest communities in America, our students perform with prestige, often on the state and national stage, in all areas of academics, clubs, organizations, and sports. And yet, we are content in continuing to use outdated infrastructure. Are we simply waiting for these structures to fail before we're willing to bring our schools into this century?

Oakland Mills High School needs and deserves the same level of redesign and renovation afforded to Hammond High School now nearly 5 years ago. As you know, this community deserves a high school that represents the integrity and values that should be present throughout Howard County. Further delaying this renovation or prioritizing other high schools for renovation at this juncture will send a clear message that the Oakland Mills community is not valued equally among Howard County communities.

We ask that you encourage the Board to do what is right by the students, families, teachers, and staff of Oakland Mills HS.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

~ Matthew Kreitzer
Teacher - Oakland Mills HS
Parent - Oakland Mills HS c/o 2030

Matthew Kreitzer
Teacher – English 11 & 12
Oakland Mills High School

From: Maura Ward <maura.ward@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 6, 2025 10:55 AM
To: guy.guzzzone@senate.maryland.gov; vanessa.atterbeary@house.maryland.gov; pam.guzzzone; jen.terrasa@house.maryland.gov; Bill_Barnes@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail; boe@hcpss.org
Subject: Honor the Commitment: Renovate Oakland Mills High School Now

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Dear Members of the Board and Leaders of our Community,

I am writing once again to urge you to move forward—without delay or dilution—with the long-promised renovation of Oakland Mills High School (OMHS). It is deeply frustrating that, year after year, the OMHS community must fight for what should be a basic guarantee: school facilities that are safe, modern, and equitable.

It is unacceptable that students at OMHS continue to learn in a building that is visibly deteriorating while other schools enjoy state-of-the-art facilities. Even more troubling is the pattern in which communities with greater financial and political capital feel entitled to challenge or derail long-overdue investments in schools like OMHS. This is not just a facilities issue—it is an equity issue, and it is a moral one.

The students, educators, and families of Oakland Mills deserve better. They deserve the same level of respect, investment, and opportunity afforded to every other school in Howard County. The renovation plan is not a luxury—it is a necessity. And it is a promise that has already been made.

To delay or reconsider this project now would be a betrayal of that promise and a clear signal that some students in this county are valued more than others. I urge you to stand firm in your commitment to the OMHS community and that renovation proceeds as planned.

Sincerely,

Maura Ward

OMHS, OMMS and 26-27 AES Parent

From: Michelle Miller <michellejeverett@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 6, 2025 8:15 AM
To: boe@hcpss.org
Cc: Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail; guy.guzzone@senate.maryland.gov; jen.terrassa@house.maryland.gov; bill_barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Please Prioritize Oakland Mills High School Renovations in FY 2027

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Dear Members of the Board of Education,

I am writing as a parent of children currently attending Atholton Elementary School. As we look ahead to their middle and high school years, we want them and all their classmates to learn in safe, modern, and equitable facilities. For that reason, I am urging you to maintain Oakland Mills High School as a priority for renovation beginning in Fiscal Year 2027.

Since we moved to Allview 10 years ago, our neighbors have been consistently advocating for renovations to both Oakland Mills Middle School and Oakland Mills High School. While we are pleased that progress is underway at the middle school, the high school continues to face aging infrastructure that impact students and staff every day. Further delays would only widen the inequity between school facilities across the county.

It is also not lost on our community that Oakland Mills High School has had to repeatedly fight to remain on the priority list for needed upgrades. The ongoing struggle to move forward this project underscores a troubling reality, that the schools serving some of the county's most economically challenged families must continually advocate just to receive the same consideration as others.

Our children deserve the same level of investment seen elsewhere in the community. The high school's renovation is not simply a building project but it is a commitment to providing students with a safe and healthy environment conducive to learning. Oakland Mills students continue to excel because of their dedication and the support of our educators, not because of the condition of the facility. It is time for the building to match the strength of the students and the community it serves.

As a parent with children slated to attend the school, I ask that you affirm the renovation of Oakland Mills High School and keep the project on schedule for FY 2027. This decision will directly impact families like mine who want to remain part of the HCPSS community and believe in the value of investing equitably across all schools.

Thank you for your leadership and for your commitment to facilities that support student success. I appreciate your time and careful consideration of this critical decision.

Sincerely,
Michelle Miller
Allview Estates Resident
407-618-6396

From: SARAH MUGO <smugo@msn.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 6, 2025 12:51 PM
To: boe@hcpss.org; bill_barnes@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail; guy.guzzone@senate.maryland.gov; vanessa.atterbeary@house.maryland.gov; pam.guzzone; jen.terrasa@house.maryland.gov
Subject: Please Vote YES for the Full Renovation of Oakland Mills High School

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Dear Members of the HCPSS Board of Education,

I am writing to urge you to vote YES for the full renovation of Oakland Mills High School.

As a parent, PTA leader, and community advocate, I have seen firsthand the inequities our students and staff face daily. Despite their resilience and pride, they continue to learn and teach in a building with mold, leaky ceilings, unsafe air quality, water quality concerns, and outdated infrastructure that compromises both safety and learning.

These are not mere facility issues—they are matters of equity, health, and dignity. Every child in Howard County deserves a safe, modern, and inspiring environment that reflects our community's shared values of excellence and inclusion.

It is time to honor the promise made to the Oakland Mills community and end decades of deferred maintenance and delay. Please stand with us by voting YES to a full renovation. Our students, educators, and families deserve nothing less.

With appreciation,

Sarah Mugo

Parent | PTA Leader | Community Advocate

From: Teresa Favero <teresa_zumbach@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 6, 2025 9:10 AM
To: Bill_Barnes@hcpss.org; CouncilMail; guy.guzzone@senate.maryland.gov; vanessa.atterbeary@house.maryland.gov; pam.guzzone; jen.terrasa@house.maryland.gov; boe@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin
Subject: OMHS Renovations - DO NOT DELAY

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Dear Superintendent Barnes and Members of the Board of Education,

The Oakland Mills Community Association and the greater Oakland Mills school community have taken comfort in the prioritization of Oakland Mills High School renovations after years of deferral and hours of first-hand testimony from teachers and students about conditions within the building. We trust that its place in the priority order will be maintained to ensure that a building, described in an independent assessment nearly ten years ago as, "unable to provide a conducive learning environment to both students and staff," will be renovated.

In the past couple of years, portions of the school, including science rooms and the media center have been closed due to mold growth. For one day, the entire school was closed due to a pipe break. The auditorium temporarily closed when raw sewage flowed into it. This is the experience students and teachers have in the building. Not only is it not conducive to learning, but it's also prohibitive to learning when key rooms or the whole building must close.

Over the past two summers, the building has been closed for emergency HVAC repairs. Our understanding is these repairs are meant to keep the system going for a few more years until there can be a full renovation. That system was described in the assessment referenced above as: "When originally deferred, this was a major HVAC renovation project; however, it has been nine years since the project was deferred. Current conditions at the school now require a full renovation. It's not practical and cost effective to maintain the system any longer. Due to the fact that the system is old, obsolete and continues to be problematic we are unable to provide a conducive-learning environment to both the students and staff."

That nine years of deferral is now 16 years and counting.

These emergency repairs, while potentially helpful, have not fixed all the problems. A few weeks ago, when the weather was still warm, there was a mechanical failure in the system that has been under repair for two summers. The band/orchestra room dropped to the 50s and the teachers were worried the string instruments would crack. Meanwhile, another classroom hit 88 degrees. But you don't need us to tell you that; you can verify it with Central Office because part of the emergency repair was to put monitoring devices in each room. You no longer have to rely on anecdotal information about the extremes in the building.

We also noted that OMHS was reassessed by the state out of cycle during the emergency repairs. While these repairs were desperately needed to keep the building habitable until it can be renovated, we hope this temporary fix to an ancient system followed by an out-of-cycle reassessment hasn't produced a misleading facilities score for the building. The bottom line is that the core of the building opened in 1973 and has never had a full systemic renovation in its history. Every high school opened before OMHS has either had a full systemic renovation or replacement. A high school opened after OMHS has also had a full systemic renovation.

It has been time to take care of OMHS for years, as evidenced by the assessment done in the mid 20-teens. We can't push this out any longer. Our EXPECTATION is that you will do what's right. Do not delay, do not defer, and do not keep making our community beg you for this renovation any further.

Thank you.
Teresa Favero, Parent

From: Trelina Gonzalez Anderson <trelina.anderson@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 6, 2025 9:21 AM
To: bill_barnes@hcpss.org; boe@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail; guy.guzzone@senate.mayland.gov; vanessa.atterbeary@house.maryland.gov; pam.guzzone; jen.terrasa@house.maryland.gov
Subject: KEEP OMHS IN CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2027!

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Dear Superintendent Barnes and Members of the BOE,

I am writing to you hoping that you continue to keep Oakland Mills High School in the Capitol Improvement Plan for immediate renovations. I have 2 children currently attending the Howard County Public School System, one at Oakland Mills Middle School and one at Oakland Mills High School.

Our family moved to Columbia in September 2021 and we were so excited to send our children to such a highly acclaimed school system. We were also thrilled to discover that our community was so tightly knit and supportive of each other, as well as others all around Howard County and the rest of the state. So imagine our shock to find that our local high school had over \$10M in deferred facilities maintenance! We were very worried to send our older child to this school for this reason, and to send our middle schooler to this school next school year.

This school has repeatedly had mold issues and continued poor air ventilation. Students have missed school days due to an HVAC issue that caused the school to flood. Ceiling tiles collapsed in the gym. There are many more issues but I think you get the idea. These are serious health and safety issues that affect the entire community, but especially the students and staff who are in that building every single day of the school year, and for some, beyond that.

Although not the fault of the current board it cannot be ignored that previous boards have routinely ignored these ongoing facility issues within OMHS and allowed the deferred maintenance to continue to build up. Had maintenance not been left to languish for such a long period of time - close to 20 years, as I understand it - perhaps we wouldn't be in such a dire state.

Oakland Mills is the most disadvantaged socioeconomic area within Howard County and for the board to continually ignore the health and safety needs of Oakland Mills High School within our community is pure negligence and frankly, shameful. I am asking that you move forward with the board's initial plans to renovate OMHS as is needed and necessary. While this renovation comes too late for my children, it is vital for the continued success of the young people who will attend after them. The future leaders of Howard County, the state of Maryland, and the nation are depending on you for leadership. Please do the right thing.

Thank you for taking the time to hear me,

Trelina Anderson
Oakland Mills resident and
Mother of HCPSS students

From: Laura Tunney <laura.jtunney@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 6, 2025 10:27 AM
To: bill_barnes@hcpss.org; boe@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail; guy.guzzone@senate.maryland.gov; jen.terrasa@house.maryland.gov; vanessa.atterbeary@house.maryland.gov; pam.guzzone
Subject: OMHS Renovations
Attachments: OMHS Renovation Prioritization 10-25.pdf

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Greetings Superintendent and members of the Board,

Please see the attached letter from the Oakland Mills Community Association regard the renovations due for Oakland Mills High School.

My children are currently attending Talbott Springs Elementary with plans to stay in OM through Middle and High Schools. We love our community and hope to see the board hold true to the promises of the decades past due much needed renovation.

Thank you,

The Tunney Family
Laura, Alex, AJ & Dylan



Oakland Mills Community Association

The Other Barn | 5851 Robert Oliver Place
Columbia, MD 21045
410-730-4610 | oaklandmills.org

October 29, 2025

Dear Superintendent Barnes and Members of the Board of Education,

The Oakland Mills Community Association and the greater Oakland Mills school community have taken comfort in the prioritization of Oakland Mills High School renovations after years of deferral and hours of first-hand testimony from teachers and students about conditions within the building. We trust that its place in the priority order will be maintained to ensure that a building, described in an independent assessment nearly ten years ago as, “unable to provide a conducive learning environment to both students and staff,” will be renovated.

In the past couple of years, portions of the school, including science rooms and the media center have been closed due to mold growth. For one day, the entire school was closed due to a pipe break. The auditorium temporarily closed when raw sewage flowed into it. This is the experience students and teachers have in the building. Not only is it not conducive to learning, but it’s also prohibitive to learning when key rooms or the whole building must close.

Over the past two summers, the building has been closed for emergency HVAC repairs. Our understanding is these repairs are meant to keep the system going for a few more years until there can be a full renovation. That system was described in the assessment referenced above as: **“When originally deferred, this was a major HVAC renovation project; however, it has been nine years since the project was deferred. Current conditions at the school now require a full renovation. It’s not practical and cost effective to maintain the system any longer. Due to the fact that the system is old, obsolete and continues to be problematic we are unable to provide a conducive-learning environment to both the students and staff.”**

That nine years of deferral is now 16 years and counting.

These emergency repairs, while potentially helpful, have not fixed all the problems. A few weeks ago, when the weather was still warm, there was a mechanical failure in the system that has been under repair for two summers. The band/orchestra room dropped to the 50s and the teachers were worried the string instruments would crack. Meanwhile, another classroom hit 88 degrees. But you don’t need us to tell you that; you can verify it with Central Office because part of the emergency repair was to put monitoring devices in each room. You no longer have to rely on anecdotal information about the extremes in the building.

We also noted that OMHS was reassessed by the state out of cycle during the emergency repairs. While these repairs were desperately needed to keep the building habitable until it can be renovated, we hope this temporary fix to an ancient system followed by an out-of-cycle reassessment hasn't produced a misleading facilities score for the building. The bottom line is that the core of the building opened in 1973 and has never had a full systemic renovation in its history. Every high school opened before OMHS has either had a full systemic renovation or replacement. A high school opened after OMHS has also had a full systemic renovation.

It has been time to take care of OMHS for years, as evidenced by the assessment done in the mid 20-teens. We can't push this out any longer.

Sincerely,

Oakland Mills Community Association Board of Directors

Cc: County Executive Dr. Calvin Ball
Howard County Council
Howard County State Delegation

From: Erika Tustin <erikatustin@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 12, 2025 1:37 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Subject: Public Complaint and Demand for Action: Systemic Discrimination in Oakland Mills High School Funding
Attachments: To Whom It May Concern_ II.pdf

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Wednesday, November 12, 2025

Subject: Public Complaint and Demand for Action: Systemic Discrimination in Oakland Mills High School Funding

To the members of the HCPSS Board of Education and the County Executive:

I am writing to you to lodge a **formal public complaint** regarding your decision to postpone, yet again, the renovation and expansion of Oakland Mills High School (OMHS).

Your decision is not merely an administrative delay; **it is an act of systemic and de facto discrimination that jeopardizes the public health of our students and staff.** OMHS is being punished because of its demographics: a community of predominantly low-income and minority families.

For 16 years, vital improvements for OMHS have been requested. Each budget cycle, we are given a date that is then pushed back. How can you expect the community to trust you if you are unable to keep your own promises? An unfulfilled budget promise is a lie to the community.

Students, teachers, and staff are breathing air contaminated by mold and faulty HVAC systems. The building is a health hazard. This environment directly impacts the academic performance and emotional well-being of our children.

I have specific questions that I demand be answered publicly:

- 1.
- 2.
3. How could the HCPSS Board of Education transfer state funds from the
4. **"Built to Learn"**

5. program, which Superintendent Barnes had earmarked for the OMHS renovation, to other projects at the last minute?

6.

2.

3.

4. Why wasn't the Oakland Mills community notified that the 2027 deadline was in jeopardy?

5.

3.

4.

5. How do you justify a delay that now, according to the latest reports, pushes the completion of OMHS back to **2036**?

6.

7.

A delay to 2036 means that an entire generation of children will spend their entire school life, from kindergarten through 12th grade, in unsafe buildings, while they watch other schools being built and renovated.

The right to health and the right to equality are human rights. Their budget decisions are violating them.

We demand that they stop treating Oakland Mills as a second-class priority. We demand that they review the capital budget immediately and restore funding for the OMHS renovation.

Do the right thing. Justice cannot wait until 2036.

Sincerely,

Erika T.

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

Subject: Public Complaint and Demand for Action: Systemic Discrimination in Oakland Mills High School Funding

To the members of the HCPSS Board of Education and the County Executive:

I am writing to you to lodge a **formal public complaint** regarding your decision to postpone, yet again, the renovation and expansion of Oakland Mills High School (OMHS).

Your decision is not merely an administrative delay; **it is an act of systemic and de facto discrimination that jeopardizes the public health of our students and staff.** OMHS is being punished because of its demographics: a community of predominantly low-income and minority families.

For 16 years, vital improvements for OMHS have been requested. Each budget cycle, we are given a date that is then pushed back. How can you expect the community to trust you if you are unable to keep your own promises? An unfulfilled budget promise is a lie to the community.

Students, teachers, and staff are breathing air contaminated by mold and faulty HVAC systems. The building is a health hazard. This environment directly impacts the academic performance and emotional well-being of our children.

I have specific questions that I demand be answered publicly:

1. How could the HCPSS Board of Education transfer state funds from the **"Built to Learn"** program, which Superintendent Barnes had earmarked for the OMHS renovation, to other projects at the last minute?
2. Why wasn't the Oakland Mills community notified that the 2027 deadline was in jeopardy?
3. How do you justify a delay that now, according to the latest reports, pushes the completion of OMHS back to **2036**?

A delay to 2036 means that an entire generation of children will spend their entire school life, from kindergarten through 12th grade, in unsafe buildings, while they watch other schools being built and renovated.

The right to health and the right to equality are human rights. Their budget decisions are violating them.

We demand that they stop treating Oakland Mills as a second-class priority. We demand that they review the capital budget immediately and restore funding for the OMHS renovation. Do the right thing. Justice cannot wait until 2036.

Sincerely,

Erika T.

From: Lindsay Cox <lindsay.m.cox@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, November 15, 2025 10:32 AM
To: CouncilMail; Jones, Opel; Jung, Debra; Rigby, Christiana; Walsh, Elizabeth; Yungmann, David; Ball, Calvin
Cc: Patrick Cox
Subject: Vote NO on CR183

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Good morning Howard County Council,

I am a resident of Oakland Mills and have 3 daughters that will attend Oakland Mills High School (ages 14, 11, and 2.5). I was extremely disappointed to hear that the Board of Education removed OMHS from the FY27 proposed budget. The high school is in an extreme state of disrepair, and the maintenance on it has been deferred since 2009. This is unconscionable. The BOE's decision was based solely on a new, highly-suspect spreadsheet that moved OMHS down in priority from #4 to #40. It places way too much emphasis on overcrowding, while not enough on the state of the building or how long a school has been waiting for an upgrade. OMHS has had several incidents of mold, flooding, and HVAC malfunction. The HVAC system is original to the school and is over 50 years old!

When you vote on Monday, please vote NO for CR183 and tell the BOE to add OMHS back to their FY27 budget. Our school is long overdue for an upgrade and if we don't act now, the school will quickly become unsafe and unusable. Please don't wait until lawsuits start flowing in from staff and students who attend OMHS and are now dealing with major health concerns because of the state of the school. With an extensive family history of lung disease (my father, grandmother, and aunt) which can be exacerbated by environmental conditions like we see at OMHS, I'm having to make a very hard decision about whether I send my kids to a school that could potentially trigger this lung disease in them down the line, or stay in a community that we love and grown with over the past 12 years. Please do the right thing for our community and for our children and teachers. Vote NO for CR183 on Monday. Thank you.

Lindsay Cox
9546 Pamplona Rd.

From: Anne Berkowitz <adberk1@verizon.net>
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 11:36 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Vote NO

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Please do not let down the Oakland Mills community. Our high school is long overdue for repairs/renovations.

Sincerely,
Anne Berkowitz

[Yahoo Mail: Search, Organize, Conquer](#)

From: Philip Pierce <anne.phil_pierce@verizon.net>
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 1:24 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Proposed removal of Oakland Mills High School from the school system's capital budget

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Dear Council members,

I have lived in the Stevens Forest neighborhood of Oakland Mills since 1991. We are grateful for the extensive renovations and additions to Oakland Mills Middle School that are now underway. However, Oakland Mills High School is in poor physical condition and very much overdue for renovations. We were extremely disappointed to find out that the renovations that were to begin in 2027 have now been postponed indefinitely. Please correct this apparent oversight as part of your voting this evening.

Thank you very much.

--Anne S. Pierce, 9489 African Hill Court

From: Arlene Baskin <onlyonearlene@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 1:41 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: VOTE NO ON CR-183

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Council members, I am so very disappointed in the fact that we taxpayers have to send our kids into buildings that is riddled with mold, lead and asbestos. I am sure if it were your children you would make a big deal about this. My daughter has not had one asthma episode since she graduated in 2020. Do the math people. I'm not the only parent with concerns.

This is not a safe place.

Arlene Baskin

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

From: Bill McCormack Jr <william.r.mccormack@verizon.net>
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 11:40 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: NO on CR - 183.

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Councilmembers,

Please vote NO on CR - 183 tonight.

Thank you.

Bill McCormack Jr.
Vice-Chair, Oakland Mills Village Board

From: trisadj@aol.com <bobsadj@aol.com>
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 1:39 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: OMHS

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PLease, do not further delay the renovations needed at OMHS. The building sorely needs improvements, and further delays will only make the school's educational environment worse for its students.
Sincerely,
Bob Bartolo

From: B Warren <warrenb971@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 11:27 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: VOTE NO to CR-183

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Hello County Council members.

I urge you to vote **No** tonight to CR - 183 and make the BOE reconsider their removal of OMHS from the HCPSS capital budget. This is outrageous and frankly just continues to put OMHS and its students last. Whatever prompted this change needs to be addressed and altered.

Thank you,
Brigitta Warren
OMHS Alumni Student Parent and Concerned Community Member

From: Casey Otten <caseypotten@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 1:00 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Vote NO on CR183-2025

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I am writing to ask the County Council to vote No to CR183-2025. The proposal from the Board of Education for the Fiscal Year 2027 Capital Budget would remove Oakland Mills High School completely from the planned FY2027 budget.

As a member of the Oakland Mills community, I implore the County Council to reject this proposal. My children have spent the entirety of their school careers in unsafe, outdated schools. They attended Talbott Springs Elementary School where both of my children suffered from severe allergic reactions to the high levels of mold. They watched the walls crumbling at Oakland Mills Middle School. My oldest child spent his four years at Oakland Mills High School under the care of a Neurologist due to migraines exacerbated by the unhealthy air quality at the school. My youngest is now starting his high school career at a school that continues to be dangerous and unhealthy.

The decision to remove Oakland Mills High School from the Capital Budget highlights the BOE's continued neglect of the students and staff at Oakland Mills. Renovations won't benefit my children, but I will continue to advocate. I am a teacher in the Oakland Mills Community and the thought of my current students having to attend OMHS in eight years and experiencing the results of the continued neglect for Oakland Mills High School breaks my heart.

We are not a wealthy community. Many of our families are struggling to get by day-to-day and do not have the time or ability to spend their limited resources advocating relentlessly as many other schools can. We can't afford matching signs or legal representation. So please know that the citizens you do hear from are speaking for all of our community. Thank you for taking the time to read and consider.

Sincerely,
Casey Otten

--
Casey P Otten
(240)432-9652

From: Chris Huza <huzac@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 11:33 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Please vote no CR-183

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County Council,

I am a long time resident and graduate of Oakland Mills High School (class of '92). I have owned a house in Oakland Mills for over 20 years and my wife just this year bought an office condominium off of Twin Knolls in OM for her business. I am currently sending two sons (18,15) to OMHS with hopes to send my two daughters (12,4) there when they are old enough.

I am writing to ask you to vote 'No' tonight to CR-183 with instructions to have the BOE reconsider their recent removal of OMHS from the HCPSS capital budget using open community testimony and discussion as it was done last year when OMHS was placed on the planned renovations schedule.

Thank you for your consideration.

Thanks,
Chris Huza
6159 Agail Place
4438381838

From: Christine Pyers <cypyers@mac.com>
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 9:14 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: CR-183 VOTE NO

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Dear County Council

Please vote No tonight to CR - 183.

The Howard Co BOE recently removed OMHS from the HCPSS capital budget. I have recently learned of this issue that BOE changed suddenly and without notice or input from our cOMmunity.

There should be transparency and fairness to address school renovations. Something is not attending up.

Thanks for considering my input!

Christine Pyers

OM village resident

OMHS Alumnae

councilmail@howardcountymd.gov

Sent from my iPhone

From: Elana Hoffman <elanadc@cs.com>
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 12:28 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Vote No tonight on CR - 183

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Dear County Council,

I am writing to ask that you please vote No tonight to CR - 183 and make the BOE reconsider their removal of OMHS from the HCPSS capital budget. Otherwise, the Council is voting on a resolution to support a plan the BOE changed suddenly and without notice or input from the OMHS community or beyond.

Any system or criteria that puts MRHS and LRHS ahead of OMHS in maintenance needs and priorities is clearly a very flawed system. Shifting a long-planned project based on a clearly flawed set of criteria is irresponsible and inequitable on its own, but to do so and offer almost no time for the OM community to weigh in is just disgraceful.

Please vote no to CR-183 and force the BOE to listen to our community. We deserve that.

Thank you,
Elana Hoffman

From: Erica Shaw <shaw.erica@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 1:38 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Help return the OMHS renovation back to the FY2027 capital budget

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My name is Erica Shaw and I currently have a tenth grader at OMHS and a 6th grader at OMMS. Both of my children attended Thunder Hill ES. Being a part of the Oakland Mills Community for the last 11 years has been nothing short of wonderful. Our community takes care of its own like no other, and there is nowhere else I would rather live or send my children to school.

We are so grateful that OMMS is finally getting renovated. We are even more grateful for the families before us who fought so hard to get the work completed. This community has always made due with what we had, and the fact that we have been successful at it shouldn't be a reason for continued maintenance deferrals. Getting by with less shouldn't be the norm. OMHS is no different. The students and staff at the school are some of the best our community has to offer. The school they attend should be equally as amazing. I can only speak on the things my daughter and close community have experienced at OMHS, so I will defer to the Oakland Mills Community Association Board of Directors:

"Over the past two summers, the building has been closed for emergency HVAC repairs. Our understanding is these repairs are meant to keep the system going for a few more years until there can be a full renovation. That system was described in the assessment referenced above as: "When originally deferred, this was a major HVAC renovation project; however, it has been nine years since the project was deferred. Current conditions at the school now require a full renovation. It's not practical and cost effective to maintain the system any longer. Due to the fact that the system is old, obsolete and continues to be problematic we are unable to provide a conducive-learning environment to both the students and staff." That nine years of deferral is now 16 years and counting.

These emergency repairs, while potentially helpful, have not fixed all the problems. A few weeks ago, when the weather was still warm, there was a mechanical failure in the system that has been under repair for two summers. The band/orchestra room dropped to the 50s and the teachers were worried the string instruments would crack. Meanwhile, another classroom hit 88 degrees. But you don't need us to tell you that; you can verify it with the Central Office because part of the emergency repair was to put monitoring devices in each room. You no longer have to rely on anecdotal information about the extremes in the building.

We also noted that OMHS was reassessed by the state out of cycle during the emergency repairs. While these repairs were desperately needed to keep the building habitable until it can be renovated, we hope this temporary fix to an ancient system followed by an out-of-cycle reassessment hasn't produced a misleading facilities score for the building. The bottom line is that the core of the building opened in 1973 and has never had a full systemic renovation in its history. Every high school opened before OMHS has either had a full systemic renovation or replacement. A high school opened after OMHS has also had a full systemic renovation. It has been time to take care of OMHS for years, as evidenced by the assessment done in the mid 20-teens. We can't push this out any longer."

Our community was created so that any family could move here, afford housing, and send their kids to an amazing, in neighborhood school. Please help us live up to that ideal.

Thank you,
Erica Shaw

From: Erika Tustin <erikatustin@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 10:18 AM
To: BoE Email; Bill_Barnes@hcpss.org; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail; CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov; jolene_mosley@hcpss.org; linfeng_chen@hcpss.org; andrea_chamblee@hcpss.org; meg_ricks@hcpss.org; jacquelin_mcCoy@hcpss.org; jennifer_mallo@hcpss.org; antonia_watts@hcpss.org; student_member@hcpss.org; April Harrison; Donna Forton; David Clark; Ombudsman; Cornell Brown; Stephen_Cowles@hcpss.org; Brian_Hull@hcpss.org; Jen_Robinson@hcpss.org; Karalee_TurnerLittle@hcpss.org; Caroline_Walker@hcpss.org; Jennifer_Webster@hcpss.org; OCR@ed.gov
Subject: Public Complaint and Demand for Action: Systemic Discrimination in Oakland Mills High School Funding
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**We demand
that HCPSS Board of Education
stop treating Oakland Mills as a
second-class priority.**

**Oakland Mills High School
9410 Kilimanjaro Road**

Public Complaint and Demand for Action: Systemic Discrimination in Oakland Mills High School Funding

To the members of the HCPSS Board of Education and the County Executive:

I am writing to you to lodge a **formal public complaint** regarding your decision to postpone, yet again, the renovation and expansion of Oakland Mills High School (OMHS).

Your decision is not merely an administrative delay; **it is an act of systemic and de facto discrimination that jeopardizes the public health of our students and staff.** OMHS is being punished because of its demographics: a community of predominantly low-income and minority families.

For 16 years, vital improvements for OMHS have been requested. Each budget cycle, we are given a date that is then pushed back. How can you expect the community to trust you if you are unable to keep your own promises? An unfulfilled budget promise is a lie to the community.

Students, teachers, and staff are breathing air contaminated by mold and faulty HVAC systems. The building is a health hazard. This environment directly impacts the academic performance and emotional well-being of our children.

I have specific questions that I demand be answered publicly:

1. How could the HCPSS Board of Education transfer state funds from the "**Built to Learn**" program, to other projects at the last minute?
2. Why wasn't the Oakland Mills community notified that the 2027 deadline was in jeopardy?
3. How do you justify a delay that now, according to the latest reports, pushes the completion of OMHS back to **2036**?

A delay to 2036 means that an entire generation of children will spend their entire school life, from kindergarten through 12th grade, in unsafe buildings, while they watch other schools being built and renovated.

The right to health and the right to equality are human rights. Their budget decisions are violating them.

We demand that HCPSS Board of Education stop treating Oakland Mills as a second-class priority. We demand that HCPSS Board of Education review the capital budget immediately and restore funding for the OMHS renovation.

Do the right thing. Justice cannot wait until 2036.

Sincerely,

OMHS Families



**NO TO
DISCRIMINATION!**

NO TO RACISM!

From: F Kuyateh <fkuyateh@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 1:33 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Vote NO tonight to CR - 183

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Good afternoon,

As a concerned citizen and parent in the Oakland Mills community, I am reaching out to ask you to vote **No** tonight to CR - 183 and make the BOE reconsider their removal of Oakland Mills High School (OMHS) from the HCPSS capital budget.

Public Hearing.

The school is badly in need of renovations which our community was hopeful to help solve the overcrowding and space issues and help get the facility up to date. Cutting this project from the budget without the community's input would only lead to distrust of the Board within our community and the notion that our community is of little priority.

Please vote NO tonight to CR - 183.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Dr. Fatmatta Kuyateh
9505 Battler Ct
Columbia MD 21045

From: Gayle Killen <killchar@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 10:58 AM
To: CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov; CouncilMail
Cc: Erika Goldsmith
Subject: Council comment: OMHS & Scenic roads

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Hello Council Members,

Regarding Oakland Mills High School.

Retrofits using hempcrete involve using hemp-based materials, like hempcrete blocks or hemp-lime insulation cast in place, to improve a building's thermal performance, reduce energy costs, and lower embodied carbon. These materials offer benefits such as good insulation, natural humidity regulation, and pest and mold resistance.

Benefits of using hempcrete for school retrofits

Improved energy efficiency: Hempcrete's insulating properties can help lower HVAC energy consumption, potentially saving 15-25% on heating and cooling costs.

Lower embodied carbon: Using hemp products can result in a significantly lower embodied carbon footprint compared to synthetic materials like foam insulation. Hempcrete also sequesters carbon during the hemp plant's growth phase.

Healthy indoor environment: Hempcrete is vapor-permeable, meaning it allows moisture to pass through, which helps naturally regulate humidity. It also has excellent acoustic properties and is naturally resistant to mold and pests, which reduces the need for chemical additives.

Fire and pest resistance: Hempcrete is naturally fire-resistant and pests like termites are not attracted to it.

Personal note: The current band-aid approach at OMHS and other buildings is wasting money and results in sick people. Sharing this knowledge helps us raise our standards. Hemp-Lime insulation is an affordable retrofit solution as materials are cheap, locally available (Lancaster Lime Works, PA) and the installation can be executed workshop style, involving teachers, parents and students in hands on learning.

Regarding scenic roads in Historic Ellicott City.

I own property and live on Main Street inside the historic district. For 15 years I've regularly walked the community from The Colored School to the courthouses and back through Fels community to the West End. It's forever been a walking community, full of people walking to work, grocery, church, community center and visiting family and friends. My home was the Icehouse for town built in 1809. Directly to my West was Cugle's restaurant, and directly to my East a Community Hall. Just a block down from that is an

old general store that served people of color when lower Main Street held up white-laws. Just about every three homes there's a Church and community tales of aunties and good food. The whitewashed stories of place still outlived by matriarchs of color with names like Burgess and Hammond, aging in place as gently as possible.

This scenic roadway could be served by pedestrian protections and runoff awareness. Broken curbs and sidewalks go unrepaired but we can definitely afford high curb bumpouts that protect homes and pedestrian pathways.

West End Main Street was a local road until google maps and waze. Around the same time Flash flood damages from 7.7" rainfall 07 Sept 2011 chewed up local infrastructure. Today, every day except Sundays, dozens of heavy trucks roll up and down main street over 8600 at the historic district boundary also the location of the Hudson Branch crossing and Roger Carter's home.

HoCo 2016 flood case study provided enough catastrophic damages to 8600 to get safe and sound Programmatic Agreement permits approved - but the safe and sound projects have been "updated" since permit issuance. Now the 8600 Main Street location, still unrepaired and in desperate need of restoration of working floodplain walls and plants, is instead loaded up with additional trucks and massive loads. A second trucking company All Roads is providing regional law enforcement heavy trucks, and now this site is also burdened with county contracted pipeline operations which also include massive heavy trucking.

I want to help you understand how conditions at this location are vulnerable to catastrophic land slides and road failure. The culvert broken in 2011 continued to leak under Main Street and scoured out the roadway from underneath in 2016 flooding. It's still broken. Tree and vegetation loss along Main Street continues erosion and land shifts. Old working floodplain walls once slowed surface flows but are now compacted grassy slopes that accelerate runoff. More than just scenic, these historic granite walls were built with a wealth of intelligence and intention. The current scene here in our charming historic community is hard to look at, hard to walk through and can be hell to live with. Please focus on people living here, try to restore working floodplain channels and protect us from development.

Historic Main Street isn't just scenic to the community living here, but if it helps to be scenic roadway then let it be with service to waterways and people.

ICYMI: My historic Main Street home does not flood from the floodplain. We're not all in the floodplain, that's a lie. In 2016 my home was flooded by infrastructure failure from 8600 Main. The empty homes at this location are not flood buyouts, they're part of a story that got the safe and sound Programmatic Agreement permitted. The empty historic home at 8611 Main was Roger Carter's home, this home does not flood. The blight you see is not scenic, it's been forced upon the people and we require the councils attention and care.

Thanks for listening, and thanks for providing council.

Every Hopeful,
Gayle Killen
8572 Main Street Historic Ellicott City MD 21043
killchar@gmail.com
4434671142

Every great advance in natural knowledge has involved the absolute rejection of authority.

~Thomas H. Huxley

From: Haydee Herrera <lolalagrande123@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 1:02 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: vote NO on CR - 183

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Dear Members of the Council,

Please vote 'No' tonight on CR-183 and urge the BOE to reconsider their removal of OMHS from the HCPSS capital budget. Otherwise, the Council is voting on a resolution to support a plan the BOE changed suddenly and without notice or input from the OMHS community or beyond.

Any system or criterion that prioritizes MRHS and LRHS over OMHS in terms of maintenance needs is clearly a flawed system. Shifting a long-planned project based on a clearly flawed set of criteria is irresponsible and inequitable in itself, but to do so and offer almost no time for the OM community to weigh in is simply disgraceful.

Please vote no on CR-183 and force the BOE to listen to our community.

Yours,

Haydee Herrera

From: Ankney, Janine M <janine.ankney@uhcglobal.com>
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 11:30 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: CR-183 - Impact on OMHS Renovations

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Hello,

As a long-time resident of Howard County, a former student of Hammond High School, and a parent to students at OMHS who graduated in 2008, 2013, 2018, and with a future grad of 2028, I am honestly appalled at the decision to remove OMHS from the renovation budget that was approved last June. This high school has been overlooked by the county for far too long.

Having children attend a school where they often cannot access more than one working restroom, drink from water fountains with lead, deal with leaking ceilings, and endure an inadequate HVAC system is simply unacceptable. I was thrilled to see Talbot Springs Elementary and Hammond High School get their reconstruction efforts completed. It gave me hope that OMHS would not be far behind. However, that has not been the case. OMHS renovations have been pushed aside and disregarded year after year.

My daughter, who is a sophomore at OMHS, has endured a lot of sickness since attending the school. She has been increasingly plagued by headaches to the point that we received a notice of concern regarding her absenteeism (despite all absences being excused for medical reasons). These headaches do not start at home; they typically begin 2-3 periods into the day and occur 3-4 times a week. There is no telling what hidden dangers there are in the building given its age and condition.

The lack of care that the Board of Education has shown for the students and staff of OMHS is appalling and embarrassing. Howard County has long been applauded for its standing in having some of the best schools. However, the Board of Education is not promoting fairness, quality education, or health and wellness when they continue to put off renovations for one of the oldest schools in the county. Renovations that are not only needed now but were sorely needed 10-15 years ago.

As a parent and a former educator, I urge you to reconsider and vote “NO” to CR-183 in order to allow the BOE to reconsider the removal of OMHS renovations in the plans and budget.

Thank you!
Janine M. Ankney

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Dear Superintendent Barnes, Board of Education Members, County Executive Dr. Ball, and County Council Members,

OMHS staff and students deserve better than to be forced to attend school in a moldy building with crumbling ceilings. The Board members except for Ms Mosley should be forced to work in the building for a week before tonight's vote to defer again becomes official. Ms Mosley is the only one who has seen firsthand each problem area of that building.

I am very disappointed that a building deemed "not conducive to learning" 10 or more years ago is being put off one more time.

Why are you building new buildings when you aren't taking care of the ones you've got?!

When children and staff get sick repeatedly, are you paying their medical bills and covering their absences? When only one bathroom is open because the rest are broken, are you cleaning up the subsequent mess? How much more will be spent to continually repair something that should've been replaced 10 years ago? How much louder can you say you don't care about the Oakland Mills community?

Oakland Mills HS provides a wonderful education IN SPITE of the Board of Education.

Sincerely,
Jessica Mahajan
Oakland Mills parent

From: Jessie Santillan <jessiesantillan24@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 12:36 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: OAKLAND MILLS HS RENOVATIONS

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Hello.

As a concerned parent, I am writing this letter in hopes that our concerns are being heard. I currently have a Senior and an incoming 9th grader next year. These kids deserve a functioning school that they can thrive in.

If OMHS was already scheduled for future renovations, why the change of plans? The school is over 50 years old. Its time to give it some new life so the future generations of the Oakland Mills community can be prideful and thrive at hOME.

Jessica Santillan, GRI, Real Estate Professional
Aguilar & Assoc Realty
O) 301.942.2560
C) 240.642.1553
www.brightmlshomes.com/jessica-santillan

From: Joanne Odegard <jcodegard118@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 11:24 AM
To: CouncilMail
Cc: manager@oaklandmills.org
Subject: CR-183 VOTE NO

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To County Council:

Vote no on this last minute agenda. OMHS needs to be renovated. Why is Oakland Mills being excluded from renovation for upkeep of the high school?

Exactly WHY? Because it is one of the oldest and not as "exclusive" villages?

This needs to be addressed.

Joanne Odegard

jcodegard118@gmail.com

410-320-3996

From: Judy Canahuati <jwc717@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 12:32 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: CR183-2025 Please vote NO

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After many years of waiting we were looking forward to OM High School finally being renovated. We have recently learned that the renovations planned for 2027 have been removed from the BOE capital budget, with no input from the community/

I urge you to vote NO on this resolution and as OM Council member to request that a process be developed to hear from the community, including students and staff working at OMHS before the County Council votes on the issue, not just testimony at tonight's meeting.

Thank you.

Judy

Judy Canahuati, Mphil., IBCLC (Ret.)

Columbia, MD 21045

Cell:301-755-4636

La Leche League Leader LLL of Columbia

<https://www.facebook.com/LLLcolumbia>

Action, Networking and Advocacy Committee member, LLLI

LLL Alliance for Breastfeeding Education representative to USBC

jwc717@gmail.com

Breastfeeding is the first step toward food security and integrated young child development.

From: tinyteacherj@verizon.net
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 11:21 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: CR-183

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VOTE NO . OMHS SHOULD NOT be removed from the list of renovations. They have been passed over with other schools getting additions and renovations. OMHS has had dangerous mold and original HVAC systems that don't work properly.

The community, students, and staff deserve to have the renovation just like other schools have!

VOTE NO

Judy Gottsagen

[Sent from AOL on Android](#)

From: Julia McCready <jamccready@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 11:11 AM
To: CouncilMail
Cc: Bill_Barnes@hcpss.org
Subject: Vote No On CR - 183

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Esteemed members of the Council Council,

Oakland Mills High School has a higher than average proportion of students who are already struggling their way up Maslow's hierarchy of needs. You know that.

When they are also too hot, too cold, too sick at school all day, that compounds their other challenges. How is that impacting their ability to learn? Mold contamination and leaking sewage - - what does this do to them, those kids who are right on the margins? Is this yet another reason that students who are already at risk are slipping through the cracks? How might OMHS look different statistically with a better learning environment?

The school system itself said the the OMHS school building was "no longer conducive to learning" back in 2018.

You've probably heard this quote from the late Archbishop Desmond Tutu:

"There comes a point where we need to stop just pulling people out of the river. We need to go upstream and find out why they're falling in."

We **know** why these young people are falling in. How is it possible that we won't even give them a decent school building? Is there no place in Howard County where their potential will be valued?

I implore you to be the lifeline for these students, faculty, staff, and school community. Vote No tonight to CR - 183. Do whatever is in your power to communicate with the BOE that their removal of OMHS from the HCPSS capital budget inequitable and unacceptable.

Thank you for your work and consideration.

Sincerely,

Julia A McCready
Columbia, Maryland

From: Julie Hershman <hollanderj@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 12:14 PM
To: CouncilMail

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Hi,

I am a resident of Thunder Hill and while my kids are not in school yet, my son will be attending Oakland Mills.

I request that you vote **No** tonight to CR - 183.

I request that you reconsider the removal of OMHS from the HCPSS capital budget. This was a sudden change and no notice or input from my community.

Thank you

From: B&K Lampron <ohschnitzel6@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 12:51 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: CR-183, please vote no

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Dear Council,
Oakland Mills High school was on the books for renovation but now those funds and project has been pulled from the budget.
This is unacceptable! Children and staff need a clean, safe environment for learning and teaching as well as a chance to remain healthy.
Please reconsider and vote No on CR-183.

Respectfully,
Karen Lampron

From: Lena Kennedy <lenakkennedy@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 12:00 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Vote No on CR - 183

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I am writing to ask that you please vote **No** tonight to CR - 183 and make the BOE reconsider their removal of OMHS from the HCPSS capital budget. Otherwise, the Council is voting on a resolution to support a plan the BOE changed suddenly and without notice or input from the OMHS community or beyond.

Any system or criteria that puts MRHS and LRHS in front of OMHS in maintenance needs and priorities is clearly a very flawed system. Shifting a long planned project based on a clearly flawed set of criteria they came up with is irresponsible and inequitable on its own, but to do so and offer almost no time for the OM community to weigh in is disgraceful as well.

Please vote no to CR-183 and force the BOE to listen to our community. We deserve that.

Lena Kennedy

Sent from my iPhone

From: Levonna LevonnaS <levonnas@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 1:32 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: CR183

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Vote NO on CR 183. Oakland Mills residents should have a voice on this decision.

From: Lynette Hillery <lynnette.hillery@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 12:24 PM
To: CouncilMail; Big Daddy
Subject: Oakland Mills needs your support

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Dear Howard Co Council

Please vote **No** tonight to CR - 183 and make the BOE reconsider their removal of OMHS from the HCPSS capital budget. Otherwise, the Council is voting on a resolution to support a plan the BOE changed suddenly and without notice or input from our cOMmunity.

OM is one of the oldest buildings in the district and requires major renovations and upgrades to help our students compete and be successful in the 21st Century. The bathrooms are mostly non functional, the heating and cooling systems cannot handle the current needs. There is lead in the water supply.

There is no other reason to delay the required renovations.

Please reconsider your decision and vote No on CR 183.

|| *Lynette Hillery*

From: Marcia White <marciahwhite@verizon.net>
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 11:48 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Please vote NO on CR 183

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I have lived in Oakland Mills for almost 30 years. My son graduated from OMHS in 2008. In all those years, OMHS has not received significant improvements of any kind.

I was last at the school in October for the Annual OMHS Holiday Craft Fair. OMHS looked exactly as it had in 2008. It's one of the oldest schools in Columbia and in obvious need for upgrades to bring it up to the level of schools in the wealthier areas of the County.

To learn that the BOE is going to remove OMHS from their 2027 Capitol Budget, without warning or explanation to the OM community is unconscionable.

PLEASE, do everything possible to urge the BOE to stick to the plan and keep OMHS improvements in their budget. Our school community needs these improvements!

Marcia White
9384 Diamondback Drive, 21045
410-707-7335

Sent from my iPhone

From: Margaret McGillivray <margaret.mcgillivray@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 6:56 PM
To: County Council
Subject: Please vote no on CR183

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To whom it may concern:

To my shock and dismay, the Board of Education abruptly requested an alternate FY 27 capital budget from the Superintendent despite staff recommendations to proceed with the plan to begin renovations finding for Oakland Mills High School in 2027. The board of education then voted on this alternative when presented at its next meeting despite reservations about an incomplete capital investment ranking system being used and without adequate opportunity for community input. Decisions about how to spend over \$160 million should not be abruptly changed or rushed.

On a personal note, as long time resident of Oakland Mills, with a senior, sophomore and a new middle schooler all attending OM schools, I am ashamed that our county cannot do better by one of the oldest schools and school buildings in Columbia. My eldest children have had more than what seems like the normal amount of respiratory infections during their time at Oakland Mills High, to the point where I am unsure if enrolling my youngest child, who happens to have respiratory issues, is advisable.

Sincerely,

Margaret McGillivray, DMA

--
Margaret McGillivray, DMA, MM, B.Mus, ARCT
Director of Music, First Presbyterian of Howard County
Third Horn, Lancaster Symphony

Musician, Educator, Advocate

520-266-9249

www.margaretmcgillivray.com

From: Mariana Orellana <marorel99@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 1:04 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: NO for CR - 183

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Good afternoon,

I am writing to ask that you please vote NO tonight to CR - 183 and make the BOE reconsider their removal of OMHS from the HCPSS capital budget. Otherwise, the Council is voting on a resolution to support a plan the BOE changed suddenly and without notice or input from the OMHS community or beyond.

Any system or criteria that puts MRHS and LRHS in front of OMHS in maintenance needs and priorities is clearly a very flawed system. Shifting a long planned project based on a clearly flawed set of criteria is irresponsible and inequitable on its own, but to do so and offer almost no time for the OM community to weigh in is just disgraceful.

Please vote no to CR-183 and force the BOE to listen to our community. We deserve that.

Mariana Orellana (they/she)

Community Operations Administrator
Freelance Photographer
University of Maryland, Baltimore County 2021
McDaniel College 2027

From: Megan Bixler <mbixler622@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 12:30 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Vote No tonight to CR - 183 and make the BOE reconsider their removal of OMHS from the HCPSS capital budget

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I am very concerned about the removal of OMHS from the FY2027 capital budget. It is extremely disappointing to once again see that OMHS is being skipped over in favor of other projects. Students and staff at Oakland Mills have to endure mold, temperature issues, and leaks that cause health issues and prevent them from having a safe learning environment. After waiting for decades to finally have their failing HVAC system replaced, the BOE once again removed OM from the priority list.

Please Vote No tonight on CR - 183!

Thank you,
Megan Bixler

From: melanie dorville <melaniedorville@yahoo.fr>
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 1:57 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: URGENT: Please Vote NO on Amendment to CR-183 Regarding Oakland Mills High School Renovation Funding

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Dear Howard County Council Members,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to any amendment or action related to Council Resolution 183 (CR-183) that would remove or delay the essential planning and construction funding for the Oakland Mills High School (OMHS) renovation project from the Fiscal Year 2027 Capital Improvement Program (CIP).

Oakland Mills High School is in dire need of a full renovation. The current facility suffers from numerous critical issues, including aging infrastructure, inadequate heating and cooling systems, and spaces that no longer meet the requirements of a modern educational environment. These deficiencies directly impact the health, safety, and educational experience of our students and staff.

The long-awaited renovation of OMHS is not merely a desired upgrade; it is a critical necessity to ensure educational equity for the students in the Oakland Mills community. Pushing this project back—especially after its place in the CIP has been established—sends a disheartening message to our community that our facilities are not a priority.

I urge you to consider the immense physical need and the educational impact of postponing this project. I respectfully ask that you vote **NO** on any amendment to CR-183 that would result in the removal of the OMHS renovation funding from the FY2027 budget. Please ensure that this vital project remains on schedule.

Thank you for your service and for your careful consideration of this critical matter.

Sincerely,

Melanie Lau
Oakland Mills Resident
melaniedorville@yahoo.fr

From: Michael Elser <mepgp3092@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 12:18 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Testimony

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I am writing to ask that you please vote No tonight to CR - 183 and make the BOE reconsider their removal of OMHS from the HCPSS capital budget. Otherwise, the Council is voting on a resolution to support a plan the BOE changed suddenly and without notice or input from the OMHS community or beyond.

Any system or criteria that puts MRHS and LRHS in front of OMHS in maintenance needs and priorities is clearly a very flawed system. Shifting a long planned project based on a clearly flawed set of criteria is irresponsible and inequitable on its own, but to do so and offer almost no time for the OM community to weigh in is just disgraceful.

Please vote no to CR-183 and force the BOE to listen to our community. We deserve that.

Michael Elser

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

From: Nik Berry <niklasberry@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 6:59 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Vote NO on CR183

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Good morning,

My name is Niklas Berry, I am a teacher at Oakland Mills High School in Columbia. I am asking you to vote NO on CR183, the Submission of the Board of Education's Capital Budget to the Interagency Commission on School Construction. This budget leaves out the renovation of OMHS, which had been planned and approved in both the FY25 and FY26 budgets.

County Executive Ball proclaimed in April 2024 after the adoption of the FY25 Budget, "With these investments, we are not only keeping our promises of putting education at the forefront, but we are committing to advance long-awaited projects for our community." In October of this year, HCPSS Central Office staff stated that the OMHS renovations should remain in place for this fiscal year; they gave their "recommendation...to maintain the project order approved by the Board of Education in the FY 2026 Capital Budget." However, the Board removed these renovations based on the argument that our school is only ranked 40th on their new Facility Prioritization list, even though Central Office staff warned them that this list was still in a "transition period and [required] further development..." This list heavily favors schools that have been overcrowded—a problem that can be solved with redistricting—while it pushes schools that desperately need renovations much further down.

We are asking the Board to keep their prOMise and honor their cOMmitment to the students, staff, and stakeholders of OMHS by restoring renovations to the FY27 Capital Budget. As members of the County Council, you can help by voting NO on CR183 and asking the Board to re-evaluate their decision before sending the plan off to the IAC.

Thank you,

Niklas Berry

From: Phillip Dodge <dodge_phillip@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 1:46 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Vote No on CR-183

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Please vote no on CR-183. The removal of OMHS at the last minute seems ill-informed at best.

Phillip Dodge
7301 Little Bird Path
Columbia, MD 21046

From: Rachel Berman <rachel.altemus.berman@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 1:02 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Vote No on CR-183

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To the members of the Howard County Council-

I am writing to ask that you please VOTE NO tonight to CR - 183 and make the BOE reconsider their removal of OMHS from the HCPSS capital budget. Otherwise, the Council is voting on a resolution to support a plan the BOE changed suddenly and without notice or input from the OMHS community or beyond.

Any system or criteria that puts MRHS and LRHS in front of OMHS in maintenance needs and priorities is clearly a very flawed system. Shifting a long planned project based on a clearly flawed set of criteria is irresponsible and inequitable on its own, but to do so and offer almost no time for the OM community to weigh in is just disgraceful.

Please vote no to CR-183 and force the BOE to listen to our community. We deserve that.

Rachel Berman

From: Rachel McGrain <rmmcgrain@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 8:00 AM
To: CouncilMail; Jones, Opel; Jung, Debra; Rigby, Christiana; Walsh, Elizabeth; Yungmann, David
Cc: Ball, Calvin
Subject: Vote NO on CR183

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Dear Howard County Council members,

I am a Wilde Lake HS alum, former City Schools teacher, and parent of a future OMHS student. I am writing in opposition to CR183 because of its exclusion of long-needed and promised renovations for Oakland Mills High School. I urge you to reject this proposal and demand that the Howard County Board of Education add OMHS back into its school building renovation plans for FY27.

The first building I taught at in west Baltimore was falling apart, and I saw firsthand the negative impact the state of the building had on my students. Despite caring and passionate teachers who worked hard to build up their self-worth, many students internalized the message the building sent that they were not worth investing in. While other students enjoyed brand new buildings, ours were stuck with one that was visibly depressing and faced constant issues and barriers to their learning.

One of the draws of moving back to my hometown of Columbia was the promise of HCPSS' excellent schools. I graduated from Wilde Lake High School in 2009 and enjoyed learning in a building that matched the teachers' dedication, students' potential, and strength of the community. There are so many factors that go into an excellent education, and physical space is an often overlooked and incredibly important one.

Teachers and students will always make do with what they have, but it takes a toll on the entire community to continually face interruptions to learning and deferred promises from leaders who are supposed to be supporting students. All students deserve to go to school in buildings that are at a bare minimum safe and sanitary with functional infrastructure.

When the funds are there, have been promised, are needed, and then are taken away- that sends a clear message that this community is not valued by its leaders. I urge you to step up to Jim Rouse's vision of community care and equity and fulfill the promise to prioritize much-needed renovations to OMHS. This community has already waited too long and cannot be pushed back any further.

Sincerely,
Rachel McGrain

District 2

From: Ramona Pyers <rcpyers@icloud.com>
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 10:40 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: CR-183 removing OMHS fr capital budget

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Dear Council,

I have lived in OM Village Center since 1972 when I moved to Columbia.

OMHS and SFES opened in 1973- new schools in a new town.

I am puzzled and frankly embarrassed by the recent vote by the school board to remove OMHS from being the next school to be renovated.

The recent vote by the School Board was sudden and without community input.

How does a school go from next to #40?

Can you please look into this?

I think the community deserves an explanation of this situation.

I have seen videos of flooding in the classrooms, reports of mold in the library as well as temperature variations from 60 to 80 degrees in the school.

OMHS went through some repairs and additions and perhaps these factored into the criteria used to evaluate conditions of a building.

Can any of you go to the school and take a tour of the situation? -or get a report from the principal Young people are our future and should not have to tolerate these conditions.

High school students are on the brink of adulthood and deserve us to invest in them and their futures.

Sometimes criteria can be analyzed in different ways to make it support what you want. Maybe someone doctored the data to move OMHS from next to #40?

Thank you,
Ramona Pyers

Sent from my iPad

From: peachcake6@aol.com
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 12:57 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Say NO to CR-183

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I am writing to ask that you please vote No tonight to CR - 183 and make the BOE reconsider their removal of OMHS from the HCPSS capital budget. Otherwise, the Council is voting on a resolution to support a plan the BOE changed suddenly and without notice or input from the OMHS community or beyond.

It's time that OMHS take priority. I have two children who have graduated from OMHS. My eldest in 2011. He suffered greatly with allergies and other illnesses while a student there from the mold and other allergens in the air. My second child graduated in 2020 and continuously coming home with bumps and bruises from being knocked around and hit in the head with backpacks, arms and elbows from many children who were taller and much bigger than she.

It is irresponsible to put MRHS and LRHS in front of OMHS. No time was given to the OM community to weigh in on this last minute change and that is truly unacceptable. The very close, talented, worthy community deserves better! We have been waiting longer than most and need the renovations more than others.

Please vote no to CR-183 and force the BOE to listen to our community. We deserve that.

Regina Maier-Manuel

[Sent from the all new AOL app for iOS](#)

From: Rizwan rashid <rizwan704@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 12:40 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: OMHS renovation plan change

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Dear board members,

I wanted to voice my concern over the removal of Oakland Mills High School renovation plan from 2027 schedule/budget. It has been neglected for many years, and removing this plan at this last minute without inputs from the community is really concerning. I hope members will reconsider making this abrupt change and uphold the equity it deserves.

Thank you,
Rizwan

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

From: ron@duvallgroup.com
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 11:26 AM
To: councilmail@howardcountymd.gov.
Subject: CR - 183 a

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I am contacting the council to strongly urge you to vote NO on CR-183 at tonight's meeting. OMHS has been ignored far too long for capital improvements. This quick action appears to me to be unseemly and needs more airtime.

Ron Duvall
President
Duvall Consulting Group, LLC
Duvall Retail Management, LLC
www.duvallgroup.com
443-562-5132
Schedule a Virtual Mtg. (<https://ron-4.youcanbook.me>)

From: Susanna Sung <susanna.s.sung@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 11:16 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Vote NO CR - 183

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Hello,

I am writing today to urge you to make the BOE reconsider their removal of Oakland Mills High School from the HCPSS capital budget. Please vote NO to the resolution that supports a plan the BOE changed suddenly and without notice or input from our community.

Oakland Mills High School was finally scheduled to be renovated starting in 2027, but on Thursday, November 6th, 2025, the HCPSS Board of Education voted to completely remove our renovations from their planned FY2027 Capital Budget.

The community has fought long and hard for these much needed renovations so that our students can learn in a safe environment free of mold, asbestos, falling ceiling tiles, and more. My children graduated from Oakland Mills and were keenly aware that their Howard County peers spent their days in safe and healthy environments. It has only gotten worse with each year. Thank you for considering this much needed and long overdue renovation.

Kind regards,
Susanna Sung

From: Tracy Downard <tracy.downard@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 1:44 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Voting on CR - 183 - URGENT

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Good afternoon,

I urge you to vote **NO** tonight on **CR-183** and require the Board of Education to reconsider its decision to remove Oakland Mills High School from the HCPSS FY2027 Capital Budget. Approving this resolution would effectively endorse a significant, last-minute change made by the Board—one implemented without notice, transparency, or meaningful community input.

Oakland Mills High School was finally scheduled for renovation beginning in 2027. However, on Thursday, November 6, 2025, the Board of Education voted to remove the OMHS renovation project entirely from the planned FY2027 Capital Budget.

How much longer must our students endure substandard building conditions?

Please help ensure that OMHS receives the long-overdue renovations that our students and our community deserve.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Tracy Downward

OM resident and mother of 2 OMHS students

From: Valerie Patel <valpatelval@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 12:21 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: vote NO on Cr-183

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I am writing to ask that you please vote No tonight to CR-183 and make the BOE reconsider the removal of OMHS from the HCPSS capital budget. Otherwise the council is voting on a resolution to support a plan the BOE changed suddenly and without notice or input from the OMHS community and beyond.

Any system or criteria that puts MRHS and LRHS in front of OMHS in maintenance needs and priorities is clearly a flawed system. OMHS had an ADDITION built in the early 2000s but absolutely no meaningful renovations to the old, 50+ year building. Shifting a long planned project based on a questionable and flawed criteria is irresponsible and inequitable. And to do so without allowing for any meaningful input from the OM community is disgraceful. Please vote no to CR 183 and force the BOE to listen to our community and our serious (and valid) health concerns). We deserve that.

Valerie Patel

--

Valerie Patel

From: Wesley Foley <wes.foley@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 11:33 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: OMHS

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Hello,

I am urging you to vote no on CR - 183 and make the BOE reconsider their removal of OMHS from the HCPSS capital budget.

Thanks,
Wes Foley, Oakland Mills resident

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From: Jeanene Smail <jfed234@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 18, 2025 12:52 PM
To: County Council

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Dear County Council,

I am shocked and saddened that the BOE decided to remove OMHS from the renovation plan that was supposed to start in 2027. And I heard some people use the excuse that it is not at capacity. Well, capacity is based on redistricting. Our boys graduated from OMHS in 2017 and 2022. But around 2020, redistricting moved our entire neighborhood of Hopewell out of OMHS and sent us to a school even farther away....Atholton HS.

However, I still feel OMHS is in serious need of these renovations as there have been mold issues for as long as I can remember. I urge not to continue to sweep OMHS under the rug. This school has a predominantly non-white population so I see why the BOE did this and thinks they can get away with it.

Please vote No this evening on CR-183 to allow BOE to get this right and put OMHS back on the list for 2027.

Thank you,

Joe and Jeanene Smail
(we have two children, one that currently goes to Oakland, Mills, Middle School, and is headed to Oakland, Mill high school next year)

From: Alisa Niefeld-Batiz <aniefeldbatiz@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, December 5, 2025 3:41 PM
To: boe@hcpss.org
Cc: CouncilMail; Guzzone, Guy Senator; Clarence.Lam@house.state.md.us
Subject: OMHS Renovations

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It saddens me and angers me that the neglected school has gone through way too long. The port event voted to allocate money in the budget for the well overdue renovations. It's not just to make the school pretty is to make it healthy. The boiler in that school was there when my son who was now 44 and it's the same original boiler when he went to school there. I'd like to see the board of Ed go through that school. I'd like to see them work there for one day but they wouldn't jeopardize their health like they put the students at risk and the staff with mold and lead pipes. It's outrageous. It's shameful.. something needs to be done. I'm going to contact the department of health department of environment that school needs to be shut down.!

Regards,
Alisa Niefeld-Batiz
Berkshire Hathaway
410-215-0047

From: Patrick Cox <patrickcox1@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, December 5, 2025 3:02 PM
To: CouncilMail; Ball, Calvin; bill_barnes@hcpss.org; boe@hcpss.org
Subject: Please fund OMHS

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Members of the County Council and Board of Education,

I am a resident of Oakland Mills and a parent of three future OMHS students. I am writing to urge you to restore Oakland Mills High School to the FY27 capital plan. After nearly twenty years of deferred maintenance and rescinded promises of funding, removing OMHS at the eleventh hour in the November Board of Education meeting is a decision that would effectively condemn our community to another generation of neglect.

At the November 6 meeting, Mr. Hull and Mr. Brown argued that advancing three smaller projects would cover “more students per dollar” spent. That framing does not include the magnitude of impact. Funding OMHS renovations would transform conditions for OMHS students and the surrounding community who use the building every day and evening, in ways that far exceed an HVAC renovation at Atholton ES. The “impact per student” is simply not equivalent.

Opportunities like Built to Learn funding are rare. When funding of that magnitude is available, the logical and fiscally responsible choice is to use it for the largest projects that cannot realistically be funded through normal capital budgets. The three smaller projects are severable and could be funded piecemeal in future capital budgets without Built to Learn dollars. I recognize that both HCPSS and Howard County face real fiscal constraints and that every decision involves tradeoffs. If you choose to fund renovating OMHS now, all three of the other projects may still be achievable with future budgets. If you choose not to renovate OMHS now, it may never happen.

In support of the decision to fund 3 smaller projects, the BoE relied on a new facility prioritization tool that dropped OMHS from fourth to fortieth. While transparent criteria are important, this system is deeply flawed. Even HCPSS staff have acknowledged that the tool was not ready for use. The tool treats building condition and capacity as nearly equivalent. As a result, schools that are overcrowded are prioritized over a building with an HVAC system nearly three decades past its intended lifespan, documented black mold, ceiling tiles falling in locker rooms, and long-standing concerns about asbestos and lead. The consequences of overcrowding are not comparable to daily exposure to environmental and structural hazards that directly threaten student and staff health and safety. The current prioritization model also ignores academic outcomes and equity. Choosing once again to overlook a school with some

of the lowest test scores and graduation rates, and one of the highest percentages of minority and FARMS students, is inconsistent with any serious commitment to equity. Using a tool with such known deficiencies to justify deprioritizing OMHS undermines confidence in the decision-making process.

I urge you to honor the commitment made to this community. Restore Oakland Mills High School to the FY27 budget and demonstrate that our county's priorities truly include safety, equity, and opportunity for all students.

Thank you for your consideration,

Patrick Cox

From: Carol Rowan <cdrow90@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, December 7, 2025 8:47 PM
To: boe@hcpss.org; CouncilMail
Subject: Keep Your Promise to Renovate Oakland Mills High School
Attachments: CR_BOE_Comments_on_CIP_120725.docx

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Keep Your Promise to the Oakland Mills Community to Renovate Oakland Mills High School!!!

I recognize the challenges you face and the many issues you need to balance, and I appreciate the work that you are doing for our communities, but the decision you made to push back indefinitely the Oakland Mills High School (OMHS) renovations is wrong and is a tremendous slap in the face to the Oakland Mills (OM) Community.

OMHS is in desperate need of repair. These much-needed renovations were initially deferred back in 2009; that was 16 years ago! Almost a decade later, the Board's 2017-2018 assessment of OMHS's HVAC system recognized that the current conditions at the school required a full renovation. That report stated,

“It’s not practical and cost effective to maintain the system any longer. Due to the fact that the system is old, obsolete and continues to be problematic we are unable to provide a conducive-learning environment to both the students and staff.”

And yet, the renovations were not included in the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) until 2021 (12 years after first being deferred) when this Board finally included the OMHS renovations into the CIP with a start date of 2026/27. Since then, there have been attempts to push off the OMHS renovations, including two by the former Superintendent, but thankfully, the Board did the right thing both times and kept the OMHS renovations as scheduled. Quick fixes to the HVAC system were attempted over the summers of 2024 and 2025, but these were not sufficient. As your own evidence states, a full renovation is needed. I am writing to you today to ask that you once again do the right thing and *keep the OMHS renovations in the CIP as approved last year. Please do not postpone renovations to OMHS!*

My name is Carol Rowan, and I am a proud member of the OM community. I am the parent of two recent OMHS graduates and the wife of a 1983 graduate. Obviously, I’m not writing to you for me, or for my kids. I’m writing to you for the future generations attending OMHS. When my kids attended OMHS, they basically went to the same school as their father did, 42 years ago, including the same HVAC system. The need for full HVAC renovations was identified and then deferred before my youngest child was even in school. Now he’s an alum. If you keep ignoring OMHS, children not even born yet will be dealing with these same issues that should have been resolved years ago.

I don’t think I should have to tell you that OMHS has long-standing and deferred renovation needs and health and safety issues. You should already know that the building has mold, leaky ceilings, a lack of fresh air and natural light, etc. The Board has heard from the OM community – ***numerous times*** – about how desperately renovations are needed. Your

own reports show it. The staff and students most certainly know it. And previous iterations of this Board finally accepted it. Most everyone understands the situation except for this current Board. It's incredibly frustrating to see how willing you are to ignore it.

You pushed back the renovations to a building declared "unable to provide a conducive learning environment" over 7 years ago to 40th on the priority list – 40th!!! OMHS now ranks below schools that have been more recently renovated (Atholton High School), re-built (Wilde Lake High School), or just plain newly built (Marriotts Ridge High School). The data you used to make this decision is obviously, flawed. Based on this new priority list it when will OMHS finally be renovated? When the building is over 100 years old? Never? Will future students still be sitting in mold-infested classrooms, be dealing with extreme temperatures ranging from 60 degrees to 80 degrees, be unable to use rooms that had to be closed off, or share one bathroom for the foreseeable future? Ignoring the issues won't make them go away and will only make them more difficult and more costly to address.

I truly don't understand how anyone could contemplate pushing back the OMHS renovations any further. It's unconscionable. This county has left a legacy of neglect of OMHS. Please, do the right thing and restore the OMHS renovations.

Thank you.

Carol Rowan

December 7, 2025

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Thank you.

Carol Rowan

December 7, 2025

From: Doug & Carol Rowan <cdrowan521@verizon.net>
Sent: Sunday, December 7, 2025 8:50 PM
To: boe@hcpss.org; CouncilMail
Subject: Keep the Promise to Renovate Oakland Mills High School
Attachments: DR_Comments_HCPSS_CIP_OMHS_2025.docx

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Hello, My name is Doug Rowan. I am a 1983 graduate of Oakland Mills High School. I am also the father of 2021 and 2024 OMHS graduates. I am proud to have attended OMHS and even more proud that my children had the opportunity to attend. The staff and administration are wonderful, and I am happy that my children attended school with such a diverse student population. Oakland Mills was and is truly hOME.

I am very disappointed that Oakland Mills High School has once again been shoved down the road and has had its much-needed renovations essentially cancelled. As I testified the last time OM was being overlooked, putting off much needed renovations to OMHS was then, and is even more so now, a terrible mistake and a disservice to one of the original Columbia communities. The Oakland Mills community, including its high school, embodies the vision that James Rouse had for Columbia. I don't think he would be thrilled with the board's decision to ignore OM once again. The last time, the board added Oakland Mills High School back into the CIP with an expected start date for renovations of 2026 after years of exclusion from the program, many faculty members, students, and concerned community members spoke about the condition of the school. You will be hearing from them again. Assessments of the building's condition and fitness should tell you all you need to know about moving forward with the deserved renovations. Putting a Band-Aid on some of the antiquated HVAC systems doesn't cut it.

Unfortunately, the proposed plan would defer rehabilitating a building that was declared "unable to provide a conducive learning environment" years ago, indefinitely. It would remain largely the same school as it was when I graduated in 1983. By the time any much needed renovations happen (or not) many of the first students to attend OMHS when it originally opened will have great-grandchildren who are attending. It is not hard for me to imagine how dilapidated OMHS will be by then.

Beyond the current Band-Aided HVAC system concerns, there are other problems that plague Oakland Mills. This includes continuous issues with mold and leaky ceilings. There is also a lack of fresh air. There are few windows. Unfortunately you have decided to prioritize fixing windows in schools only 20 years old. Those schools are lucky to have windows. This is not acceptable. There

are also no spaces for students to gather, an auditorium that is substandard and has had OSHA deem parts unsafe (again, essentially the same as when I attended).

Unfortunately, it appears to some of us that pushing much needed renovations further into the future on the high school with the highest proportion of lower income and traditionally underrepresented racial and ethnic populations is not by accident. This needs to stop. Enough is enough. It is inequitable, and immoral to delay much needed renovations to OMHS any longer.

Thank you,

Doug Rowan

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Thank you,

Doug Rowan

December 2025

From: Gillian Jimenez (Gillian) <gillian92983@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, December 7, 2025 11:28 AM
To: Gillian Jimenez
Subject: Oakland Mills High School

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My name is Gillian Jimenez and I've been a resident of Howard County for twenty years. I'm a proud resident and hOMEowner in the Village of Oakland Mills, having lived here for the last 16 years. I have two children in the HCPSS who will eventually attend Oakland Mills High School. I'm "hopeful" that by now, you are aware of the ongoing deferred maintenance issues the county has gotten itself into, especially those impacting Oakland Mills High School. In 2008, my husband and I started house hunting while living in the Town Center area of Columbia. We finally settled on a nice single-family hOME in the Stevens Forest neighborhood of Oakland Mills. Thanks to my husband's time serving our country in the United States Navy, including two deployments to Iraq during the war, we were able to purchase our hOME and find our place within the cOMmunity.

Before we became parents, we weren't too aware of the goings-on of the neighborhood schools, but we did witness renovations to the elementary school that one day, our eventual children, would get to attend, SFES. Through our relationships with those in our cOMmunity, our neighbors, village board members, and various other people, we started to learn more about the schools in our neighborhood and throughout the county. We started to hear more and more about the ongoing maintenance issues at OMHS and OMMS. Then we heard that Talbott Springs was finally getting a long-overdue rebuild, and witnessing the cOMmunity cOME together to make this happen was truly inspiring.

And over the course of a few years, we actually saw the building cOME to life, and we were so lucky that our youngest child was able to attend the county's RECC program there for one semester once he was eligible. The building is truly beautiful, and from the mOMent you walk inside, you immediately feel like you are hOME and that you're sending your children into the best possible learning environment. Our oldest had been attending SFES for several years, and while we wholeheartedly love this incredible school, there's a different feeling walking into it than when walking into TSES. SFES is the county's smallest elementary school, and it's so welcOMing when you see the same teachers and staff members year after year, and they ask about your children long after they've moved on. It's cOMforting knowing that the

principal and other administrators know who you are simply because they take the time to get to know you and your family.

And as our oldest got further into grade school, we looked ahead at middle school and learned that OMMS was long overdue for a rebuild to bring the school up to code and be a more conducive learning environment. And we got involved. My husband and I educated ourselves on the history of the BOE's continued pushback of prioritizing OMMS and OMHS. We learned about the problems both crumbling buildings were facing as hundreds of students and staff members spend eight or more hours a day inside the unstable infrastructure the county stands behind.

We also learned about the rigorous redistricting process that seems to never end as our county's growth supersedes the capacity of our smaller neighborhood schools. We've learned that during these most recent redistricting processes, the BOE has drawn and approved plans that negatively impact OMHS. The county has continuously approved plans that either keep OMHS capacity flat or lower it, which ultimately means that other high schools in the county continue to be over-capacity. When the state rolled out the ranking system to determine which schools are priorities for renovations/additions, one of the factors that goes into this outcome is the impact to the total capacity of which a school is capable of serving.

Common sense will tell you that when the county wants more students to attend specific schools that are already overcrowded and maxed out at capacity, of course adding more space to that building would prioritize it over a building where the county has zero interest in sending more students due to repercussions from the communities of those students who would be forced to attend the "ghetto school," OMHS.

This is an equity issue. As it stands now, OMHS, the actual building, no longer provides a conducive learning environment and has not been providing this since at least 2017. That means that for the last 8 or more years, the BOE has broken its promises of educational equity through its strategic plan. This reprioritization of building renovations and remodels further penalizes the already marginalized populations within the community. The percentage rates for graduating, attending college, etc., will only decline over the course of the years as the building continues to fall behind in adequate functionality. Inevitably, if left at the current ranking of 40 on the priority list, OMHS will be forced to close the building sporadically when a new hole pops up in the roof after a few days of rain, or another sewage line backs up due to a crack hidden way below the surface of the ground under the already crumbling building. Or when mold spreads through the kitchen and the school cannot provide clean, healthy food to its students. Or when the library has to close down for a week again when the mold grows back on every surface within the room, including thousands of books the students use for completion of assignments or simply for the fact that they want to read something for pleasure.

If the school system follows the new ranking list, OMHS doesn't stand a chance at renovations or a remodel or a whole new building for at least another 40-50 years. The BOE has already argued that they cannot sustain 3 or more buildings being worked on at one time, so with OMHS being at 40 right now, the OM community will have to wait at least four more decades, that's two more generations, to see the BOE finally do something about the

conditions at OMHS. Two more generations of our future not being invested in and allowed to have an equitable opportunity to education. That's unacceptable.

And the BOE has already broken the prOMise they made last year. Last year, the BOE decided that in order to have enough money to build a better OMHS, the work on OMMS would only be for a renovation/addition and not a rebuild. As a cOMmunity, we considered this a win. But now, OMHS doesn't get anything, and OMMS still only gets the renovation/addition. The county not only breaks its prOMise but then goes ahead and pours salt in the wound. I understand that not every single resident within the county will be happy no matter the outcOME. And I understand that at the end of the day, it all cOMes down to politics, money, and pride. But the BOE's recent vote shows that no politician, even those elected to represent this very cOMmunity, will stand up for what's right and provide a basic, healthy environment where future generations can learn and grow. They'd rather do the cowardly, selfish thing and vote in a way that best suits them for reelection, money, and pride.

I'm beyond frustrated and appalled at the BOE, the HCPSS central office staff, and other stakeholders who have contributed to the ongoing blatant setbacks forced upon OMHS, OMMS, and its cOMmunities.

It's my sincere hope that each and every student who has attended OMHS and will attend OMHS grows up to becOME a successful, contributing member of society despite all of the odds against them simply because six people voted to remove OMHS from the list.

Gillian Jimenez

Oakland Mills Village Resident

Oakland Mills Middle School Parent

Stevens Forest Elementary School Parent

PS: If everything above doesn't hit home, imagine being back in high school attending OMHS. It's almost the end of your 6th period class, English, one more class to go, Math, and you're home free for the rest of the day. Your 7th period class, Math, is just two classrooms down from where you are right now, in your English classroom. You have got to go to the bathroom. You don't think you'll be able to wait until the end of the day or until you get home. But the bathroom that's closest to you is not working and hasn't been for a few weeks now. The toilets overflow and they've shut the water off so no one can use them, not even the sinks to wash hands. You then remember that the other two bathrooms nearby also don't work and are closed. That leaves the bathroom that's furthest away from where you are right now and other than the bathroom that is in the locker room, it's the only working restroom available for you in the entire building. And you have to share it with half of the students in the entire building. And there's going to be a line because out of the 750 students who are now sharing this one restroom, a lot of them are more than likely going to need to use it between classes.

So you have a decision to make:

#1: ask to go to the bathroom now knowing that your teacher will be going over the study packet for tomorrow's quiz which you need to pass to keep your grade up

#2: risk it and go between classes. The hallways are narrow and crowded so after struggling to get clear across the building, you'll have to wait in line and will most likely be late making it all the way back to your math class

#3: ask to go to the bathroom in your next class knowing that you have a timed test to take. Your teacher will tell you that you'll have to wait until you're done with the test. So you'll have to either rush through the test to get to the bathroom or sit there in agony, take the test and then go to the bathroom

All of this running through your head while you should be paying attention in English class just because you have to use the bathroom. But, it doesn't matter what you choose to do, you end up failing your English quiz the next day and your math test too.

Your grades continue to slip. You lose confidence in yourself because of this and further slip. Your future isn't looking as bright as it had been. Next time you find yourself in a situation where you have to choose between using the bathroom and your classwork, you choose classwork. You get sick from a UTI and miss a lot of school. You're so behind you can't make it up. You have to take summer school before senior year and are still struggling all the way up until graduation. You couldn't work after school because you were too busy with a tutor to bring your grades up. You can't afford HCC classes after graduation because your parents had to use some of the money saved up for college for your medical bills. Now you juggle two part time jobs trying to work enough to take at least a few classes in the spring. This is not how you envisioned young adulthood but you've accepted it and it is what it is.

Meanwhile, kids in other high schools across the county are side tracked thinking about who knows what while they should be paying attention. They don't have to worry about sharing a bathroom with 750 students, making it across the building in time for class to start or if they'll make it home in time to use the bathroom. These kids go on to score better and get better grades allowing them to have a brighter future. They won't get sick and miss a lot of school and not have the opportunity to make up the missing work. They graduate with scholarship offers and have concrete plans for college in the fall. Life is looking pretty good as you head into young adulthood.

Now, explain to me your choice number and how this is acceptable and equitable in 2025 in Howard County, Maryland.

From: Aaron Massey <akmassey@sixlines.org>
Sent: Monday, December 8, 2025 1:36 AM
To: boe@hcpss.org
Cc: CouncilMail; Ball, Calvin; Guy.Guzzone@senate.maryland.gov; Clarence.Lam@senate.maryland.gov
Subject: Please address the sudden change in plans regarding the Oakland Mills High School renovation

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To the HCPSS Board of Education,

I'm the parent of three children who are in an elementary school that feeds into Oakland Mills High School. When we moved here back in 2015, the excellence of this school was one of the factors in our decision. One of my professional idols, Randy Pausch, was a proud graduate of Oakland Mills. I was so thrilled that I would have an opportunity to send my kids to the same school. Now, ten years later, I am deeply concerned.

In 2017, I read that a severe black mold problem had been discovered in the high school and the school had been deemed by an independent assessment to be unable to provide a conducive environment for learning. At the time, I thought this surely would be fixed by the time my oldest would be starting there as a freshman. However, nothing has been done in eight years. After hearing from other parents that existing renovation plans were scrapped (again!) this fall, I began digging deeper into this. I do not like what I've learned.

It appears that the original HVAC system is still operating as the primary system for the building despite being over 30 years past its planned effective lifespan. Raw sewage has spilled out into the auditorium. Walls in locker rooms have collapsed because they lost structural integrity from mold infestations. The litany of emergency repairs and repeated half-measures for the school's infrastructure is stunning.

To the best of my ability to discern, the most recent change in plans is a result of a new ranking procedure to prioritize capital expenditure for the school system. This new ranking procedure is abysmal. It does not factor in the age of infrastructure. This seems at best unwise when planning renovations. It calculates cost to repair facilities to an as-new condition rather than the cost to bring facilities up to current code, which penalizes older school that would not pass existing code even if they were magically transformed into a pristine as-new condition. If this new ranking procedure is based on objective data, it appears not to be made public. Have other common problems for buildings of this age been found? Is there lead in the pipes? Was asbestos used in the original construction? What are the most recent numbers on the mold infestation? I believe OMHS is ranked 40th in line for repairs, which is

either proof that the school system has 39 of the most decrepit schools in the country or proof that the ranking system is horribly broken.

I recently attended a town meeting to discuss this problem. While they were able to confirm many of my concerns as both real and in some ways worse than I thought, they also raised questions I hadn't considered. As an example, many of the parents there believe the never-ending redistricting efforts are actually straightforward attempts to deploy structural racism as a means of allocating capital to schools with white kids. They claim that the new ranking procedure relies on "capacity" as an "objective" measure. If true, then I believe these parents have a point. Capacity isn't objective if the lines drawn to determine who goes to what school are chosen by people with an agenda. I haven't been able to spend the time needed to get into this more, but it seems plausible.

Most of the time, I try not to worry about my kids at school. It's easy to worry too much about things you can't control. I remember walking my kids to Thunder Hill Elementary the day after the school shooting in Uvalde. Obviously, we didn't tell them anything about the shooting. They're too young to process something like that. Hell, I'm 45 and I don't think I'm old enough to understand it. I started reading about other major school shootings. I probably shouldn't have, but it's hard not to. One detail stands out to me more than the others: the actual buildings where major school shootings occurred are rarely if ever used as schools again. The damage from high-powered automate rifles and blood stains are simply too much to easily repair. Often, the community simply doesn't want to renovate send kids back there anyhow. So they build something new. It's a horrible detail in an already tragic situation.

And yet... I can't help but be amazed that the HCPSS Board of Education has so mismanaged the physical infrastructure at Oakland Mills High School that it's actually plausible an actuarial accounting of the health effects of continued delayed renovations would be worse than the actuarial accounting of a school shooting at the facility. It's hard to compare, of course. But at some point the accumulated monetary costs of the health effects of mold exposure, possible lead exposure, possible asbestos exposure, and (amazingly) sewage exposure over hundreds of students would surpass the accumulated monetary costs of death and therapy for students at schools experiencing shootings like Parkland. If Oakland Mills High School is 40th in line for renovations and the system renovates one school per year, then the HVAC system will be 70-something years beyond its expected lifetime. How bad would the mold be in 2065? At some point, an actuarial table would have to say continually deferred renovations are worse, right?

How is it possible that the HCPSS is so bad at managing capital expenditures that I'm starting to wonder if my kids would be better off if there was a major school shooting at Oakland Mills before they hit high school just to ensure they wouldn't have to attend such a debilitated wreck of a building?

I know we live in dark times with a flailing economy. But, come on. This is one of the wealthiest counties in the country. What the hell are you people doing?

Sincerely,

Aaron Massey, PhD

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Aaron Massey - <http://www.sixlines.org>