Updated Timeline: July 17, 2017

To: Wyatt Shields
From: Peter Noonan
Re: George Mason High School and Mary Ellen Henderson Middle School Campus Project

It is with great excitement that I send this memo for you to share with the City Council as they consider the questions associated with the campus site at George Mason High School and Mary Ellen Henderson Middle School. This memo is intended to outline information relevant to support the decision-making process regarding the history, options, needed size, and future considerations with this project.

Much of the information in this memo is known to both the City Council and School Board because the two elected bodies have been working so closely on this project for many years. We should all be proud of the collaborative work that has been accomplished thus far. I am looking forward to our continuing partnership on behalf of the citizens of the City of Falls Church.

In addition to the information provided I, along with the School Board, welcome questions for clarification to further inform the City Council and the general public regarding the need for a new high school.

History of GMHS Campus Project

The following is a chronological history of the George Mason High School campus project that is meant to provide historical context. (1949-1995 references from **FCCPS Celebrating 50 Years, 1999**).

1949

Falls Church voter approval of $700,000 bond referendum, authorizing the purchase of the 25-acre Flagg property at the corner of Leesburg Pike and Haycock Rd and the building of a new high school. (This referendum also authorizes the purchase of Mt. Daniel property and school building). The GMHS campus land costs $40,000 and the high school accommodates 325 students. The land becomes the property of Falls Church City, although remaining jurisdictionally in Fairfax County.

1951
Delay in construction of new school due to shortage of steel.

1952
George Mason Junior/Senior High School opens (Grades 6-12).

1953
- The school is immediately overcrowded, and Falls Church seeks Federal Impact Aid funding grants for an addition.
- FCCPS rents land adjacent to GMHS owned by Dr. Oscar Kiessling for $200/year as a temporary athletic field. Parents and community members clear the forest with shovels, axes, picks and rakes to build a field.

1957
Controversy arises when the Council rejects a School Board request for a bond issue to expand the high school, despite a petition signed by 1,200 residents favoring expansion. The Council removes the School Board members who recommended the bond issue. The newly constituted School Board votes to eliminate 12 positions from school staff and proposes to house children in quonset huts rather than planning for permanent buildings. Public ire is aroused. At one School Board meeting more than 300 people attend to show their concern for the schools. On two other occasions, bond issues appropriating money for the schools are defeated or postponed as a result of court suits brought by opponents of the system.

1960s
Permanent football field, tennis courts and track are added to GMHS campus

1962
GMHS addition: classrooms, small activity gym, shower and locker rooms, enlarged administrative space, library.

1969
GMHS auditorium and vocational classrooms open.

1973
Current GMHS library opens.

1975
First School Bond is paid off after a 25-year repayment period.

1979

$2M renovation at GMHS to make it accessible and more energy efficient, including the addition of elevators, ramps, and accessible restrooms. Energy conservation measures include new HVAC, dropped ceilings, lowered window spaces and sound insulation and lighting.

1991

Voter approval of $12.8M bond referendum for GMHS/GMMS renovation/addition.

1993

Groundbreaking for GMHS/GMMS renovation/addition that includes new learning areas to accommodate enrollment growth; reconfiguration of existing spaces; addition of science labs, auxiliary gym, dining room, kitchen, bathrooms; new roof; improvements to gym and locker room, auditorium and other facilities; asbestos removal, FCC-TV studio upgrade.

1994

Falls Church enters into long-term lease agreement with UVA and Virginia Tech for a parcel of land that had been an underutilized part of the campus.

May 7, 1995

Community celebration of GMHS/GMMS $14.9M renovation/addition, the largest construction project in the City's history.

2003

In November, voter approval of bond referendum to finance a new middle school. Because the school campus is in Fairfax County, all zoning permits are subject to Fairfax County Planning Commission approval. The school is the first Virginia school that takes advantage of the new Public Private Education Act (PPEA) structure for design and construction.

2005

Mary Ellen Henderson Middle School opens.

2006

Improvements to GMHS science labs are completed.

2013

Citizen approval of referendum to sell Falls Church Water System to Fairfax Water. This agreement includes bringing the campus land into the City of Falls Church, and a $40,000,000 payment to the City of Falls Church.

2014

January

- Water sale complete. Boundary adjustment brings the campus land into City of Falls Church. Joint Campus Process Planning Group is approved by School Board and City Council. Membership includes School Board, City Council, Planning Commission & EDA representatives.

Spring

- Arcadis is retained to perform “Space Fit” study, confirming that a school campus and 10 acres of development can fit on the site, in several different configurations.

October

- Urban Land Institute Technical Assistance Panel (ULI TAP) reviews the site providing suggestions on placement of school buildings, commercial development location and type, collaboration with neighboring sites.

2015

April

- Unsolicited bid is received from Edgemoor.

May

- Unsolicited bid is rejected by School Board and City Council, and PPEA Process is announced.

June

- Cooper Carry presents Campus Community Outreach public engagement to begin community input into the use of the site, educational program and commercial uses.

Summer

- Joint Campus Process Planning Group sunsets. PPEA RFP is issued for joint development of land - building a school and using 10 acres for economic development.

November

- Two bids are received despite great interest at the time of RFP issuance. Complexity of project cited as major reason for few bids. Public Portion of Edgemoor LLC Bid Public Portion of Mason Greens LLC Bid.

October

- Community meeting/staff and student focus groups on Shared Vision for the Schools of the Future, including architectural, environmental sustainability, and other factors.

December

- AIA Presentation and Gallery show of School Design NOW, sharing boards about 25 groundbreaking school design around the world.

2016

June

- PPEA process is abandoned because it did not provide the result sought by community sought. Process decoupled.

September 2017

- LINK Strategic Partners is retained to help School Board and City Council define a process and develop a pathway to work through the complex issues. Process includes identifying and answering open questions, creating a roadmap for the path forward. Campus Working Group, consisting of 2 City Council members, 2 School Board members and staff, work closely with LINK to sift through information and make it understandable for elected officials and citizens.

2017

February

- LINK process culminates in a well-attended Community Meeting about three preferred options - build new, phased, renovation. Strong community preference for “Build New” option, but concerns raised about pricetag and affordability.

March

- Perkins Eastman is retained for School Feasibility study.
- Economic Feasibility Working Group is formed. Membership includes members of City Council, School Board, Planning Commission and Economic Development Authority

May

- Alvarez and Marsal is retained for Economic Feasibility study

June

- School Feasibility study results are presented by Perkins Eastman at Campus Update Community meeting.

The Work of the School Board and Design Choice

In May of 2017 the School Board held a work session to review the Feasibility Study presented by Perkins Eastman. This presentation included five (5) separate designs providing for a number of configurations with respect to new construction, renovation, 10-acre development sites, and smaller development sites. Prior to the joint School Board and City Council meeting the School Board was able to narrow the options to the three that best met the needs of the school program and allow for opportunities for economic development.

The design principles are:

- School Heart
- Hy-C Integration
- Flexible/Adaptable
- Continuum of Education
- Civic Presence
- Active Community Use
- Safe Routes to School

The criteria used to determine the best options are:

- Program Accommodation
- Outdoor Athletics Program
- MEHMS Expansions/Connection
- Building Life-cycle
- Economic Development of 10 Acres
- Sustainable Goals
- Walk/Bike/Metro Access
- Phasing/Schedule/Trailers
- Constructability
- Existing Conditions Cost Impact

OPTIONS | SITE PLANS

COMMUNITY SCHOOL

COMMUNITY II SCHOOL

CIVIC SCHOOL

HYBRID SCHOOL

ACADEMIC SCHOOL

Perkins Eastman

Following a robust discussion,the School Board selected “Community School” as its preference. This option provides everything the School Board and staff are seeking and provides ten (10) acres for future economic development.

Further, it is clear that the renovation/modernization scheme (“Academic”) is both instructionally and administratively challenging, and it allows fewer acres for future economic development.

Please see the matrix below that scores each of the three options and how they rate based on the defined criteria:

OPTIONS | MATRIX

LEGEND
ACHIEVES GOAL
- Very well
- Somewhat
- Not Well

		COMMUNITY SCHOOL	COMMUNITY II SCHOOL	CIVIC SCHOOL	HYBRID SCHOOL	ACADEMIC SCHOOL
	New Construction / Renov/Addn	new construction	new construction	new construction	renov/addn	renov/addn
DESIGN PRINCIPLES	School Heart	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟡
	HY-C Integration	🟢	🟢	🟢	🔴	🟡
	Flexible/Adaptable	🟢	🟢	🟢	🔴	🔴
	Continuum of Education	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟡
	Civic Presence	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟡
	Active Community Use	🟢	🟢	🟢	🔴	🔴
	Safe Routes	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟢
CRITERIA	Program Accommodation	🟢	🟢	🟢	🔴	🟡
	Outdoor Athletic Program	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢
	MEHMS Expansions / Connection	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟡	🟢
	Building Life-Cycle	🟢	🟢	🟢	🔴	🔴
	Economic Development 10 acres	🟢	🟢	🟢	🔴	🔴
	Sustainable Goals	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟡
	Walk / Bike / Metro / Bus	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢
	Phasing / Schedule / Trailers	🟢	🟡	🟡	🔴	🔴
	Constructability	🟢	🟡	🟡	🔴	🔴
	Existing Conditions Cost Impact	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟡

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The Costs of **Community School**

There are two main drivers that inform the cost of the selected option (Community School). These costs include “hard costs” and “soft costs.”

> **Hard Costs -** the actual costs of construction associated with the school as well as demolition and site preparation for the acreage designated for economic development.
> **Soft costs** - associated charges that represent architectural and engineering costs, construction management fees, permitting and utility fees, and furniture, fixtures, and equipment (FF&E).

In the costing of the selected option, the overall equation used is

> Hard Cost + Soft Cost = Project Cost
> Project Cost - Potential Savings = Total Projected Cost

In the “Community 1” school option the total estimated cost of construction is $110M.
FF&E is estimated to be approximately $13.8M.
These costs together represent $123.8M.

$110M + $13.8M = $123.8M

There are a number of potential cost savings measures that have been explored.
The following represent the larger items that have been reviewed:

- Reuse **existing furniture – $1M**
- Deduct **10 classrooms** and associated spaces **- $2.5M**
- Decrease **Performance Department** size - **$0.7M**
- Decrease **Aux Gym** size **- $1.0M**
- Decrease **Athletics Dept** size - **$1.0M**
- Eliminate **Geothermal $1.7M ***

**Payback period estimated at approximately 9 years.*

- Defer **athletic field** improvements **$4-10M**

Savings vary. There could be reductions in cost if off-site staging and/ or additional parking are available.

We believe that some savings are possible with the reduction of classrooms while still meeting the educational specifications. The school program will remain comparable to neighboring jurisdictions if the following reductions are undertaken: reducing the size of the auditorium, reducing the size of the athletics area; reducing the amount needed for FF&E. A conservative estimate of overall savings is $6.5M.

$123.8M - $6.5M (potential reductions) = $117.3M

Context of Entire Division

The School Board and Superintendent recognize that there are other pressing capital needs in the division that are a result of growth in population; notably Thomas Jefferson Elementary School (TJES). It is estimated that the cost of a 20 classroom addition with “soft costs” included would be $10.5M. The capacity issues cannot be overlooked and will need to be reviewed in the coming year(s). It is believed that when Mt. Daniel Elementary School’s construction is complete the second grade can move (in the short term) to Mt. Daniel and create space for the student population at TJES. Due to constraints on the site as a result of negotiations with Fairfax County, this is not a sustainable solution. It is anticipated that by 2021 Mt. Daniel will be at, or above, the 660 building cap and an alternative solution will need to be sought.

With the anticipated enrollment growth, it is likely that Mary Ellen Henderson Middle School (MEHMS) will need additional space in the 2025 time frame as well.

UVA-Weldon Cooper Enrollment Estimates for FCCPS : Updated October 19, 2016

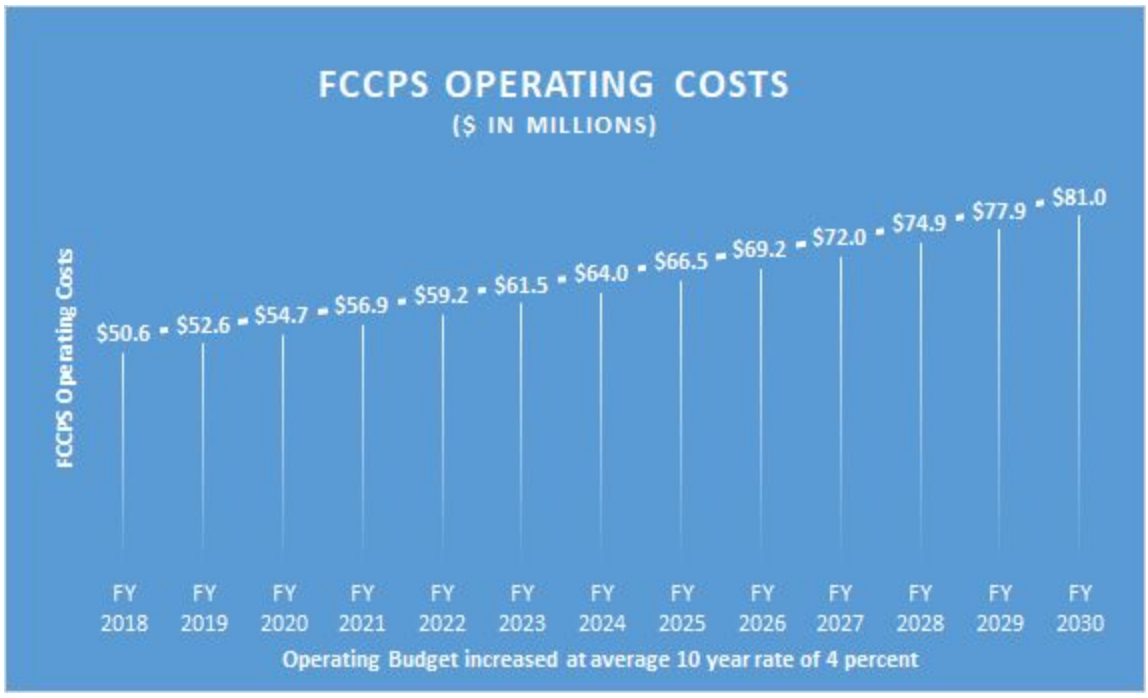
	PK	SE^	JT	K	1	MD*	2	3	4	5	TJ*	6	7	8	MEH	9	10	11	12	GM	Total	% Chg
2016-17	48	26	74	191	191	382	177	230	196	221	824	176	215	197	588	203	205	204	205	817	2685	5.91%
2017-18	44	17	61	188	204	392	197	189	237	212	835	227	179	235	641	212	210	201	208	831	2760	2.79%
2018-19	50	21	71	200	201	611	210	211	196	256	663	217	231	192	640	251	220	207	204	882	2867	3.88%
2019-20	47	22	69	220	213	639	206	225	216	211	652	261	220	246	727	205	261	216	210	892	2979	3.91%
2020-21	47	20	67	204	237	661	220	220	229	232	681	214	265	237	716	266	214	258	222	960	3085	3.56%
2021-22	48	21	69	207	219	670	244	236	226	249	711	236	220	288	744	258	278	212	263	1011	3205	3.89%
2022-23	48	22	70			657					747				732					1068	3274	2.15%
2023-24	50	21	71			665					770				766					1122	3394	3.67%
2024-25	50	22	72			674					781				798					1133	3458	1.89%
2025-26	51	22	73			684					764				838					1179	3538	2.31%
2026-27	52	22	74			694					775				865					1163	3571	0.93%
2027-28	52	23	75			704					785				877					1224	3665	2.63%
2028-29	53	23	76			713					797				858					1296	3740	2.05%
2029-30	54	23	77			723					808				870					1319	3797	1.52%
2030-31	54	24	78			733					819				881					1353	3864	1.76%
2031-32	55	24	79			743					830				895					1368	3915	1.32%

^ Pre-K Special Education Enrollment

* Estimates include plan to return 2nd Grade to Mount Daniel in the 2018-2019 school year

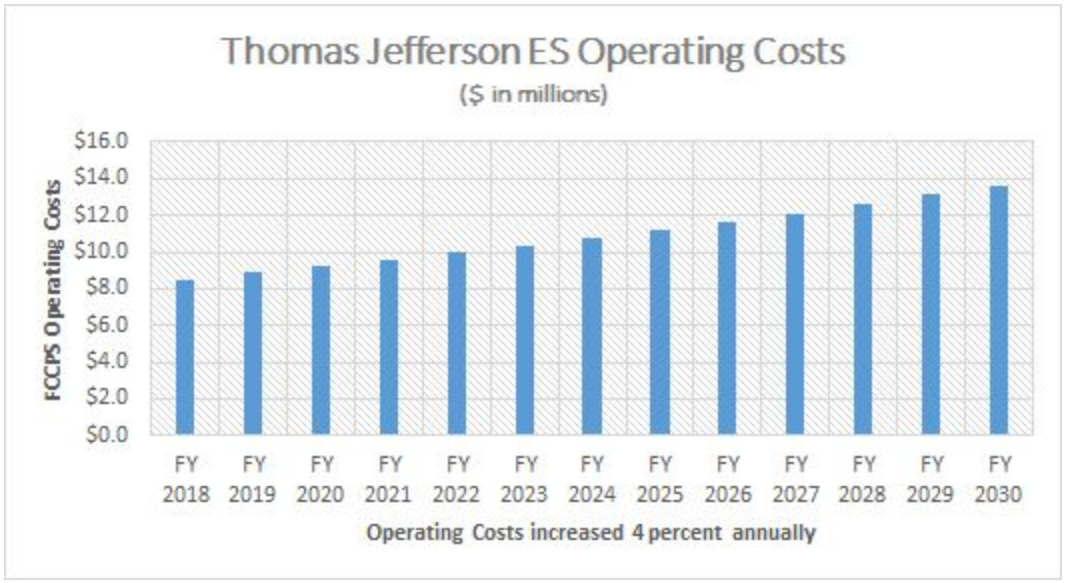
Long Term Operations Consideration

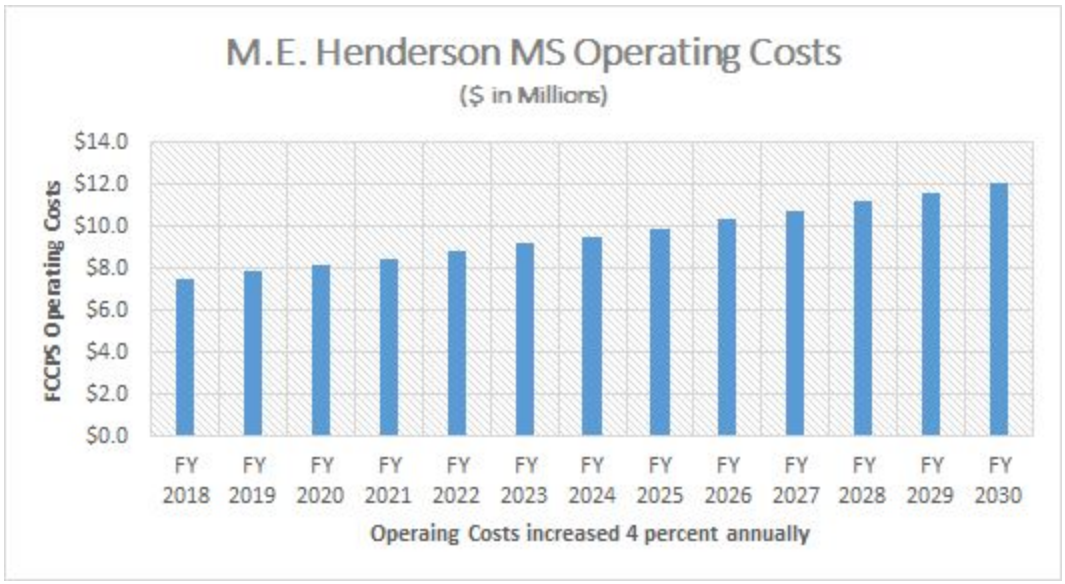
It is understood that with growth in enrollment there will be ongoing additional operating costs. These costs have multiple variables that drive outcomes that include, but are not limited to, enrollment growth, salary and benefit costs, resource and material costs, etc. Operational costs have averaged 4% per year over the last ten years. Using that same average, the following table represents what the overall operating costs could be between now and 2030:

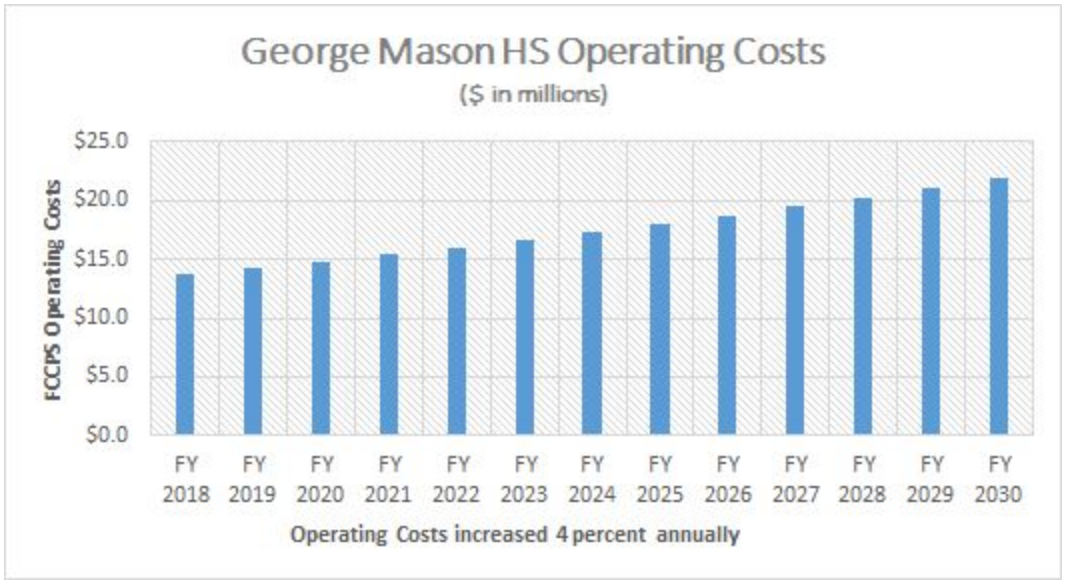


Fiscal Restraint of Operating Costs

The Superintendent and School Board are committed to seeking ways to keep the escalation of overall operational costs to a minimum particularly during this time of capital improvement. We will seek efficiencies that present themselves and look for potential reductions that will not have a negative impact on our student achievement in the Falls Church City Public Schools.


Thomas Jefferson ES Operating Costs
($ in millions)
FCCPS Operating Costs
$16.0
$14.0
$12.0
$10.0
$8.0
$6.0
$4.0
$2.0
$0.0
FY 2018
FY 2019
FY 2020
FY 2021
FY 2022
FY 2023
FY 2024
FY 2025
FY 2026
FY 2027
FY 2028
FY 2029
FY 2030
Operating Costs increased 4 percent annually


M.E. Henderson MS Operating Costs
($ in Millions)
FCCPS Operating Costs
$14.0
$12.0
$10.0
$8.0
$6.0
$4.0
$2.0
$0.0
FY 2018
FY 2019
FY 2020
FY 2021
FY 2022
FY 2023
FY 2024
FY 2025
FY 2026
FY 2027
FY 2028
FY 2029
FY 2030
Operaing Costs increased 4 percent annually


George Mason HS Operating Costs
($ in millions)
FCCPS Operating Costs
$25.0
$20.0
$15.0
$10.0
$5.0
$0.0
FY 2018
FY 2019
FY 2020
FY 2021
FY 2022
FY 2023
FY 2024
FY 2025
FY 2026
FY 2027
FY 2028
FY 2029
FY 2030
Operating Costs increased 4 percent annually