

March 3, 2017

Dear Mayor Muriel Bowser,
Chairman Phil Mendelson,
Chairman David Grosso,
Councilmember Anita Bonds,
Councilmember Elissa Silverman,
Councilmember Robert White, Jr.,
Councilmember Brianne Nadeau,
Councilmember Jack Evans,
Councilmember Mary Cheh,
Councilmember Brandon Todd,
Councilmember Kenyan McDuffie,
Councilmember Charles Allen,
Councilmember Vincent Gray, and
Councilmember Trayon White, Sr.:

cc:

Deputy Mayor of Education Jenny Niles
Chancellor Antwan Wilson, DCPS
Director Greer Johnson Gillis, DGS
Karen Williams, President, DC State Board of Education
Jack Jacobson, Vice President, DC State Board of Education
Ashley Carter, DC State Board of Education
Laura Wilson Phelan, DC State Board of Education
Ruth Wattenberg, DC State Board of Education
Lannette Woodruff, DC State Board of Education
Mark Jones, DC State Board of Education
Joe Weedon, DC State Board of Education
Markus Batchelor, DC State Board of Education
Commissioner Christine Healey (ANC6C01)
Commissioner Karen Wirt (ANC 6C02)
Commissioner Scott Price (ANC 6C03)
Commissioner Mark Eckewiler (ANC 6C04)
Commissioner Chris Miller (ANC 6C05)
Commissioner Heather Edelman (ANC 6C06)

As families and community members who support Capitol Hill Montessori at Logan (CHML), we urge you to make a significant investment in the capital budget to modernize all District of Columbia Public Schools. In addition, we ask that you prioritize all schools that have not received any modernization and put CHML on the list to be modernized in FY 2019, so that planning can begin in FY 2018. Our city's financial health is strong, yet not all of our children attend school in healthy, safe, modern buildings. It is time to rectify the inequity in the FY 2018 budget.

CHML is unique in many ways. We are a citywide school with students enrolled from every ward. We attract families from every ward because we are the only Montessori school in the DCPS system. We not only reflect the geographic diversity of our city, but we reflect the racial diversity of our city. Fifty-eight percent of our students are African American, thirty-four percent are white, and eight percent come from other backgrounds. In addition, almost a third of our students are economically disadvantaged.

Our school community has worked hard over the last six years to build a reputable, desirable, and safe learning environment. When CHML opened in 2011, 158 children were enrolled in grades PK3-5th grade. In six years, the student body has more than doubled, the school has added grades 6th through 8th, and now a total of 366 kids attend PK3-8th grade at CHML.

Families are excited to become part of our school. In fact, for the 2016-2017 school year, we had 1554 students apply for 80 slots, and had a waitlist of approximately 1027 children. Many of our children are achieving at high levels, but we are also working hard to close our achievement gap. Last year, CHML exceeded the DCPS average scores for both English Language Arts and math. In addition, the Office of the State Superintendent of Education congratulated our school for a 14 percent gain on the Math PARCC assessment.

Despite this progress, CHML is the only Ward 6-based elementary school that has **not received any modernization since the school's inception**. How can we expect our children and teachers to continue to work to improve test scores and help shape well-rounded, prepared-for-the-world youth when decisions by the city leadership reflect a position that a school that has not been modernized is not a priority for modernization? We are not the only school in this situation – all of the schools that have been systematically ignored deserve top priority for modernization in the FY 2018 budget.

CHML has never received any phase 1 modernization. Originally, we were promised modernization in 2014, but each year it has been pushed back. Then CHML received an email in 2016 telling us, without any basis or justification, that we will have no modernization until maybe sometime after FY 2022 -- an indefinite delay. This means our current kindergartners will benefit from the modernization only if it happens in FY 2023, when they would be in the fifth grade. Soon after that email, our parents discovered that our school had never even received a DGS annual assessment. This sequence of frustrating setbacks has served to undermine our trust in the city's commitment to ensure a first-class education system for our students.

Our parents contribute everyday to make CHML a positive and supportive learning environment. Our parents believe in the DCPS system, but until our city budget invests in our school and the other schools that have been left behind, our confidence in DCPS and the city continues to erode as we are treated inequitably and the system has failed to provide our students with a facility that enhances rather than inhibits their learning.

Our children's school building desperately needs a modernization. We were pleased that the Council and the Administration have been working together on the P.A.C.E. Act, which intends

to bring data and transparency to the process of prioritizing modernizations. However, at this time, we do not know the timing of implementation or have access to how the language of the Act will be interpreted, so although metrics have been identified, how they are implemented is a step in the process we are unable to evaluate at this time. But we continue to believe that any school that has not had any modernization deserves top priority.

In addition, DCPS has been working hard on creating new educational specifications (Ed Specs) for our schools so that initial conversations about modernizations will have a common platform to begin discussions. The Ed Specs narrative says that they are designed to, "...improve facilities planning and align the Ed Specs update with the DCPS mission, which is to ensure that every school provides a world-class education to ALL students..." Further, it says that the "[Ed Specs] describe the essential components of a school facility and explain how the built learning environment will support the academic programs and vision of the school's leadership." We want that too – but without modernization, we are not provided the means to achieve this goal. The Ed Specs process has further clarified how far behind the CHML building lags compared to all other DCPS facilities.

Our facility is woefully inadequate on all elements that the DCPS Ed Specs articulate for an education campus including: lighting, environmental and air quality factors, acoustics, ergonomics, full technology capabilities, a fully functional cooking kitchen, as well as adequate spaces for food services, library, visual arts, performing arts, physical education, music, outdoor space, community meetings and a technology lab. In February alone, our school had two drainage issues in the cafeteria, one involved sewage backup. Shockingly, our school is not even remotely equipped for supporting a child, parent, relative or visitor who has a physical disability whether temporary or permanent. We have a student who broke his leg and is on crutches. The city has made it so difficult for him to navigate the three floors of our building. He must enter school on crutches and go up one flight of stairs to class, then down two flights to lunch, then up two back to class then up and down a few more times for specials, then down one more flight to leave for the day. We have no idea how many children or families have lost the opportunity to experience a public Montessori education because one of them has a physical disability.

Finally, our school is not adequate for the growth we are experiencing and continue to expect as our younger classes continue to progress through the grade levels and stay in the school through 6th, 7th, and 8th grades. Our main building cannot accommodate all of the 4th, 5th and 6th grade enrollment we anticipate in the coming years. Our middle school is still housed in a trailer that we will outgrow in just a few years. We are quickly moving towards a capacity crisis.

We are lucky that we have an amazing principal, teachers, parents, and student body that are working to foster learning and build a community despite the building needs. As a Montessori school in the DCPS system, we fight every day to offer a unique education, yet are misunderstood and often ignored by all of the city's leadership. We have been working hard to promote the overall need for more capital budget to be allocated towards all schools, and we think it is well past the time for CHML and other schools that have been left behind to be funded.

We are a strong community dedicated to seeing our school succeed. But we need your help.

Please make a significant investment in DCPS school buildings. We ask that you include additional funding in the FY 2018 budget to allow for all schools to be modernized and stabilized, and give priority to the schools like CHML that have had not received any modernization.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

CHML Family Name	Ward
1. Lisa Gail Rucker	1
2. Souleymane Diallo	1
3. Craig Gilbeaux	2
4. Janee Gilbeaux	2
5. Mark Downs	2
6. Andrew Amundson	3
7. Caitlin Terrell	3
8. Mike Lee	3
9. Anastasia Kulin	4
10. Charelle Jeter	4
11. Denise Miller	4
12. Herman Bunch	4
13. Khalilah Woodland	4
14. LaVonne Bunch	4
15. Morgan Carpenter	4
16. Motteo Verwin	4
17. Anthony Foard	4
18. Abbey Powell	5
19. Chantal Snowden	5
20. Cherrye Jeter	5
21. Courtney Ranson	5
22. Daryl Snowden	5
23. Devon Dunn	5
24. Donald Perritt	5
25. Glenda Livingston	5
26. Hajure Rushdan	5
27. Jamila Perritt	5
28. Jay Davis	5
29. Johanna Polsenberg	5
30. Johannes Kiess	5
31. Kim Bursic	5
32. Lamont Clark	5
33. Laura Zehr	5
34. Michael Zehr	5
35. Scott Yanish	5

36.	Sheila Clark	5
37.	Stephanie Coleman	5
38.	Taurica Wallace	5
39.	Terrence Chavis	5
40.	The Young Family	5
41.	Thomas Branen	5
42.	Timothy Holt	5
43.	Tonisha Barnes	5
44.	Tony Tomelden	5
45.	Tracy Davis	5
46.	Warren Nott	5
47.	Akela Mims	6
48.	Alex Butler	6
49.	Alexander Hoppes	6
50.	Alicia Kinsey	6
51.	Alphonso Butler	6
52.	Amanda McClean	6
53.	Amy and Irving Jones	6
54.	Amy Clement	6
55.	Andrew Kravetz	6
56.	Anita Mingo	6
57.	Anji Keating	6
58.	Anna Bieolzinski Manan	6
59.	Anya Landau French	6
60.	Benjamin Barbin	6
61.	Benjamin Schwalen	6
62.	Beth A Abdella	6
63.	Brian Kernek	6
64.	Brooke Rosenblatt	6
65.	Burns Family	6
66.	Carol Atkins	6
67.	Cathy Duvall	6
68.	Chad Anthony	6
69.	Chad Ernst	6
70.	Cheryl Zimmer	6
71.	Chris French	6
72.	Chris Pilla	6
73.	Chris Pilla	6
74.	Christine Cochran	6
75.	Christopher N Hardgrave	6
76.	Clyde Watson	6
77.	Courtney Schwalen	6
78.	Dana Boehm	6
79.	Danica Petroshius	6
80.	Darren Drakes	6

81. David Johnson	6
82. David Steckler	6
83. Diego and Lalla Marquez	6
84. Doug Black	6
85. Ebony Mack	6
86. Elizabeth Nash	6
87. Emily Martin	6
88. Erika Hoppes	6
89. Erika Moritsugu	6
90. Fajr Majeed	6
91. Floyd Mills	6
92. Frank Nickerson	6
93. Gabriella Boston	6
94. Geoy Invanova	6
95. Grace Steckler	6
96. Greg Whitsell	6
97. Gregory Adams	6
98. Gretchen Hesbacher	6
99. Helena Smolich	6
100. Isabelle Dikland	6
101. Jackie Davidson	6
102. James Martin	6
103. Jeetander Dulani	6
104. Jeff Janicke	6
105. Jeff Young	6
106. Jeffery Trinca	6
107. Jennifer Lucas	6
108. Jeron Young	6
109. Jessica Herstek	6
110. Jill Wheeler	6
111. Jitesh Kerai	6
112. Joshua Kramer	6
113. Julia Kramer	6
114. Julie Scofield	6
115. Julie Stewart and family	6
116. Justin Louchheim	6
117. Kafayat Husband	6
118. Kate Gilles	6
119. Katherine Weishaar	6
120. Keith Earles	6
121. Kevin Morrison	6
122. Keya Chatterjee	6
123. Kimberly Trinca	6
124. Kurt Lucas	6
125. Laura Kim	6

126.	Laurie Anne Ernst	6
127.	Leah Young	6
128.	Levin-Folsom Family	6
129.	Lisa Nipp	6
130.	Lori Hamilton	6
131.	Magoavena Elliott	6
132.	Marcella Horton	6
133.	Marta Pilla	6
134.	Matthew Dunne	6
135.	Mel Antonen	6
136.	Mia Morrison	6
137.	Michele Anderson	6
138.	Michelle Adams	6
139.	Mike Gilles	6
140.	Mike Hess	6
141.	Mike McCarthy	6
142.	Nyall Beggs	6
143.	Paul Davidson	6
144.	Pete Nash	6
145.	Peter Zimmer	6
146.	Rachele Martin	6
147.	Sameena Kluck	6
148.	Sandra Moscoso	6
149.	Sara Kerai	6
150.	Sara Moore Kerai	6
151.	Scott Carlson	6
152.	Scott Carlson	6
153.	Scott Weishaar	6
154.	Shannan Kavanagh	6
155.	Stephanie Beggs	6
156.	Susan drake	6
157.	Tenikal Murphy	6
158.	The Pezzarossi Family	6
159.	Tiffany L Hardgrave	6
160.	Timothy Abdella	6
161.	Todd Cochran	6
162.	Tom Kavanagh	6
163.	Tom Kluck	6
164.	Tom Scofield	6
165.	Vicki Ellis	6
166.	White DeLuca	6
167.	Whitney Louchheim	6
168.	Wuhan Dansby	6
169.	Abigail Tanner	7
170.	Alvin Reynolds	7

171.	Dena Hasan	7
172.	Dena Hasan	7
173.	Dorothy Plummer	7
174.	Gary Berry	7
175.	Gregory Brooks	7
176.	Jenkins Family	7
177.	JoAnne Reynolds	7
178.	Justin Tanner	7
179.	Kahlia Wilson	7
180.	Kara Snell	7
181.	Karen Berry	7
182.	Kathleen Jones	7
183.	Katina Ford	7
184.	Lakishia Blackman	7
185.	LaTifah McPherson	7
186.	Lindy Campbell	7
187.	Luke Campbell	7
188.	Lynnette Williams	7
189.	Lyvonne Lawson	7
190.	Marcus Boykin	7
191.	Matthew Wright	7
192.	Neal Pratt	7
193.	Neil Snell	7
194.	Patricia Long	7
195.	Patricia Long	7
196.	Ralph Barnett	7
197.	Sadea Riddick	7
198.	Shelly Pratt	7
199.	Siraaj Hasan	7
200.	Susan Wright	7
201.	Tara Gross	7
202.	The Long family	7
203.	Tina Patterson	7
204.	Yahnae' Riddick	7
205.	Yohanness Ayechew	7
206.	Andrea Jones	8
207.	Annie Williams	8
208.	Arletha Idrissa	8
209.	Boubacar Idrissa	8
210.	Catrina Jones	8
211.	Christina Plummer	8
212.	Desean Jones	8
213.	Dionne Bryant	8
214.	Fonta Gilliam	8
215.	Francesco Garri	8

216. Hasan Booker	8
217. Janiyah Jones	8
218. Jerry Booker	8
219. Joshua Robinson	8
220. Keith Golden	8
221. Kristin Garri	8
222. Lloyd Bryant	8
223. Melisss Green-Peterson	8
224. Nicole Dunn	8
225. Olutosin Burrell	8
226. Ruth Robinson	8
227. Tabitha Bennett	8
228. Takeia Williams	8
229. Vaugh Perry	8
230. Victor Akinrodeye	8
231. Octavais Kahawia	8
232. Shelley Carr-Brown	8