

Better Buildings: Better Schools, Issue 20 (June 2004)

*Monthly news on DC Public School facilities from the 21st Century School Fund (21CSF), a Washington DC based, nonprofit - **working to build the public will and capacity to improve urban public school facilities.** To subscribe or unsubscribe please email: newsletter@21csf.org.*

Community Forum on School Closings/Consolidations a Success

On May 18th, 21CSF held a community forum on DCPS school closings and consolidations, at the Charles E. Sumner School Museum. The meeting was well attended, with approximately 60 people present. The forum provided the public with information on current building utilizations and closing/consolidation policies; and discussed neighborhood implications, proposed policy revisions, and what citizens can do to influence the process. 21CSF is currently working on follow-up and minutes from the meeting, which will soon be available to the public.

DCPS FY05 Budget Update

A City Council vote to approve the school system budget, as part of the overall city budget for next fiscal year (FY05 DC Budget Support Act) is scheduled for the week of June 14th. After that, it will be submitted to Congress for final approval.

Proposed Legislation to Remove Facilities Management from DCPS on Hold

As part of the FY05 DC Budget Support Act currently under development, language had recently been included to remove facilities management from DCPS authority and put it under the Mayor's control. However, a group of education and community activists, including 21CSF, rallied in opposition; partly objecting to the idea, and partly to the lack of a public hearing or any other opportunity for community input. The DCPS facility management change was subsequently pulled from the current legislation. 21CSF is currently studying the idea, which has been implemented in other school districts, such as New York City, and will also work hard to ensure public participation in any future legislation development.

Send Us Your Own Updates!

21CSF has decided to try something new: asking our readers to send facility-related updates on schools. We'd like to hear your concerns or updates about construction or maintenance issues at schools that you know. Examples of updates we'd like to hear include: How are construction projects going (e.g., activity, progress, site security and orderliness)? Are there major school maintenance issues? How is swing space working out (e.g., transportation, parental accessibility)? Send updates to info@21csf.org, and include "Citizen Update" in the subject heading. Thank you!

For more information: Contact Jordan Spooner or Nancy Huvendick at (202) 745-3745, or info@21csf.org