

## Better Buildings: Better Schools, Issue 46 March/April 2008

Monthly news and commentary 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/unsubscribe, please email: [newsletter@21csf.org](mailto:newsletter@21csf.org)

### Community Discussion of the DCPS Capital Budget

The 21<sup>st</sup> Century School Fund will hold a meeting Monday, March 31<sup>st</sup> at 6:30 PM to discuss the FY2009 DCPS Capital Budget. The meeting is open to the public. Best public and private management practice is to secure input into the facility plans and to ensure that the users, as well as those who will have to live with building improvements or the design of new or modernized buildings are a part of the planning and design process. The purpose of the meeting is to identify questions and concerns about the school construction project priorities and to help local schools and community prepare comments for on the capital budget being considered by the Council.

Monday, March 31, 6:00

Main Conference Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
1816 12<sup>th</sup> Street, NW

The building is two blocks from the U Street, Cardozo Green/Yellow Line Metro; street parking is generally available. Please call or e-mail Tonja Smith if you are planning to attend: 202-745-3745x10; [tsmith@21csf.org](mailto:tsmith@21csf.org).

### DCPS Capital Budget: Which Projects are Priorities?

This is the budget season for the District of Columbia. It is the first full operating and capital budget process where the DCPS schools are under the full control of the Mayor. This is the first time the public will see Mayor Fenty's budget priorities under a Chancellor, Deputy Mayor for Education, the expanded Office of the State Superintendent for Education (OSSE), and the Office of Public Education Facilities Modernization (OPEFM).

The Office of Public Education Facilities Modernization (OPEFM) is in charge of the DCPS **capital budget**. The DCPS portion of the Mayor's FY2009-2014 Capital Budget can be viewed on line at [http://cfo.dc.gov/cfo/frames.asp?doc=/cfo/lib/cfo/budget/2009/Cappital\\_Appendices\\_Volume\\_6\\_2of2.pdf](http://cfo.dc.gov/cfo/frames.asp?doc=/cfo/lib/cfo/budget/2009/Cappital_Appendices_Volume_6_2of2.pdf) There will be a hearing on the OPEFM budget, which includes the DCPS capital budget, Wednesday, April 2 at the Wilson Building Room 412 at 2 PM.

The specific school projects to be funded in this capital budget have not been delineated in the Capital Budget. The DCPS capital budget 6 year total by the Mayor is \$1.36 billion—approximately \$225 million per year. The school-by-school list of capital projects budgeted for the FY 2009-2014 school years is expected to be available only after the update of the Master Facility Plan in May. OPEFM is working on revisions to the DCPS Educational Facility Master Plan, which should inform the capital plan and budget. So far, there has been no public input on either the MFP update under OPEFM or the budget. This means that the public and the council will have very little time to understand the capital budget or to propose changes before the final council vote on the budget in June.

**The Office of Public Schools Facilities Modernization has a new website** linked to the Mayor's Education Initiative at <http://opefm.dc.gov/>. Available through this website is the OPEFM Transition Plan, which includes itemization of project status summary, school-by-school as of February.

### Community Discussion of the DCPS Operating Budget, Wednesday, April 2

S.H.A.P.E. and Parents United are sponsoring a community meeting on the DCPS operating budget:  
Florida Avenue Baptist Church, 623 Florida Avenue NW – Lower Auditorium  
6:00 P.M.  
Parking/Metro

The meeting will provide details and background on the DCPS operating budget. Mary Levy from the Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights & Urban Affairs will provide budget analysis. This meeting is suggested especially for those who want to testify at the council budget hearing on April 8.

**S.H.A.P.P.E. Celebrates 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary at Luke Moore High School**

The Senior High Alliance of Parents, Principals and Educators (SHAPPE) has advocated for local school based involvement in DCPS secondary education since February, 1998. SHAPPE was founded by former DCPS parent Cathy Reilly and former high school principal, Dr. Wilma Bonner, in response to a fatal stabbing of a DCPS student. SHAPPE facilitates dialogue between local school parents, teachers, and principals to influence policy and budget decisions impacting our city's teenagers. Often SHAPPE meetings explore aligning modernized school facilities with sound educational practice. You can find in-depth information about DCPS High-school reform issues and analysis in their bi-monthly newsletter at [www.21csf.org](http://www.21csf.org).

**21<sup>st</sup> Century School Fund Presents at Policy Link Regional Equity Conference in New Orleans**

On March 6<sup>th</sup>, Mary Filardo, Executive Director of 21CSF participated on a panel before nearly 200 people on "Quality and Equity in Education". Other panelists were John A. Powell, Executive Director for the Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity; Michael Rebell, Executive Director and Counsel, Campaign for Educational Equity, Teachers College, Columbia University; and Theodore M. Shaw, Director-Counsel and President, NAACP Legal Defense Fund. They explored the links between segregated schools, segregated neighborhoods, and inadequate facilities, and the possibilities for drafting an equity agenda to secure resources for quality education and buildings. To learn more about PolicyLink go to: <http://www.policylink.org/>.

**Deputy Mayor Holds 2<sup>nd</sup> Round of Community Meetings on Reuse of Closed Schools**

The Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education held the first of a series of community meetings on the disposition of schools that have been targeted for immediate closure on March 20 and 24th. The second series of meetings will be:

<p>April 1 – Ward I at Tubman ES 3101 13<sup>th</sup> St., NW, 6:00-8:00 pm <i>Closed Schools: Gage-Eckington and Meyer</i></p>	<p>April 3 – Ward 7 at Kelly Miller MS 301 49<sup>th</sup> St., NE 6:00-8:00 pm <i>Closed Schools: Merritt and Benning</i></p>
<p>April 7 – Ward 8 at Patterson ES 4399 S. Capitol Terr., SW 6:00-8:00 pm <i>Closed Schools: Douglass and PR Harris</i></p>	<p>April 9 – Ward 4 at Barnard ES 430 Decatur St., NE 6:00-8:00 pm <i>Closed Schools: Clark and Rudolph</i></p>
<p>April 10 – Ward 5 at McKinley Tech HS 151 T St., NE 6:00-8:00 pm <i>Closed Schools: Backus, Taft, Slowe, JF Cook, MM Washington, Young</i></p>	

**UPCOMING DC COUNCIL BUDGET HEARINGS ON PUBLIC EDUCATION**

All hearings are at the John A. Wilson Building, 1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.

<p><b>April 2, 2008 (Wednesday); ROOM 412;</b> 11:00 a.m. Committee of the Whole, Chairman Vincent Gray - Office of Deputy Mayor for Education 2:00 p.m. Committee of the Whole, Chairman Vincent Gray – Hearing on OPEFM</p>	<p><b>April 8, 2008 (Tuesday); COUNCIL CHAMBER (ROOM 500); 10:30 a.m.</b> Committee of the Whole, Chairman Vincent Gray District of Columbia Public Schools</p>
<p><b>April 11, 2008 (Friday); ROOM 412; 10:00 a.m.</b> Committee of the Whole, Chairman Vincent Gray Office of the State Superintendent of Education</p>	

To sign up to testify about the budget contact Aretha Latta at 724-8196 or e-mail [alatta@dccouncil.us](mailto:alatta@dccouncil.us).