Montgomery County
Public Schools

April 8, 2015

F. Craig Meadows
County Administrator
County of Montgomery
755 Roanoke Street, Suite 2E
Christiansburg, VA 24073-3179

RE: Request for Funds for Capital Needs

Dear Mr. Meadows:

The purpose of this letter is to request $775,000 from Montgomery County to be used for capital improvements for Montgomery County Schools. The Board of Supervisors has recognized the importance of funds for school district capital expenses through a one-time allocation of $400,000 in 2013 and special allocations in 2012 and 2013 for $250,000 for roof replacement projects; $150,000 for technology; and $175,000 for bus replacement.

These items are a part of the original School Board budget request for 2015-2016. Due to the potential gap between identified needs and available funding, I ask that the Board of Supervisors consider this request for one-time funds to support the school division's capital needs. All of these items remain critical items for funding from other sources.

The following is additional information offered regarding the request:

Provide a Building Capital Repair/Improvement Budget Line Item – The $275,000 request represents $25,000 for a state grant match to address safety enhancements and $250,000 for building repair and the roof maintenance plan. If approved by the Board of Supervisors, funds may be appropriated to the School Board budget or remain in a capital account maintained by the County Administration.

Technology Improvement Plan Budget Line – In order to continue the improvement plan $150,000 is requested to support continued improvements in hardware. We have over 5,000 computers and associated technology valued over $6 million. The future of instruction is tied to teacher and student access to and use of current technology. With a three to five year life cycle, it is critical that technology is maintained, updated, and replaced.

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Replacement of Aging School Buses – The requested amount of $350,000 will provide the division with four replacement school buses. With a fleet of 125 buses and State guidelines for the use of a bus for twelve years on daily routes plus three years as a spare, the school division should replace 8 to 9 buses per year. During the 5 year period from 2011 – 2015 twenty-two buses have been purchased, an average of 4.4 per year.

I appreciate your consideration of this request. Approval by the Board of Supervisors provides an additional $775,000 available to MCPS for designated capital needs (roofing project/building maintenance), technology purchases for teacher and student use, and the purchase of 4 school buses. Although MCPS anticipates carryover funds for this year, our needs are many. Support by the Board of Supervisors for these specific capital needs will allow the School Board greater flexibility to address other needs of the school division with carryover funds.

Your ongoing support for quality education in Montgomery County is appreciated. Please contact me if you have any questions about the information I have provided.

Sincerely,

Brenda B. Blackburn

Brenda B. Blackburn
Superintendent