



**ARLINGTON RIDGE CIVIC ASSOCIATION
2604 SOUTH GRANT STREET
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA 22202**

April 20, 2010

Mr Jay Fisette
Chair, Arlington County Board
2100 Clarendon Blvd.
Arlington, VA 22201

Ms. Sally Baird
Chair, Arlington School Board
1426 North Quincy Street
Arlington, VA 22207

Subject: Urge Funding Construction of Wakefield H.S. in 2010 School Bond

Dear Mr. Fisette and Ms. Baird,

Arlington Ridge Civic Association (ARCA) urges the County Board and School Board to include construction funding for Wakefield in the 2010 school bond. The economic downturn presents an opportunity for unique cost savings for this critical capital project. Construction costs are down dramatically, with large commercial projects on hold, and with restricted bank lending. Also bond interest rates are historically low.

Revised estimates for Wakefield presented at the School Board's budget work session show that funding Wakefield's construction in the 2010 bond, and starting construction in 2011 would cost an estimated \$109 million -- saving 30% over prior estimates of \$156 million or more. Delaying Wakefield's funding until the 2012 bond could add \$15 million. Delay would also risk increases in bond rates and in construction costs, if construction picks up in the private sector and fewer construction companies bid.

Wakefield plans and energy-efficient design were presented at our March 18 meeting. The reviews and input from the school community, residents, and various county and schools committees, staff, and officials show significant improvements over earlier plans. We commend everyone involved in the lengthy planning process.

Sincerely,

Charles A. Walter

Charles ("Chick") Walter
President, Arlington Ridge Civic Association