

**ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COUNCIL OF FALLS CHURCH**

February 23, 2015

Mr. Justin Castillo  
Chair, School Board

We congratulate your recent election as Chair of the School Board.

The purpose of this letter is to communicate to you our support of pursuing LEED Silver certification for Mount Daniel. By this, we mean the actual certification from the USGBC rather than just the intent to build to LEED standards. We also support renovation plans that would enable installation of rooftop solar energy systems at a future date.

Our support of LEED certification relates both to the practical achievement of a building that is independently verified to be environmentally friendly, and for the role that having LEED certification plays in communicating to our community, and especially our students, that buildings play an important role in how we affect our environment.

LEED is by no means a perfect standard. But it does enjoy widespread support throughout the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. We were pleased that you participated in two recent tours of LEED certified schools in our area – Wakefield High School in Arlington, and Dunbar High School in Washington, D.C. Therefore you will have seen first hand the support that LEED certification enjoys in neighboring jurisdictions.

A particularly important benefit of LEED certification is the commissioning of building systems. This in-depth post-installation testing of important environmental systems ensures that we are getting what we pay for, and that HVAC systems are functioning at optimum levels both for comfort and efficiency. We believe that savings over time from properly adjusted HVAC systems will more than pay for the cost of LEED certification.

We also favor the installation of photovoltaic and photothermal systems on our schools. However, we recognize the financial challenges of achieving this result in the near term. Over time, we anticipate that conditions will improve for installing these systems. Therefore we would encourage the renovation of Mount Daniel to include plans for the easy installation of these systems in the future. Maximizing available rooftop space for PV panels and setting aside conduit for electrical cables are low-cost ways to enable easier installation of rooftop solar in the future.

Sincerely,

Tim Stevens  
Chair, Environmental Services Council

Cc: City Council members  
Chris McGough