



## Steve Solomon statement on Option H

My name is Steve Solomon, and I am a candidate for Montgomery County Council At-Large.

When I first learned about the proposed Crown High School several years ago, I thought it was a great idea. Given the continued growth in the Crown area, a new school made sense to help alleviate both current and projected overcrowding at neighboring high schools. And it would accommodate neighborhood students who could now walk there.

However, I never anticipated that the new school would be used to replace an existing one. When I learned of Option H – the proposal to permanently move all Wootton students to Crown – I was deeply concerned.

Elected officials and leaders often speak of transparency, accountability, and meaningful public engagement. Unfortunately, this process reflects the opposite. Option H appears to have been advanced hastily, without sufficient community input, and in direct contradiction to the concerns expressed by a large majority of affected constituents. Moreover, the proposal raises serious fiscal concerns and reflects short-term thinking rather than responsible long-term planning.

Montgomery County has for years delayed or deferred critical facility upgrades at numerous schools. However, closing or displacing an existing school community is not the solution. Many of our school facilities are aging and require substantial investment. We must commit to modernizing our schools comprehensively while also planning responsibly for future growth.

It is also notable that the Maryland Building Industry Association – an organization that rarely takes public positions on local school matters – has spoken out against the closure of Wootton.

Additionally, the recent shooting at Wootton was deeply troubling for our entire community. This event underscores the urgent need to evaluate and strengthen school safety policies, including reconsidering the role of School Resource Officers. Evidence-based safety measures must be implemented in collaboration with educators, families, and public safety professionals to ensure secure and supportive learning environments.

I urge the Board of Education to vote against Option H.

As a County Councilmember, I will advocate for transparent decision-making, responsible fiscal planning, safe schools, and policies that strengthen our communities while preparing thoughtfully for future growth. Our students, parents, and educators deserve nothing less.

Steve Solomon

Candidate for Montgomery County Council - At Large