

## School repairs can't wait

Your recent editorial "Repairing city schools" (Feb. 18) can only have been written by someone who hasn't spent much time in the city's public schools recently. I have, and I can tell you that there are students who avoid going to the bathroom all day because the toilets won't flush or the stall doors are missing, and there are teachers who have lost a decade's worth of materials to flooding caused by leaking roofs.

If you were to set foot inside their schools, would you tell students that certain "details" need to be worked out before we can start raising the money to fix their buildings?

From inside those dingy plastic "windows," the view is a dim one. Keeping up with even routine maintenance always seems to be something we can't afford to do this year, so we kick the can farther down the road.

The result? As you describe, a \$2.8 billion backlog of needed repairs. Do you really need to know the details of how a non-profit bond-issuing agency will be set up in order to agree that we need to start taking responsibility for the condition of our schools?

Here's a thought: perhaps this spring, The Sun could agree to keep its air conditioning turned off until mid-June, when school ends, out of solidarity with the many students who attend class in buildings that are cooled only by Baltimore's gentle breezes.

I'm guessing that might give your editorial board a sense of urgency and compassion missing from your editorial.

*Hugh Bethell, Baltimore*



**READERS  
RESPOND**

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2012 | NEWS | THE BALTIMORE SUN **15**