

Kelley Eiskant
BOE Budget Hearing 01/20/10
Wheaton Cluster Representative

Good evening, Dr. Weast and members of the Board of Education. My name is Kelley Eiskant. I am the co-chairperson for the MCPS Parent Advisory Council and PTSA President of Loiederman Middle School. I am also the mom of three MCPS students at Loiederman Middle School and Bel Pre Elementary School, and a proud MCPS graduate. This evening, I am speaking on behalf of the parents, students, and staff of the Wheaton High School cluster.

The Wheaton Cluster supports the Superintendent's Recommended Budget as it stands, as well as the Superintendent's Maintenance of Effort level request. We strongly support the new Core Value of Equity adopted by the School Board. This provides support and a degree of equity to the Title I schools and secondary schools in the Down County Consortium, including Academic Intervention, Focus, and paraprofessional support for our massive ESOL population, Special Program teachers, and teacher positions in the Middle School Magnet Consortium.

Maintaining the current levels of staffing provided to us is crucial to sustaining not only our level of success to date, but also the very programs which define the consortia and allow for choice therein. For example, Loiederman's Creative and Performing Arts magnet and Parkland's Aerospace Technology magnet rely on staffing to sustain their specific programs and achieve the level of success their students expect. Wheaton Cluster schools have demonstrated increased student performance steadily over the last five years. What does that increased performance look like? In 2004, Wheaton Woods Elementary's grade 3 students' MSA proficiency rates were 55.8% in reading and 61.5% in math. In 2008, Wheaton Woods' grade 3 students' MSA proficiency rates were 93% in reading and 94.7% in math. At Loiederman Middle School in 2006, MSA proficiency rates for grade 6 students were 67.7% in reading and 63.9% in math. In 2008, Loiederman's grade 6 students achieved an MSA proficiency rate of 85.1% in reading and 86% in math. In 2004, Wheaton High School's HSA pass rate in Algebra was 30.7%. In 2008, 69% of 10th grade students passed Algebra. These achievements have been made possible in large part through reduced class size and the current levels of staffing. If increasing class size does become truly necessary we ask that it would be limited to one additional student per class.

Finally, the support our schools receive from the MCPS Maintenance Department including Heating and Air Conditioning, Carpenters, Plumbers, Electricians and Building Service personnel is vital to our schools. We ask for stabilized staffing of maintenance positions to ensure a safe, comfortable learning environment in the nine Wheaton Cluster school buildings, which were built an average of 55 years ago.

On behalf of Wheaton High School, Loiederman and Parkland Middle Schools, and Brookhaven, Harmony Hills, Sargent Shriver, Viers Mill, Weller Road, and Wheaton Woods Elementary Schools, thank you for your consideration of our requests and for the

opportunity to have our collective voice heard.