

Rockville Cluster
Operating Budget Testimony
1/16/2008

Good evening, I am Amy Hartley. Mike Joseph and I are the Co-Cluster Coordinators for the Rockville Cluster.

First, we would like to extend our thanks for your support last year in our efforts to get bus service for the Lincoln Park neighborhood in Rockville. The bus service has made a difference to those students and their success in high school.

Special Education. Many of the schools in the Rockville cluster support programs for students with special needs. Maryvale has an autism program, Barnsley both a Deaf and Hard of Hearing and GT/LD program, Meadow Hall has an elementary LAD center program and Flower Valley an Emotional Disabilities program to name a few. We support full funding of these programs and encourage the board to ensure that these programs are fully funded.

Support for increased rigor. The Rockville Cluster has several new initiatives toward increasing the academic rigor offered to our students. Rockville High School is on its way with the approved IB program and Wood Middle School is not only working on pre-IB programming, but is also a phase-one school for middle school reform. In order to support these initiatives, Wood is requesting that the Implementation of Middle School Reform be fully funded. Personnel, curriculum, and hardware should be continued at least at current proposed levels. The support of the Middle School Reform evaluation process is also important.

Our elementary schools are requesting a shared staff member to support being able to teach higher level mathematics classes such as Middle School Math B.

Safety, Security, and Discipline. Our cluster sees its fair share of discipline issues. We are extremely interested in the safety and security of all of our students. We support the continuation of the "Ride by the Rules" program and any other programs that will allow our children to travel to and from school in safety.

Measures such as Educational Facilities Officers (EFO's) and a stronger communication partnership between MCPS schools and the Montgomery County Police Department offer hope that our children will be safe in and around their schools.

Wood Middle School would like to see funding for a full time EFO. This would directly support gang prevention and safe and secure environment priorities in addition to supporting counseling and outreach needs at Wood. Though funding for this program is the responsibility of the county council, we request that MCPS look for ways to support this effort.

The cluster's elementary schools urge funding of the additional Lunch Hour Assistant positions requested in the Superintendent's recommended budget so that adequate supervision is provided for students at lunch and recess.

Finally, we in the Rockville Cluster support the goals stated in the MCCPTA testimony and its operating budget compact. We also support the MCCPTA resolution on the operating budget priorities.

Thank you,
Amy Hartley

Rockville Cluster