

WHEATON CLUSTER

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| Wheaton High School | Brookhaven Elementary School |
| Parkland Middle School | Harmony Hills Elementary School |
| Loiderman Middle School | Sargent Shriver Elementary School |
| | Viers Mill Elementary School |
| | Weller Road Elementary School |
| | Wheaton Woods Elementary School |

FY 2013 Operating Budget Testimony

January 18, 2012

The Wheaton Cluster is happy to serve our students, parents, staff and local community. We are not flipping burgers, nor are there any drive-thru lines, but we can customize an order and let our cluster have their say.

Although this is not a commercial, Burger King' s vintage slogan fits well with our cluster' s approach to giving our community a unified voice on issues impacting education, "You Can Have It Your Way!"

Good evening Dr. Starr, President Shirley Brandman, and members of the Board. I am Shebra Evans, a cluster coordinator for Wheaton and a mother of two elementary aged students.

The Wheaton Cluster supports the Superintendent' s proposed Operating Budget and the MCCPTA Operating Budget Priorities. While the economy is not on our side, we must still provide the highest quality of education for all students.

For our students, our way of maintaining a quality education is smaller class sizes, additional staffing and adequate resources. With this in place we can continue to ensure our programs are successful in meeting the educational objectives for all students. In the Wheaton Cluster, our middle schools need additional staff to teach 8 course offerings, funding to cover money for late buses for extended learning opportunities after school, and a Magnet Coordinator in the cluster. In our high

school, thanks to the Board of Education we will be able to offer an application program next year. Our community is grateful for the opportunities that are created for the students, but we can't guarantee successful implementation of programs or class offerings without meeting the needs of the students with additional support, resources, and adequate funding for our new magnet and academies. This continued support is necessary for our students to compete – not just with other students in the county or the state - but globally.

For our teachers, our way of maintaining a quality education is ongoing professional development. It is important to continuously train and support both new and experienced educators. An informed educator is the most important factor in influencing student achievement. Restoring all or some of the substitute days would help in this effort to keep everyone up-to-date on technology, new curriculum resources, and more. Professional development is critical to the success of all students. Great teachers help create great students.

Just as All State Insurance customers know they are in good hands, parents want to be reassured that their child's education is in good hands with MCPS. This is accomplished by maintaining safe, secure and healthy school environments with continued support for additional learning and enrichment opportunities beyond the school day.

Our cluster appreciates the opportunity to give every child one voice.