

January 20, 2010
Operating Budget Testimony
Einstein Cluster

Good evening, my name is Kelly Giblin and I am the Cluster Coordinator from the Einstein cluster of schools. The Einstein Cluster recognizes the difficult job the Board has before it in these difficult economic times. And the Einstein Cluster recognizes that each school in the county is going to suffer budget reductions and still be expected to deliver results showing student success. Nevertheless, there are some possible budget cuts proposed which will cause extreme hardship for DCC schools and schools like them throughout the county.

Academic intervention and support staff at all levels is critical in making sure that all students, regardless of how prepared or unprepared they are when they walk through the doors, will be able to access the 7 Keys as laid out by MCPS. Please consider when deciding on program cuts how children who are in the middle of these programs will be affected. Will cuts prevent students from earning special diplomas or certificates that would have made them more competitive in the college application process? Will these cuts slow or stop the rapid growth a child was making with this support, preventing them from catching up and becoming considered at or above grade level? Are these cuts hurting children who, with the support, were obtaining the 7 Keys? A snapshot of how beneficial these interventions are can be seen at Einstein High School. At the end of first quarter in '07 a whopping 38% of freshmen were considered to be academically ineligible. This past fall that number was down to 23%. Academic intervention, Focus Teachers, and staff working with kids on the edge are paying big dividends.

The Einstein Cluster also has a unique situation within one of our schools. The Einstein Cluster offers a huge thank you for listening to our cry this past fall regarding the overcrowding at Oakland Terrace Elementary School and finding a temporary solution to this serious problem. And while we have now secured a facility to help with the overcrowding and look forward to the possibilities that can come from this unique partnership, we realize much of the hard work still lies ahead. We are anxious to begin working with MCPS to ensure that an adequate amount of staff, educational materials and playground equipment are provided to the satellite campus to make this venture a success for all staff, families and especially the 5 year olds this will affect. We realize that the need for more money could not have come at a worse time, but this solution must be a success in the event that a similar need for a satellite campus should arise elsewhere in the county.

Thank you,

Kelly Giblin
Einstein Cluster Coordinator