

Thanks to those who were able to join us at the Operating Budget Workshop. Several members signed up to testify before the County Council this week. Thank you.

Some key messages included in their testimony are:

- MCCPTA asks that the Council fully funds the County Executive's MCPS Operating Budget proposal.
- This budget prioritizes education-- even in a fiscally constrained environment, because above all else, it is our school system that contributes most to economic development, our families' welfare, and our community's future.
- And It reflects the reality of MCPS enrollment numbers-- we are increasing annually by 2,500 students (that's one high school a year). This proposal adds \$67 million over last year, but most of that total is simply for keeping pace with growth.
- (Optional: Additionally, we hope this funding blueprint will advance Superintendent Smith's goals of shifting more resources from the central office directly into our schools for more teachers, counselors, and staff on-hand for our students).
- We are grateful for the Council's consideration; we urge you to invest in our children by supporting this budget.

We were fortunate to have MCPS CFO Nicola Diamond join us at our workshop for an overview of the budget sent to the County Council with the full support of the Board of Education and the County Executive. The budget represents a 2.9% increase. Roughly 2% of that increase, however, is directly related to growth. Montgomery County has seen enrollment grow by more than 2,000 students per year for the last decade and this year is no different.

The proposed FY2019 budget is able to serve the growing population, including larger

special needs and ESOL populations, with this small increase by realizing savings from realignments within the Central Office and system wide. While there are some concerns about the realignments within the BOE structure, we are hopeful that the changes will ultimately serve our students even better than the current structure.

While Thursday (4/12) is the final day of the operating budget hearings, it is still not too late to contact the County Council members to encourage support of the budget as proposed.

Laura Mitchell

Chair, Operating Budget Committee