

**Testimony of Danielle Drissel, Ward 6 Parent
DC Public Schools Fiscal Year 2024
Public Budget Hearing November 16, 2022**

Good evening DCPS Budget Team and Chancellor Ferebee. I am Danielle Drissel, a Ward 6 parent of students at Brent Elementary and Stuart Hobson, I am also a member of W6PSPO and the Capitol Cluster PTA Advocacy Chair but am addressing you in my personal capacity.

I am testifying this evening about the need for the FY2024 budget to meet three key goals: DCPS initial budgets that are stable and ensure full staffing; targeted support for before and after-school needs for working families at all schools and strategic budget allocations address learning loss and capitol investment to avoid losing federal resources tied to pandemic.

Our schools need full and consistent budgets. The annual stress of needing to advocate to fully fund their existing payroll is unnecessary and inefficient. In this era of teacher and staff attrition, the message that full staffing is not the budget baseline is demoralizing. The initial central office budgets for each school should fully fund payroll at existing staff levels.

Unfunded mandates are unacceptable. If schools will be required to implement new staffing mandates for the upcoming year, each school's budget should include the funds for the additional staff. New requirements without new funds force schools to cut existing programming.

Budget for the true cost of staffing. At many schools, unfilled positions are directly attributable to insufficient budget. The mental health needs of our students are unmet due to underfunded positions, particularly at the elementary level. Librarians need to be permanent fixtures in every DCPS school. These staffing gaps are consistently attributed to DCPS not offering salaries that are competitive with what these skilled professionals can obtain with other District employers and neighboring school districts. Similarly, we have many paraprofessionals openings because the page grade is not commiserate with the demands of the position. Passion for serving the children only goes so far when you can make more stocking shelves at the grocery store.

Subsidize before and after-school care based on financial need regardless of DCPS school. DCPS has strong policies to ensure families at Title 1 schools have the before and after school care needs met. This support for working low-income families only at Title 1 schools is essential but insufficient. No DCPS student should be turned away from their school's childcare provider due to inability to pay.

Be strategic about addressing learning loss and capital needs to avoid leaving federal funds unspent. In FY2024 our schools will face non-recurring significant needs to address pandemic learning loss and capital investment. The budgeting process should leverage federal funds to directly give each classroom teacher budget to obtain for learning materials for classroom-based recovery support. Likewise, the significant federal resources should be used to meet essential non-recurring facility needs identified during the pandemic. Across the city, schools have air quality concerns tied to acute HVAC challenges and safety issues tied to locks that tied to door lock issues. In Ward 6 the capital needs also include the field at Eastern High School and the auditorium at Stuart Hobson.

Thank you!

JACKSON-REED HIGH SCHOOL LOCAL SCHOOL ADVISORY TEAM

November 16, 2022



Testimony for the 2022 DCPS Budget Hearing on behalf of the JRHS LSAT Parents

Good evening, my name is Melody Molinoff and I am the parent of two Jackson-Reed High School students and currently serve as the Jackson-Reed LSAT chair.

Last year parent representatives from CHEC, Deal, and Jackson-Reed met with the deputy chancellor and other Central office leaders to discuss our serious concerns about the chronic underfunding of large schools by DCPS. As you know, these schools (JRHS, CHEC, and Deal) are the city's three largest public schools, collectively representing nearly 25% of students enrolled in DCPS middle and high schools, and some 10% of total DCPS students.

During our conversations we emphasized that an "economies of scale" budget approach in the education space has been proven to be ineffective. In fact, the Maryland State Department of Education recently concluded that large schools require more—not less—funding per student, which is why Maryland recommends capping the size of new schools.[1]

One example of DCPS's ineffectual budget approach is the way we staff counselors in high schools. Counselors serve a critical function in preparing students for success in high school, college, and other career pathways. At a time when the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) recommends one counselor for every 250 students, DCPS assigns or budgets high schools two counselors per grade regardless of the size of the school or of grade cohorts. At JRHS each cohort ranges from 445 to 695 students, which means that counselors are handling caseloads more than double the caseload of counselors working in other DCPS high schools. This is inequitable and must be fixed.

We have shared with DCPS staff how this underfunding adversely impacts large schools; DCPS has acknowledged this systemic problem.[2] We urge DCPS to evaluate the adverse impact of chronic underfunding of large schools, and to ensure that future school budgeting exercises and models address the issues we are raising.

For the purpose of this hearing I will outline some additional examples of the challenges created by the District's long-standing large-school underfunding:

Supplemental Resources Provided on "Per-School" Basis Underfund Large Schools: As noted, DCPS has assigned critical staff on a "per school" basis, such as permanent substitute teachers. Rather than allocating resources on a per school basis, a more equitable model would allocate resources to each school based upon a rationally established increase above a specified student count (e.g., one substitute for each 300 students).[3]

At-Risk Funding Allocations Fail At-Risk Students at Large Schools: DCPS provides supplemental funding to schools that have a high concentration of At-Risk students. The extra funding kicks in only when more than 40% of the student population qualifies as At-Risk. A large school like Jackson-Reed, would not receive any supplemental At-Risk funds unless at least 840 students (40% of ~2,100 students) qualified as At-risk. Consequently, **despite serving over 500 At-Risk students—equivalent in size to some DCPS high schools**—Jackson-Reed has received zero extra funding to support those students. This needs to be fixed, and DCPS should consider a more equitable model to ensure larger schools can adequately deliver critical support to At-Risk students.

Very Low Per-Pupil Base Funding Rate: Previously, we have detailed the District's alarmingly low per-pupil base funding rate, which should be increased at all schools across the city. If the current rate stays static, the quality of instruction for **25% of middle and high students in DCPS will suffer.**

Thank you for your time. We look forward to further conversations with you on these issues to ensure that all DCPS students and schools have what they need to succeed.

[1]"Final School Size Study Report: Impact of Smaller Schools," Prepared for the Maryland Department of Education, APA Consulting, June 30, 2015, page 38 ("For elementary schools, both economic efficiency and effectiveness began to decrease at enrollments above 700 students; for middle schools, the drop off occurred at 900 students; and for high schools, at about 1,700 students. These data would suggest maximum school size policies should be set at the sizes before efficiency and effectiveness decrease: 700 students for elementary schools, 900 students for middle schools, and 1,700 students for high schools. ").

[2]"Next Generation Budget Model: Summer 2020 Engagement," DCPS Presentation, at 10-13 (showing, for example, on DCPS slide titled "Utilizing the CMS, smaller schools end up being budgeted with more staff (FTEs) per student," that larger high schools receive 28 fewer Fulltime Equivalent staff per 500 students; and stating, on a subsequent slide, that: "Total per student spending varies across schools, even after adjusting for varying student needs; this inequity is most pronounced in secondary schools"); "Next Generation Budget Model: Summer 2020 Engagement," DCPS Presentation, September 2020, at 16 (indicating "Impact on Schools: What will the new model mean for the future and for my school?... There is also concern over adequate funding for small schools and some of our large schools...").

[3] If large schools were expected to offset these "per-school" allocations in special circumstances, that would be one thing. However, under the current budget models, large schools also are chronically underfunded, thus preventing equitable allocations of critical staffing.

Hello,

My name is Analiese Marchesseault and I am a parent of 2 children at Maury Elementary School, and a future Maury cougar. Our family feels very lucky to be part of the wonderful Maury community, but I am concerned about the impact the planned DCPS budget will have on the school, the school community, and most importantly, Maury students. As a Maury Elementary parent, my primary concern is ensuring that the FY24 funding formula be corrected to ensure that Maury and all DCPS schools are provided sufficient funding.

Maury's per pupil spending of \$10,949 is the lowest of all DCPS schools. It is well below even the next closest school, Watkins Elementary at \$11,730. If this model continues, Maury would remain underfunded causing possible issues with the current staffing, let alone increasing staff based upon the needs of the Maury community.

This year Maury enrolled approximately 30 new students—more than an *entire new classroom worth of students*—bringing enrollment to a total of about 530 students. Yet, under the current budget model, Maury has zero new classroom teachers, and zero new interventionists. In addition, specials teachers are forced to rotate across terms in order to serve all students. My children only have the benefit of each special for half the year, despite the proven benefits that STEAM education and foreign language learning has on developing minds.

We also lost a special education teacher position from Maury's budget last year. Meanwhile, the pandemic has caused a backlog of identifying and diagnosing special learning needs and other necessary interventions.

Based upon inadequate FY23 funding, Maury students and staff are impacted in the following ways this current school year.

- *Four* 3rd grade classes were forced into *three* oversized 4th grade classes because there was no funding for an additional teacher.
- Maury's one art teacher, one music teacher, one librarian, and one foreign language teacher serve all 530 students as there is no funding for additional specials teachers.
- Maury's front office staff is overworked. There is no budget for a second front office assistant, even as the workload has dramatically increased.

In addition, this year:

- There are only one full-time and one half-time physical education teachers serving the entire student populations. This makes it extremely difficult to meet the District's own "*two PE classes per week*" mandate;
- Students who in past years would have received intervention support go unsupported because of insufficient staffing to meet the demand for both academic and social/emotional supports;
- Maury received a large number of grade 3-5 transfer students from other schools. As Maury implemented intentional curricular changes in K-2 to better prepare upper elementary students,

transfer students coming into Maury have not benefited from these adjustments. As a result, there is insufficient staffing for the academic interventions needed specifically in grades 3-5.

- The school is extremely lacking in supplies and materials funding. In some moments meeting basic photocopy needs can be challenging.

Without a change in the funding formula these shortfalls remain and will only get worse overtime, particularly in the context of inflation.

In addition to budgetary needs for staff there is a larger maintenance issue. The DC General Services Office has failed to adequately meet the needs of maintaining the school. There are cracks in the exterior walls of the building, in the retaining walls surrounding the playground. There is a busted exterior window next to a set of entrance/exit doors, and the list goes on.

- additional interventionists in reading and math, with a particular focus on support for grades 3-5
- a second full-time physical education teacher
- an additional fourth grade teacher
- additional staffing in the main office
- adequate funding for materials and supplies.

Maury has an amazingly dedicated staff, teachers, and paraprofessionals. They deserve an adequate and appropriate funding level to support their efforts, and our students deserve the resources necessary for a supportive learning environment.

I request that the budget formula be corrected to ensure that Maury, and all DCPS schools, are adequately funded.

Thank you,
Analiese Marchesseault

Written testimony of Matthew Thompson for the DCPS FY24 Public Budget Hearing held on November 16, 2022

My name is Matt Thompson and I am a parent of two children at Maury Elementary School.

As a Maury Elementary parent, my primary concern is ensuring that the FY24 [funding formula](#) be corrected to ensure that Maury and all DCPS schools are provided sufficient funding. Based on the objective points I will raise, it is strongly evident that the funding formula failed Maury Elementary in FY23, the present school year.

As last year's Maury LSAT parent representatives' letter to Chancellor Ferebee highlighted, Maury's per pupil spending of \$10,949 is the lowest of **all** DCPS schools. It is well below even the next closest school, Watkins Elementary at \$11,730. If this model continues, Maury would remain underfunded causing possible issues with the current staffing, let alone increasing staff based upon the needs of the Maury community.

This year Maury enrolled approximately 30 new students—more than an *entire new classroom worth of students*—bringing enrollment to a total of about 530 students. Yet under the current budget model, Maury has zero new classroom teachers, zero new interventionists. Specials teachers must rotate class schedules on a weekly basis and alternate teaching students for only two terms this year to meet the needs of the entire student body.

DCPS even took away funding for a special education teacher position from Maury's budget last year – despite no identified drop in the number of students who receive special education services. To the contrary, the pandemic is widely reported to have caused a backlog of identifying and diagnosing special learning needs and other necessary interventions. In other words, these populations, as an input to the DCPS funding formula, is almost certainly underestimated before even accounting for pandemic-driven impacts on learning.

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- Our overworked front office staff is— once again – without relief. There is no budget for a second front office assistant, even as the workload has dramatically increased.

In addition, this year:

- There are only one full-time and one half-time physical education teachers serving the entire student populations. This makes it extremely difficult to meet the District's own "*two PE classes per week*" mandate;
- Students who in past years would have received intervention support go unsupported because of insufficient staffing to meet the demand for both academic and social/emotional supports;

- Maury received larger numbers of grade 3-5 transfer students from other schools. As Maury implemented intentional curricular changes in K-2 to better prepare upper elementary students, transfer students coming into Maury have not benefited from these adjustments. As a result, there is insufficient staffing for the academic interventions needed specifically in grades 3-5.
- The school is extremely lacking in supplies and materials funding. In some moments meeting basic photocopy needs can be challenging.

Without a change in the funding formula these shortfalls remain and will only get worse overtime, particularly in the context of inflation.

In addition to budgetary needs for staff there is a larger maintenance issue. The DC General Services Office has failed to adequately meet the needs of maintaining the school. There are cracks in the exterior walls of the building, and in the retaining walls surrounding the playground. There is a busted exterior window next to a set of entrance/exit doors, and the list goes on.

Based upon this I request that the budget formula be corrected to ensure that Maury, and all DCPS schools, are adequately funded.

The Maury community is fortunate. We have amazing, dedicated teachers and staff. Our students work incredibly hard at both academics and social-emotional learning. But we are bewildered about DCPS's budget process and how it neglected our school in this way.

Maury needs sufficient funding to provide:

- additional interventionists in reading and math, with a particular focus on support for grades 3-5
- a second full-time physical education teacher
- an additional fourth grade teacher
- additional staffing in the main office
- adequate funding for materials and supplies.

DCPS has promised more transparency this year. But we have yet to see that, and this testimony is based on what we know to date.

At the end of the day, we are asking, once again, that DCPS provide adequate baseline funding per pupil to enable the school to operate.

Thank you,

Matt Thompson, on behalf of our children Anna Thompson (4th grade) and Drew Thompson (1st grade)

My name is Diana Dillon and I am a parent of Rory Dillon at Maury Elementary School. I am writing to share my concerns before the DCPS FY24 Public Budget Hearing on November 16, 2022.

As a Maury Elementary parent, my primary concern is ensuring that the FY24 [funding formula](#) be corrected to ensure that Maury and all DCPS schools are provided sufficient funding. Based on the objective points I will raise, it is strongly evident that **the funding formula failed Maury Elementary in FY23, the present school year.**

As last year's Maury LSAT parent representatives' letter to Chancellor Ferebee highlighted, Maury's per pupil spending of \$10,949 is **the lowest of all DCPS schools**. It is well below even the next closest school, Watkins Elementary at \$11,730. **If this model continues, Maury would remain underfunded causing possible issues with the current staffing, let alone increasing staff based upon the needs of the Maury community.**

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At the end of the day, we are asking, once again, that DCPS provide adequate baseline funding per pupil to enable the school to operate.

Thank you.

Diana Dillon

My name is Jennifer Lee and I am a parent of Max Masood at Maury Elementary School.

I would like to reiterate the testimony of the school's LSAT representatives below.

As a Maury Elementary parent, my primary concern is ensuring that the FY24 [funding formula](#) be corrected to ensure that Maury and all DCPS schools are provided sufficient funding. Based on the objective points I will raise, it is strongly evident that the funding formula failed Maury Elementary in FY23, the present school year.

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At the end of the day, we are asking, once again, that DCPS provide adequate baseline funding per pupil to enable the school to operate.

Thank you

Testimony of Shavanna Miller (Ward 6, Mother of 3 and PTA Co-President at Maury ES)

My name is Shavanna Miller and I am a parent of 2 current students and 1 future student at Maury Elementary School in NE. I am writing to you today about the inexplicable budget issues we are facing at Maury ES - issues which I fear will not be addressed with the current funding formula. We urgently need your attention with this.

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At the end of the day, we are asking, once again, that DCPS provide adequate baseline funding per pupil to enable the school to operate.

Thank you.

Shavanna Miller

Hello,

My name is Courtney McCaffrey and I am a parent of 2 children at Maury Elementary School.

As a Maury Elementary parent, my primary concern is ensuring that the FY24 funding formula be corrected to ensure that Maury and all DCPS schools are provided sufficient funding. This is especially concerning because the funding formula failed Maury Elementary in FY23, the current school year.

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At the end of the day, we are asking, once again, that DCPS provide adequate baseline funding per pupil to enable the school to operate.

Thank you,
Courtney McCaffrey

November 16, 2022

My name is Elizabeth Kaehler, and I am a parent of 1 child at Maury Elementary School. I am also co-chair of the school's main fundraising event, Maury at the Market. As one of the chief fundraisers at the school, I am keenly aware of how DCPS' budgeting system hurts Maury and its students. I feel the added pressure to raise more money due to the gap that this formula has created.

As a Maury Elementary parent, my primary concern is ensuring that the FY24 [funding formula](#) be corrected to ensure that Maury and all DCPS schools are provided sufficient funding. Based on the objective points I will raise, it is strongly evident that the funding formula failed Maury Elementary in FY23, the present school year.

As last year's Maury LSAT parent representatives' letter to Chancellor Ferebee highlighted, Maury's per pupil spending of \$10,949 is the lowest of all DCPS schools. It is well below even the next closest school, Watkins Elementary at \$11,730. If this model continues, Maury would remain underfunded causing possible issues with the current staffing, let alone increasing staff based upon the needs of the Maury community.

This year Maury enrolled approximately 30 new students—more than an *entire new classroom worth of students*—bringing enrollment to a total of about 530 students. Yet under the current budget model, Maury has zero new classroom teachers, zero new interventionists. Specials teachers must rotate class schedules on a weekly basis and alternate teaching students for only two terms this year to meet the needs of the entire student body.

DCPS even took away funding for a special education teacher position from Maury's budget last year – despite no identified drop in the number of students who receive special education services. To the contrary, the pandemic is widely reported to have caused a backlog of identifying and diagnosing special learning needs and other necessary interventions. In other words, these populations, as an input to the DCPS funding formula, is almost certainly underestimated before even accounting for pandemic-driven impacts on learning.

Based upon inadequate FY23 funding, Maury students and staff are impacted in the following ways this current school year.

- *Four* 3rd grade classes were forced into *three* oversized 4th grade classes because there was no funding for an additional teacher.
- Maury's one art teacher, one music teacher, one librarian, and one foreign language teacher serve all 530 students as there is no funding for additional specials teachers.
- Our overworked front office staff is—once again—without relief. There is no budget for a second front office assistant, even as the workload has dramatically increased.

In addition, this year:

- There are only one full-time and one half-time physical education teachers serving the entire student populations. This makes it extremely difficult to meet the District's own "*two PE classes per week*" mandate;

- Students who in past years would have received intervention support go unsupported because of insufficient staffing to meet the demand for both academic and social/emotional supports;
- Maury received larger numbers of grade 3-5 transfer students from other schools. As Maury implemented intentional curricular changes in K-2 to better prepare upper elementary students, transfer students coming into Maury have not benefited from these adjustments. As a result, there is insufficient staffing for the academic interventions needed specifically in grades 3-5.
- The school is extremely lacking in supplies and materials funding. In some moments meeting basic photocopy needs can be challenging.

Without a change in the funding formula these shortfalls remain and will only get worse overtime, particularly in the context of inflation.

In addition to budgetary needs for staff there is a larger maintenance issue. The DC General Services Office has failed to adequately meet the needs of maintaining the school. There are cracks in the exterior walls of the building, in the retaining walls surrounding the playground. There is a busted exterior window next to a set of entrance/exit doors, and the list goes on.

Based upon this I request that the budget formula be corrected to ensure that Maury, and all DCPS schools, are adequately funded.

The Maury community is fortunate. We have amazing, dedicated teachers and staff. Our students work incredibly hard at both academics and social-emotional learning. But we are bewildered about DCPS's budget process and how it neglected our school in this way.

Maury needs sufficient funding to provide:

- additional interventionists in reading and math, with a particular focus on support for grades 3-5
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- an additional fourth grade teacher
- additional staffing in the main office
- adequate funding for materials and supplies.

DCPS has promised more transparency this year. But we have yet to see that, and this testimony is based on what we know to date.

At the end of the day, we are asking, once again, that DCPS provide adequate baseline funding per pupil to enable the school to operate.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Elizabeth Kaehler

Dear Mayor Bowser,

I'm a parent of two Maury elementary school students. I know education is very close to the heart of your agenda as our Mayor.

My primary concern is ensuring that the FY24 [funding formula](#) be corrected to ensure that Maury (and all DCPS schools) are provided sufficient funding. The funding formula fell short of Maury Elementary's young students' needs in FY23, the present school year in ways I'll describe below.

As last year's Maury LSAT parent representatives' letter to Chancellor Ferebee highlighted, Maury's per pupil spending of \$10,949 is the lowest of all DCPS schools. It is well below even the next closest school, Watkins Elementary at \$11,730. If this model continues, Maury would remain underfunded causing possible issues with the current staffing, let alone increasing staff based upon the needs of the Maury community.

This year Maury enrolled approximately 30 new students—more than an *entire new classroom worth of students*—bringing enrollment to a total of about 530 students. Yet under the current budget model, Maury has zero new classroom teachers, zero new interventionists. Specials teachers must rotate class schedules on a weekly basis and alternate teaching students for only two terms this year to meet the needs of the entire student body.

DCPS even took away funding for a special education teacher position from Maury's budget last year – despite no identified drop in the number of students who receive special education services. To the contrary, the pandemic is widely reported to have caused a backlog of identifying and diagnosing special learning needs and other necessary interventions. In other words, these populations, as an input to the DCPS funding formula, is almost certainly underestimated before even accounting for pandemic-driven impacts on learning.

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In addition, this year:

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Without a change in the funding formula these shortfalls remain and will only get worse overtime, particularly in the context of inflation.

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Maury needs sufficient funding to provide:

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DCPS has promised more transparency this year. But we have yet to see that, and this testimony is based on what we know to date.

At the end of the day, we are asking, once again, that DCPS provide adequate baseline funding per pupil to enable the school to operate.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

Caitlin Rogger

Testimony of Andy Marchesseault before the DCPS FY24 Public Budget Hearing
November 16, 2022

My name is Andy Marchesseault and I am a parent of 2 children at Maury Elementary School.

As a Maury Elementary parent, my primary concern is ensuring that the FY24 funding formula be corrected to ensure that Maury and all DCPS schools are provided sufficient funding. Based on the objective points I will raise, it is strongly evident that the funding formula failed Maury Elementary in FY23, the present school year.

As last year's Maury LSAT parent representatives' letter to Chancellor Ferebee highlighted, Maury's per pupil spending of \$10,949 is the lowest of all DCPS schools. It is well below even the next closest school, Watkins Elementary at \$11,730. If this model continues, Maury would remain underfunded causing possible issues with the current staffing, let alone increasing staff based upon the needs of the Maury community.

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DCPS even took away funding for a special education teacher position from Maury's budget last year – despite no identified drop in the number of students who receive special education services. To the contrary, the pandemic is widely reported to have caused a backlog of identifying and diagnosing special learning needs and other necessary interventions. In other words, these populations, as an input to the DCPS funding formula, is almost certainly underestimated before even accounting for pandemic-driven impacts on learning.

Based upon inadequate FY23 funding, Maury students and staff are impacted in the following ways this current school year.

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because there was no funding for an additional teacher.

- Maury's one art teacher, one music teacher, one librarian, and one foreign

language teacher serve all 530 students as there is no funding for additional specials teachers.

- Our overworked front office staff is—once again – without relief. There is no

budget for a second front office assistant, even as the workload has dramatically increased.

In addition, this year:

- There are only one full-time and one half-time physical education teachers

serving the entire student populations. This makes it extremely difficult to meet the District's own "two PE classes per week" mandate;

- Students who in past years would have received intervention support go

unsupported because of insufficient staffing to meet the demand for both academic and social/emotional supports;

- Maury received larger numbers of grade 3-5 transfer students from other

schools. As Maury implemented intentional curricular changes in K-2 to better prepare upper elementary students, transfer students coming into Maury have not benefited from these adjustments. As a result, there is insufficient staffing for the academic interventions needed specifically in grades 3-5.

- The school is extremely lacking in supplies and materials funding. In some

moments meeting basic photocopy needs can be challenging.

Without a change in the funding formula these shortfalls remain and will only get worse overtime, particularly in the context of inflation.

In addition to budgetary needs for staff there is a larger maintenance issue. The DC General Services Office has failed to adequately meet the needs of maintaining the school. There are cracks in the exterior walls of the building, in the retaining walls surrounding the playground. There is a busted exterior window next to a set of entrance/exit doors, and the list goes on.

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- adequate funding for materials and supplies.

DCPS has promised more transparency this year. But we have yet to see that, and this testimony is based on what we know to date.

At the end of the day, we are asking, once again, that DCPS provide adequate baseline funding per pupil to enable the school to operate.

Thank you.

--

Andy Wilcox Marchesseault
MS, Information and Library Science

Hi budget hearing,

Full funding that matches the increased number of children at the school please!

Thank you.

Father of a pupil.

Ben Sheppard

Testimony of Rachel Abrecht-Litchfield before the DCPS FY24 Public Budget Hearing
November 16, 2022

My name is Rachel Abrecht-Litchfield and I am a parent of a child at Maury Elementary School.

As a Maury Elementary parent, my primary concern is ensuring that the FY24 [funding formula](#) be corrected to ensure that Maury and all DCPS schools are provided sufficient funding. Based on the objective points I will raise, it is strongly evident that the funding formula failed Maury Elementary in FY23, the present school year.

As last year's Maury LSAT parent representatives' letter to Chancellor Ferebee highlighted, Maury's per pupil spending of \$10,949 is the lowest of all DCPS schools. It is well below even the next closest school, Watkins Elementary at \$11,730. If this model continues, Maury would remain underfunded causing possible issues with the current staffing, let alone increasing staff based upon the needs of the Maury community.

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DCPS even took away funding for a special education teacher position from Maury's budget last year – despite no identified drop in the number of students who receive special education services. To the contrary, the pandemic is widely reported to have caused a backlog of identifying and diagnosing special learning needs and other necessary interventions. In other words, these populations, as an input to the DCPS funding formula, is almost certainly underestimated before even accounting for pandemic-driven impacts on learning.

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In addition, this year:

- There are only one full-time and one half-time physical education teachers serving the entire student populations. This makes it extremely difficult to meet the District's own "*two PE classes per week*" mandate;
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- Maury received larger numbers of grade 3-5 transfer students from other schools. As Maury implemented intentional curricular changes in K-2 to better prepare upper elementary students, transfer students coming into Maury have not benefited from these adjustments. As a result, there is insufficient staffing for the academic interventions needed specifically in grades 3-5.
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Based upon this I request that the budget formula be corrected to ensure that Maury, and all DCPS schools, are adequately funded.

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Maury needs sufficient funding to provide:

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- adequate funding for materials and supplies.

DCPS has promised more transparency this year. But we have yet to see that, and this testimony is based on what we know to date.

At the end of the day, we are asking, once again, that DCPS provide adequate baseline funding per pupil to enable the school to operate.

Thank you.

Rachel Abrecht-Litchfield
(212.960.3636)

Testimony of Ashley Quarcoo for the DCPS FY24 Public Budget

November 17, 2022

My name is Ashley Quarcoo and I am a parent of two 3rd graders at Maury Elementary School.

As a Maury Elementary parent, my primary concern is ensuring that the FY24 [funding formula](#) be corrected to ensure that Maury and all DCPS schools are provided sufficient funding. It seems to me that the funding formula failed Maury and likely other schools this past year. It did so by assuming that there are fixed costs that don't change with the growing cost of enrollment. That is a faulty assumption.

Additional enrollment places pressure on all core school operations - everything from front office administrative/operational staff, to specials teachers, to supplies. This year Maury enrolled approximately 30 new students, bringing enrollment to a total of about 530 students. Yet under the current budget model, Maury has zero new classroom teachers, zero new interventionists, a particular problem with regard to special education. They budget forced Maury to eliminate a special ed position last year, despite the fact that those enrollment numbers have remained constant.

Based upon inadequate FY23 funding, Maury students and staff are impacted in the following ways this current school year.

- *Four* 3rd grade classes were forced into *three* oversized 4th grade classes because there was no funding for an additional teacher.
- Maury's one art teacher, one music teacher, one librarian, and one foreign language teacher serve all 530 students as there is no funding for additional specials teachers. Specials are only offered for two terms to meet the needs of the entire student body.
- Our overworked front office staff is— once again — without relief. There is no budget for a second front office assistant, even as the workload has dramatically increased.

In addition, this year:

- There are only one full-time and one half-time physical education teachers serving the entire student populations. This makes it extremely difficult to meet the District's own "*two PE classes per week*" mandate;
- Students who in past years would have received intervention support go unsupported because of insufficient staffing to meet the demand for both academic and social/emotional supports;
- Maury received larger numbers of grade 3-5 transfer students from other schools. As Maury implemented intentional curricular changes in K-2 to better prepare upper elementary students, transfer students coming into Maury have not benefited from these adjustments. As a result, there is insufficient staffing for the academic interventions needed specifically in grades 3-5.
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Without a change in the funding formula these shortfalls remain and will only get worse overtime, particularly in the context of inflation.

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DCPS has promised more transparency this year. But we have yet to see that, and this testimony is based on what we know to date.

At the end of the day, we are asking, once again, that DCPS provide adequate baseline funding per pupil to enable the school to operate.

Thank you.

Hello, my name is Elizabeth Corinth. I am a ward 6 resident and the parent of three DCPS students at School-Within-School @ Goding, where I currently serve as the LSAT chair. As we prepare the DCPS budget allocations for FY24, we urgently need to address the insufficiency of the baseline budgets that schools receive.

I challenge you to find a DCPS school that feels that its baseline budget allocation is truly sufficient for its baseline operations. I challenge you to find a DCPS school that didn't find itself using one-time stabilization or recovery funds for expenses that are ongoing and part of its baseline operations in FY23. I challenge you to find a DCPS school that felt it had enough left over to adequately address the true specific and extraordinary recovery needs brought about by the pandemic. And I challenge you to find a DCPS school that is not deeply worried about what it will do next year when some of these one-time funds are no longer available.

Most concerningly, I challenge you to find a DCPS school that did not use some amount of its targeted funds, intended to serve at-risk, special needs, and other underserved populations, towards expenses which are in fact part of the school's general operations. When this is the state of affairs, we are failing those students with the greatest need by claiming to provide them with additional support but placing it on a crumbling foundation.

Also concerningly, I challenge you to find a DCPS school that doesn't feel the need to tap into family donations and contributions, to whatever extent its community can provide them, in order to cover programs and services that they consider to be the bare minimum they should be providing to their students. Some schools are able to raise hundreds of thousands of dollars to supplement their programming, while other schools raise little to nothing from families. This exacerbates educational inequities by allowing schools that serve wealthy families to offer programs and services that other schools are not able to provide. Imagine a world in which we funded public schools not out of scarcity, but out of abundance, such that wealthy families did not feel the need to pour additional dollars into their child's school. That is the world that students deserve, because that is a world where educational equity begins to become a real possibility.

As I listen to my fellow LSAT members from other schools in my ward and beyond discuss their annual budget allocation decisions, what I hear is that there is never enough. What I hear is that annual budget allocations consistently fail to keep pace with payroll increases, enrollment increases, inflation, and other drivers of rising cost, so that even what looks like an increase over last year's budget often turns out to be, in effect, a decrease in spending power, necessitating further cuts to a budget that is already insufficient.

In Washington DC, in 2022, this should not be the situation in which we find ourselves. In order to move towards the educational equity which is our moral imperative, in order for targeted funds to truly and fully serve and support the students they are designed for, in order to uphold our political duty to make a quality public education available to every student regardless of socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, ability, zip code, or any other factor -- we must take a hard look at the baseline budgets we are offering to schools, identify the many ways in which they fall short of meeting the true baseline needs of those schools, and immediately find a way to make up that difference, with a commitment to doing so on an ongoing rather than a one-time basis.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Testimony of Talia Dubovi before the DCPS FY24 Public Budget Hearing November 16, 2022

My name is Talia Dubovi and I am a parent of two children at Maury Elementary School.

First and foremost, I would like to note that I believe there is a critical need to increase the DCPS budget. I see reports from across the system of under-resourced schools, an unresponsive (and I am guessing, understaffed) maintenance department, problematically slow bureaucratic processes in the central office, and an overall need to truly invest in students across the city. I cannot think of a more important priority for DC than our schools, and it is distressing to hear about ongoing challenges throughout the system that are impacting our kids, particularly students of color.

Recognizing that DCPS does have finite resources, however, as a Maury Elementary parent my primary concern is ensuring that the FY24 funding formula be corrected to ensure that Maury is provided fair and equitable funding. **The funding formula failed Maury Elementary in FY23**, the present school year.

As last year's Maury LSAT parent representatives' letter to Chancellor Ferebee highlighted, **Maury's per pupil spending of \$10,949 is the lowest of all DCPS schools**. It is well below even the next closest school, Watkins Elementary at \$11,730. If this model continues, Maury will remain underfunded, which will continue to cause challenges at the current staffing level and prevent the school from increasing staff to meet the needs of Maury students.

This year Maury enrolled approximately 30 new students—more than an entire new classroom worth of students—bringing enrollment to a total of about 530 students. Yet under the current budget model, Maury has zero new classroom teachers, zero new interventionists. Specials teachers must rotate class schedules on a weekly basis and alternate teaching students for only two terms this year to meet the needs of the entire student body.

DCPS even took away funding for a special education teacher position from Maury's budget last year – despite no identified drop in the number of students who receive special education services. To the contrary, the pandemic is widely reported to have caused a backlog of identifying and diagnosing special learning needs and other necessary interventions. In other words, these populations, as an input to the DCPS funding formula, is almost certainly underestimated before even accounting for pandemic-driven impacts on learning.

Based upon inadequate FY23 funding, Maury students and staff are impacted in the following ways this current school year:

- Four 3rd grade classes were forced into three oversized 4th grade classes because there was no funding for an additional teacher. **As the parent of a 4th grader, I have seen the direct impact this has had on my child's experience and education. The overfull classes have led to increased classroom management challenges for the teachers, which takes away from instructional time. As the Maury PTA Equity Co-Chair, I am particularly concerned about the impact of this overcrowding on students of color and those with IEPs. It is problematic and counterproductive to ask schools to address learning gaps and then underfund the school so there are not even enough resources to have the right number of teachers.**
- Maury's one art teacher, one music teacher, one librarian, and one foreign language teacher serve all 530 students as there is no funding for additional specials teachers.
- Our overworked front office staff is – once again – without relief. There is no budget for a second front office assistant, even as the workload has dramatically increased.

In addition, this year:

- There are only one full-time and one half-time physical education teachers serving the entire student populations. This makes it extremely difficult to meet the District's own "two PE classes per week" mandate;

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In addition to budgetary needs for staff there is a larger maintenance issue. The DC General Services Office has failed to adequately meet the needs of maintaining the school. There are cracks in the exterior walls of the building, in the retaining walls surrounding the playground. There is a busted exterior window next to a set of entrance/exit doors, and the list goes on.

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DCPS has promised more transparency this year. But we have yet to see that, and this testimony is based on what we know to date.

At the end of the day, we are asking, once again, that DCPS provide adequate baseline funding per pupil to enable the school to operate.

Thank you.

Written Testimony of Melissa Hoppmeyer before the DCPS FY24 Public Budget Hearing
November 18, 2022

My name is Melissa Hoppmeyer and I am a parent of 2 children at Maury Elementary School.

As a Maury Elementary parent, my primary concern is ensuring that the FY24 [funding formula](#) be corrected to ensure that Maury and all DCPS schools are provided sufficient funding. Based on the objective points I will raise, it is strongly evident that the funding formula failed Maury Elementary in FY23, the present school year.

As last year's Maury LSAT parent representatives' letter to Chancellor Ferebee highlighted, Maury's per pupil spending of \$10,949 is the lowest of all DCPS schools. It is well below even the next closest school, Watkins Elementary at \$11,730. If this model continues, Maury would remain underfunded causing possible issues with the current staffing, let alone increasing staff based upon the needs of the Maury community.

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- Our overworked front office staff is— once again – without relief. There is no budget for a second front office assistant, even as the workload has dramatically increased.

In addition, this year:

- There are only one full-time and one half-time physical education teachers serving the entire student populations. This makes it extremely difficult to meet the District's own "*two PE classes per week*" mandate;
- Students who in past years would have received intervention support go unsupported because of insufficient staffing to meet the demand for both academic and social/emotional supports;

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Without a change in the funding formula these shortfalls remain and will only get worse overtime, particularly in the context of inflation.

In addition to budgetary needs for staff there is a larger maintenance issue. The DC General Services Office has failed to adequately meet the needs of maintaining the school. There are cracks in the exterior walls of the building, in the retaining walls surrounding the playground. There is a busted exterior window next to a set of entrance/exit doors, and the list goes on.

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DCPS has promised more transparency this year. But we have yet to see that, and this testimony is based on what we know to date.

At the end of the day, we are asking, once again, that DCPS provide adequate baseline funding per pupil to enable the school to operate.

Thank you.

Melissa

Hello Education professional,

I am a long term parent at Maury Elementary School with three children attending over the last 7 years. I, my husband and neighbor friends are all concerned at the current budget allocations for Maury ES. I cannot believe Maury's allocation is one of the very lowest per child in DC. If DC education professionals would look at the effects on positive income growth for DCPS, the Maury district- and its neighborhood tax dollars - has been one of the top tax income generators for the city by its excellent reputation becoming a magnet school. Many, many families have chosen to move into and STAY long term in this neighborhood because of the excellence of Maury ES and its administrators and educators. Tax dollars from these families have only grown and filled DCPS coffers.

You must not allow this inequality to continue. If this school is to retain good teachers and administrators it must increase its budget in a fair manner comparatively to other schools. It is in DCPS's interest to listen to and respond to our urgent concerns.

Please respond with your plan for a fair raise in our budget... Best, Jessica Talley

Testimony of Christopher Connelly before the DCPS FY24 Public Budget Hearing.

November 16, 2022

My name is Chris Connelly and I am a parent of 1 child at Maury Elementary School.

As a Maury Elementary parent, my primary concern is ensuring that the FY24 [funding formula](#) be corrected to ensure that Maury and all DCPS schools are provided sufficient funding. Based on the objective points I will raise, it is strongly evident that the funding formula failed Maury Elementary in FY23, the present school year.

As last year's Maury LSAT parent representatives' letter to Chancellor Ferebee highlighted, Maury's per pupil spending of \$10,949 is the lowest of all DCPS schools. It is well below even the next closest school, Watkins Elementary at \$11,730. If this model continues, Maury would remain underfunded causing possible issues with the current staffing, let alone increasing staff based upon the needs of the Maury community.

This year Maury enrolled approximately 30 new students—more than an *entire new classroom worth of students*—bringing enrollment to a total of about 530 students. Yet under the current budget model, Maury has zero new classroom teachers, zero new interventionists. Specials teachers must rotate class schedules on a weekly basis and alternate teaching students for only two terms this year to meet the needs of the entire student body.

DCPS even took away funding for a special education teacher position from Maury's budget last year – despite no identified drop in the number of students who receive special education services. To the contrary, the pandemic is widely reported to have caused a backlog of identifying and diagnosing special learning needs and other necessary interventions. In other words, these populations, as an input to the DCPS funding formula, is almost certainly underestimated before even accounting for pandemic-driven impacts on learning.

Based upon inadequate FY23 funding, Maury students and staff are impacted in the following ways this current school year.

- *Four* 3rd grade classes were forced into *three* oversized 4th grade classes because there was no funding for an additional teacher.
- Maury's one art teacher, one music teacher, one librarian, and one foreign language teacher serve all 530 students as there is no funding for additional specials teachers.
- Our overworked front office staff is— once again — without relief. There is no budget for a second front office assistant, even as the workload has dramatically increased.

In addition, this year:

- There are only one full-time and one half-time physical education teachers serving the entire student populations. This makes it extremely difficult to meet the District's own "*two PE classes per week*" mandate;
- Students who in past years would have received intervention support go unsupported because of insufficient staffing to meet the demand for both academic and social/emotional supports;
- Maury received larger numbers of grade 3-5 transfer students from other schools. As Maury implemented intentional curricular changes in K-2 to better prepare upper elementary students, transfer students coming into Maury have not benefited from these adjustments. As a result, there is insufficient staffing for the academic interventions needed specifically in grades 3-5.
- The school is extremely lacking in supplies and materials funding. In some moments meeting basic photocopy needs can be challenging.

Without a change in the funding formula these shortfalls remain and will only get worse overtime, particularly in the context of inflation.

In addition to budgetary needs for staff there is a larger maintenance issue. The DC General Services Office has failed to adequately meet the needs of maintaining the school. There are cracks in the exterior walls of the building, in the retaining walls surrounding the playground. There is a busted exterior window next to a set of entrance/exit doors, and the list goes on.

Based upon this I request that the budget formula be corrected to ensure that Maury, and all DCPS schools, are adequately funded.

The Maury community is fortunate. We have amazing, dedicated teachers and staff. Our students work incredibly hard at both academics and social-emotional learning. But we are bewildered about DCPS's budget process and how it neglected our school in this way.


Maury needs sufficient funding to provide:

- additional interventionists in reading and math, with a particular focus on support for grades 3-5
- a second full-time physical education teacher
- an additional fourth grade teacher
- additional staffing in the main office
- adequate funding for materials and supplies.

DCPS has promised more transparency this year. But we have yet to see that, and this testimony is based on what we know to date.

At the end of the day, we are asking, once again, that DCPS provide adequate baseline funding per pupil to enable the school to operate.

Thank you.

DocuSigned by:

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11/18/2022 | 8:28:17 AM PST

Chris Connelly

November 18, 2022

My name is Bahman Koosha and I am a parent of 1 child at Maury Elementary School.

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In addition, this year:

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DCPS has promised more transparency this year. But we have yet to see that, and this testimony is based on what we know to date.

At the end of the day, we are asking, once again, that DCPS provide adequate baseline funding per pupil to enable the school to operate.

Thank you.
Bahman Koosha

November 17, 2022

My name is Marjan Moosavi and I am a parent of on child at Maury Elementary School.

As a Maury Elementary parent, my primary concern is ensuring that the FY24 [funding formula](#) be corrected to ensure that Maury and all DCPS schools are provided sufficient funding. Based on the objective points I will raise, it is strongly evident that the funding formula failed Maury Elementary in FY23, the present school year.

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At the end of the day, we are asking, once again, that DCPS provide adequate baseline funding per pupil to enable the school to operate.

Thank you
Marjan Moosavi

Dear esteemed elected officials and associated colleagues,

My name is Sandra Lawrence, I am a ward 6 resident, and I am a parent of two children at Maury Elementary School.

As a Maury Elementary parent, my primary concern is ensuring that the FY24 [funding formula](#) be corrected to ensure that Maury and all DCPS schools are provided sufficient funding. Based on the objective points I will raise, it is strongly evident that the funding formula failed Maury Elementary in FY23, the present school year.

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Thank you.

Sandra Lawrence

Dear Chancellor Ferebee and DCPS staff,

My name is Marisa Goldstein and I am the proud parent of a kindergartener at Bruce Monroe Elementary School @ Park View in Ward 1. I am also a Ward 4 PLE board member with Parents Amplifying Voices in Education (PAVE).

First off, I want to thank Mayor Bowser and the DC Council for investing \$2.4M in grant funding for community-based organizations (CBOs) to provide more clinicians in DCPS and public charter schools. BMPV has a partnership with Mary's Center and, even in just a few months at our school, we've had firsthand experience with how important this partnership is for the school and appreciate the investment to improve access to these services for children and their families.

I'm testifying today because I see more opportunities for the city to invest in schools, support specialized school programs, and expand Out-of-School Time (OST) options.

The teachers, staff, and administrators at my son's school are incredible educators, creating warm and nurturing classroom environments and working hard every day to respond to children's individual needs. But this work is made even more challenging by large class sizes. My son's kindergarten class has 22 students, and we have heard that more newcomers typically enroll mid-year. He and his peers have spent half of their lives in a pandemic and are understandably arriving at school in need of additional social-emotional support. We need the city to invest more money to hire and retain excellent teachers and help reduce class size so children can get the kinds of individualized attention they need and we do not further burn teachers out.

We know how important engaging the whole child is to helping to develop a love of learning and that access to music and arts is an important part of a well-rounded education. However, too many students across the district do not have access to these kinds of enriching opportunities. At my son's school, kindergarteners currently do not have access to music and art, and we know that opportunities to access music, art, and other subjects outside of core academics are inequitably distributed across the district. The 2023-2024 budget needs to ensure that these kinds of investments are prioritized and that the district works to retain and build the pipeline for teachers in these specialized subjects.

Although the \$15.3M in new funding for OST grants, Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), and Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) will go a long way to expanding access to needed OST programs, there is still more work to be done to reduce barriers that mean too many families cannot access these opportunities and have safe, supportive spaces for young people to learn and thrive. Despite known, ongoing issues brokering families' access to OST options, there are still major gaps in coverage; in perusing Learn24 for an option that might work for my son, the closest program to our home I could find is 2 miles away, the website doesn't indicate whether or not they provide transportation, and the program is only available 3 days a week. This simply isn't workable for families -- we need more and better options, better information about those options, and fewer barriers to accessing programs. With families and students at the table as partners, we have a real opportunity to not only increase investments in OST programs but to do so in ways that are responsive to their needs.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of increased funding and access to specialized education programs and OST programs, and I hope to see these important priorities reflected in the 2023-2024 budget.

Best,
Marisa Goldstein

Testimony of Paul Barbour before the DCPS FY24 Public Budget Hearing

November 18 2022

My name is Paul Barbour and I am a parent of 2 children at Maury Elementary School.

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At the end of the day, we are asking, once again, that DCPS provide adequate baseline funding per pupil to enable the school to operate.

Thank you.

Paul Barbour

Testimony of Courtney Backemeyer before the DCPS FY24 Public Budget Hearing
November 16, 2022

My name is Courtney Backemeyer and I am a parent of two children at Maury Elementary School.

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- *three*
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- on the teachers, as well as the students, particularly when it comes to addressing behavioral issues in the classroom.
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At the end of the day, we are asking, once again, that DCPS provide adequate baseline funding per pupil to enable the school to operate.

Thank you.

TO: DCPS Engagement and Partnerships Office

Testimony (written) of Todd Brintlinger and Stephanie Getty for the DCPS FY24 Public Budget Hearing

November 17, 2022

We are Todd Brintlinger and Stephanie Getty, and we are parents of a 1st- and 3rd-grader at Maury Elementary School, which is literally across the street from our house.

As Maury Elementary parents, our primary concern is ensuring that the FY24 funding formula be corrected to ensure that Maury and all DCPS schools are provided sufficient funding to meet DCPS standards of academic and social/emotional learning. Based on the objective points below, it is strongly evident that the funding formula did not adequately provide for Maury Elementary student and staff needs in FY23, the present school year.

As last year's Maury LSAT parent representatives' letter to Chancellor Ferebee highlighted, Maury's per pupil spending of \$10,949 is the lowest of all DCPS schools. It is well below even the next closest school, Watkins Elementary at \$11,730. If this model continues to be followed, Maury will be chronically underfunded which will negatively impact staffing, let alone accommodating the possibility for increasing staff based upon expanding needs of the Maury community.

This year Maury enrolled approximately 30 new students— more than an entire new classroom worth of students — bringing enrollment to a total of about 530 students, yet under the current budget model, Maury has zero new classroom teachers, and zero new interventionists. Specials teachers must rotate class schedules on a weekly basis and alternate teaching students for only two terms this year to meet the needs of the entire student body.

This funding formula and subsequent DCPS decisions even resulted in the removal of a special education teacher position from Maury's budget last year – despite no identified drop in the number of students who receive special education services. To the contrary, the pandemic has caused a backlog of cases where identifying and diagnosing special learning needs is required for necessary interventions. In other words, these populations, as an input to the DCPS funding formula, is almost certainly underestimated before even accounting for pandemic-driven impacts on learning.

With inadequate FY23 funding, Maury students and staff have experienced in this current school year:

- Four 3rd grade classes were forced into three oversized 4th grade classes because there was no funding for an additional teacher.

- Maury's one art teacher, one music teacher, one librarian, and one foreign language teacher serve all 530 students as there is no funding for additional specials teachers.
- The Maury front office staff is visibly overworked, where parents can see the difficulty in their expressions and body language as they struggle to meet the needs of 530 students, the entire staff, and parental requests, and are – once again – without relief. There is no budget for a second front office assistant, even as the workload has dramatically increased.

In addition, this year:

- There are only one full-time and one half-time physical education teachers serving the entire student populations. This makes it extremely difficult to meet the District's own "two PE classes per week" mandate;
- Students who in past years would have received intervention support go unsupported because of insufficient staffing to meet the demand for both academic and social/emotional supports;
- Maury received larger numbers of grade 3-5 transfer students from other schools. As Maury implemented intentional curricular changes in K-2 to better prepare upper elementary students, transfer students coming into Maury have not benefited from these adjustments. As a result, there is insufficient staffing for the academic interventions needed specifically in grades 3-5.
- The school is extremely lacking in supplies and materials funding. In some moments meeting basic photocopy needs can be challenging.

Without a change in the funding formula these shortfalls remain and will only get worse overtime, particularly in the context of inflation.

In addition to budgetary needs for staff there is a larger maintenance issue. The DC General Services Office has failed to adequately meet the needs of maintaining the school. There are cracks in the exterior walls of the building, in the retaining walls surrounding the playground. There is a broken exterior window next to a set of entrance/exit doors, and the list goes on.

Based upon all of these demonstrable, quantifiable negative impacts, we request that the budget formula be corrected to ensure that Maury, and all DCPS schools, receive funding appropriate to the DCPS standards of high academic and social/emotional learning.

The Maury community is fortunate. We have amazing, dedicated teachers and staff. Our students work incredibly hard at both academics and social-emotional learning. But we are bewildered about DCPS's budget process and how it neglected our school in this way.

Specifically, on top of the recently released budget under discussion, Maury needs funding to provide:

- additional interventionists in reading and math, with a particular focus on support for grades 3-5
- a second full-time physical education teacher
- an additional fourth grade teacher
- additional staffing in the main office
- adequate funding for materials and supplies.

A simple adjustment to bring Maury to similar per pupil spending as nearby schools would go a long way toward those goals. Our teachers deserve better, too, where signing a long-term contract will allow for better planning and retention. Lastly, the backlog of maintenance sitting with DC General Services must be addressed to provide the safe, clean environment necessary for the top flight education DCPS is striving to provide.

DCPS has promised more transparency this year, but the budgetary process, formulation, decision-making, and eventual outcome has remained opaque to the Maury community, and this testimony is only based on what we know to date.

At the end of the day, we are asking, once again, that DCPS provide adequate baseline funding per pupil to enable the school to operate, to meet DCPS's own guidelines, to better prepare students for a continuing education at Eliot-Hine, and to continue to be part of the 'rising tide that floats all boats', please don't let Maury sink by weighing it down with inadequate funding.

Respectfully and with regards,
Todd Brintlinger and Stephanie Getty

To the DCPS Partnerships and Engagement Office and Mr. Charles Allen:

I am a parent of 1 child at Maury Elementary School, and a resident of Ward 6.

As a Maury Elementary parent, my primary concern is ensuring that the FY24 [funding formula](#) be corrected to ensure that Maury and all DCPS schools are provided sufficient funding. Based on the points raised below, it is evident that the funding formula failed Maury Elementary in FY23, the present school year.

As last year's Maury LSAT parent representatives' letter to Chancellor Ferebee highlighted, Maury's per pupil spending of \$10,949 is the lowest of all DCPS schools. It is well below even the next closest school, Watkins Elementary at \$11,730. If this model continues, Maury would remain underfunded causing possible issues with the current staffing, let alone increasing staff based upon the needs of the Maury community.

This year Maury enrolled approximately 30 new students—more than an *entire new classroom worth of students*—bringing enrollment to a total of about 530 students. Yet under the current budget model, my understanding is that Maury has zero new classroom teachers, zero new interventionists. Specials teachers must rotate class schedules on a weekly basis and alternate teaching students for only two terms this year to meet the needs of the entire student body. My understanding is that DCPS even took away funding for a special education teacher position from Maury's budget last year – despite no identified drop in the number of students who receive special education services.

Based upon inadequate FY23 funding, my understanding is that Maury students and staff are impacted in the following ways this current school year.

- *Four* 3rd grade classes were forced into *three* oversized 4th grade classes because there was no funding for an additional teacher.
- Maury's one art teacher, one music teacher, one librarian, and one foreign language teacher serve all 530 students as there is no funding for additional specials teachers.
- There is no budget for a second front office assistant, even as the workload has dramatically increased.

In addition, this year:

- There are only one full-time and one half-time physical education teachers serving the entire student populations. This makes it extremely difficult to meet the District's own "*two PE classes per week*" mandate;
- Students who in past years would have received intervention support go unsupported because of insufficient staffing to meet the demand for both academic and social/emotional supports;
- Maury received larger numbers of grade 3-5 transfer students from other schools. As Maury implemented intentional curricular changes in K-2 to better prepare upper elementary students, transfer students coming into Maury have not benefited from these adjustments. As a result, there is insufficient staffing for the academic interventions needed specifically in grades 3-5.
- The school is extremely lacking in supplies and materials funding. In some moments meeting basic photocopy needs can be challenging.

Without a change in the funding formula these shortfalls remain and will only get worse overtime, particularly in the context of inflation.

In addition to budgetary needs for staff there is a larger maintenance issue. The DC General Services Office has failed to adequately meet the needs of maintaining the school. The flexible partition between the gym and the cafeteria hasn't worked in years, making it extremely difficult to run gym classes as there is no wall to keep gym materials and noise separated from the cafeteria. There are cracks in the exterior walls of the building, in the retaining walls surrounding the playground. There is a broken exterior window next to a set of entrance/exit doors.

Based upon this I request that the budget formula be corrected to ensure that Maury, and all DCPS schools, are adequately funded.

The Maury community is fortunate. We have amazing, dedicated teachers and staff. Our students work incredibly hard at both academics and social-emotional learning. But we are bewildered about DCPS's budget process and how it neglected our school in this way.

My understanding is that Maury needs sufficient funding to provide:

- additional interventionists in reading and math, with a particular focus on support for grades 3-5

- a second full-time physical education teacher
- an additional fourth grade teacher
- additional staffing in the main office
- adequate funding for materials and supplies.

DCPS has promised more transparency this year. But we have yet to see that, and this letter is based on my understanding of what is known of to date.

At the end of the day, the Maury community is asking, once again, that DCPS provide adequate baseline funding per pupil to enable the school to operate.

Thank you.

Sheela Portonovo

Testimony of Katherine Wright before the DCPS FY24 Public Budget Hearing November 16, 2022

My name is Katherine Wright, and I am a parent of 2 children at Maury Elementary School.

Maury's per pupil spending of \$10,949 is the lowest of all DCPS schools. It is well below even the next closest school, Watkins Elementary at \$11,730. When compared with schools in Ward 3, with lower percentages of English Language Learners and At-Risk Students, Maury still ranks dead last. Why?

If this model continues, Maury will remain underfunded. This will adversely impact current staffing, let alone increasing staff based upon the needs of the Maury community. This year Maury enrolled approximately 30 new students—more than an *entire new classroom worth of students*—bringing enrollment to a total of about 530 students.

Yet under the current budget model, Maury has zero new classroom teachers, zero new interventionists. Specials teachers must rotate class schedules on a weekly basis and alternate teaching students for only two terms this year to meet the needs of the entire student body.

DCPS even took away funding for a special education teacher position from Maury's budget last year – despite no identified drop in the number of students who receive special education services. My son is a preK4 student who has been referred for Speech Therapy this year, and I am very worried about the workload of the overtaxed Special Education teachers. This lack of staff support is not only incredibly unfair to the teachers but is undoubtedly impacting the quality of services for students.

Based upon inadequate FY23 funding, *four* 3rd grade classes were forced into *three* oversized 4th grade classes because there was no funding for an additional teacher. My daughter will be entering fourth grade next year. Her teachers at Maury have been phenomenal. But the pandemic-related gaps for all students, particularly at-risk students, is clearly evident in even a cursory observation of a classroom. Overcrowded classrooms will only exacerbate this problem.

In addition to the staffing challenges, our school is facing challenges procuring basic supplies. Just one quarter into the school year, and our administration is having to make tough decisions about purchasing toilet paper. Toilet paper! A city reporting significant budget surpluses in the past several years should not be allowed to operate public schools that can't afford the necessities.

Perhaps most frustrating is the complete lack of transparency into how these budget allocations are decided. Repeated requests from the Maury LSAT and PTA to Central Office have yielded no concrete information as to why Maury is so underfunded.

I request that the budget formula be corrected to ensure that Maury, and all DCPS schools, are adequately funded.

President Biden once said "Don't tell me what you value. Show me your budget, and I'll tell you what you value." As a resident and a DCPS parent, I urge you to explain why this city does not value its children.

Sincerely,

Katherine Wright

Testimony of Marion Smith before the DCPS FY24 Public Budget Hearing
November 16, 2022

My name is Marion Smith and I am a parent of one child at Maury Elementary School.

As a Maury Elementary parent, my primary concern is ensuring that the FY24 [funding formula](#) be corrected to ensure that Maury and all DCPS schools are provided sufficient funding. Based on the objective points I will raise, it is strongly evident that the funding formula failed Maury Elementary in FY23, the present school year.

As last year's Maury LSAT parent representatives' letter to Chancellor Ferebee highlighted, Maury's per pupil spending of \$10,949 is the lowest of all DCPS schools. It is well below even the next closest school, Watkins Elementary at \$11,730. If this model continues, Maury would remain underfunded causing possible issues with the current staffing, let alone increasing staff based upon the needs of the Maury community.

This year Maury enrolled approximately 30 new students—more than an *entire new classroom worth of students*—bringing enrollment to a total of about 530 students. Yet under the current budget model, Maury has zero new classroom teachers, zero new interventionists. Specials teachers must rotate class schedules on a weekly basis and alternate teaching students for only two terms this year to meet the needs of the entire student body.

DCPS even took away funding for a special education teacher position from Maury's budget last year – despite no identified drop in the number of students who receive special education services. To the contrary, the pandemic is widely reported to have caused a backlog of identifying and diagnosing special learning needs and other necessary interventions. In other words, these populations, as an input to the DCPS funding

formula, is almost certainly underestimated before even accounting for pandemic-driven impacts on learning.

Based upon inadequate FY23 funding, Maury students and staff are impacted in the following ways this current school year.

- *Four* 3rd grade classes were forced into *three* oversized 4th grade classes because there was no funding for an additional teacher.
- Maury's one art teacher, one music teacher, one librarian, and one foreign language teacher serve all 530 students as there is no funding for additional specials teachers.
- Our overworked front office staff is— once again — without relief. There is no budget for a second front office assistant, even as the workload has dramatically increased.

In addition, this year:

- There are only one full-time and one half-time physical education teachers serving the entire student populations. This makes it extremely difficult to meet the District's own "*two PE classes per week*" mandate;
- Students who in past years would have received intervention support go unsupported because of insufficient staffing to meet the demand for both academic and social/emotional supports;
- Maury received larger numbers of grade 3-5 transfer students from other schools. As Maury implemented intentional curricular changes in K-2 to better prepare upper elementary students, transfer students coming into Maury have not benefited from these adjustments. As a result, there is insufficient staffing for the academic interventions needed specifically in grades 3-5.

□ The school is extremely lacking in supplies and materials funding. In some moments meeting basic photocopy needs can be challenging.

Without a change in the funding formula these shortfalls remain and will only get worse overtime, particularly in the context of inflation.

In addition to budgetary needs for staff there is a larger maintenance issue. The DC General Services Office has failed to adequately meet the needs of maintaining the school. There are cracks in the exterior walls of the building, in the retaining walls surrounding the playground. There is a busted exterior window next to a set of entrance/exit doors, and the list goes on.

Based upon this I request that the budget formula be corrected to ensure that Maury, and all DCPS schools, are adequately funded.

The Maury community is fortunate. We have amazing, dedicated teachers and staff. Our students work incredibly hard at both academics and social-emotional learning. But we are bewildered about DCPS's budget process and how it neglected our school in this way.

Maury needs sufficient funding to provide:

- additional interventionists in reading and math, with a particular focus on support for grades 3-5
- a second full-time physical education teacher
- an additional fourth grade teacher
- additional staffing in the main office
- adequate funding for materials and supplies.

DCPS has promised more transparency this year. But we have yet to see that, and this testimony is based on what we know to date.

At the end of the day, we are asking, once again, that DCPS provide adequate baseline funding per pupil to enable the school to operate.

Thank you.

Best,

Marion Smith

The DCPS and Perkins Eastman Design Team have done an exceptional job envisioning a building that will propel our community forward. Attention to detail, skill, and willingness to receive feedback from the SIT and school community have been the foundation of our strong partnership. From impactful designs, to active engagement in long meetings, to donating their time to host School Without Walls at Francis Stevens students for a tour and feedback session, it is clear why DCPS continues to select Perkins Eastman in reimagining the day-to-day experiences of our youth.

The SWW FS community seeks to inform the design process as we advocate for changes to the proposed design. The changes will dramatically increase our ability to achieve the DCPS Becoming vision of “All schools becoming safe, supportive, and loving spaces.” Additionally, each of the six changes we request directly support improved student safety, school culture & climate, and curriculum facilitation and instructional needs.

We, the undersigned groups, advocate for the following:

- DCPS and Perkins Eastman develop plans for the following six propositions
- Potential trade-off decisions be significantly influenced by the SIT and school community, while adhering to ED Specs and other relevant guidelines

1. 3rd floor circulation

- a. **Issue with proposed plan:** Congestion leads to safety issues with uncomfortably packed hallways, student conflict, tardiness, and staff exhaustion. Keep teachers focused on instruction by reducing the frequency of hallway redirections and student conflicts
- b. **Solution:** An east/west hallway that connects over the new library space will have a significant impact on school culture and climate

2. Accessible Electrical Outlets in all classroom/ instructional spaces

- a. **Issue with proposed plan:** Students cannot complete assignments and engage in 21st century learning if they cannot charge devices in the classroom
- b. **Solution:** All spaces need outlets to charge devices for the number of students planned to be in the room

3. Faculty Restrooms

- a. **Issue with proposed plan:** Staff have a finite amount of time to use the restroom and often cannot wait for students to use restrooms
- b. **Solution:** Restrooms should be included in each of the Teacher Collaboration areas

4. Classroom Storage

- a. **Issue with proposed plan:** The N street building did not provide adequate storage for a year's worth of: manipulatives, classroom essential supplies, art supplies, etc...
Elementary needs in-classroom storage for student belongings

- b. **Solution:** Keep the learning space for learning by providing built-in storage in each classroom

5. Increase the number of parking spaces

- a. **Issue with proposed plan:** Staff are what make the culture and community SWW FS special. Staff with morning childcare and family responsibilities rely on available parking at school. Many staff members also endure long morning and evening commutes. Including only 45 spots for 100+ staff will negatively impact staff performance and morale. Additionally, increasing enrollment will require more staff.
- b. **Solution:** Increase the number of parking spots
- c. **Issue with proposed plan:**The parking lot is also slated to be a roundabout for families to drop off their students. How will this impact staff arriving and leaving?

6. Greenroom space

- a. **Issue with proposed plan:** There is no nearby space to the Auditorium to prepare for theatrical and music performances. Our students deserve a professional-style space that inspires confidence and a sense of belonging as they prepare for big moments on stage. Many students do theater/ dance outside of school and we can entice them to participate in school events with improved facilities
- b. **Solution:** Furnish the “Specials Lab” to the east of the auditorium (cafeteria side) as a green room. Provide the equipment needed (mirrors, storage, chairs) and locking changing rooms

Endorsed by,

SWWFS LSAT
Cedic Hendricks, LSAT Chair

SWWFS HSA
Matt Webster, HSA President

SWWFS SIT
Zach Carroll, SWWFS Teacher