

Barbara Schaffer  
Rockville, MD 20850  
April 3, 2025

**Testimony in favor of Approving the BOE's Proposed MCPS Budget**

**TO:** Council President Stewart, Vice President Jawando, and members of the County Council

**FROM:** Barbara Schaffer

Dear Councilmembers,

**My name is Barbara Schaffer. I am a resident of Rockville in District 3. I am submitting this testimony in support of fully funding the Board of Education's FY26 Operating Budget recommendations for MCPS.**

As a former teacher, a member of Chabad Potomac Synagogue, and a concerned citizen for the future of Montgomery County, I believe it is of the utmost importance to invest in our children's education as they will become our future leaders and citizens. I request the Council to fully fund the Board of Education's proposed Montgomery County Public School FY26 budget. As a way of making this possible, As a homeowner, I fully support the County Executive's proposed 3.5 cent property tax rate increase required to fully fund the MCPS budget.

My Jewish values guide me to care about all people, especially young people and the vulnerable. In MCPS, students of color are disproportionately disciplined, suspended, and more likely to enter the criminal justice system compared to other students. Police in schools is not a solution. We need our schools to focus on prevention of violence through supportive environments that center early intervention, Restorative Justice programming, relationship building. Restorative Justice practices allow people to resolve conflicts and repair harm through mutual accountability and strong communication. In MCPS, Restorative Justice programming has already decreased suspension rates of Black students and led to a sharp drop in the number of repeat incidents. By funding the Board of Education's proposed budget, MCPS would be able to maintain essential funding for restorative justice specialists.

I support fully funding the proposed BOE FY26 budget because we need to invest in educational resources that make our MCPS system a place where all children can learn in a safe and nurturing environment. **I respectfully urge the County Council to approve the BOE FY26 budget.**

Yours truly,

Barbara Schaffer