

Date of Public Hearing: April 22, 2025
Phyllis K. Lerner
Bethesda, MD 20815

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

My name is Phyllis Lerner. I am a resident of Bethesda. I am submitting this testimony to request for additional funding, even via an increase in taxes, for in MCPS.

I grew up through the MCPS school system, from Rosemary Elementary, to TJ Pyle and finally, Walt Whitman HS. My higher education took me from Massachusetts to California, and back to Bethesda. Ironically, while I live here, my global education work has included Children's International Summer Villages, the American Jewish World Service and my recent night years, at a post-genocide HS for orphaned and vulnerable youth at Agahozo-Shalom Youth Village, in Rwanda. I was, between 2009-2024, a Faculty Associate, at Johns Hopkins University, Graduate School of Education. I was on a team of six who designed and delivered our Teach For America and Teacher Development Partnership nationwide.

I am willing to increase my investment in education with others, including partnerships with Montgomery County Public Schools Educator Unions (Montgomery County Education Association and SEIU Local 500).

This means to:

- Fully fund the Board of Education's FY26 Operating Budget recommendations for Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS)
- Support the County Executive's proposed 3.5 cent property tax rate increase required to fully fund MCPS
- Follow the union partners suggestion to focus on the need for increased funds for special education, which will only be possible with a fully funded budget.
- Fully funding the MCPS budget will also ensure there is funding for restorative justice, additional social work and counseling staff across all programs.

For any schooling to be effective, our entire system must work together. That requires full financial support. **I urge the council to support additional funding to MCPS, as enhancing and improving learning is crucial across our country AND specifically, this county.**

e/s Phyllis K. Lerner