



Testimony for the Committee of the Whole Budget Oversight Hearing Thursday June 3, 2021

To: DC Council Committee of the Whole, Chairman Phil Mendelson, Committee of the Whole Members, and Committee of the Whole Staff

From: Yizel Romero, Ward 1 City Wide Board member and Ward 1 PAVE Parent Leader

Date: June 3rd, 2021

Dear Chairman Mendelson and members of the Committee,

My name is Yizel Romero, I am a Ward 7 resident and a proud parent of 3 wonderful children. I am also a Ward 1 PAVE (Parents Amplifying Voices in Education) Parent Leader and student leader at Briya. Before I begin I want to give thanks to Mayor Bowser for proposing a \$40M increase to the UPSFF next year.

I am testifying today because I want to emphasize the importance of fully funding the at-risk weight by investing \$78.5 million. This investment in our schools is important to me because I know just like many families and students are struggling, schools are also struggling to reopen strong and it is very important to me that all schools are ready to fully support the needs of the whole child, especially in meeting the needs of ALL of our most vulnerable children. We need to ensure that all schools are able to provide the best learning environments for all children. With additional funding schools can go beyond covering the basic needs of kids and staff and make investments in trauma-informed training for everyone in the building to better support our children who continue to carry so much.

I am also testifying for an increase of \$10.8 million to ensure trauma informed training for all school staff, social and-emotional learning programs for all students. We are not done with facing the effects that this pandemic has had on us as adults and on our children. I continue to see these effects on my own children who continue to try their best at school when their own emotional wellbeing has been compromised. I envision a future for my children's education where their school community is full of trauma-informed trained staff that are prepared to interact with children who have gone through so much and have resources for my children to engage with their emotions and with their peers.



Thank you for lending me a moment of your busy time. I am not the only parent who shares this vision for DC education. I hope you fully fund the at-risk weight and invest the \$10.8 million that our school communities need for social emotional learning programs for students and trauma-informed training for all staff.

Sincerely,

Yizel Romero

Ward 1 PAVE Parent Leader