

**Education Agencies
Performance Oversight Hearing Testimony
Committee of the Whole
Wednesday, March 2, 2022**

To: Committee of the Whole, Chairman Mendelson, Committee of the Whole members, and Committee of the Whole staff

From: Ms. Linda Jones, PAVE (Parents Amplifying Voices in Education) Ward 8 PLE Board Member

Date: March 2, 2022

Good morning Chairman Mendelson and members of the Committee of the Whole. My name is Linda Jones. I was born and raised right here in DC and I am a Ward 8 PAVE PLE Board Member. I'm also a Ballou Graduate and all three of my children attend DC public schools (both PCS and DCPS). Now that I am a grandmother, my eldest granddaughter is a Highschool Junior at Thurgood Marshall Academy and my youngest granddaughter is under three in daycare.

First, thank you for your out-of-school time programs investment of \$22M in the FY22 Budget. Those are important investments! I am testifying today because I want all kids to be able to access important OST programs such as Summer Youth Employment Program and mentorships. This is so important for students who are going through transitions, like my granddaughter who is getting ready to apply to colleges in the Fall.

I'm so proud of Kamarie that when she was in the 10th grade she won the Thurgood Marshall Academy Law day! Schools like Thurgood provide opportunities for access to mentorship programs and pathways to college that can be made even stronger when the city invests in OST funding. Thurgood focuses on academics, but Kamarie got more interested in school when she was able to get involved with the afterschool arts programs. Right now she is in a portrait painting group and is making good grades!

It's important to mention that my granddaughter Kamarie has an IEP and since receiving it she has been doing so well! This strong academic support from her school has helped prepare her for participation in Mayor Marion Barry's Summer Youth Employment program, which she has been working with since the age of 15. One of things about Kamarie participating in SYEP is that last summer, when she had a few academic issues and had to attend summer school, she was still able to get paid for her study time through [the program](#)! SYEP is just one type of summer program, but to increase access to many different types of summer programs, we are asking you to provide at least \$25 million in local, recurring funding for OST programs in FY23. This funding

will help create more programs like these. Programs that help with students' academic needs like combatting learning loss after virtual learning, while still offering skill building, mentorship and employment opportunities that are so positive for young people! It was good that our family could get information from the city about signing up for this through her school. But seeing this type of information posted in a variety of places like supermarkets, churches and rec centers will make it more accessible for families in Ward 8.

By providing at least \$25 million in local, recurring funding for OST programs and by providing dedicated funding for schools for before/after school, summer, and winter programs, we can make it so that even more students, like my granddaughter Kamarie, get the support they need to make a successful transition to life after highschool.

Thank you for allowing me to testify and share what I want to see for our kids and our District!

Linda Jones

PAVE (Parents Amplifying Voices in Education) Ward 8 PLE Board Member