

**Mabel Hernández**  
**State Board of Education**  
**State Board of Education Meeting**  
**March 15, 2023**

Good evening President Thompson, Vice President O’Leary, and members of the SBOE,

My name is Mabel Hernández, I live in Ward 7. I currently serve as a PAVE parent leader on the Ward 7 PLE Board. I want to thank you for your partnership and leadership on advocating for the needs of students, schools, and school staff. My kids go to LAMB school in Ward 4. We already commute almost 40 minutes every day , twice a day to access a bilingual program not available where we live.

Today, I’m testifying because I want to be sure all families in DC have access to high quality, affordable, and abundant OST activities in all 8 Wards. DC kids are in need of them during the school year as after care programs and during time off from school like Spring and Summer Camps.

This matters to me because as summer is approaching I lose sleep thinking about what is out for my family and if my kids will be able to have an enriching summer experience. What if we are out of luck with the newly implemented DPR lottery system. I am concerned as well about my experience with the lack of standardized quality among the different programs offered in the city.

We PAVE parents' leaders believe in the Vision of Every family having access to a high-quality OST program for their children that supports their individual needs where they can explore their passions and enrich their learning - regardless of income level, national origin, spoken language or where they live. This looks like providing targeted resources to add more OST seats close to where families already are; offering competitive pay for teachers/school staff, college students, and community organizations to run programs and offer guidance to help set-up their programs; cover security costs for OST programs at schools; and providing high-quality training for all government-funded OST programs to support students with disabilities.

I personally would also like to see training that takes developmental stages of children into consideration. I would like to see, too, that all programs offer a loving and respectful discipline model, as well as trainings that helps facilitators and staff utilize de-escalation and conflict resolution techniques. These should be adapted to the students’ age and developmental stage,



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and this will help students learn these skills as well. Finally, In order to be inclusive, facilitators/staff need to reflect the population and language of the population they serve, so English learners and immigrant families feel welcome, and safe.

Thank you all for your time and partnership in advocating for the needs of our students and schools.

Best,  
Mabel Hernández  
PAVE Ward 7 PLE Board Member