

Marisa Goldstein
State Board of Education
State Board of Education Meeting
February 15, 2023

Good evening members of the state board of education.

My name is Marisa Goldstein and I live in Ward 4. My son attends Bruce Monroe Elementary School and I currently serve as a PAVE parent leader on the Ward 4 board.

I want to thank you for your recent leadership on healthy school facilities, which we know is such an important part of creating a positive learning environment and ensuring that staff and students feel welcomed and valued in their buildings.

I'm testifying today about the importance of equitably investing in out-of-school time programming. We know from a robust body of research that OST programs like before and after care confer a number of academic, social-emotional, and economic benefits. These programs provide opportunities for academic enrichment, allow young people to explore new activities and find joy in learning, build important social skills, and provide safe spaces for kids that allow their caregivers to work. As we continue to support students and families to recover from the traumas and challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, these programs are more important than ever.

We also know that the infrastructure around OST programming is severely lacking on multiple levels -- seats are inequitably distributed across the city, programming does not reflect the diverse interests of the city's youth across age levels, transportation is a barrier, and information about programming and financial aid remains opaque despite recent developments like the Learn24 platform.

There are a number of steps elected officials and agencies across the city can take to equitably improve access to OST programming, including:

- Increasing access to OST programs by ensuring families have access to quality programs in convenient locations that meet their needs.
- Improving information sharing about programs and cost-saving options.



- Improving and expanding access to scholarships, vouchers, and financial aid.
- Increasing transparency and oversight for OST.

To do this work well and to be responsive to the diverse needs of DC families, students and families need to be at the table to help craft solutions. I look forward to the state board developing recommendations, convening stakeholders and asking important questions that will ensure we achieve a stronger and more equitable OST infrastructure.

Thank you for your time and your continuing commitment to students.