

Andrea Jones
Department of Parks and Recreation
Budget Hearing Testimony
Committee of Recreation, Libraries, and Youth Affairs
Wednesday, April 5th, 2023

My name is Andrea Jones, and I live in Ward 8. My kids attend KIPP KCP, KIPP Learning Center, Minor Elem, and Boone Elem. I currently serve as a PAVE parent leader on the Ward 8 board.

I want to thank you for your partnership and leadership in recognizing the inequities of access to OST programs for children with disabilities.

My testimony is regarding the therapeutic center. While the therapeutic center is closed, staff will be temporarily sent to other locations to support children with disabilities. This is a great strategy because it will allow more children with disabilities to have access to summer camps with their peers instead of one location (that may not be close to their home or peers).

I am asking for this temporary model to become permanent to include support for children with disabilities to attend specialty camps, or boost camps like robotics camps and journalism camps, to name a few.

Every family should have access to high-quality OST programs for their children that supports their individual needs while enriching their learning and engaging in social activities with peers. Creating this model permanently will require additional staff to the therapeutic center and professional training. I am asking for funding for the therapeutic center to increase staffing, professional training, and adequate pay for workers.

Additional funding will assist with spreading the support that the therapeutic center provides to all 4 quadrants, which will reduce cost and transportation issues for many DC residents.

Thank you for your time, and have a great day.

Andrea Jones
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