

**Yolanda Anderson
Committee of the Whole
OST Programs Hearing Testimony
Wednesday, June 7th, 2023**

Good morning Chairman Mendelson and members of the Committee of the Whole,

My name is Yolanda Anderson and I live in Ward 4. My children attend Theodore Roosevelt High School. I currently serve as a PAVE parent leader on the Ward 4 PLE board. I am also a Program Site Coordinator for Excellence Through Opportunity, a 21st Century Community Learning Center grant program that provides extended learning programs for students at Theodore Roosevelt HS. We teach our students not only work-related skills, but also the life skills and soft skills they need in life.

I want to thank you for your continual work and leadership in opening up more options and opportunities for OST programs by increasing funding to offer more seats.

Today I am testifying on the need to expand opportunities for students to engage in work-related and work-training programs.

In my work, I've seen that not all students have access to the skills they need to succeed in the workforce. They are not prepared in many ways. For instance, resumes have been difficult for our students. Part of our program involves working with UDC for career guidance. As part of that, students go through the strong interest inventory and figure out what they are interested in and who they are as a person. They learn more about their personality in the workplace. These are the elements they should display on their resume. But many of them have trouble translating that information on their resumes. They understand that their resumes are important to getting a job, but appropriately putting them together to get that outcome is where they are lacking. These are the things that help. They've done things in school, amazing things, but don't know how to translate that and show the expertise they have to offer. Students are learning and they are trying, but they need to be better prepared. I want to see them better prepared for life because I don't want it hitting them in the face.

While I do want to see more access to these programs, I'd like that to be paired with accountability and oversight. Programs need to show proof these programs are showing where



students have gains and their successes at after. Don't just pour money into them, but make sure they are actually doing what they claim and need to for our students.

I've seen what happens when students have access to these programs, when we practice interviews with students, it has prepares them as they apply and seek jobs during the Marion Barry Summer Program and the Student Youth Internship program and beyond. Preparing students for the workforce helps them find amazing opportunities while they are in high school , not just what's handed them. Students shouldn't have to wait until college to get access to these practices. Our high schoolers need this practice. Our high schoolers need more OST programs that help them get more practice. Our high schoolers need more programs to help give them the skills they need to find more opportunities they love.

Thank you for your time and all the work you do for students.

Best,

Yolanda Anderson

PAVE Ward 4 PLE Board

Program Site Coordinator at Excellence Through Opportunity

