

**Yolanda Anderson**  
**OSSE, DCPS, and DME**  
**Performance Oversight Hearing Testimony**  
**Wednesday, February 28th, 2024**

**To:** DC Council Committee of the Whole, Committee of the Whole Chairperson Phil Mendelson, Committee of the Whole committee members, and Committee of the Whole staff

**From:** Yolanda Anderson, Ward 4 PLE Board Member and parent leader at PAVE (Parents Amplifying Voices in Education)

**Date:** February 28th, 2024

Good afternoon Chairperson Mendelson, members of the Committee of the Whole, and Committee staff. My name is Yolanda Anderson. I am a Citywide and Ward 4 PLE Board member at (Parents Amplifying Voices in Education). 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 am here to testify on specialized school programs and make sure all students have access to trained staff and high-quality programs. At Excellence Through Opportunity, we recently had a partnership with an organization called Flying Classrooms. Through this program, our students had the chance to learn to build and code a drone. They spent weeks working on this and it was the first time the program had done this for high schoolers. My students learned so much from this program, but because it happened in an OST program, they won't receive any form of class credit for their work and many of them do not have access to programs like that through their school or specialized school program.

We need more teachers highly trained to offer programs like this. In our PAVE statement of beliefs, we request that OSSE should build out more robust voluntary continuous education credit programs/micro-credentials for educators in all SSP areas (dual-language, dual-enrollment, STEM/STEAM, Arts Integration, Career Technical Education (CTE), supporting students with disabilities within the specialized program, etc.) to build specific expertise. We also need more certificate programs so students can take what they've learned through these high-quality programs and can go into careers right after high school if they do not choose to go to college. Students can be certified in drone flying, but I'm not aware of any opportunities students have to receive that certificate through their public school. They either must pay for a program to receive it, or be fortunate enough to get it through an OST program. I am proud of the work my students did through this program and



want more students to have access to these kinds of things. Thank you so much for your time today and I am available for any questions.

Best,

Yolanda Anderson, MBA  
Citywide and Ward 4 Parent Leader at PAVE