

Katrice Fuller
Committee of the Judiciary and Public Safety
Metropolitan Police Department
Tuesday, February 13th, 2024

Good afternoon, Councilmember Pinto and DC Council staff. My name is Katrice Fuller and I am a Citywide and Ward 5 PLE Board member and Miner Elementary School and Monument Public Charter School parent.

I want to begin by thanking the Mayor for the \$7.2 million to maintain the DC School Connect program and the \$6.5 million increase for the OSSE special education transportation program. I also fully support the \$8.7 million set aside to create 40 new community safety officers and fund new civilian positions within MPD to free up sworn officers for more critical tasks, which I hope can at least partly be used to hire more School Resource Officers.

In the past 2 school years at Monument, we've lost a lot of students and their guardians to violence. The more digging we did we learned so much of it was when getting to and from school, crossing into different neighborhoods, and school-to-school conflict (which we didn't have any idea about). We lost our SROs, who were heavily involved in our community, and with them, we lost a lot of intel and help. I've learned there are so many different sectors of Safe Passage and yet I feel and see its effects, especially being on the East side of the River. Needless to say, once we did some digging with other LEAs in our communities, collaborated with other school leaders, and more, we noticed that we needed to buckle down and address this problem together like staggering half days, building relationships with our local Metropolitan Police Department, and more which has been super instrumental as an administrator and a mom whose kids attend these schools. Communication has been key. Making sure that everyone involved with safe passage from MPD to school leaders to Safe Passage Workers convenes on the citywide and hyper-local level can bring a lot of positive change. We are already beginning to see these plans start to form in some communities so we know it is possible. At Monument, we've created a lot of meaningful partnerships and I've seen firsthand what school communities need to help kids feel safe traveling to and at school.

As the leaders of Public Safety and District law enforcement, we need you to collaborate with us to ensure the safety of our children when they travel to and from school. Because of all that I shared above, I and other PAVE parents are asking you to not only attend regular safe passage convenings with all DCPS and PCSB school leaders, but also to add more youth-only WMATA buses and pilot youth-only train cars, all stationed with trained Safe Passage Workers, and MPD-who are more connected to school communities. Additionally, I want to push MPD to be more involved in their communities and to become well-versed in interacting with youth, including



interacting with students with disabilities, and youth development. It is our collective responsibility to ensure our children are safe at all times, especially when doing something as trivial as going to school. With the help of MPD and with mutual coordination, we can make safe passage of all students a reality in our city.

Sincerely,

Katrice Fuller, Citywide and Ward 6 PLE Board Member, PAVE (Parents Amplifying Voices in Education)