

Sharnetta Boone-Ruffin
Committee of the Judiciary and Public Safety
Metropolitan Police Department
Tuesday, April 9th, 2024

Hello, Councilmember Pinto and DC Council staff. I am Sharnetta Boone-Ruffin, a Ward 8 resident and a PAVE Citywide PLE Board member. I am also a Dunbar High School-Engineering academy and Eagle Academy Public Charter School parent.

First, I want to uplift several items in Mayor Bowser's Budget like 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.

I and other PAVE parents created a few asks, many of which are budget friendly that we want the Metropolitan Police Department to implement moving forward that will go far in helping keep our kids safe during their daily commute. The asks are:

- MPD, Safe Passage Workers, WMATA PD, DCPS, and all public charter school leaders should convene in person for a citywide meeting, to build relationships and discuss ways they can collaborate around safe passage;
- MPD in collaboration with the Office of the Student Advocate should convene hyper-local (by school or neighborhood cluster) monthly meetings with other safe passage stakeholders and community partners such as violence interrupters, Cure the Streets, Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement office, Mayor's Office of Community Relations and Services liaisons, agency staff, Department of Parks and Recreation to discuss issues, updates, and interventions and mostly importantly to build bridges with one another;
- MPD should expand training on youth-focused interventions like responding to youth in crisis, restorative practices, de-escalation, interacting with students with disabilities, and youth development;
- MPD, DCPS and public charter schools, the DME, and DMPSJ should review the structure, re-implementation, training, and hiring of the school resource officer program together.



I cannot stress enough the help our kids need. The crime and violence rate of the District youth is far too high and each of us must do everything we can to end this cycle. MPD are leaders in this city and should, therefore, be leaders in building safe passage opportunities for all DC students.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to the solutions you develop and am available for questions.

Sincerely,

Sharnetta Boone-Ruffin

Citywide and Ward 8 PLE Board member, PAVE (Parents Amplifying Voices in Education)