

**Testimony of SEIU Local 500 President Pia Morrison  
Montgomery County Council  
April 8, 2021**

**FY22 Operating Budget and Amendments Hearing  
SUPPORT**

Dear Members of the Council,

Thank you, Council President Hucker, and all members of the County Council, for speaking with us today. On behalf of the members of SEIU Local 500, I would also like to thank each of you for your extraordinary work during this ongoing pandemic.

As you know, SEIU Local 500 represents more than 20,000 members, more than 9,000 of whom are employed as supporting services professionals at MCPS. Our members at MCPS are bus drivers, security guards, food services professionals, and paraeducators. They work in offices, media and technology, and building services. We are an association of educators, non-profit workers, and caregivers. We are all invested in the strength and vitality of our local public schools – professionally and personally.

I come before you today on behalf of all of our members to enthusiastically endorse the proposed budget set forth by the Superintendent and the County Executive and to respectfully ask the Council to fully fund it. Our amazing members at MCPS have never worked harder, both on the front lines and behind the scenes, as they have during this pandemic. They have transitioned to teaching remotely, distributed literally millions of meals to children in need, delivered Chromebooks and provided the technical and logistical support to make virtual learning possible. Working successfully with teachers, our paraeducator members helped make distance learning successful. Our members at MCPS, regardless of their profession or title, have gone above and beyond for the children and families of Montgomery County. This budget recognizes their efforts and accounts for their needs.

I would also like to say one additional thing before closing. As we know, additional federal relief is expected to come into the county. I would ask that when it comes time to decide how relief funds are disbursed, that the Council include unions, the voices of working people, in the decision-making process.

Once again, I thank you all for your time and your hard work throughout this ordeal and reaffirm the support of our members for this budget.