

Testimony Presented to the Montgomery County Council
Regarding the FY2023 Montgomery County Public Schools Budget
by Jennifer Martin, President of the Montgomery County Education Association
April 21, 2022

Good evening, Council President Albornoz, Council Vice President Glass, and Councilmembers.

The Montgomery County Education Association is grateful that you and the County Executive intend to fund a historic MCPS budget to meet the needs of the students we serve. This investment will support the continued excellence of our public schools, and provide the resources needed to help students and staff overcome the hardships we experienced over the past two years.

This reinvestment in our public schools is long overdue. Educators and MCPS support staff have been crushed by workloads created by persistent short staffing and ever-increasing demands. Burnout resulting from overwork and underfunding has led to an increasing number of staff resigning or retiring from MCPS each year. And these problems negatively affect families' connection to the school community, student wellbeing, and academic success.

As of this week, over 1,443 MCPS employees have notified the system of their resignation or retirement, versus a total of 832 at this time last year. And the school year is not over yet. Meanwhile, colleges and universities here and across the country are seeing drastic reductions in students pursuing teaching careers. Full funding of the County Executive's proposed school budget will help us ensure that the system can provide wages, benefits and working conditions that will attract and retain educators of the highest quality.

Further, this budget will enable MCPS to address opportunity gaps and the growing need for mental health services for our students. It will expand our community schools program and build bridges for family engagement.

Employees in MCPS are counting on you to approve this budget that restores respect for the dignity of the work we do. Our students and their families are counting on you to provide the funding for the strong schools they deserve. The future prosperity and livability of our county depends on your commitment to investing in our public schools.