

Testimony of Andy Turner
April 13, 2017

Good afternoon council members.

My name is Andrew Turner, I am resident of Ward 6. We moved to the district to raise our family and our 5 year old son was fortunate to join Capitol Hill Montessori at Logan last year. Our youngest child turned two-years old yesterday and already is looking forward to following his big-brother to school. The Montessori education and the staff of Logan have been fundamental to our son flourishing in his first years of education - a formative time for the rest of their lives of learning.

As trained engineers, my wife and I have personally volunteered our time and expertise along with other parents helping ensure a safe, healthy, and productive work environment for the children of our school. Through temperature monitoring and analysis we identified unhealthy environmental conditions which are now being addressed thanks to the work of Council Members Cheh and Grosso.

In the past year alone, the school has dealt with numerous infrastructure emergencies, from sewage in the cafeteria to extreme lead levels in the drinking water. The latter of which was actually identified and data available months before it came to the attention of astute parents who called for an immediate resolution.

Schools are investments in our future citizens. We have precious few years to provide an environment for them to learn the skills and passion for learning and improve their chances of professional and personal success. When we are merely respond to disasters we not only have dramatically impacted their health and safety - but we are likely missing even more chronic issues that we may learn too late. Our children should be able to breath, drink, eat, walk, laugh, run and play without constant risk to their well-being.

Currently there is a severe lack of transparency in modernization funding, facility selection process, and cooperative strategic planning. Considering that DC school enrollment has increased steadily about 2% year over year, and CHML is growing about 10% each year, we need to ensure adequate planning and modernization for a future we all want to achieve.

Capitol Hill Montessori at Logan is a unique opportunity. It offers a compelling, competitive educational program, from Pre-K through 8th grade middle school, which attracts and retains engaged families to collaboratively improve the community alongside education staff and officers. Ensuring the facilities are adequate to support our diverse and growing population should be a priority for this council.

We are proud residents of Washington, DC and we hope to see our children, and many more, grow and excel at Capitol Hill Motessori at Logan. It's imperative that we make strategic and efficient modernization investments now before infrastructure crosses a point of no return.