

**Testimony of Adrienne Balanc
Before the Montgomery County Board of Education
Public Hearing on the Strategic Plan October 12, 2006**

Elementary School Security Procedures

Good evening. My name is Adrienne Balanc. I am a parent of five children. Two have graduated from the Montgomery County School System and are attending college. Three are in elementary school, one at Cresthaven Elementary and two at Roscoe Nix Elementary.

My over fifteen years of experience with the MCPS has been positive and very rewarding. MCPS has always taken pride in being fully equipped to handle the many challenges facing a large, ever changing, suburban school district. Presently, we face another challenge in properly securing the schools our children attend.

At this time, I need to outline some very specific concerns. Our high schools and middle schools have concrete security measures in place, but our older elementary schools have nothing beyond Code Blue/Code Red procedures. Cresthaven Elementary has shared a security officer with eighty other schools. This person is set to retire in February 2007. On occasion, Cresthaven's principal has found it necessary to request help from the security personnel at neighboring Key Middle School. Key Middle School is scheduled to be closed for renovation next year.

Cresthaven and all elementary schools would benefit from a greater security personnel presence. Currently, there are three portables at Cresthaven that are situated near a wooded area and, while they are away from the street, there is a need for greater security, possibly strategic camera placements and an intercom system.

Roscoe Nix Elementary, being situated in a brand new building, at least has a buzzer system in place. Neighboring school districts such as Fairfax County and D.C. Public Schools have everything from police presence down to locked door policies to ensure the safety of every child, K through 12.

Cresthaven and all elementary schools would benefit from greater security measures from a buzzer system for the doors, strategic camera placements, and an increased security personnel presence, if not an actual police presence. Please let us be proactive in protecting our children. I show you a letter sent home to parents last year by MCPS. It boldly states, **Be ready. Disasters happen!** Please let us stand behind this motto and take it a step further: **Be ready, prevent the disaster from happening.**

Thank you.