

Rockzana Flores
Loiederman Middle School

Testimony for the Montgomery Board of Education
Community Forum
October 11, 2007

Good Evening.

My name is Rockzana Flores and I'm a 6th grader at Loiederman. Many of you are probably wondering why an 11 year old is speaking in front of you tonight.

Well, tonight I am here not only as a student, but as a tax payer.

Yes, you heard me correctly, a tax payer. For over 3 years now I have been working and paying taxes on the money I make. And since I am not old enough to vote, this is truly the only way I have to voice my opinion as to where some of that money should go.

So, as a tax payer, I would like to see my money go to continue the great work being done at Loiederman. This school is truly one- of-a-kind. From the dance and theater departments to the math and perspective teachers.

As a student, I had a choice of going to Westland; yet, for my "Pursuit of Excellence," I choose to go to Loiederman, an unknown. It was not that there was one thing that helped me to make that difficult choice; it was many small and large things. Free breakfast in homeroom may seem silly to you, but when you are running late and haven't had anything to eat, knowing that food will be there makes life a lot easier.

It's having ASK time to get extra help in math or chill out and read.

It's having Mr. Betts who really cares about the students and knew my name the first week of school when I did not even know his.

It's having only 4 classes a day so that when Mr. Johnson is doing a great visualization project you don't have to stop just when you're getting started.

So, as a tax payer and a kid, how do I get you to listen to me and take me seriously? How do I get you to understand how very much this school means to me and the other students? I thought about this a lot and had two ideas.

The first idea is to use visualization like we use in school. I want you to close your eyes.

Please, I only have a short time left, so work with me here.

Okay, now in your mind picture a place that you really want to go, anywhere that you really feel comfortable and happy. Now that you are there, really experience it. Smell the air around you. Listen for the special sounds that are only in that place.

Now, imagine this place changing and then gone and you can never have it the same way again. How does that make you feel? Please open your eyes and look at me.

That awful feeling is the feeling I get every time I think about Loiederman not having the money to continue as it is right now. So, put yourself in my place, how would you feel to learn that the school you so much want to be a part of not going to be the same?

My second idea was for a petition. In front of you is the result of that idea. 920 names. 920 voices speaking out to you. 920 requests that you find the money and continue this wonderful program.

Loiederman the smART choice.

PETITION

TO: MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION:

We, the undersigned citizens of Maryland, respectfully request the following:

The Middle School Magnet Consortium (MSMC) was funded by a \$7.2 million grant from the United States Department of Education. The grant goals are to--

- improve student performance at Consortium schools;
- broaden student choices in middle school programs in MCPS; and
- decrease socioeconomic isolation in Consortium schools.

In order for Loiederman (and the other MSMC schools) to continue to provide the same level of services currently offered and continue the work started with the grant, the Montgomery County Board of Education **must** approve the continuing funding of these schools once the grant is finished.

Thank you for your service to Montgomery County.

Respectfully submitted,

The Undersigned