

October 11, 2007

Dear Montgomery County Board of Education:

My name is Elizabeth Gamero, I am an active parent of the Montgomery County Public Schools.

- o MCPS Web Site and Hispanic Parents

About two years ago, I was fortunate to receive and invitation to participate in a group called "**Conquistando Tus Sueños**" at the beginning I was not clear on what I was getting myself into but, as soon as we started meeting a door of opportunities opened. I was being train to be a leader, I took on the opportunity and now I am teaching (volunteer) computer classes to Hispanic Parents at Silver Spring International Middle School (SSI) for the third year. This has opened my eyes to the **need to train Parents on how to use a computer and how to navigate the cyber space, and possible to become Community Leaders**. We have a wealth of information and resources on our MCPS website, and if one knows how to use it, that person can find almost anything related to education (parents, students, and community). I truly, love to research and navigate the MCPS website and often download information for Hispanic parents I know. The downside of this amazing tool is that there are many parents that are not familiar with a computer, and many youngsters think their parents are slow and try to manipulate the situation. Furthermore, these parents are missing out on this wonderful technology that we spend a good amount of our taxpayer's money. We would like to see **Basic Computer classes offer to parents** of children in the Montgomery County Public Schools so they are able to work, and keep up with their students' education by reviewing Edline reports and e-mailing school officials.

- o Parents & PTSA Meetings

I have been a member of the PTSA for years and in the pass volunteered translating simultaneously during PTSA, and Advisory Board Monthly Meetings. When my child got to middle school I saw the need to get involved and push to have ALL parents participate of the monthly PTSA Meetings; however, my son moved onto High School and the PTSA meetings continued to be small, and Hispanic parents did not attend because there was no point the school did not offer translation. Now that my son is in High School, I continue to push for One Diverse Meeting with all parents involved but I am sad to say that Hispanic parents do not attend those meetings for the lack of translation and they get school information through the grapevine and most of the times it is limited information. Let's face it, this nation is changing, the Hispanic population is rapidly increasing and we need to do something so these parents can be informed so we can truly have an outstanding education system.

I believe that a key to a Students' Success is getting parents involved, lets get schools with a large Hispanic population a Bilingual Parent Coordinator, an **interpreters, and one audio systems** (minimizes interruptions) that diverse cultures can use but has to be checked out from the Principals' office.

We need to take advantage of the wonderful diversity in our Montgomery County Schools System by investing on these issues of our society.

- o Basic Computer Classes for Hispanic Parents
- o Bilingual Parent Coordinator
- o Interpreters & good audio system

Thank you for the opportunity ~