

MCPS Budgeting and Priorities for FY 2010

Joan Karasik, October 16, 2008

Of course, for next year, MCPS needs more services for students who have disabilities – hours-based staffing, which has shown such benefits, more Transition Support Teachers and paraeducators, inclusion support staff, and so on. I know that you will do your darndest in these tight budget times to help our young people with disabilities prepare for the real world when they leave the entitlements of public education.

However, I will talk mostly about ways that may improve education for all of our kids.

- One way is more rapid deployment of PBIS training. Visiting schools this past spring, we found teachers and administrators enthusiastic about the positive benefits of consistent and positive approaches to interfacing with all of their students, including those with IEPs.
- Another way is to instruct more teachers in the use of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles, enabling them to tailor instruction to the varied needs of students in a classroom that, more and more, reflects the increasing diversity of the county's population.
- Finally, I note that all of the contesting Board candidates stress the need for more vocational preparation. This need is not just for vocational courses. Vocational preparation can include actual work experience, knowing how to handle a job interview, writing a coherent business letter, how to work with others, and so on. And one hopes that our students learn about the perils of credit card use and other ways of digging oneself into debt. Let us admit that not quite all MCPS graduates will wind up in Ivy League schools.

Thank you for your good work!

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