

Testimony of Danielle Snowden  
October 16, 2008

Good Evening President Navarro, Members of the Board of Education and Dr. Weast. My name is Danielle Snowden and I'm an 8<sup>th</sup> grade student and SGA president at A. Mario Loiederman Middle School for the Creative and Performing Arts.

Two years ago I had multiple middle school options to choose from including my home school. However, after visiting a variety of schools I was drawn to Loiederman and I'd like to tell you why, so, as you're considering funding options for the 2009 – 2010 school year that truly make a difference to middle schoolers, you'll have first hand knowledge of what makes LMS special.

First and foremost, the Loiederman staff is the best in the county. Our principal, Ms. Serino and the other administrators and counselors are helpful and always open to hearing from students. Our teachers are passionate about the subjects they teach and they have a real commitment to Loiederman students that's reflected in the creative things they do to educate us, including debates, interesting projects, and games that incorporate fun and learning. Loiederman teachers go the extra mile to make us want to learn. My friends and I regardless of our race, gender or special needs are always encouraged to try our hardest and we're supported every step of the way. Our after-school programs are creative and exiting and there's always an appetite to add new options throughout the year. Having the right number of administrators and teachers to help us makes this all possible.

I'm sure you've all heard about the arts program at Loiederman because it's not uncommon to read about our wonderful theatrical productions, our dance company, artists, singers and/or musicians. That's the value of having a Magnet School Coordinator. Having a coordinator also allows us to continue to offer new and innovative arts programs. The Magnet Coordinator also enriches our school by marketing and promoting our arts program which allows us to continue to attract the most talented student artists here in Montgomery County.

Also, because of your support and funding, we have unique elective classes to choose from. Most seventh and eighth graders are able to

take two electives each year. More often than not it's a hard choice to make when you have a state of the art digital music lab, an award winning chorus and opportunities to work with local professional artist in our community.

On behalf of all Loiederman Middle School students I want to thank you for supporting us this far and realizing that being a student at Loiederman is life changing. My parents often tell me that the skills I pick up by participating in the arts are life skills that are foundational to my success regardless of my career path.

There's always something new and exciting happening at Loiederman and I encourage you to visit our school and see the new art sculpture that was recently installed on one of our exterior walls. A small group of my classmates will have an opportunity to work with the artist, Arturo Ho, and get feedback on their own portfolios.

Also, I would like to personally invite you to join us on October 24<sup>th</sup> or 25<sup>th</sup> for our fall production, *The Audition*. It will be another first-class Loiederman production. You can only imagine how exciting it is for some of our new 6<sup>th</sup> graders to have this unique experience to be a part of the cast or crew. I hope you too can join us.

We couldn't have these wonderful events without your funding. So on behalf of the A. Mario Loiederman Middle School for the Creative and Performing Arts student body, we thank you for including our program in the operating budget last year and request that you do so this coming year and many years to come.

Thank you.