

BOE Community Forum Testimony
On behalf of the Wheaton Cluster
October 16, 2008

Speakers: Grace Barnes, Wheaton Cluster Coordinator.

Wheaton students: Tran Phung 10th grade student in the Biosciences and Health Professions Academy and Julie Castaneda, student in the Engineering Academy.

Good evening, my name is Grace Barnes and along with Chris Zawlocki, we represent the Wheaton Cluster PTAs. In answering the question posed by tonight's discussion, we in the Wheaton cluster understand the difficult economic times and the need to spend the County's resources prudently. Our middle school students continue to benefit from the unique programs in the Performing Arts and Science and Technology offered at A. Mario Loiederman and Parkland Middle Schools. We thank the Board for funding these programs in the budget last year and appeal to them to continue the funding for the next school year.

The Academies at Wheaton High School have proven to be a tremendous success for our students and to make my point I have brought several students from the Engineering, and Biosciences and Health professions at Wheaton. They will tell you the difference that these academies have made in their educational careers and the need to continue funding.

I also would like to remind the Board that several of our elementary schools of our cluster are scheduled to be renovated; these are Wheaton Woods, Harmony Hills, and Veirs Mill. We ask the Board to keep the capital budget and feasibility studies for these modernizations, and for these to remain on schedule as well as plans for modernization of fifty-four year old Wheaton High School. Thank you.