

Testimony at Community Forum by Qin Chen
September 17, 2009
Quince Orchard High School

Dear respected Board Members and Dr. Weast,

Thank you for giving me this opportunity today to share with you some of my experiences at MCPS. My name is Qin Chen, and I am a mother of five children. My eldest child just graduated from MCPS this May, and is now studying at University of Maryland. I still have one child in high school, one in middle school, and two in elementary school. It has been almost 20 years since I came to this country. During the years, I witnessed the great efforts the school system has been making to help us parents who don't know much English. When my children first entered MCPS, I didn't know how to communicate with the school and teachers, and I was so scared to go to parent-teacher conferences. Because of my limited English and culture difference, I was hardly able to participate in my children's education. In recent years, with the help of ESOL parent community coordinators, I learned how to use computers, how to access school information in Chinese from MCPS website, and how to use Ed-line. Thanks to their help, I now can communicate with the school and teachers, and I even signed up to volunteer at my children's schools this year. I really appreciated MCPS for valuing the importance of parent involvement, investing a lot of money and personnel to translate important information into different languages, and hiring bilingual staff to help parents so that we are kept updated on our children's progress at school, and are able to participate in schools' activities. Right now, we are under a very difficult economic situation, but I sincerely hope that MCPS keep all these important ESOL services – for if not because of these bilingual services, I wouldn't have stood here to share with you my experiences. Thank you!

Testimony at Community Forum by Qin Chen
September 19, 2009
Quince Orchard High School

各位尊敬的教育委员会委员和Dr. Weast,

谢谢你们让我有机会今天在这里与你们分享我在 MCPS 的一些感受。我叫陈琴，是五个孩子的妈妈。我最大的孩子今年五月刚从 MCPS 毕业，现在马大就读。另外一个孩子正在读高中，一个在读初中，两个在读小学。我来美国差不多 20 年，我看到学校系统很努力地为这些不懂英语的家长提供服务。在孩子刚进入 MCPS 时，由于语言的限制和文化的差异，我很害怕、也不知道怎样与学校和老师沟通，也不敢去参加家长会，因此几乎无法参与孩子的教育。最近几年，在 ESOL 家长社区协调员的帮助下，我学会了使用电脑，知道如何从 MCPS 的网站上获得众多的中文资料，也学会如何使用 Ed-line。通过他们的帮助，我现在也可以与学校和老师进行沟通了，而且我今年还报名在学校做义工。我很感谢 MCPS 对家长参与的重视，并为此投入了大量的资金和人员，把重要的资料翻译成不同语言，也聘请了双语的工作人员，让我们随时了解孩子的学习进展，并积极参与学校的活动。虽然现在的经济形式不好，但是我希望 MCPS 能够继续保留这些重要的 ESOL 服务 – 如果不是因为这些双语服务的帮助，我今天绝对不可能站在这里与你们分享我的感受。谢谢!

(Please refer to the back for English translation.)