

Testimony of Jerrika Grissette  
To The  
Montgomery County Board of Education  
Community Forum  
At  
John F. Kennedy High School

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Hello everyone. My name is Jerrika Grissette; I'm a sophomore at Northwood High School. I would like to thank the Board of Education for giving me the opportunity to speak on behalf of the Wellness Center. Before I came to High School, work was easy for me, I knew everybody at my school got along with them, and just had fun. In eighth grade I started to realize that my freshman year would mean getting more serious, stress, getting ready for colleges, making new friends and losing some.

When I first arrived at Northwood, I thought it was a huge school. I knew I was going to get lost and go in circles and everything looked the same. One day I was walking through the hallways and I saw a group of kids coming out of a room laughing and talking; my friend and I had to go in there because she had to heat up her food. To me it just looked like a normal group of kids just hanging out and having lunch together. The next day I went in there again because it seemed interesting; a staff member named Veronica Stroman asked me if I wanted to join a group called AFFIRM which stands for the Adolescent Female Forum to Inspire Respect and Motivate. It's about sisterhood and it encourages young ladies to believe they are beautiful in their own way, have confidence, show their inner strengths, and be a role model to other young ladies. After you finish the program, you graduate and get an award to show that you have succeeded in achieving your goal. AFFIRM is a part of the Wellness Center's Positive Youth Development programs. Positive Youth Development programs are groups and clubs that males and females can join which include the Adolescent Male Empowerment Network (AMEN), Multicultural Youth Lead (MY Lead), and Identity.

I am a student that holds a 3.75 GPA and I am academically motivated. I'm in the Wellness Center SWAT program which stands for the Student Wellness Advocacy Team and the Northwood Ambassadors program. Both groups are leadership programs which focus on making the school better and diverse. These two programs are good for me because I'm confident, I love to make a change in people, and show my talents, and skills. I like to encourage the incoming freshman by letting them know that we were all in their position once. It's all about teamwork, helping each other out having faith, and never giving up.

The Wellness Center has helped me with, getting free physicals when needed, free Tylenol and helping me with my problems by sending me to a counselor. Also to fulfill my needs when I couldn't afford something, or just couldn't get it they've always had a way to keep me happy and going knowing that nobody could stop me from achieving my goals.

We also have clubs like fitness club, chess club which I'll never understand how to play, and book club. Fitness club helped me to keep myself in shape learned how to eat healthy, and have fun at the same time. It's a really good stress reliever. They're so many ways that you could describe the Wellness Center, hardworking, loving, thoughtful, and more. But the only way for you to know what I feel is for you to join in and see the experiences, the skills, feelings, and the accomplishments that you would have or make in life. If I never knew about the Wellness Center I would never have felt open-minded enough to do what I really like to do and find out who I

really am. But most of all I did it by believing in myself and knowing that there are other people like me that struggle and find their way somehow. Please keep supporting the Wellness Center and let it expand to help others.

Thank You!