

4-4-05

**Comments of Kelly Signs, Douglas MacArthur PTA President
City Council Hearing on proposed ACPS budget,
April 4, 2005**

Good afternoon Mayor Euille, and members of the City Council. I am Kelly Signs, this year's president of the Douglas MacArthur PTA. On behalf of our parents and staff, I am here to urge you to fully fund the proposed school budget for next year. We believe that there is much to commend in the proposed budget, with its emphasis on strengthening core instruction. Citizens of Alexandria should know that Alexandria schools work hard to provide a high quality, rigorous education for all students. And that effort requires the commitment of our community to support the schools.

This afternoon, I have brought with me two MacArthur students, both shining examples of the benefits of a public school education and the opportunities it provides. First, I would like to introduce John West, president of our student council, and after John, will be Deja Robinson, the secretary of the student council.

Good afternoon,

I am John West, President of the SCA at Douglas MacArthur Elementary School. I am here to ask you to approve the budget for Alexandria's schools. I have been a student at MacArthur since I was in kindergarten, and now I am a fifth grader. I think I have gotten a great education at MacArthur. My favorite subject is Virginia history, and since I've been at MacArthur, I have learned a lot about our state. One of the highlights of my time at MacArthur was in fourth grade when I participated in our annual Colonial Fair. I researched colonial games and sports, and we taught other students about life in Virginia in the 1700's.

I think it is important to spend money on having good schools so that kids will have the opportunity to do what they want with their lives. I hope to be a real estate developer someday. I have taken some classes in economics and business, and I hope to take more.

I know that you have many other good and important uses for the city's money, but money spent on schools will not be wasted. I know I am lucky because Alexandria has already spent money on improving our schools. Next year, I will attend George Washington Middle School, which looks like a brand new school after all the renovations. And I will be able to attend a brand new high school, as a member of the Class of 2012. So please stay committed to the kids of Alexandria by approving the school budget, and I will keep working to be the best that I can be.

Thank you.

Good afternoon,

I am Deja Robinson, secretary of the SCA at Douglas MacArthur Elementary School. I am a fourth grader at MacArthur this year. I'm here to ask you to approve money for the Alexandria public schools so that kids can continue to get a good education.

At MacArthur we have many great teachers, like our SCA advisors, Ms. Lansing and Mrs. LeRoy. They help us organize projects like our canned food drive at Thanksgiving and our recent fundraiser to help tsunami victims. We are lucky at MacArthur to have teachers who want to help us find out about the world and how kids can help other people.

This year, I joined the MacArthur Orchestra and now I play the cello. There are 31 fourth graders in our Orchestra, and 17 fourth graders are in the Band. Many fourth graders are also in the MacArthur Chorus. I really like the music classes at MacArthur and hope that all kids in Alexandria schools get to have a chance to play an instrument or sing in the chorus.

Thank you for all you have done to support the schools.