

May 1, 2008

Congressman Tim Murphy
322 Cannon House Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20515
ATTENTION: Morgan Jones

Dear Congressman Murphy:

I am writing to express my strong support for the West Jefferson Hills School District's Appropriations requests.

As you know they are requesting \$750,000 for technological resources upgrades for math and science programs in the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education Appropriations bill and \$500,000 in the Commerce, Justice, State Appropriations bill for the establishment of a District Alternative Education (DAE) program that will provide quality services for students who have been identified as "at risk" and have not been able to comply with the established rules and regulations of the traditional classroom.

While both programs are important, the technological improvements request is their priority.

The Math and Science Departments at the West Jefferson Hills School District are seeking to use upgraded technology to make changes that would provide students with a more interactive instructional environment.

This initiative, offered to students in Grades K-12, will allow students to explore math and science in new and innovative ways. Classrooms will be equipped with a teacher laptop, a laptop cart, a printer/scanner, a webcam, an electronic whiteboard, one projector, productivity software, three digital still cameras, clickers, five digital video cameras, scientific lab, probes and other equipment. Access to the technology provided will enable the Science and Math Departments to integrate new resources with other technological initiatives already implemented in our District.

Secondly, DAE will provide educational services, counseling services and guidance services to students through grades 6-12. These students will be those children that are identified as potentially "at risk" students by the professional staff of the West Jefferson Hills School District. "At risk" students would be those students who are or have committed: 1) at risk of dropping out; 2) numerous policy violations; 3) chronic disciplinary infractions; 4) chronic truancy; 5) drug /alcohol violations or; 6) weapons violations and are 45-day placements.

The primary goal of this program will be twofold. First, to offer to the student the opportunity to continue receiving an appropriate education, eventually leading to the successful acquisition of a high school diploma. Secondly, to offer the student the opportunity to become a productive member of the community through vocational programming and work experience opportunities. Currently, the District has approximately 25 students that are in school placements outside of the District. These children have been identified as "at risk". The District would use the funds to purchase specific equipment such as technology, curriculum materials, procure an appropriate off-site location, staffing, including highly qualified regular and special education teachers, administrative staff, non-professional support staff, and to contract for mental health supports.

West Jefferson Hills School District has never asked for federal funding before. However, with the rising costs of school construction and other needed improvements, we find that our needs are outweighing our resources. We ask that you join us in strongly supporting their request for funding these important projects.

Sincerely,

Signature

Address (street)

Address (city/zip)

Affiliation

Parent/Teacher/Community Member