

Dear Mayor Adams and City Commissioners,

My name is Brian Anderson and I am the principal of Buckman Arts Focus Elementary in southeast Portland. I appreciate the opportunity to speak today and also want to thank the Buckman families who have testified before you. As many parents from the affected schools have testified, we urge that there be no cuts to city pass-through funds to SUN, particularly to Buckman.

Many have said that Buckman is very misunderstood. It is not a wealthy school or community, and is quite diverse. Because of major cuts to our budget over the years, we have virtually no additional support in place for struggling students, except for what our teachers can offer during the day. Those support positions, such as reading specialist, math support specialist, educational assistants, special education para-educators, have been cut. We no longer have PE and, although we do have a part time library assistant, we can only offer partial access to library resources. We are a school of 500 students, including two behavior rooms which help support students with behavior issues. 53% of our students live in the neighborhood, and 47% come from all over the city. When I came to Buckman 3 years ago, 70% of students were here on transfer and 30% were neighborhood. 23% of our families back then were eligible for free or reduced lunch. Just this past month, we hit the minimum 40% free or reduced lunch requirements for Title One supports, only to have it raised to a 60% minimum nearly that same day. This data really emphasizes that our school's demographics are changing quickly. There is an abundance of rental units in our neighborhood, and due to this, we can never predict how many families will walk through the door. We accept all neighborhood children whether we have space or not. Many families have special needs and our SUN partnership has been instrumental in supporting them, whether with short-term or long-term services. I think 3rd grade parent Matt Callahan said it best recently when he spoke to you. He said, "Once the support and coordination is gone, so goes the well-being of the child." It has been clearly conveyed that Buckman depends so much on SUN for support and enrichment opportunities that cannot be accomplished during the day because of severe budget cuts. Last week, I had no choice but to make very painful cuts to our elementary arts program - the only one of its kind in Portland. We are faced with the loss of 2 out of 3 art teachers who have been with us for almost as long as Buckman's 22 years as an arts focus elementary school. The two art teachers not only help our children form a lifelong love of the arts, they have also been supportive forces in the lives of all 500 students this year and thousands from years past. Losing these two teachers has been like losing a limb and I do not know how we will recover. Mayor Adams, you have always been a supporter of the arts and of Buckman's art focus and I'm sure you realize what a devastating

loss this is to all. The possibility of losing SUN renders us unable to offer support to students who desperately need help. As Matt and others pointed out, Diane and her SUN team directly provide support with tutors, mentors, social service coordination, outreach to families, which includes English language learners, coordinating holiday gift giving to those in need, work with over 40 community partnerships, 60 enrichment classes offered each week, and academic support that ties into our school improvement plans. Although you know this from other's testimonies, I want to share with you that Diane and our SUN partnership is fully proactive with their academic support as well as social service needs. I will meet with Diane when I have students who are seriously struggling in certain areas, such as math, writing, or reading, and she will find academic support for those children. If a child has basic service needs such as food or clothing, SUN is right there to offer non-judgmental help and support. SUN coordinated our Family Math Night and our Write Night which brought families in to introduce the new math adoption and also to help them support their child's writing needs.

I have worked in 5 schools during my educational career. Without hesitation, I can say that I have never worked with a SUN manager as dedicated to kids as Diane Meisenhelter. She and her staff are truly all about supporting children and their families. We continue to try and do more and more with much, much less. Losing SUN, losing our 2 beloved art teachers, losing the pool, and finally reaching Title One requirements only to have it pulled out from under us is more painful than I could ever convey to you. Our SUN program, like our arts focus, is what makes Buckman such a healthy, supportive, beautiful place to be for all 500 students and their families. Removing even one of them is tragic. Imagine school next year with none of them. While we're on the subject, there are more cuts we are suffering in other areas that greatly affect our children and school. They are not even included in these pending decisions.

We all appreciate your support of Buckman School and our community over the years. Mayor Adams, you especially have taken an interest in our unique learning environment which has drawn many to our school and city from all over the world. SUN has been there every step of the way....supporting our kids and their families through it all. Please think of that famous phrase, "It takes a village". This could not be more appropriate to describe what our SUN partnership means to us. Please consider keeping our SUN program alive for the sake of our children, families, and Buckman staff. Thank you.

Moore-Love, Karla

From: Brian Anderson [banderson@pps.net]

Sent: Tuesday, April 03, 2012 8:14 AM

To: Moore-Love, Karla

Subject: testify

Hi Karla...I was wondering if there was room for me to testify in behalf of SUN on April 25th? Thank you,
Brian

Brian Anderson

Principal

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<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fgwdFXaio4g>

www.pps.k12.or.us/schools/buckman

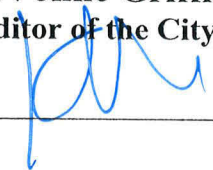
Request of Brian Anderson to address Council regarding SUN program
(Communication)

APR 25 2012

PLACED ON FILE

Filed APR 20 2012

LaVonne Griffin-Valade
Auditor of the City of Portland

By  _____

COMMISSIONERS VOTED AS FOLLOWS:		
	YEAS	NAYS
1. Fritz		
2. Fish		
3. Saltzman		
4. Leonard		
Adams		