

Good afternoon,

My name is **Marialys** and I am a student at **Classical**. I am also a student advocate at Young Voices. I am writing today in SUPPORT of House Bill #7726, If passed, this act will require public school districts and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to publicly announce a proposal for closure, merger, or phase-out of a public school. In addition, it requires a public forum where the proposed closure can be discussed openly and sets a timeline for final decision-making after community engagement, ensuring transparency and accountability.

A high school is a community for high school students, their families, the faculty and staff. As we saw with 360, a public forum between the community and RIDE came together only once a decision had already been made. How should we as students be expected to react when we are the last to know that our school community is being shut down? H7726 will guarantee that we as stakeholders in our education have a voice in the potential impact all future decisions will have on the community.

Accommodating lots of students into one school takes away communication and relationship between students and teachers. Students will get less resources and blend into the crowd with less support. As one student out of 1,200 at Classical I've rarely connected with guidance, admin and even some teachers. Additionally, Classical is undergoing construction right now and historical murals that were painted from other classes are getting painted over. Similar to taking away school buildings with history, community and relationships are vanished and destroyed. Furthermore, less public schools leads to less education and more disruption with students' learning.

I am asking you and your colleagues in the House to PASS H7726. We are relying on you to do the right thing and ensure that your constituents are heard. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Marialys