

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON EARLY CHILDHOOD,
ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

“High School/College Dual Enrollment Programs”
September 18, 2009

John Otis Brooks, II (5th year Mott Middle College High School Student)

First, let me thank Chairman Kildee for giving me the opportunity to testify at this hearing to support early college programs.

My name is John Brooks. I attend Mott Middle College High School in Flint, Michigan and will graduate in 2010 with a high school diploma and an Associate’s Degree. I feel fortunate that my Mom came to me and told me about this program. Now, I will be the first male and sibling in my family to earn a college degree.

While at Mott Middle College, I have maintained a 3.35 high school GPA and I will complete my Associate’s Degree in Business Management. After I graduate, I plan on going to a big university and becoming a great business manager.

Mott Middle College has helped me and my family in so many ways. My peers and I think one of the program’s greatest strengths is that it provides free college tuition. If I did not attend Mott Middle College, I probably would not have gone to college due to my family’s financial situation and the lack of mental and academic support in the traditional high school setting.

In fact, I have friends, who without MMC, would not have started college or maybe even graduated from high school either because of poverty, having children, or not seeing a future for themselves past high school. At our school, all students are looked at as college bound and can become college successful.

At Mott Middle College we are like a family; everyone supports everyone. Our teachers are here for us during school and outside of school. During my time at the Mott Middle College, I was able to start a Mentor Program to help some of the students who do not have the support at home and outside of school. We also started a Peace Maker and Peace Jam Program for our “zero tolerance” rule for fighting.

Mott Middle College doesn’t just enroll us in the classes and pay for them. Our teachers give us more one on one attention than regular high schools. The teachers help us when we need it, whether its school work, helping us figure out what college classes to take, or helping us look for scholarships to help pay for

additional college when we leave. They also send us on leadership trips like the one I attended in Canada in 2008. It was the Rotarian Leadership Conference in Ontario.

We also have a more diverse student population, so there really are no “cliques” or groups. Students set examples for each other and everyone is expected to be a role model. Because our school is small, everyone is acquainted with each other.

MMC creates more opportunities for students because they get a head start on college credits and a good introduction to a college atmosphere. Our school requires students to take at least 3 early college seminars to prepare us to earn good grades in our college classes and mature as responsible students. We also have FOCUS groups where the teachers and students get to know each other like a family. During this class time you can get help with homework or have fun with others and communicate.

We also have college public safety on our campus, so it makes it a safe environment.

So, some may ask “What’s different about going to high school on a college campus?” Being on a college campus forces us to mature and act like adults because we are in class with adults, we have lunch with adults, we ride the bus with adults; so we become adults.

I asked some of my fellow classmates “How is MMC different from a traditional high school?” They told me quote:

“It’s like we’re at home; everyone is friendly”

“The teachers interact with us more and we get more one on one attention”

“When we come here, we want to do better”

“It’s a more diverse student population. It gives us a different look on life”

“We have more responsibilities as students”

I would like to end my testimony by saying, we come in students, we leave as scholars.