

Testimony on HB 166: Main Operating Budget for FY 2020-2021  
Senate Finance Subcommittee on Primary and Secondary Education  
Wednesday, May 8, 2019

Clarice Banks  
Breakthrough Schools, Alumnus

Chairman Terhar, Vice Chair Lehner, Ranking Member Fedor and members of the Subcommittee; my name is Clarice Banks I am a graduate of the Class of 2015 from E Prep Woodland Hills, a Breakthrough Schools middle school campus. In the sixth grade I was attending a failing school with an extremely disruptive learning environment. I expressed to my mother that I did not feel safe in my school, I did not feel that I was being set up for success, nor was I happy there; with all of that being said I transferred schools within that same week. The adjustment was an experience that I will never forget, the Preps hold their students to a higher standard as part of their Breakthrough agenda. This element was implemented into various aspects throughout the school, classroom behavior, as well as assignments.

The educators throughout my life have spent their entire careers preparing me for my future, Breakthrough is no exception to this. My teachers at the Preps were setting me up for success through the five keys of success, classroom behavior, and stressing the importance of grit. Once my younger brothers were old enough they began their educational career at Village Prep Woodland Hills, a Breakthrough elementary campus. Both my siblings and I have experienced new feats of success and many opportunities. My younger brothers enjoying learning, love their school as well as the teachers who have formed meaningful relationships with them. The Preps have left such an impact on my life that even as a high school senior I am still in touch with my teachers and classmates. Breakthrough schools are a wonderful investment into the Cleveland and Greater Cleveland area, they change the lives of their students and teach them the value of education and seeking a form of higher education. The Breakthrough family stays with you throughout your entire high school career as well as your college career.

I am grateful for the time I spent with the Breakthrough family and hope my words show you the value behind these schools as well as the impact they leave on each and every scholar that passes through their doors. Without E-Prep Woodland Hills I would not be graduating high school and attending a University of my choosing in the fall. Without Village Prep my nine-year-old younger brother wouldn't be reaching colleges and universities with strong engineering programs. Without Breakthrough, many scholars of both the Cleveland and Greater Cleveland area would not know the value of education.

Please provide the necessary funding for schools like Breakthrough to continue making a difference.

Thank you.