

May 5, 2016

To Chair Member Graf, Vice-Chair Member Lewis, Members and Dr. Crawley

Topic: Patrick Henry's Auditorium

I want to speak to you on a personal note.

My daughter, Phoenix, is an artist. If you were to ask me, "Does she sing, dance, act, draw, paint, or write?" I would reply, "Yes, to all of the above."

When she was an infant, Phoenix attended Childtime Learning Center, and one of her caregivers would often tell me that I needed to get Phoenix to Hollywood. Being a first-time mom at 43, initially, I did not see what Phoenix's caregiver saw.

Phoenix started singing before she started talking. When she was about nine months old, we were listening to Rod Stewart's Great American Songbook. *Time After Time* was playing, and she chimed in along with Rod, where I understood her. That is when I had a light-bulb moment, and I saw what Phoenix's caregiver saw.

Most of all, Phoenix is a performer, and Patrick Henry has given her a quality educational experience in her future profession. The auditorium has been a place where she has been able to express herself through song, dance and acting.

I have attended many performances at Patrick Henry during my daughter's time there. The students at their ages are so talented in performing arts and I want future artists, like Phoenix, who will attend the new Patrick Henry to have the same opportunities she has had. Phoenix will tell you that she loves being on the auditorium's stage performing in front of an audience. The auditorium is a valuable platform for young performers to gain a quality educational experience and to share their talents.

Thank you.

Sondra Rhodes, Mom

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