

February 22, 2018
Public Hearing on the Combined Funds Budget
Remarks by Kenneth Warren

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for having me [today](#). My name is Kenneth Warren. I am a junior at T.C Williams High School, I am the Founder of CURE, Community United for Renewable Energy. And I am also a gift bearer for you. In my back pocket I have a yearly check for 75,000 dollars.

If I gave you this check, what would you do with it? Would you spend it addressing the overpopulation in our schools? Would you spend it up-dating and renovating the old schools of ACPS? Would you spend it to provide after-school aid to students? To be frank, I don't need any of you to answer. As I trust that all of you would spend the check to address the issues, that are simply no single person's or organization's fault, but are instead a result of Alexandria's growing community. And I trust that you would view this yearly check as an opportunity to create a better Alexandria.

In my sustainability class, we took an inventory of all of the lights at T.C. Williams. We counted every single light, filled out each light into its own category--T8, T5, etc. From there we reached out to the school engineers to find out the wattage for each bulb. After contacting Mr. Jeet Viswanathan, your Energy Manager, we took the wattage and converted it to cost per kilowatt. At this point, we thought we were done. But NO! Mr. Earle, our teacher, said that we need to calculate how much energy and money T.C. would save if we switched to LED lighting.

Ladies and Gentlemen, this check represents the money that ACPS, the citizens of Alexandria, and you, the School Board, would save if, just T.C. Williams switched to all LED lighting.

This check represents a community commitment to putting down the things that we want and start to do the things that we need, these checks will provide students, all across Alexandria, the opportunity and environment that they need in order to succeed.

And my organization CURE, is essentially dedicated to providing you more of these checks, so that you can go create legacies and new-found opportunities for students. Because our mission is to create 100 percent sustainable schools. Which we hope to do through things like:

- solar panels
- making schools more insulated
- using school gardens to start to, in part, provide school lunches
- and re-create the method in which we recycle

Which we hope to take your brilliant methods, of having a zero down and debt free installation, to create a eco-friendly school environment for students.

Of which will, again, provide you more of these savings to create real change in Alexandria and solve the problems of [tomorrow](#) that ACPS faces. But it is more than that. All of you have the potential to create a legacy that will expand and impact people like my two little middle school brothers and my little kindergarten sister.

As a son, a brother, and a 16 year old student there are many things that I do not know. I do not know if the current state of the nation will uphold sustainable values. I do not know if the coral reefs will survive climate change. And I do not know how my life will look in 25 plus years.

Here is what I do know.

You will see me again. Because I am committed, my peers are committed, my organization is absolutely committed to creating a better [tomorrow](#), by imputing real change into our community.

Which is a somewhat daunting task. How can you convince people to change? On paper a task like that seems like a HUGE rock that all of us are pushing up a hill. It is a rock that, the higher we go, seems to get heavier and heavier. But if we just simply let the rock fall down the mountain, the task becomes so much simpler.

All we have to do is light one match to start the fire. My organization, my peers, the citizens of Alexandria, and I are ready to light the match. Are you?