



April 17, 2017

City Council  
15 Kellogg Blvd. West, 310 City Hall  
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Dear Council Members:

This is a letter in support of Linwood Monroe Arts Plus. My name is Iris Shiraishi, and I have been the taiko residency artist at Linwood for many years. It's been my honor and privilege to work with their third graders and see them grow during our two weeks together, learning this Japanese drumming art form, building on their abilities to focus, strengthening their community, and expanding their world view. It has been equally exciting to see the dynamic faculty and staff work together to make these artistic experiences meaningful and successful for all. And it has been gratifying to witness the enthusiastic audiences we have performed for - parents, student bodies, and faculty of both the lower and upper campuses.

I have been a taiko artist and residency instructor for 20 years, have taught literally thousands of students of all ages the art of taiko, and have seen the gamut of learning environments in all parts of Minnesota and beyond. Linwood Monroe is a unique, special place - one where the arts are valued and respected, where faculty and staff believe that arts are a part of a vital learning atmosphere, and where there is an expectation of achievement and success for each student.

I have learned so much from both the students and faculty about best practices for my art form and the arts-at-large. I hope to continue this fulfilling experience for many years to come.

Sincerely,  
Iris Shiraish, Ph.D., MT  
Catalyst, ensemble-MA & TaikoAlive!  
Teaching Artist, MacPhail Center for Music  
Adjunct Lecturer, St. Catherine University