

**CENTRAL AREA EDUCATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL**

Baltimore County Public Schools  
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**To: Baltimore County Board Of Education****Date: October 20, 2003****From: Central Area Educational Advisory Council****RE: Pre-Budget Hearing Report**

The pre-budget hearing for the Central area was held on October 16, 2003 at Dumbarton Middle School.

We have prepared this report for your review and consideration. We have organized the report into the following three sections and attached an appendix that contains the written testimony of any speakers who provided such testimony:

- I. Introduction -States the purpose and highlights major issues of concern
- II. Information and Summarized Testimony -Statistical information about the hearings and excerpts from the testimony of individual speakers by school category or issue where appropriate.
- III. Summary and Recommendations

**I. INTRODUCTION**

**A. Purpose**—The Central Area community voiced their concerns about what they believe the priorities should be for the next operating budget for their school system. The pre-budget hearing serves as the primary opportunity for citizens to express their opinions directly about the budget. We urge the Board to give careful consideration to the testimony and recommendations in this report. Giving serious consideration to citizen input maintains the Board's connection to the community it serves and contributes to a high quality educational system for our children.

**B. Issues**-- We have listed the issues presented in priority order, provided a rationale along with the Council's recommended action for that issue. We believe these items require the Board's immediate attention and should considered priority items for funding in the next operating budget.

1. **Salary Increases for Teachers and School Staff** - In order to attract and retain quality staff in a time of increasing competition salary increases for teachers and staff are needed. The state of Maryland hires approximately 8,000 teachers a year. The colleges in MD produce only 2,500 teachers a year. We recruit in 17 different states, hiring approximately 1,000 teachers each year. We are in fierce competition for hiring the brightest and best for our children not only within Maryland but outside of MD as well. It is essential that salaries keep pace with other area school systems if Baltimore County Public Schools are to remain a quality system.

③ **Recommendation: Provide funds for salary increases for teachers and school staff to attract and retain quality staff**

2. **Limited English Proficiency** – At the secondary level, there are four main ESOL Centers at county schools. Two-thirds of the county's middle school ESOL students attended Dumbarton Middle School. This is ¼ of their school population. Most of these students are unable to participate in the after school programs because of transportation. Dumbarton is not their home school and many are on a bus for up to an hour in the morning and afternoon. They

are limited in their ability to become an integrated member of their school community, not only by their language skills, but also by their geographical distance from the school they attend. Additionally, due to the time spent on buses and the language, it is difficult to become part of their neighborhood community. BCPS needs to consider the development of the adolescent as a whole. Additionally, the growth of the ESOL program in elementary schools is having an impact on adequate staffing for the program. While Stoneleigh Elementary Schools has 55 ESOL students with a full time ESOL teacher Rodgers Forge Elementary School has 45 ESOL students with a half-time time ESOL teacher. Adequate staffing of the ESOL program at all levels is needs. As this very diverse population continues to grow, BCPS needs to assess how to best meet the needs of this population – especially in light of NCLB.

③ **Recommendation: Create ESOL programs for secondary students at their home schools**

③ **Recommendation: Increase staffing for ESOL programs at all levels**

3. **Reduction of class size/adequate staffing-** Class size continues to be a concern of our community. While acknowledging the reduction in elementary school class size that began this year, many are still concerned over class size and having adequate staffing. The dollars spent to reduce elementary school class may well be balanced by minimizing the need for remediation in middle and high school.

③ **Recommendation: Reduce class size by funding more class teachers and either change the formula used to calculate class size or, at minimum, give flexibility to provide additional teachers in schools where particular grades experience large class sizes.**

③ **Recommendation: Have community forum to discuss class size and its formulation so that community is aware of the many aspects that influence class size ratios. Class size reduction is an ongoing subject at pre-budget meetings. To best serve our community and its concern over this issue, more information on it needs to be disseminated.**

4. **Career and Technology Education** – The number of students participating in the Career and Technology programs has grown 12% from last year. It now serves approximately 65,000 students. Funding has remained static. Funds need to be preserved at current level at the very minimum to maintain program.

③ **Recommendation: Fully fund the requested 2004-2005 Career and Technology Education budget in order to maintain the quality of the CTE programs.**

5. **Instructional Technology Positions** - The elementary schools represented are pleased with the new IT positions. Our community asked that the positions remain in the budget with a possible increase to making the positions a minimum of ½ time in all elementary schools. They have had a positive impact on the schools.

③ **Recommendation: Maintain current Instructional Technology (IT) positions in elementary schools and provide funding for at least half-time IT position in all elementary schools.**

6. **Gifted and Talented Resource Teachers** – Elementary schools are very pleased with the Gifted and Talented Resource teachers in their schools. They would like to see funding for these positions increased. The resource teachers are providing much needed help with differentiated instructional methods and implementation of the G&T curriculum.

- ③ **Recommendation: Maintain current funding for GT Resource teachers in schools. Consider expanding programs to provide more resource teachers to schools.**

7. **Special Education** – Upon completion of the Special Education Audit recommendations to improve the system are expected. When the recommendations are approved and implemented many of them will have a financial impact on the operating budget.

- ③ **Recommendation: Set aside funds for beginning implementation of Special Education Audit recommendations.**

8. **Kindergarten** – Kindergarten concerns were addressed. Rodgers Forge expressed a need to expand to all day Kindergarten. While the Citizen Advisory for Special Education representative advocated that while full day kindergarten is being implemented that the Special Education kindergarten classes need to be extended to full day also. Finally, as the phase in of full day kindergarten occurs, the issue of adequate space becomes more important. The State Superintendent for Education expressed in a recent meeting on MSA that in schools where lack of space is an issue for implementing full day kindergarten that school systems may be allow to contract with private companies to provide full day kindergarten. This is an area of great concern especially in the Central area where adequate facilities are lacking for implementing full day kindergarten. This issue needs to have close attention paid to it.

- ③ **Recommendation: Monitor carefully the implementation of full day Kindergarten in the Central Area.**

9. **Diversity in Staffing** – Concern was expressed over lack of diversity in school staffing at many of our schools. Our school staffs need to be reflective of our community at large, giving our children the benefit of learning that all kinds of people can teach them much and well.

- ③ **Recommendation: Baltimore County Public Schools should develop a plan of action to hire teachers that are not only highly qualified but reflective of our diverse county population.**

On a final note, several school addressed facility issues that need to be address by the Capital budget. We forward these concerns as well and ask that the appropriate personnel review them.

We commend the Board for their continuing support of the Advisory Councils and for their commitment to an open, inclusive budgetary process. As always, we thank you for your time and effort on behalf of all the students in the Baltimore County Public Schools.

cc: Dr. Joe Hairston, Superintendent  
Dr. Christine Johns, Deputy Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction  
Dr. Robert Haines, Deputy Superintendent of Business Services  
Merle Audette, Chief of Staff  
Dr. Kim Whitehead, Central Area Executive Director  
Barbara Burnopp, Executive Director of Fiscal Services  
Donald Krempel, Executive Director of Physical Facilities  
Vicki Schultz-Unger, Coordinator of Area Educational Advisory Councils  
Jim Smith, Baltimore County Executive  
T. Bryan McIntire, Third District County Councilman  
Vincent J. Gardina, Fifth District County Councilman  
Joe Bartenfelder, Sixth District County Councilman  
Kevin Kamenetz, Second District County Councilman

Kenneth Oliver, Fourth District County Councilman  
Samuel Moxley, First District County Councilman  
John Olszewski, Sr., Seventh District County Councilman

## II. INFORMATION AND SUMMARIZED TESTIMONY

### A. Statistical Information

Central Area Educational Advisory Members Attending:	5
Total Number Attending:	43
Number of Speakers:	16
Number Submitting Written Testimony Only:	2
Number of Schools Represented:	13
Number of Special Groups Represented:	5

### B. High Schools

#### 1. Carver Center for Arts and Technology

- ☞ Provide instrumental music program

#### 2. Dulaney High School

- ☞ Increase teacher salaries to hire and retain highly qualified teachers
- ☞ Consistent use of technology as means of communication between home and school
- ☞ ESOL programs in home schools to better serve students

#### 3. Hereford High School

- ☞ Increase pay for food service workers

#### 4. Towson High School

- ☞ Increase teacher salaries to hire and retain highly qualified teachers

### C. Middle Schools

#### 1. Cockeysville Middle School

- ☞ Funding for adequate staffing to reduce class size; particularly for challenged students

#### 2. Dumbarton Middle School

- ☞ ESOL programs in home schools of secondary school ESOL students to better serve students

#### 3. Ridgely Middle School

- ☞ Increase teacher and staff salaries to hire and retain highly qualified teachers
- ☞ Consistent use of technology as means of communication between home and school

### D. Elementary Schools

#### 1. Hampton Elementary School

- ☞ Continue to fund new student to teacher ratios to lower class sizes
- ☞ Continue to fund new Instructional Technology positions
- ☞ Increase teacher and administrator salaries to hire and retain highly qualified teachers

## **2. Pot Spring Elementary School**

- ☞ Continue to fund new student to teacher ratios to lower class sizes
- ☞ Increase in ESOL population means a need for increase in funding
- ☞ Increase teacher salaries to hire and retain highly qualified teachers

## **3. Rodgers Forge Elementary**

- ☞ Reduce class sizes to optimize student learning
- ☞ Fund all day kindergarten at school
- ☞ Increase in ESOL population means a need for increase in funding
- ☞ Continue to fund Gift and Talented program in school
- ☞ Continue to fund new Instructional Technology positions Stoneleigh Elementary School
- ☞ Increase teacher salaries to hire and retain highly qualified teachers
- ☞ Increase in ESOL population means a need for increase in funding

## **4. Stoneleigh Elementary School**

- ☞ Increase teacher salaries to hire and retain highly qualified teachers
- ☞ Increase in ESOL population means a need for increase in funding

## **5. Timonium Elementary School**

- ☞ Increase funding for Gift and Talented Resource teachers in school
- ☞ Increase funding to new Instructional Technology positions so that every elementary school has at least a ½ time position
- ☞ Increase teacher salaries to hire and retain highly qualified teachers
- ☞ Ask for all funding that is needed to provide a first class education for students of Baltimore County Public Schools

## **6. Villa Cresta Elementary School**

- ☞ School needs diversity in staffing

## **E. Career and Technology Education Advisory Council**

- ☞ Continue funding Career and Technology budget at current level in order to maintain CTE programs.

## **F. Citizens Advisory Council for Gifted and Talented**

- ☞ Increase teacher and in school staff salaries to hire and retain highly qualified teachers and staff

## **G. Citizen Advisory Council for Special Education**

- ☞ Set aside funds for beginning implementation of the anticipated Special Education Audit recommendations.
- ☞ Special Education kindergarten classes need to be extended to full day.
- ☞ Provide adequate funding for special education programs

## **H. Elementary and Special School Nurses – Baltimore County Chapter**

- ☞ Salary increase needed for nurses in school system in order to hire and retain quality nurses for schools

## **I. PTA Council of Baltimore County**

- ☞ Increase teacher salaries to hire and retain highly qualified teachers and staff
- ☞ Reduce class sizes to optimize student learning
- ☞ As the phase in of full day kindergarten occurs, the issue of adequate space

becomes more important. This is an area of great concern especially in the Central area where adequate facilities are lacking for implementing full day kindergarten. This issue needs to have close attention paid to it.

### **III. FACILITY CONCERNS**

#### **A. Carver Center for Arts and Technology**

- ☞ New addition to expand program offerings

#### **B. Dumbarton Middle School**

- ☞ Hole in ceiling of auditorium
- ☞ Window frames in lobby need replacing
- ☞ Sprinkler system not up to code
- ☞ Lack of proper exterior lighting

#### **C. Ridgely Middle School**

- ☞ Needs auditorium

#### **D. Timonium Elementary School**

- ☞ Needs new windows and doors

### **IV. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

With the submission of this report and attached testimony, the Central Area Educational Advisory Council strives to fulfill its mission. We have provided community input to the Board of Education as requested with the expectation that the community's concerns will be heard. In our advisory capacity, we urge the Board of Education to do the following as it formulates the operating budget for next year:

- **Provide funds for salary increases for teachers and school staff to attract and retain quality staff**
- **Create ESOL programs for secondary students at their home schools**
- **Increase staffing for ESOL programs at all levels**
- **Reduce class size by funding more class teachers and either change the formula used to calculate class size or, at minimum, give flexibility to provide additional teachers in schools where particular grades experience large class sizes.**
- **Have community forum to discuss class size and its formulation so that community is aware of the many aspects that influence class size ratios. Class size reduction is an ongoing subject at pre-budget meetings. To best serve our community and its concern over this issue, more information on it needs to be disseminated.**
- **Fully fund the requested 2004-2005 Career and Technology Education budget in order to maintain the quality of the CTE programs.**
- **Maintain current Instructional Technology (IT) positions in elementary schools and provide funding for at least half-time IT position in all elementary schools.**
- **Maintain current funding for GT Resource teachers in schools. Consider expanding programs to provide more resource teachers to schools.**
- **Set aside funds for beginning implementation of the anticipated Special Education Audit recommendations.**
- **Monitor carefully the implementation of full day Kindergarten in the Central Area.**
- **Baltimore County Public Schools should develop a plan of action to hire teachers that are not only highly qualified but reflective of our diverse county population.**