

SE Area Educational Advisory Council
Pre-Budget Hearing Minutes
October 18, 2005

The meeting was held at Sollers Point Technical High School in the Quad. Members of the SE Area Educational Advisory Council in attendance were: Boyd Crouse, Alex Crouse, Steve Crum, Robert Berkshire and Sandra Skordalos. Also in attendance was SE Area Assistant Superintendent, Jean Satterfield.

The public portion of the meeting began at 7:05 PM and was well attended by members of the Board of Education (Tom Grzynski, John Hayden and Luis Borunda), the superintendent's staff, the SE area principals and the community. There were approximately 60 concerned stakeholders in attendance.

The meeting commenced with salutations and introduction by the SE Area Educational Advisory chair, Sandra Skordalos. This was followed by the stakeholders addressing the council and attendees by elaborating on issues of concern for the new operating budget. There were five speakers from the PTSA and faculty at Dundalk High School. Each addressed concerns that were not only relevant for improving the success of students at their school but also the success of students across the county. The first speaker was Lauren Magnuson who addressed the concern of appropriate staffing of nurses. She extolled the virtues of the nurse at DHS and listed the overwhelming demands of her position. It was opined that an assistant or even another nurse be given to facilitate the needs of Dundalk High School's population of over 1400 students many of whom are low-income.

The second speaker, Loretta Gentile, presented the benefits to students and consequently student performance of adequate health care.

Anita Glinski, a parent of a student at DHS requested funding to update technology in the science department, specifically, wireless tablets, blue-tooth technology, lap top computers and multimedia projector systems. She related the need to the changing structure of jobs in the market. Without knowledge and use of this new technology, our students will not be as competitive as others.

Tephany Blackburn, a teacher at DHS expressed the concerns of the teachers at Dundalk as well as in other schools related to conducive testing environments. She suggested that other Maryland systems, such as Harford County, adjust the transportation schedule for HSA/MSA testing days to allow for students who are not testing to arrive at school 3 hours later. It is believed that this practice has helped to improve scores in Harford County.

Linda Wrenn, the librarian at DHS presented the need for additional staffing in most libraries across the county including Dundalk HS. There are suggested guidelines that are based on population for the number of librarians and clericals in each school. She related that adequate staffing would help to improve standardized test scores. Additionally, she discussed the need for updated technology in the elementary schools.

Fred Theiss, PTSA president at Sparrows Point High School spoke on behalf of the president of the middle school PTSA who was unable to attend. The issue of concern is the lack of a School Resource Officer dedicated to the middle school. At the present time there is one SRO for both the middle and high schools. Although the number of students may not seem to warrant another officer, there are unique circumstances with having both schools in the same building that necessitate another officer.

Cheryl Bost, TABCO president addressed several salient issues from staffing to day to day operations. Her first concern is the understaffing of special education teachers, instructional assistants and clericals

for inclusive special education. A more specific request involving staffing relates to the need for another assistant principal at Patapsco HS. As far as needs on a daily basis, fans for hot and humid days were requested, more Scantron machines per school for the proper collection of data were suggested, and a closer examination of the contract with Océ copy machines to consider more cost-effective alternatives. Ms. Bost also discussed the ranking of Baltimore County teacher's salaries within the state. We are currently ninth for new teachers and even lower for veteran teachers. Finally, she mentioned the impact of our pension system on the retention of teachers.

Bob Berkshire, council member and PTSA liaison for DHS reiterated the necessity of improving technology in the schools. He emphasized the need for faster processors as well as additional hardware on which to train our future workforce leaving Baltimore County Schools so as not to disadvantage them in the job market.

Jeanie Jung, former member of the Board of Education also emphasized the need to improve teacher's salaries as well as providing incentives to teachers who teach in the more difficult schools. Another concern of Ms. Jung's was the funding of arts programs. She spoke about the purchase and maintenance of musical instruments.

Steve Crum, council member and CTE Coalition member discussed the importance of career and technology programs and the viable options these career preparatory programs provide for the students who are not college bound.

Following Mr. Crum's presentation the public portion of the meeting was closed at approximately 8:00 by Mrs. Skordalos and members of the audience were invited to remain for the business portion. It was announced that the next SE Area Educational Advisory Council meeting would be held in February at Dundalk Middle School and the invited guest will be the Superintendent, Dr. Hairston.

The business portion of the meeting commenced at approximately 8:10. In attendance were the council members, Jean Satterfield and Jeanie Jung. The meeting ensued with a discussion of the topics presented and categorization of these topics. The council decided that the topics could be summarized as issues concerning salaries for teachers, staffing, technology, HSAs and transportation, and special programs such as CTE and the arts.

It was decided that either Steve Crum or Sandra Skordalos would present the concerns at the next board meeting if possible.