

Draft of Minutes
Southwest Area Educational Advisory Meeting
Halethorpe Elementary School
December 14, 2005

Student led individual tours begun approximately 6:30 pm.

Council Attendees: Brian Bailey, Elizabeth Lee, Elizabeth Lilly, Sharon Loving, Sam Macer, Lisa Orens, Christina Parr, Dr. Manuel Rodriguez, Susan Wilken
Other in Attendance: Approx 40

Meeting called to order at 7:17 pm by Jill Bordenick, Principal.

Thanks extended to all in attendance. The following introductions were made: Russell Pratt, Halethorpe AP; Halethorpe staff (approximately 10, asked to stand); tour guides (fourth grade peer mediators); SWEAC members; Dr. Rodriguez and Susan Wilken from Area Office; Principals and APs from other area schools (approximately 10, asked to stand); BOE members and local dignitaries; Sally Fricke, Halethorpe PTA President; and Nancy Andrew Kyle, Halethorpe Counselor recently named Maryland State Counselor of the Year.

Lisa Orens extended thanks to the school for hosting and to the students for the tours. She remarked that the format of this meeting was modeled after one hosted by the Northwest Educational Advisory Council as an opportunity to gather with elected officials for a discussion about continued support of public education in the area.

Presentation begun approximately 7:45 pm: Councilman Sam Moxley

Sam remarked that he spoke earlier with Ken Oliver explaining that Mr. Oliver might be unable to attend due to a need to have a bill on the floor in the morning.

Sam indicated the County Council has set education as a number one priority – “we need the boys and girls to become leaders and pay *our* Social Security”. Sam went on a tour with Frank who in Sam’s opinion is an amazing student, one example of the great job being done with students in the community. Sam remarked that he always makes a point to stop in the restroom when he visits a school since it is his opinion that children cannot be expected to perform when they are adults if they are not given guidelines. If a public school has poor lighting or is dirty, a message is sent to children that they are not important. [The bathroom here sent a good message, with a question regarding the umbrella.]

Sam explained there is currently a bill that will hopefully pass Monday evening December 19 dealing with adequate public facilities. Overcrowding according to the state is when a school is at 115% capacity. When new construction projects are awarded, only one project and its impact on overcrowding is viewed. However, there could be multiple projects occurring simultaneously that would all impact one school. With this bill, the County Council is saying, “we must look at all development.” This not only helps prevent overcrowding situations but also encourages developers to work with the County.

Sam expressed that facilities should be a place where teachers can teach, students can learn, and of which parents can be proud. He extended his thanks to all involved parents.

Presentation begun approximately 7:32 pm: Senator Delores Kelley

Delores indicated she represents the 10th district, which includes northwest and southwest schools. She affirmed comments made by Sam Moxley in his presentation, indicating she believes the County Council to be on target in its support of education. She herself is a retired college professor so education is a primary concern and commitment.

Delores remarked that the state of Maryland began to disaggregate testing statistics due to the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) act. She indicated this to be a poor design of research because one student affects all subgroups of which he or she is a part (e.g., free or reduced lunch, ethnic group). A child with an IEP (individualized education program) has a conflict: disability law says the child must be given special accommodations while NCLB says no accommodations are to be made. There is work being done to have the disability law take priority when the two are in conflict.

Delores is one of seven delegates looking for national pilots/models to consider for Maryland (e.g., looking to Denver, Colorado where the system gives stakeholder groups input allowing for better disbursement of scarce resources such as masterful teachers). Consideration is being given to self-driven programs because they empower people to strive to reach their goals.

Delores commented that some centers are harder to staff and some schools have a harder time getting good subject area professionals. She indicated that teachers in general do not get enough support in their early years and that Maryland is one of seventeen states with no induction program for its teachers; about 40% of trained teachers leave within five (5) years.

Delores added that a contextual situation of concern is the west side of the county as it has more out-of-home students than the rest of the county combined. A large concentration in one area presents a problem – an individual child does not. Circumstances including foster care and group homes result in unrest in both students and school staff (schools have to reestablish plans each year).

All members of the Baltimore County delegation have been active to get legislation passed to aid schools with out-of-home student situations. In the past two years, five bills have been signed into law (but not yet implemented) dealing with the following issues:

- Board of Certification for certification of a group home administrator (there are currently no certification requirements)
- Annual directory of group homes is to be printed and available to elected officials (currently homes can be licensed by three different department)
- Requirement of performance outcome measures (homes may be receiving as much as \$100,00 per year per child but no one is accountable in any way)
- Transfer of academic records between schools made easier (as of October 1, 2005, schools can now use electronic transfer methods such as fax machine)

The state senate goes into session January 11, 2006 for 90 days and topics to be considered include:

- Teacher pensions is expected to be brought by the teachers union (Maryland has one of the worst plans in the nation)
- Medicare “D” is due
- General Accounts office has required all states to go to new accounting system (this carries a \$20 billion liability)

With all the issues that need attention, some of those expected for discussion present a timing issue as the demand for funding is immediate.

Presentation begun approximately 7:52 pm: Michele Moghis

Michele brought the message that she was present to get information to take back to Representative Ben Cardin.

Presentation begun approximately 7:55 pm: Philisha Lane

Quoted from notes provided:

“Foremost, I would like thank the Southwest Area Educational Advisory Council for your advocacy on behalf of the constituents of the Seventh Congressional District.

Congressman Cummings takes great pride in representing our public school system in Congress and in delivering the highest level of service to his constituents.

Congressman Cummings supports federal programs such as the Title I Program and the Federal Pell Grant program which provide valuable resources to our educational institutions and our students. He has nominated our most talented students to our nation’s military academies and brought Dell’s Tech Know program to Woodlawn Middle School. Furthermore, his annual “How to Pay for College’ Seminar has informed thousands of families about the significance of postsecondary education and government financial assistance programs. In addition, Congressman Cummings’ annual Art Competition has honored the artistic achievements of our county’s high school students.

Congressman Cummings and his staff have and will continue to support the Baltimore County Public School System and its students.

Thank you.”

Presentation begun approximately 7:58 pm: Joseph Pallozzi, BOE

Joe was appointed to the Board of Education (BOE) in August. He extended a special thanks to school staff in obtaining his appointment as many principals wrote letters on his behalf. New BOE initiative has resulted in development of five focus areas: student achievement, staff, facilities, communication, and marketing. Joe has visited ten schools in the SW area since September. Due to his personal profession as a police officer, he looks a safety during his visits.

Presentation begun approximately 8:04 pm: Manuel Rodriguez, SW Area Assistant Superintendent

Manuel remarked that if we do not have safe schools and instructional leadership, we will not have what is necessary to meet adequate yearly progress (AYP) and the criteria is getting tougher. The BCPS Blueprint for Progress requires the curriculum to contain rigor, relevance and relationship. He extended thanks to teachers for all they do. He affirmed that we will achieve a positive direction as charged by the Superintendent.

Closing remarks from Lisa Orens

Lisa was asked to announce that Senator Kelly’s husband was putting together a science fail at Morgan State University and that information was available for anyone interested, perhaps in getting his or her students involved. She wished all a happy holiday season.

Presentation portion of meeting adjourned approximately 8:10pm.

Business meeting called to order at 8:29 pm by Lisa Orens

Council Members in Attendance: Brian Bailey, Elizabeth Lee, Elizabeth Lilly, Sharon Loving, Sam Macer, Lisa Orens, Christina Parr, Dr. Manuel Rodriguez, Susan Wilkins

Others in attendance: Rob Lesnevich, Cindy Saathoff

A. Member discussion:

1. Welcome to Elizabeth Lilly, student rep from Lansdowne HS. Kiera Thomas will also be joining the council and will be representing Woodlawn HS; although Lisa has been attempting to contact her, concerned that she may have replaced Gabrielle as the student rep to the BOE. Christina Parr is a junior at Catonsville HS and Nathan Price II is a senior at Western School of Technology.
2. Rob Lesnevich and Cindy Saathoff may also be joining.
3. Reported that Anita's term ended in 2004 per Brenda Stiffler.

B. Old Business - None

C. Other.

1. Lisa forwarded a request for participation on a committee concerning policy 1070 regarding Parent Involvement. Sam currently serves on this committee but likely in a PTA capacity. Sam indicated the policy is based on PTA national standards.
 - a. Dr. Rodriguez reported that no campus in the southwest has an action plan for parent involvement. He suggested that no two campuses will have the same parent involvement need and that local PTAs should be contacted to assist with development of an action plan beginning with one goal relevant to seven research points. He indicated his belief that with focused purpose and measure of whether parents were involved, schools could make modifications to goals to achieve desired results.
 - b. Sam requested that the referenced research study and author be shared and questioned the possibility of following up with school principals to get action plans. Dr. Rodriguez has mid year conferences scheduled with principals and will remind them during this time.
2. Sam remarked that BOE members recently visited some southwest community schools and suggested that perhaps council members could be notified and even invited to join BOE members on such occasions. Brian suggested contacting Brenda Stiffler. Dr. Rodriguez reported there is a visit scheduled for Friday December 16 to Lansdowne ES, MS and HS, and to Relay ES and Riverview ES where he will be joining BOE members.
3. Elizabeth questioned volunteer opportunities at schools, indicating she has been informed by other parents that some school seem unwelcoming to the point of rejecting volunteers.
 - a. Elizabeth Lee questioned who would set goals, indicating that some schools do not appear to want volunteers therefore making it difficult for parents to have an idea of where improvements might be necessary. Dr Rodriguez indicated the parents should set goals. Sam stated that parents have the "right" to visit classrooms. Elizabeth responded that, within the BCPS system, there seems to be an unequal level of volunteerism as some schools just do not seem to want to allow parents in. Sam suggested responding to parents making these claims that they take opportunities such as this meeting to report issues to the council to have them recorded in minutes that are submitted to the BOE and furthering that with visits to

BOE meetings to make verbal reports specific with detail regarding which school(s) appear to be limiting volunteer opportunities. Dr. Rodriguez requested that he be given the first opportunity to address this with specific schools by referring parents first to his office.

- b. Lisa advised that another dynamic in volunteering is the dynamic between the teacher and the parent and that confidentiality is a huge issue. The principal of a school has a need to balance volunteer opportunities and student confidentiality.
 - c. Dr. Rodriguez requested that additional occurrences be documented so data is available. It is an expectation from the Superintendent to allow volunteers to be present in schools.
 - d. Lisa suggested the process should be to first talk to the principal and if further action is necessary to address it with Dr. Rodriguez. Dr Rodriguez confirmed that due process and protocol should be followed.
4. Elizabeth requested assistance from Dr. Rodriguez' office in her communication efforts with the Magnet Office. She indicated she has been attempting to organize the April meeting regarding "Magent Schools: Does the SW area need one?" and that after a phone call and an email has received no response. Dr. Rodriguez asked that she consider sending one more email with a copy to him. The message should include her phone number and a time line for anticipated response. In questioning Elizabeth regarding who she has been attempting to contact, Elizabeth indicated she received David Lukes as a contact name. Dr. Rodriguez suggested the email to the Magnet Office also include a copy to Dr. Christine Johns.

D. Sam announced that January 27, 2006 is an annual Meet & Greet with the PTA

E. Sharon provided a brief update on the boundaries committee, reporting that a flyer and questionnaire have been developed, and that a community forum is planned for Wednesday, January 18 at 7pm at Woodlawn HS.

F. Elizabeth Lilly announced that Lansdowne HS had a blood drive scheduled for Friday December 16 and wondered if Dr. Rodriguez would be able to donated during his visit.

Business meeting adjourned approximately 9:04 pm.

Next scheduled meeting is a joint councils meeting on Thursday January 19,2006 at the Greenwood Campus ESS building at 7:00p.m. followed by a local meeting Wednesday February 15 at Woodmoore ES.

Respectfully submitted,
Sharon Loving
Secretary, SW Education Advisory Council