

Southwest Area Educational Advisory Council

Operational Pre-budget hearing Minutes
October 18, 2006 Woodlawn High School

Opening:

The operational pre-budget hearing of the Southwest Area Educational Advisory Council was called to order at 7:20p.m., on October 18, 2006 at Woodlawn High School by Robert Lesnevich.

Present:

Board of Education members: Joseph Pallozzi, Ramona N. Johnson, John A. Hayden III, Warren C. Hayman

Boyd Crouse, Co-coordinator, Area Educational Advisory Councils

Lisa Sampson, Assistant to the Assistant Director for the Southwest Area

Barbara Burnopp, Executive director, Financial Services

Southwest area Educational Advisory Council members:

Rob Lesnevich, Beverly Lindsey, Sharon Loving, Sam Macer, Lisa Orens

A Poem read by President, 100 Strong Male Role Models

B Speakers:

1. Jackie Gibson, PTA president, Parent, Dogwood Elementary School

Issue: Overcrowding. Dogwood Elementary School has over 600 students every year. Capacity is 486. Chadwick and Featherbed Elementary Schools Hillcrest and Catonsville Middle School are getting Additions. Dogwood should get one also. Dogwood has 4 kindergarten Classes and 1 teaching Assistant. The average class size is 28 students per class. Kindergarten students need more assistants to help provide structure in the classroom. She is forming a committee to explore this issue and work with the Board of Education.

- 2 Nancy Ostrow, First Vice President, PTA council\

Issue: PTA Council supports having tech support staff in every school county wide. They urge the Board of Education to maintain competitive teacher salaries. New teachers in Baltimore County have salaries among the top 5 in Maryland. Seasoned teachers' salaries have dropped in rank. PTA council would

like to have sound enhancement systems in every school. Urge to Board of Education to reduce class sizes.

3. Catherine Fu, PTA member, Westowne Elementary School PTA

Requests an Aide in every kindergarten classroom. Notes that 5 & 6 year old ratio is 15:1 per state child care licensing regulation & Westtown ES has 1:26 ratio for Kindergarten class.

4. Barbara Gough, Westtown ES, Vice President PTA:

Issue: Requests new HVAC, window units or at least fans to reduce heat problem. Notes health issues from heat, student performance issues.

5. Scott Morton, Westtown ES, PTA:

Issue: 1. Requests assistant kindergarten teachers to reduce teacher/student ratio to acceptable ratio. Currently there are 26 students in kindergarten class and no assistant.

2. Requests funding for teacher development in the area of gifted and talented education.

6. Shantel Briscoe, President, Winfield ES PTA:

Issue: Overcrowding. Enrollment is up and new student are still coming to the school. In the 5th grade 2 classrooms held 35 students each. After a new teacher was added the classes are now 28 students each, and grade and Kindergarten are overcrowded also. She fears Windsor Mill Middle School will quickly become overcrowded also.

7. Amy Brown, Hillcrest ES, PTA

Issue: High enrollment and ongoing development result in overtaxed support staff and facilities, particularly the school nurse guidance counselor and lunchroom worker. Also request an aide in each Kindergarten Classroom. The original restrooms need upgrades and renovation. On 9/28/2006 PTA sent letter to Board of Education President Mr. Arnold asking for an update on the plans to alleviate overcrowding at Hillcrest. They have not received a response to date, and are anxious to hear from the Board of Education soon.

8. Natalie Moore, Woodmore ES PTA:

Issue: security issues at school. Unlocked doors and transfers between relocatables and main school building. Requests overhang between relocatables and main building. A "Strange man" was wandering around school property, Police were notified and the man was removed from the property.

9. Julia Graham, Catonsville MS

Issue: Requests funding to reduce class size in middle schools. Her son is in 7th grade G/T and grade level classes with more than 35, some with 40 students. She was informed that double periods for remedial reading, language arts and math have required more staff. Last year Catonsville Middle School had the same situation. A new teacher was added in January. She feels that is too late and asks the Board of Education to develop a better process for staffing.

10. Roxanne Gehne, Parent, Hillcrest & Westowne

Issue: The playground is fairly far from the classrooms and needs a fence to prevent the students from running away. This will make the playground safer from the students and easier for the teacher. The restrooms need renovation because they are too small, and students have to be changed in a window.

11. Doreen Garrett, PTSA President, Woodlawn HS

- Issue:
- 1) Teacher Shortage and resulting large class sizes.
 - 2) Need more funding for safety. Outsiders have caused much trouble.
 - 3) Need Assistants in the classrooms.
 - 4) Notes she is the proud parent of a member of the 100 Strong Male Role Models.

12. Christa Zimmerman, Teacher, Johnnycake Elementary School

Issue: Addressed lack of air conditioning at school. She requests that the Board of Education review policy of not allowing window units. Alternatively, she asked if fans could be provided for classrooms. She presented over 36 letters from 5th grade students complaining of excessive heat. See attached.

13. Thomasine Wells, President, Southwest Academy PTA

Issue: Requests more teachers to alleviate overcrowded classrooms. Students are sitting on windowsills to learn. She asks the Board of Education to please fix this problem.

14. Shayna Orens, 8th Grade Student, Sudbrook Magnet MS

Issue: She plays Viola in the level 3 orchestra at Sudbrook, takes private lessons and is a member of the Greater Baltimore Youth Orchestra. There is no High School instrumental Music Magnet program in the Southwest/ Northwest Area. The County offers the Program at Patapsco High School in Dundalk. Students from the

Southwest and Northwest areas can apply to the program. However, no transportation is available from the Northwest and Southwest areas. The transportation costs would be about \$1440 in tolls and \$1440 in gas. She and her family have considered the Baltimore School for the Arts, which may cost a little less. She requests that The Board of Education consider developing a magnet instrumental music program for high school students in the Southwest and Northwest Areas.

15. Lisa Orens, Parent, Sudbrook Magnet MS

Issue: Reiterated her daughter Shayna's observations. She notes that some students from the Sudbrook Magnet instrumental music programs are zoned for local high schools that don't offer instrumental music.

16. Rhona D. Hoyman, Technical Programs Supervisor, Office of Career and Technology Education, Career & Technology Advisory Council:

Submitted issues, but was unable to attend:

- Continued support of the Academy of Finance program at Randallstown HS
- Continued support of EMS/Fire Rescue program at Woodlawn HS
- Implementation of Project Lead the Way pre-engineering program at Middle River MS, Deep Creek MS, Chesapeake & Woodlawn HS
- Update Child Care labs at 12 high schools
- Textbooks for implementation of the new MSDE mandated technical education credit needed for HS graduation
- Purchase new mobile lab to serve all middle schools
- Purchase instruction material and equipment to support CTE programming
- Support continuing education for CTE teachers.

Hearing Adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Business Meeting convened at 8:20 p.m.

Members present: Rob Lesnevich, Beverly Lindsey, Sam Macer, Lisa Orens

Community members present: Roxanne Gehne, Bassam Sayad

C. **Parents comments**

Bassam Sayad, Parent, Southwest Academy

Concerned that Southwest Academy has failed to make AYP for 2 years. If they fail for a third year, the school will be in corrective action, and teachers will have to re-apply for their positions. He has been pleased with the teachers. Sam Macer asked if parents have been notified of a plan to improve the students test scores. He explained that the process is complex and that parents need to be involved and informed. At Woodlawn Middle School, parents were informed in December. Mr. Sayad asked about what happens with the students who are performing well in terms of the corrective action process.

SAM will be attending a 10 state conference focused on Failure the Meet AYP. Mrs. Gehne was impressed with the improvements at Woodlawn High School.

Rob Lesnevich asked if the process through which Hillcrest Elementary School is getting an addition is fair. Can the County Council allocate funds for this kind of improvement? The Hillcrest Elementary School held a meeting in October of 2005. The office of strategic Planning presented their projection figures. At that meeting County Councilman Moxley announced that the County Council would provide funds for an addition at that school. Rob asked if the Southwest Area Advisory Council can write a letter to the County Council to ask for an explanation of the process. He added that throwing money at the problem may not be the best solution, and that all the options need to be examined.

Communications: Question raised as to whether or not the flyer was sent to the schools, Rob explained that he received it via his child's backpack. He also emailed the local newspapers

D. New Business

Pre-budget Hearing: The council briefly reviewed the issues presented

1. Security
2. Classroom aides
3. Overcrowding

Future Meeting Topics: Beverly Lindsey would like to have a presentation about the High School Assessments. Council felt that would be a good topic for the February 21, 2007 meeting. Rob will contact the MSDE for a speaker.

For the April meeting, Council discussed having a Southwest Area Update, including renovations and short cycle assessments.

The suggestion was made to try to plan the 2007-2008 meeting schedule at our May meeting. This would allow more time to promote the meetings.

Beverly Lindsey expressed interest in sitting on the Calendar Committee this year.

Sam Macer announced that BCPS now has an official process for volunteer training.

Adjournment:

Meeting was adjourned at 9:25p.m. By Rob Lesnevich. The next meeting will be at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, December 13, 2006 at Hillcrest Elementary School.

Minutes submitted by: Lisa Orens

Approved by: Robert Lesnevich