

**SOUTHWEST AREA EDUCATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL TO THE  
BALTIMORE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Capital and Operating Pre-Budget Hearing

Wednesday, October 17, 2007

Western School of Technology and Environmental Science

**Members Present:** Lisa Orens (Chair), Brian Bailey, Veronica, Magwood Burton, Beverly Lindsey, and Sam Macer.

**Board of Education Attendees:** Joseph J. Pallozzi (1<sup>st</sup> Councilmanic District) and John A. Hayden, III (5<sup>th</sup> Councilmanic District)

**Total Attendance:** 40 (Approximately)

**Speakers:** 13

**Hearing called to order at 7:05 PM** by Lisa Orens, Chair, who stated the purpose of the meeting is to take concerns of parents, students, community members, teachers, staff, etc. regarding budgetary items back to the Board of Education.

Joe Pallozzi, 1<sup>st</sup> Councilmanic District Representative to the BCPS Board of Education, was recognized.

Appreciation was expressed to Richard Jester, Principal, for hosting the meeting.

*Each speaker received 3 minutes and was called to address the group in the order that they signed the sign-up sheet:*

- **Joan Swiston, Director, Baltimore County Tech Prep Consortium:**
  - o Thanked the Board of Education for their continued support of the Career and Technology (CTE) budget. Requesting full support of the proposed CTE budget. Specific budget priorities include:
    - Continued implementation of revised state graduation requirements for Technology Education programs;
    - Increase student achievement by correlating career complete program and CTE course indicators with the HSA's, Industry certification, and accuplacer assessments. Conducting professional development in those areas;
    - Increase achievement through career information initiatives;
    - Increasing opportunities for participation in safe structured work-based experiences;
    - Repair, replace and service CTE lab equipment, thus promoting safe schools;
    - Improve efficient use of resources by implementing procedures to make data driven decisions; and,

- Continued support of use of resources for the MSDE fast track and model CTE programs.
- **Roy Shaw, PTA President, Baltimore Highlands Elementary School**
  - The existing HVAC system has been replaced, but that system only serves part of the school. Temperatures approached 100 degrees, and then remained that hot for days. Students were lethargic and inattentive. The situation is unacceptable.
- **Cindy Standinger, Parent, Hebbville Elementary School**
  - Concerned about extreme heat in classrooms. Son has autism, is very high functioning. When classroom is hot he cannot concentrate, gets sleepy and doesn't feel well. If the County wants to increase the number of students in full inclusion, then the needs of these students, as well as all students, must be met. Hot classrooms greatly affect students with asthma, and pregnant teachers. The situation is unhealthy for everyone in this school. Hebbville Elementary is a brick building, when the weather gets hot; the building gets even hotter inside. If air conditioning is not possible, are exhaust fans an option?
- **Fay Davenport, Teacher, PTA President and Parent, Hebbville Elementary School**
  - Each year she has concerns for her children and her students because of the heat. Realizes that the Board of Education recognizes the importance of student achievement and effective instruction. And that environment has a great effect on student behavior, academic progress and ultimately achievement. Asks that we send the students of Baltimore County the message that their education, academic progress and their school are as important as every other school in the county. Asks that Hebbville be included in the budget this year for air conditioning.
- **Katyrh Davenport, Student, Hebbville Elementary School**
  - Really likes school, but when it is hot it is not fun. When kids get hot and sweaty, they get cranky. It is hard to learn. Opening windows doesn't always help, bees and flies come in. Hebbville would be a much nicer place to learn if it was air conditioned. Please help Hebbville Elementary School.
- **Natalie Moore, PTA President, Woodmoor Elementary School**
  - Asking for more Kindergarten Aides and 1 more kindergarten teacher. With 30 students, the teacher needs more help. Thanks the Board of Education for the new windows at Woodmoor.
- **De'Ja Lewis, Student, Woodmoor Elementary School**
  - She has asthma, as do many of her classmates. She has missed a lot of school when it is hot. She has a hard time concentrating on school work

when it is so hot. She needs to be in school every day. She is asking the Board of Education to please help her and other students suffering with asthma by installing air conditioning at Woodmoor Elementary School.

- **Shari Gray, Speech Pathologist, Hebbville Elementary School**
  - Requesting Air Conditioning for Hebbville Elementary School. Collected comments from students. Responses included that the heat interferes with their ability to concentrate and learn, reduced their energy level, and makes them just want to go home. One student was hospitalized due to dehydration.
  - Comments from teachers included observations of similar effects on students as those mentioned above. Teachers said they could not focus on instruction, and also suffered from dehydration and exhaustion. Pregnant teachers were impacted: One fainted, and one was dizzy and missed 2 days of school. Medical conditions were compounded by the heat. Teachers observed that achievement decreased as the heat built up in the school. She finds it is like teaching in an oven. Long after the weather cools down, the classrooms stay hot.
  - Comments from parents included concern for medically fragile students and the impact of heat on achievement. One parent explained that their child had to be taken out of school several times because of asthma. The student required breathing treatments that caused hyperactivity, thus hindering the students' academic success.
  
- **Susan Katz, President, PTA Council of Baltimore County**
  - Encouraging the school system to continue to integrate sound enhancement technology in each classroom, including purchasing the equipment and training teachers on its use. This is part of the National PTA legislative platform. Recruitment and retention of the highest quality teachers is essential to increasing student achievement and success. Technology Support personnel should be in place in every school. Support personnel like bus drivers, cafeteria workers, etc. deserve adequate compensation and benefits that enable them to earn a living wage.
  
- **Laura Thacker, 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Teacher, Hebbville Elementary School**
  - Cited Research by Herrington in 1952, finding that temperatures above 80 degrees produce harmful effects in humans that decrease work and efficiency output. In September, a resource teacher from Greenwood observed her class. After 10 minutes she left because the heat was unbearable. She and her students had to remain the whole day. 27 of the first 36 days of school the high temperature reached 80 degrees or more. Indoor temperatures climb above 90 degrees. Problems with the windows

create a ‘greenhouse effect’. In 1960, MacDonald found that adding air conditioning to classrooms yields positive results. Student performance behavior and attitude improve. Teachers work patterns improved. Research in 1964 by Stuart and Curtis supported these findings. Asking that the Board of Education find the funds to provide air-conditioning for Hebbville Elementary School.

- **Sheila Harris, Parent, and Philip Harris, former Student, Hebbville Elementary School**
  - o Quoted students: “it was hot and sweaty and some people became stinky.” Her son Cameron, age 7, said” It feels like you are going to blow up, or melt like cheese in a microwave!” Her son Philip was excited about the opportunity to help his school get air conditioning. Described headaches and difficulty breathing in hot classrooms because the heat aggravated his asthma. Recommends that the PTSA and parents work together to raise funds to help purchase air conditioning for Hebbville.
  
- **Ann Stockbridge, Teacher, Baltimore Highlands Elementary School**
  - o Requesting air conditioning. Student achievement will increase by providing a comfortable environment. Average temperature in the classrooms is 92 degrees. Lack of cross ventilation intensifies the situation. Asks that the Board of Education be equitable and make all of the Baltimore County Schools air conditioned.
  
- **Brian Neal, Teacher, Hebbville Elementary School**
  - o There are 532 known gangs exist in the Liberty Road Corridor. When Hebbville Elementary School has been semi-locked down because of gang activity near the school, the heat in classrooms was unbearable. Leaving windows open was not possible because it would compromise students’ safety.
  
- **Nancy Brigante, Principal, Maiden Choice School**
  - o Thanks the Board of Education of Air Conditioning and renovations last year. Maiden Choice still needs wider doorways. The sinks and doorways are still not accessible for their student population. Each year their population becomes more disabled. Currently 60 to 70 % of students are in wheelchairs and/or have mobility issues.
  
- **Speaker, Philip Harris, Student, Woodlawn Middle School**
  - o Asking for Air conditioning at Woodlawn Middle School. Requesting more magnet programs. Also, students need more support and coach classes for academic subjects.

**Hearing adjourned at 8:05 PM.**

**Please note:** Hard copies of some of the speeches were submitted to the Council to be presented to the Board of Education with the minutes from this hearing. Those documents will be mailed to Ms. Stiffler.

Respectfully submitted:

Lisa Orens, Chair  
Southwest Area Educational Advisory Council