

**Southeast Area Education Advisory Council  
Meeting Minutes September 12, 2011**

Meeting called to order: 7:12PM

Advisory Council Members: Bill Bafitis, Jackie Brewster, Steve Crum, Sandra Skordalos & Bud Staigerwald

Attendees: None

Presenters: George L. Sarris (BCPS Budget Director) Office of Budget and Reporting

Presentation:

Mr. Sarris handed out an overview of the budget process. He explained the different sources of funding for the 2012 capital budget: 104 million from the county, 32 million from the state and 7 million from the alcohol tax. He handed out the 2013 priorities: New Dundalk/ Sollers HS, Millford Mill and Parkville HS Renovations, Continue High School Renovation at Hereford HS, Roof and Window Replacements, Site improvements and New Lutherville Area ES.

He also spoke about the operating budget and that the state will probably be asking the county to pay for their teacher pension program. The cost is \$46 million. We may be asked to contribute \$9 million to start.

Public Questions and/or Comments:

An email was received from Cathy Fialkowski of Middleborough ES PTA on June 8<sup>th</sup>:

Myself and a few parents from Middleborough are on a quest to get air conditioning put in all of Baltimore County Schools. Last week, in the height of the 100 degree days, Tim Tooten from WBAL reported that only 50% of the schools in Baltimore County are air conditioned while surrounding counties are at 98-100%. I contacted Kevin Kamenetz's office to find out why all of our schools are not air conditioned. His Chief of Staff informed us that the children only have to deal with the heat 17 days out of the year. I'd like to know how they came up with 17 days, and trying to make it sound acceptable. Well it is completely unacceptable, and I would like to invite him and Kevin Kamenetz to sit for 1 hour in one of our over-heated rooms, and then tell me it's ok to subject our children to these temperatures and expect them to learn. This has me and other parents in an outrage. We are desperately trying to find a way to get 100% of Baltimore County schools air conditioned, but we're not sure where to turn for help. Kevin Kamenetz's office was not helpful at all. I have started a petition online that I intend to circulate to Baltimore County families and a few parents and I plan to pursue this matter until the County can stop shutting down on hot days and put air conditioning in all of their schools. I have a stack of letters that Middleborough first graders gave me hoping that I can help them get air conditioning. And I have to tell you it broke my heart reading how these children feel about suffering in this heat.

I am tired of hearing how there is no money for this. I am furious that Baltimore County, aside from the City, seems to be the only county in this state that is not 100% air conditioned. And as a Tax payer, I am appalled that it seems that the schools in Baltimore County that do have air conditioning are mainly Title 1 schools. How can certain schools over others be chosen when all of the children are suffering in the heat? The County needs to just put out the money and fix this problem now.

The Baltimore County Board of Education should have a moral obligation to provide a safe environment for our children. In my opinion, 90+ degree classrooms is not a safe environment. Please help us put air conditioning in ALL of our Baltimore County schools, so our children can feel safe, comfortable, and want to continue to learn.

I've emailed a stack of politicians who seem to just give me the same run-around. Do you know of any committees I could possibly hit up for some help? Should I be going to Southeast meetings to find out more? Help.

Mr. Sarris explained that approximately 45% of our buildings are air-conditioned. It would cost approximately \$500 million to \$1 billion to air-condition all of our schools. There are some facilities that it would be more cost effective to build new buildings rather than try to retrofit the old structure for air-conditioning. The schools that received air-conditioning this year were chosen because they were easier and less costly to complete.

Recently in the news Peter Franchot has been stating that there is money to air-condition all school building. Mr. Franchot will be addressing Middleborough ES PTA and parents on Monday, September 19<sup>th</sup> at 5:15PM. Advisory council members were invited to attend.

The SE advisory council requested numbers to share with everyone regarding the schools that need air-conditioning and the cost of providing air-conditioning for those schools. We understand that during this hard economic time that air-conditioning is not a high priority. In a time when we needed to draw on the reserve to get the budget through, it is not feasible to add air-conditioning to our buildings. The public needs to hear the numbers involved in order to understand that this is an extremely costly matter.

Mr. Sarris stated he will compile those numbers and get back to us through email.

Presentation Period Ended 8:13PM

#### Advisory Council Meeting

The council met briefly to review:

- The letter received from James P. Mitcherling, Office of Transportation regarding our inquiring into how they select bus companies for field trip use. Consolidated Safety Services, Inc. now monitors this program. Details of the inspection program can be viewed at <http://ptspp.consolidatedsafety.com> . Bus companies that are approved by the Pupil Transportation Safety Program (a nationwide quality assurance program) are placed on a National Approved Carrier list and are available for use by BCPS. Consolidated Safety Services notifies BCPS when a new vendor is approved. The carrier must also become an approved vendor with BCPS. BCPS entered this agreement on April 20, 2010. Of the 35 companies previously used by BCPS, 18 companies have met the new standards.
- ECP brief on Understanding the Common Core Standards.
- The schedule for our 2011-2012 meetings.
- Our October flyer.
- The status of each member on the SE Educational Advisory Council and whether they will be seeking re-appointment or appointment to our advisory council.
- How to encourage new members to join.
- This is the second meeting in a row that no one at the building knew we were coming. We had to go around the outside of the building looking for a custodian to ask them to open the building for us. I will contact Ms. Stiffler to confirm our meeting dates and contact the principal of the building the day before our meeting.
- For our meeting at Sollers Point Tech. next month Ms. Skordalos will contact the principal to set up our dinner and make sure he knows we are coming.

Meeting Adjourned: 8:48PM

Next meeting: October 10<sup>th</sup> Dinner 6PM, Sign up 6:30PM and Testimony begins 7PM at Sollers Point Technical HS – Pre-Operating Budget