

**Southeast Area Educational Advisory Council
Pre-Operating Budget October 10, 2011
Minutes**

Meeting called to order: 7 PM

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

Attendees: Roger Janssen (Board of Education), Maria Lowry (Chesapeake HS – Principal), H. Edward Parker (Board of Education), Dale Rauenzahn (Executive Director Student Support Services), George Sarris (Director Budget & Reporting), Tom Shouldice (Dundalk HS – Principal), Harry Walker (Sandy Plains ES – Principal), Michael Weglein (Sollers Point Technical HS – Principal)

Speakers:

John Redmond (TABCO)

“We all understand that we are living in tough financial times. These are the most difficult times any of us have ever seen in our lifetimes. It is hard to know which programs are necessary and which programs can be cut to the bone or even eliminated. Even now there are some programs at the core of our democracy that need to be bolstered to help alleviate the underlying problems. Public education is one of those fundamental programs. If we want an educated, employable, knowledgeable and forward thinking population, we must have an outstanding well-funded public school system. Our children are the future of our country, and now is not the time to short change their potential.

We need to keep any cuts that are deemed necessary to the education budget as far away from the school house as possible. We need to keep the full teaching force with no reductions as our student population increases. We need to make sure that we have sufficient resource teachers to maximize individual student support and the overall quality of instruction.

The public in survey after survey, year after year, is willing to pay for public education. This is not the time to take cutting scissors to our education budget. We doom our children to a gloomy future and our country to failure.”

Debbie Smith (Dundalk HS - PTSA President)

“Dundalk has made great academic and social strides in the last three years in part due to the additional financial support from BCPS. This support and the hard work of our teachers, students, and parents have made a significant difference in the school and the community. We realize that this is going to be a difficult economic year for Baltimore County. We also want the progress at Dundalk to continue. This year, Dundalk’s operating budget was reduced by 5% and the school had a net loss of 14 teachers. This has meant larger class sizes at all levels and fewer resources with which to help individual students.

For next year’s budget, we request that there be no further reduction in the staff at Dundalk. In addition, we request that the school receive the necessary maintenance of effort operating funding to continue to make progress. We don’t want to see the investment in Dundalk reversed.

On another note, we want to thank the Board for their continued support of the construction of the new Dundalk Sollers Point High School. Construction is on schedule for the school to open in the fall of 2013. We want to invite everyone to swing by the school to see this stellar project. It is going to be truly amazing and a jewel for our community.”

Jackie Brewster (Charlesmont ES – PTA Treasurer)

- “BCPS to consider setting aside money for each school to purchase costly technology supplies (for example projector bulbs) to maintain their technology equipment/ replacement computers.
- Our school is in need of a kiln for our art classroom. We have been on a list for several years to receive our kiln from the art office. Our students are not able to complete projects in the elementary art curriculum.
- We also would like to request – for long range planning – our need to replace the window blinds throughout the school as the blinds are in need of repair and/or replacement. This should be a BCPS maintenance consideration and not a responsibility of the local school’s budget.
- As the PTA treasurer I am getting more and more requests for basic school needs like reeds for clarinets. Budgets are getting cut, but programs need to continue. More and more schools are looking for their PTAs to pay for more items, but the PTAs are also having financial issues as more and more families are without jobs and therefore cannot participate in fundraisers. I would like to see the board come up with other methods than cutting 5% from every school to deal with these hard economic times. Most schools were already working with less. Now it is cutting into very basic needs.”
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Jackie Brewster (Patapsco HS & CFA - PTSA Secretary)

- “No more reductions in staff
- Ceiling mounted projectors and Promethean boards or similar equipment in all our classrooms. Technology is ever changing and a separate budget account needs to be added to all schools for maintenance and upgrades to all buildings. The type of technology is vastly different between schools. It is unfair for one school to be state of the art while at other schools teachers need to share equipment.
- New seating, sound system and curtains for our auditorium
- New serving lines for our cafeteria
- Plumbing replaced, so we have clean water in our building
- Lights and stands for our athletic fields because we cannot charge admission as other high schools can do
- Air conditioning throughout our building.”

“I have heard that our parking lot is scheduled to be resurfaced finally, so thank you very much. We have also heard that this may be placed on hold; hopefully the project will begin soon.

I heard that there will be some upgrades done to the auditorium, but I do not believe that it includes a full sound system upgrade or seating.”

Steve Crum (Career & Technology Education Advisory Council)

Career & Technology is preparing students for careers right after high school. Learning that occurs at school is used directly out of school. Students need these programs. Please support fully funding these programs.

Testimony portion adjourned: 7:20PM

The SE advisory council met briefly to discuss the priorities for our area and approved the September minutes. During our discussion three questions arose:

1. What will happen to the technology at Dundalk and Sollers Point Tech. when the new school opens? Does it move to the new building? Is it distributed to other southeast high schools?
2. We understand that these are hard economic times, but we do not want to see any additional teacher cuts. Where are all of the teachers who were cut from our local high schools? Are they currently teaching in other schools? Are they teaching students, performing other duties, or joint teaching with other teachers? Did we increase class sizes in some schools just to have teachers waiting in other buildings for teaching positions to become available for them?
3. When it comes to staffing and teachers, what percentage of teachers are actually directly teaching students? Since teacher salaries are the largest portion of our budget, are all of these teachers directly working with students?

We appreciate the attendance of the Board of Education members and the school system personnel at our meeting. We welcome their future attendance at our meetings.

Special thanks to Mr. Weiglein, Mr. Sheehe and the students of Sollers Point Tech. HS for hosting our dinner and preparing a delicious meal. It is always a pleasure to see our students being prepared for their future.

Meeting adjourned: 8:40PM