

**Southeast Area Education Advisory Council
Meeting Minutes November 12, 2012**

Meeting called to order: 7 PM

Advisory Council Members: Bill Bafitis, Jackie Brewster, Bonnie Saul & Sandra Skordalos

Attendees: Heather Buse (Title 1 PSC & PTA President), Vicky L. Ciulla (Berkshire Principal), Mary Ann Clinton (Berkshire AP), Matthew Corner (Chesapeake HS AP), Krista Gibson (parent), Wanda Porter (PTA Council AVP SE) & Leigh Squires (PTA Treasurer)

Presenters: Cathy Allie (Assistant Superintendent), Karen Blannard (Assistant Superintendent), Sharma Gregory (Assistant to the Assistant Superintendent), Cathy Thomas (Assistant to the Assistant Superintendent), and Verletta White (Assistant Superintendent)

Presentation:

There are 105 elementary schools, 4 special schools, 1 early childhood center and 1 public charter school under their supervision. 45 are Title I schools and 7 are magnet schools.

Southeast area is becoming very diverse and so is BCPS. FARMS went from 49.79% in 2001-2002 to 65.18% in 2011-2012. We are still doing very well. 86% of the kindergartners are fully ready for school based on the Maryland Model for School Readiness (MMSR). Dynamic Indicators of Basic Literacy Skills (DIBELS) the kindergartner's composite score 82.3% at benchmark. MSA reading has improved by 30% over the past 10 years. The same thing can be said about the MSA math scores.

Blueprint 2.0 focuses on Academics, Safety, Communication and Organizational Effectiveness.

Curriculum: Primary Talent Development (k-2), Reading Language Arts, Related Arts (Specials), Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.

There is core instruction and supplemental instruction. It is not unusual to have a teacher working with one small group and another adult working with another small group in the same classroom.

BCPS is making sure students are College/ Workforce ready. Common Core standards go beyond our state and across the country. They also focus on teaching across disciplines.

The elementary superintendents each supervise 37 schools. Public Questions and/or Questions/Comments:

It was asked how they manage to cover so many elementary schools. They each have an assistant. They try to visit two schools a day. They also use email and the have principal meetings once a month.

Do students that attend Pre-K score higher on tests? Have these programs been cut? Acceptance into the Pre-K program is based on need. If the program is full at their home school and their child qualifies the parent can take them to another school where there are still openings.

Question regarding the number of hours spent on social studies in the elementary level. It seems as though since it is not a tested area, we are not spending as much time on it. There is a recommended schedule. It does include social studies. It is hard to fit everything in the elementary school day. This is one of the areas that may be improved by teaching reading across with materials that include social studies topics.

Do they teach spelling? Yes they teach spelling. It is connected to the phonics word patterns and learning to read.

Algebra is the gateway to success. Kids who take calculus are more successful in college. Are they focusing on the GT kids? The decisions made in elementary school effect

whether a student will be able to take calculus in high school. Are the elementary teachers aware the impact of their decision on whether or not a student is GT or not? GT is a fluid process in third through fifth grades. Students move in and out of the program.

Do they still teach cursive? Students must write a section of their SAT test in cursive. Yes they do. They teach it in second grade and reinforce cursive in their grade.

There was a concern over the volunteer screening process. Why isn't there a background check? They do not believe that the child molester website check is enough (especially on field trips, because there may be no other direct supervision). They believe there should be a criminal check as well.

Small group met to talk about air conditioning and safety concerns regarding their parking lot (lack of crossing guard, small parking lot, no places for parents to park so they line the street and no one can see, etc.) at Berkshire ES.

Presentation Period Ended 8 PM

Advisory Council Meeting

September & October minutes were approved.

There was discussion regarding why the joint advisory council meeting in October was canceled. I was told by the coordinator that it was because Mr. Schmidt was unable to meet with the chairs ahead of time. We do not understand why such a meeting needed to take place as the joint advisory council meeting could have served this purpose. Our meeting scheduled on January 2012 was also canceled. It is becoming very frustrating that we are not allowed this interaction with the school board. I was told that the coordinator would be sending out an email to request our input. Once again we want to know how the joint advisory coordinator is chosen. We do not believe our coordinator is relaying our questions and concerns to the board. We do not believe that we are being properly represented. We believe that the area councils should have been asked to give input as to who they wanted for their coordinator. If this lack of communication continues, you will continue to lose area councils. As reported at the last board of education meeting, both the central and northeastern councils are no longer functioning.

We also spoke about the dangerous arrival and dismissal problems that were related to us by the PTA president of Berkshire ES. I do not understand why there is no crossing guard. I also do not understand why this matter of school safety has not been addressed in a timely matter.

Meeting Adjourned: 9 PM

Next meeting: January 14th 7PM at Dundalk HS – Our New Superintendent Dr. Dance