

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HOWARD COUNTY

January 22, 2008

The Board of Education of Howard County held a Public Hearing on the Superintendent's Proposed FY 2009 Operating Budget on Thursday, January 22, 2008, at 7:30 p.m. in the Board Room of the Department of Education, located at 10910 Route 108, Ellicott City, Maryland. The following were present:

Frank J. Aquino, Chairman
Ellen Flynn Giles, Vice Chairman
Lawrence H. Cohen
Sandra H. French
Patricia S. Gordon
Diane B. Mikulis
Janet Siddiqui, M.D.

Sydney L. Cousin, Superintendent, Secretary/Treasurer
Sandra Erickson, Deputy Superintendent
Patti Caplan, Director, Public Relations
Florence Jackson, Recording Secretary

Chairman Aquino called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m., and Dr. Siddiqui led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Hearing – Superintendent's Proposed FY 2009 Operating Budget

Mr. Phillip Sandborn, Student, Wilde Lake HS; Representative, Science Advisory Committee (SAC)

- Thanked the Board for its support of the MSDE (Maryland State Department of Education) grant awarded to HCPSS to promote science interest to Howard County students (a plan known as the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) initiative.
- Thanked Dr. Cousin and the Board for continued support of the elementary and secondary science budget.

Ms. Shannon Jones, Student, Glenelg HS

- Spoke in support of funds on behalf of all school media centers.

- Noted that media centers have many resources, including computer labs, portable laptops, television studios, magazines, up-to-date fiction and non-fiction collections, and reference books.

Mr. Ben Vaughn, Jr., Student, Atholton HS, and G/T Advisory Committee Member

- Requested full funding of the Superintendent's proposed budget.
- Provided information related to his experience with the G/T program.
- Stated that full funding of the budget would benefit not only students involved in the G/T Education Program, but also every student in HCPSS.

Mrs. Karen Groner, Parent

- Expressed full support of the Superintendent's Proposed FY 2009 Operating Budget.
- Spoke in support of Technology Resource Teacher positions.
- Asked the Board for additional materials of instruction (MOI) funding for additional technology resources for schools.
- Requested funding for additional technology positions in middle and high schools.

Ms. Linda Lagala-Spano, Library Media Advisory Committee

- Spoke in support of the Superintendent's Proposed FY 2009 Operating Budget, referencing funds allocated to the Media and Educational Technology budget.
- Thanked the Board for completing the funding of Media Paraeducators in the FY 2008 Operating Budget.
- Requested that the \$400,000 line item stipulated for replacing audiovisual equipment not be cut.
- Requested that the funding for equity, which will enable collection upgrades in older schools, as well as smaller schools, be preserved.
- Asked the Board to support the per-pupil allotment for books, AV materials, and supplies.

Mr. Gary Toller, Science Advisory Committee

- Thanked the Board for its continued support of the elementary science program.
- Spoke in support of the Superintendent's Proposed FY 2009 Operating Budget.

Ms. Susan Webster, President, Howard County Administrators' Association, and Principal, Triadelphia Ridge ES

- Spoke in support of the Superintendent's Proposed FY 2009 Operating Budget.
- Stated that the budget includes numerous items that will enhance and improve the achievement of students as it addresses needs at each school level, as well as systemic needs.
- Indicated that the budget includes a multitude of important items to keep students learning at the high levels expected by county residents.

Ms. Mary Jane Grauso (on behalf of Ms. Diane Matuszak), School Health Council

- Spoke in support of the Superintendent's Proposed FY 2009 Operating Budget.
- Thanked the Board for continuing to support programs that ensure a safe and nurturing school environment.
- Supported funding to add four cluster nurses to complete the cluster model and one secretary to the Health Services office.
- Expressed support for the addition of two school counselor positions.
- Supported funding for Psychological Services requests.

Mr. Michael O'Donnell, Mathematics Advisory Committee

- Spoke in support of the Superintendent's Proposed FY 2009 Operating Budget.
- Thanked the Board for their past support for the math program.
- Thanked the Board for their past support of Mathematics Instructional Support Teacher (MIST) positions and asked for more funding for additional teachers.

Ms. Arvinder Goomer, Parent

- Thanked the Board for their continued support of international students and families.
- Stated that it is imperative that children are equipped with the right tools and education so they can adapt and conquer as technology shrinks the world.

Dr. Ben Dorman, Special Education Community Advisory Committee (SECAC)

- Spoke in support of the Superintendent's Proposed FY 2009 Operating Budget.
- Requested more funding for Assistive Technology.
- Requested additional funding for Summer Services.

Ms. Kelly Meissner, Parent, and SECAC Vice President

- Expressed appreciation for the Board, Superintendent, and Department of Special Education for their willingness to hear from parents on issues that affect them most.
- Requested that the Board support the new position of LD/ADHD coordinator that is currently in the budget.

Ms. Julie Foley, Parent, and SECAC Member

- Spoke in support of the budget for the Office of Special Education.
- Noted the need for access to programs offered at the ARL (Applications and Research Laboratory) for special education students, which includes a modified curriculum, trained teachers to provide the appropriate level of support, and encouragement/behavioral support for students with special needs.
- Discussed the importance of student assistants, who help special education students stay in typical classrooms, and expressed the need for these assistants to be employed by HCPSS.

Ms. Kimberly McKay, Parent, and SECAC Member

- Spoke in support of the budget for the Office of Special Education.
- Supported the increase of student assistant positions.
- Supported the increase in the budget for early intervention staff to work in community preschool settings.
- Supported the LD/ADHD coordinator position and cluster nurse funding.
- Thanked Dr. Jim Walsh and Ms. Patty Daley, Office of Special Education, for their excellent working relationship with SECAC.

Ms. Stephanie Maric, Parent, and Howard County Autism Society Co-President

- Spoke in support of the budget for the Office of Special Education.
- Supported the increase in student assistant positions.
- Supported the increase for additional teachers and paraeducators.
- Supported the four paraeducators to facilitate teacher planning time in the preschool MINC programs.
- Supported the need for three Extended School Year (ESY) teachers.
- Thanked Dr. Walsh and Ms. Daley for the creation of the MINC-EL program.

Ms. Laura Shovan, G/T Advisory Steering Committee

- Spoke in support of the Superintendent's Proposed FY 2009 Operating Budget.

- Spoke in support of full funding of the Gifted and Talented program budget.

Mr. Chris Wertman, CAC Chairman

- Commented on concerns regarding funding for the position of Assistant Superintendent for Communication.
- Commented on the Leadership Intern Program and offered suggestions for ensuring that the program is effectively designed, implemented, and evaluated.
- Agreed with the concept of utilization of eight positions for HSA interventions but expressed concerns regarding the implementation and execution of interventions, objectives of interventions, and measures of merit to determine the value of adding intervenionists.
- Expressed concern regarding the projected estimate of 700 additional students in grades 1-5 and asked for better understanding of actual and projected enrollments.
- Expressed the need for well-defined objectives and measures of merit for new programs.
- Expressed the need for clearly defined and effectively evaluated Return on Investment (ROI) of existing legacy programs.
- Requested that the budget be presented in an "easy read" format for the general public.

Mr. Rick Tinker, Parent; Technology Advisory Committee Member

- Thanked the Board and Superintendent for their support of technology initiatives, and asked for continued support.
- Discussed the importance of different areas throughout the school system that need constant technology attention.

Ms. Mary Jane Grauso, President, PTACHC; Ms. Vicki Imre, Ms. Ginger Segala, Ms. Terri Chiu, and Mr. Nehemiah Spence, PTACHC Members

- Thanked Mrs. Giles and Mrs. French for providing a three-hour tutorial on the Operating Budget.
- Recommended that the Board consider changing the timeframe for public testimony next year to a later date.
- Asked that HCPSS and the Board consider having two budget formats:
 - State criteria.
 - Strategic initiatives and current educational programs.
- Indicated that the Operating Budget for HCPSS must provide funding for:
 - Academic performance for all students.
 - Instruction.
 - Leadership intern training, staff retention, and recruitment.

- Technology.
- Communications.
- Maintenance/improvements of school facilities.
- Health and safety in all schools.
- Transportation.

Ms. Ann DeLacy, President, Howard County Education Association (HCEA)

- Thanked the Board for honoring the Negotiated Agreement between the Board of Education and HCEA.
- Asked the Board to insure that any additional mandates that result in additional workload be off-set by the removal of other items.
- Suggested that the Board reinstitute the HCEA/HCPSS Workload Group.
- Asked the Board to consider expanding and enhancing the Teacher Resource Center located at Faulkner Ridge.
- Asked the Board to continue and enhance support for National Board Certification and the utilization of those who have been National Board Certified.
- Asked the Board to reconsider the structure of Cradlerock School.

Ms. Sunhee Kim, Parent

- Testified in support of International Student and Family Services.
- Asked the Board for increased funding for additional liaison positions and to implement programs for the International Office.

Ms. Heidi Strominger, Student Services Advisory Committee

- Spoke in support of the Superintendent's Proposed FY 2009 Operating Budget.
- Advocated for the continued movement by the Board toward the recommended staffing ratio of one counselor to every 250 students.
- Spoke in support of adding four cluster nurses and one secretary to the Health Services Office.
- Spoke in support of the Psychological Services budget addition of one school psychologist position.
- Spoke in support of the Alternative Education budget request.
- Requested that the current level of funding for Pupil Personnel Services be maintained.

Ms. Nannette Schweitzer, President, HC Chapter - Learning Disabilities Association of America

- Requested approval of the LD-ADHA Coordinator position.
- Spoke about the effects of learning disabilities on society.

Ms. Donna Weaver, Parent

- Asked the Board to approve the LD-ADHA Coordinator position.
- Requested full funding of the proposed budget.

Ms. Caryn Lasser, Atholton HS PTSA President

- Spoke in support of the Superintendent's Proposed FY 2009 Operating Budget.
- Stated that the budget supports the negotiated agreement for staff while conservatively and responsibly planning for future needs across HCPSS.

Proposed budget work session schedule:

- Public Work Session I – Tuesday, January 29, 2008 (7:00 p.m.)
- Public Work Session II – Tuesday, February 5, 2008 (1:00 p.m.)
- Public Work Session III – Wednesday, February 13, 2008 (7:00 p.m.)
- Public Work Session IV – Tuesday, February 13, 2008 (1:00 p.m.)

Different categories of the proposed budget will be discussed at each work session. Information on the budget can also be found on the HCPSS website.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m. by the Chairman.