

APPROVED
6-2003

Rockville, Maryland
January 22, 2003

The Board of Education of Montgomery County met in special session at the Carver Educational Services Center, Rockville, Maryland, on Wednesday, January 22, 2003, at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL Present: Mrs. Patricia B. O'Neill, President
 in the Chair
 Ms. Sharon Cox
 Mr. Reginald M. Felton
 Dr. Charles Haughey
 Mr. Walter Lange
 Mr. Gabe Romero
 Dr. Jerry Weast, Secretary/Treasurer

Absent: Mr. Kermit V. Burnett
 Mr. Mihyar Alnifaidy, Student Board Member

Re: **FY 2004 OPERATING BUDGET HEARING**

The following people testified before the Board of Education:

1. Suzanne Costilo, Blair Cluster
2. Bill Waller, Kennedy Cluster
3. Barbara Shulman and Emily Rosenberger, Einstein Cluster
4. Teresa Taylor, Wheaton Cluster
5. Shirley Brandman, Whitman Cluster
6. Pam Moomau, Walter Johnson Cluster
7. Lauren Mercado Rhim, Bethesda-Chevy Chase Cluster
8. Jerry Heupel, Stephen Knolls Parent Staff Association
9. Bob Astrove
10. Joan Sabaka, McNeeds
11. Kathryn Ramsperger
12. Joyce Whang
13. Lyda Astrove
14. Carla Satinsky, League of Women Voters
15. Dr. Paul Durand
16. Reda Sheinberg, Emotional Disability Action Group
17. Philip Lemburg
18. Jill Lyons
19. Jay Larson, Special Ed Voters.Org
20. Judy Docca, NAACP
21. Susan Scofield, Gifted and Talented Association
22. Kay Romero, Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

23. Anna Forbes Towns, Montgomery County Community Action Board
24. Ricki Sabia, Special Education Continuous Improvement Team
25. John Hesse, East County Citizens Advisory Board
26. Linda Rigsby
27. Kimberly Harris, Montgomery County Alliance of Black School Educators
28. Sharon Bourke
29. Richard Huffman and Tina Burke, Montgomery County Educational Media Specialists Association
30. Kathy Beland, Character Education Partnership

The Board of Education asked the following questions:

1. Mr. Felton referred to Mr. Waller's testimony and asked staff to give the Board talking points on the per-pupil expenditures. What are the real dollars? How is that dispersed among the student body? It is important for the Board and the community to understand what the school system's per-pupil expenditures really are in comparing dates and the programs MCPS has to provide.
2. Ms. Cox asked for information on the plan in the downcounty consortium (DCC) to cover the roll out or the expansion of the ninth grade academies, especially regarding Northwood coming on line.
3. Ms. Cox inquired about sharing staff between the Northeast and Downcounty consortiums regarding the articulation process. Could there be information on the plan for deployment of staff and the sharing of the work load?
4. Mr. Lange referred to Ms. Costilo's testimony on community outreach, and the eighth graders choosing their high school in their first year in the consortium. With the identified staff, how will that happen?
5. Mr. Lange wanted the identification of where MCPS was having problems with counselors who discourage students and, in effect, hold them back.
6. Regarding Ms. Shulman's testimony, Mr. Romero asked what the current budget was for each of the DCC schools, and how do these relate to each school's programs. He understood that there was \$1.9 million available for the DCC, and he wanted to know how that was implemented in this budget. Can there be a breakdown?
7. In Wheaton's testimony, Ms. Cox noted the concern that all-day kindergarten, first and second grade class-size-reduction initiatives, staff development positions, and the academic intervention teachers were in jeopardy of being cut. It was her impression that the same level of staffing was recommended for next year's budget. Staff affirmed that she was correct.

8. Ms. Cox asked about the ESOL reduction, and what other positions in the high school would have to assume those responsibilities. Could there be specific information on what the duties are, and what other positions would assume the duties? What would be sacrificed by assuming those duties?
9. In Bethesda-Chevy Chase's and Walter Johnson's testimony on reduced funds for textbooks, Ms. Cox noted that the budget added \$3.1 million for textbooks, but there are reductions for instructional materials in elementary and high schools. She asked for an explanation of the overall impact on textbooks and instructional material. Mrs. O'Neill requested that the answer be forwarded to those two clusters.
10. Ms. Cox asked for the number of kindergarten classes with 25-plus students that do not have an instructional assistants assigned to them.
11. Mr. Felton asked the clusters what their opinion was on tax increases to support high quality education in the county.
12. Mr. Lange asked for the percentage of counselors' time that is devoted to administrative responsibilities that could be given to other competent staff.
13. Mr. Lange asked about encouraging writing throughout the curriculum. Is there a provision, similar to the composition aides, for support of teachers?
14. Dr. Haughey asked for clarification on changes and costs contemplated in the LAD program.
15. Mr. Romero referred to the ratio of speech therapists to students. What budget increase would be needed to lower the ratio to 50 to 1, 40 to 1, and, in Ms. Lyons testimony, to 35 to 1 for preschool?
16. Mr. Lange wanted a summary of Ms. Astrove's comments about the memorandum of understanding between MCPS and MSDE regarding the autism waiver.
17. Regarding Mr. Lemberg's testimony about the Chinese Immersion program, Mr. Lange wanted a summary report of the grants mentioned and what would be necessary to sustain the life of those grants.
18. Ms. Cox wanted information on how the 15 special education reading teachers that were added to the budget last year through the Thornton funding were deployed.
19. Ms. Cox asked for an explanation of the discrepancy between the transportation costs projected for the Chinese Immersion program in the December 20 memorandum from the superintendent versus the grant proposal that was prepared

on August 20.

20. Ms. Cox asked for information about the redesign committee strategies that Ms. Sabia referred to in her testimony on improving relationships between parents and special education teachers. What are the strategies? What are the resources necessary to implement the strategies?
21. On the issue of transferring funding from Safe and Drug Free Schools to Title I, Ms. Cox asked what the impact would be on the projected budget for Title I if that money was not transferred.
22. Mr. Felton noted that there were several options offered for Chinese Immersion. He was not sure those options were legal, and he asked staff to ascertain if there could be problems.
23. Mr. Felton referred to several organizations and their concerns over Fast Start. He asked for clarification on where the school system was in making decisions on this proposal.
24. Mr. Felton heard that there was concern about community superintendents and their perceived lack of ownership for special education programs. He wanted a description of the role of the community superintendent made available to the community.
25. In terms of the Safe and Drug Free Schools program, Mr. Felton stated that while the federal law allows MCPS to transfer the dollars to Title I, it does not take away the school system's responsibility for meeting the objectives of the Safe and Drug Free Schools program. How will those objectives be met in the absence of funding?
26. Mr. Felton thought there should be some commentary on the concerns regarding recruitment and retention of speech therapists.
27. Mrs. O'Neill said there had been a memorandum from the superintendent on the costs associated with starting an upcounty gifted center for middle school students. She asked that those costs be included in the budget answers.
28. Mrs. O'Neill referred to the MSDE grant that was given to start a second Chinese Immersion program. What is the background? Is it use or lose by June 30? What additional support (staff and costs) is associated with the immersion program at Potomac Elementary School? Are there special costs not covered with grants?

The meeting adjourned at 10:05 p.m.

PRESIDENT

SECRETARY

JDW:gr