

APPROVED REPORT

REPORT OF THE PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR 2007 OPERATING BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS

Wednesday, January 25, 2006
Ridge Ruxton School

The hearing was called to order by President Thomas Grzyski at 7:00 p.m. In addition to President Grzyski, the following Board members were present: Mr. Donald L. Arnold, Ms. Frances A.S. Harris, Mr. John A. Hayden, III, Mr. Rodger C. Janssen, Ms. Ramona N. Johnson, Ms. JoAnn C. Murphy, Mr. Joseph J. Pallozzi, and Miss Gabrielle Wyatt. In addition, Dr. Joe A. Hairston, Superintendent of Schools, staff members, as well as media were present.

Dr. Hayman entered the room at 7:03 p.m.

The following citizens and employees offered testimony:

- 1) Ms. Patricia Jamerson, Parent – Supports the proposed operating budget for the AVID program. Her son attends Kenwood High School. The program has helped him to excel and become a better than average student.
- 2) Miss Megan Buckner, Student, Woodlawn High School – Supports the proposed operating budget recommendations for the AVID program. Some advantages of the program are college tours, help with tutorials, and enrollment in challenging courses.
- 3) Mr. Corey Green, Student, Woodlawn High School – Asked the Board to fully fund the AVID program. The program has helped him improve since middle school. It is helpful to see colleges, and tutorials help to get better grades.
- 4) Mr. Gary Willow, AVID Coordinator, Woodlawn High School – Supports the proposed operating budget for the AVID program. Woodlawn High School now has 93 students and would like to add another class. Of the group scheduled to graduate this year, thirteen students have already been accepted for college.
- 5) Miss Lindsey Fowler, Student, Overlea High School, and Ms. Marlene Fowler, Grandparent - Supports the proposed operating budget recommendations for the AVID program.
- 6) Mr. Rick Hepler, AVID Coordinator, Overlea High School – Urged the Board to support the proposed operating budget and the AVID program recommendations. The program has a lot of success getting students into more challenging courses. He would like to see the program expanded by one class per year.

Mr. Borunda entered the room at 7:17 p.m.

- 7) Mr. Lloyd Hugh Allen, Teacher, Parkville High School – Requested that the Board create a non-teacher position in every middle and high school, maybe elementary schools, to support technology and be an employee of the Help Desk. He is a math teacher and part time technology liaison.

- 8) Ms. Valerie Berkey, Teacher, Pine Grove Elementary School – Thanked the Board for its support of the Infants and Toddlers program positions and for converting 10-month positions to 12-month positions. As a parent of a child in the program, the Infants and Toddlers program has helped her son and family.
- 9) Ms. Debbie Richmond, Teacher, Towson High School - Asked the Board to consider increasing compensation for new teachers. The pool for new teachers is limited due to the low entry-level pay. Young teachers need additional compensation to keep them in the position.
- 10) Ms. Karen Johnson, Parent – Supports the proposed operating budget recommendations for the AVID program. Her son is a member of the first graduating class from the AVID program at Pikesville High School. She stated it is nice to be able to throw money at success.
- 11) Ms. Suzanne Demallie, Parent – Asked the Board to consider testing sound enhancement technology in low income, high ESOL schools. She believes technology needs to be proactive spending instead of reactive spending.
- 12) Ms. Callie Geller, Parent – Urged the Board to include an extended day pilot program at Lansdowne Elementary School to add 75 minutes to the day. Teachers are great; however, students need more instructional time.
- 13) Ms. Janet Banlaki, Parent – Asked the Board to consider an extended day program at Lansdowne Elementary School by adding 75 minutes to the school day.
- 14) Mrs. Andoh, Parent – Requested the Board consider an extended day pilot program at Lansdowne Elementary School by adding 75 minutes. She noted that after-school programs for students are helpful.
- 15) Mr. Fiores, Parent – Requested the Board add money to the budget for an extended day pilot program at Lansdowne Elementary School. He believes children need more time to learn especially those who speak English as a second language.
- 16) Mr. David C. Besler, AFSCME Executive Board Member – Requested additional funding for higher starting salaries for AFSCME workers, especially grounds workers, bus attendants, and custodians. Custodians make \$1 less compared to their counterparts in county government.
- 17) Mr. Craig Rankin, Parent and Member of the Lansdowne Community Association – Expressed concern with extending the school day at Lansdowne Elementary School. He would like to see the focus on instructional assistants and paid parent helpers rather than adding 15 minutes to each subject.
- 18) Ms. Mary Collette-Muirhead, Teacher, Towson High School – Asked the Board to consider increasing starting salaries of incoming teachers. Ms. Muirhead stated teachers should not be left behind.

- 19) Mr. Scott Olson, Teacher, Towson High School – Requested the Board increase teachers’ salaries. He provided various salary comparisons for first-year and fourth-year teachers with other counties and Pennsylvania.
- 20) Mr. Brody Fredericksen, Teacher, Towson High School – Asked the Board to increase teachers’ salaries. He was in the private sector before and was considering going back to the private sector.
- 21) Mr. Peter Skeels, Teacher, Towson High School – Expressed concern over the teacher transfer policy. Math teachers are difficult to obtain. He encouraged the Board to look at the total compensation package for teachers and ask for more that what has been requested.
- 22) Mr. Harry McNeir, Teacher, Towson High School – Urged the Board to push for competitive salaries for teachers to keep quality teachers in BCPS. He expressed concern that he cannot afford to live in the area that he teaches.
- 23) Mr. Stephen Crum, Chair, Career & Technology Educational Advisory Council – Requested the Board completely fund the career and technology education program (CTE). CTE program offers a variety of programs including health, automotive, cosmetology, legal justice, and human services.
- 24) Ms. Angie Lankford, PTSA President, Parkville High School - Asked the Board to add to the budget a non-teaching technical maintenance support individual in every school. It should be policy that technical support is required as with other non-teaching personnel staffing and funded as part of the budget process. Teachers need to devote their attention to students not repairing computer equipment.
- 25) Ms. Natalie Bailey, AVID Coordinator, Pikesville High School – Supports the proposed operating budget recommendations for the AVID program. The program has made a huge difference for students at Pikesville High School. The program serves as a medium to close the achievement gap. AVID is an avenue that builds self-esteem and confidence.
- 26) Ms. Marcia Mellinger, Student, Pikesville High School – Urged the Board to approve the proposed operating budget recommendations for the AVID program. AVID has helped her in the areas of study skills, test preparation, visiting colleges, and preparing for the PSAT.
- 27) Ms. Judy LaFlame, Parent – Asked the Board to place paid aides in all kindergarten classrooms county-wide, whether full or half-day. Kindergarten is a child’s first school experience, and sometimes they struggle with even simple tasks such as writing and recognizing the letters in their names. Ms. LaFlame presented a proposal to have funds distributed to each elementary school to be used only for aides in the kindergarten class.
- 28) Ms. Tammy Schnydmann, Team Leader, Infants and Toddlers Program – Read a letter to the Board from a parent thanking the Board and Superintendent for the additional positions in the Infants and Toddlers Program. This program has helped her son and family. She hopes positions continue to be added to the program in the future.

- 29) Ms. Jasmine Shriver, On Behalf of Ridge Ruxton PTA – Asked the Board to maintain current resources and staff at this school and requested support of the proposed operating budget. A decrease in the number of students does not necessarily mean that the teaching staff can be decreased. She stated the school system should look at the needs of each individual child.
- 30) Ms. Jan Thomas, Parent – Expressed concern over the student drop-out rate, which has increased to 14%. She stated this area needs to be researched to determine the root cause and address the issue. She was glad to see AVID going to all the high schools and to see the funding efforts in differentiated reading.
- 31) Ms. Kelly Nelson, Parent – Supports salary increases for teaching staff. She stated it is wonderful that a larger number of children are being directed to inclusion programs; however, resources need to be added to support the teaching staff. Ms. Nelson noted that the President decreased all IDEA special education programs by 1%. She thanked the Board for the proposed budget increases in the Infants and Toddlers Program.
- 32) Ms. Dana Shindel, Teacher, Hebbville Elementary School – Asked the Board to place more money in the compensation package. Teachers must be compensated fairly for the professional jobs they perform.
- 33) Ms. Cheryl Bost, President, Teachers Association of Baltimore County – Requested the Board to ask fiscal authorities to fund education at a respectable rate and not “nickel and dime” us. She expressed concern with the school system’s ability to recruit and retain quality educators. Ms. Bost provided statistics on teacher salary rankings within the state. While the system continues to front load the salary schedule, veterans are not rewarded. She also requested the Board to increase the budget for course reimbursement.
- 34) Ms. Pat Everett, Teacher, Riderwood Elementary School – Requested to have a paid para-professional in each kindergarten classroom. The kindergarten program is well written and is contingent upon two adults being in the classroom. Ms. Everett expressed concern that student confidentiality could be compromised with volunteers versus paid aides.
- 35) Ms. Debbie Pueschel, Teacher, Joppa View Elementary School – Asked the Board to fully fund the teachers’ pensions. Teachers continually need to update their skills. With regards to kindergarten classes, she asked the Board to add a paid instructional aide to every elementary kindergarten class.
- 36) Ms. Judy Shane, BCPS Librarian and President of the School Association of Library and Technology – Thanked the Board for the web-based catalogue program. She requested the Board adjust staffing of media specialists to match population. Ms. Shane stated that staffing media specialists should be equal to guidance positions and special areas.
- 37) Ms. Roe Davis, Interagency Coordinator for Infants and Toddlers Program – Supports the proposed operating budget for additional staffing of the Infants and Toddlers Program.

- 38) Ms. Susan Parker, Parent – Asked the Board to place air conditioning in Parkville and other schools in the county. Computers are breaking down because of the high temperature in schools. Ms. Parker stated that maintenance personnel need to be placed in the budget as well as money for better air quality and trained computer experts.

The hearing was concluded at 8:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joe A. Hairston
Secretary-Treasurer

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