

## APPROVED REPORT

### REPORT OF THE PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR 2009 OPERATING BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS

Tuesday, January 15, 2008  
Ridge Ruxton School

The hearing was called to order by President JoAnn C. Murphy at 7:03 p.m. In addition to President Murphy, the following Board members were present: Ms. Donna Flynn, Ms. Frances A. S. Harris, Mr. John A. Hayden, III, Mr. Earnest E. Hines, Mr. Rodger C. Janssen, Ms. Mary-Margaret O'Hare, Mr. Joseph J. Pallozzi, Mr. H. Edward Parker, Jr., Ms. Joy Shillman, and Miss Audrey Dittman. In addition, Dr. Joe A. Hairston, Superintendent of Schools, staff members, as well as media, were present.

The following persons offered testimony:

- 1) Ms. Kimberly Davids, Parent – Her daughter, who suffers from anxiety, has been doing well in the new virtual program piloted by the Home and Hospital program. After being enrolled for several months, the student's grades were brought up while anxiety went down. The Home and Hospital program helps children that cannot function in a day-to-day program.
- 2) Ms. Ann Ritchey, Teacher, Bear Creek Elementary School – Asked the Board to add funding for salary increases for all teachers. She is a veteran teacher of 42 years, and at this point in her career, she would not receive an increase. (Fifty-five individuals stood to support this speaker's position).
- 3) Mr. Lloyd Hugh Allen, Teacher, Parkville High School – Asked the Board for additional computer technicians in the schools. Parkville High School has 678 computers and two liaisons.
- 4) Ms. Jan Thomas, Chairperson, Special Education Citizens' Advisory Council – Thanked Dr. Hairston for returning the lost Third Party Billing funds into the general fund budget. She stated that all these positions are integral to the special education program including the health assistants, psychologists, and social workers. She reminded the Board that special education students have the highest achievement gap, across the board for all categories.
- 5) Ms. Sharon Alston, Parent – Asked the Board to continue funding social workers in the schools. Social workers communicate well with the parents.
- 6) Ms. Velma Pack, Parent – Echoed the comments made by the previous speaker. Asked the Board to continue funding social workers in the schools. Social workers are the connection between parents and teachers.
- 7) Mr. Rob Bentzley, Social Worker, General John Stricker Middle School – Asked the Board to support the Superintendent's budget to continue funding social workers at schools. Mr. Bentzley introduced a parent, Ms. Pat Sutter, who asked the Board to keep the social worker positions in the schools.

- 8) Ms. Christine Whitehead, Parent – Encouraged the Board to continue to keep social workers in schools. Social workers bridge the gap with the parents, who are not in the school during the day.
- 9) Ms. Mayaugust Finkenberg, Social Worker – Supports moving funds from Pass-through and Third Party Billing to the operating budget.
- 10) Ms. Donna Batkis, Parent – Supports the Infants and Toddlers Program. There are only 1,825 days between birth to attendance in the elementary school, and 1,095 days between birth and three years of age. Early childhood assistance is very critical.
- 11) Ms. Michelle Hart, Parent and LLD Chair – Supports the Infants and Toddlers Program. She thanked Dr. Hairston and Dr. Grasmick for continuing support. She noted that the number of children eligible for and receiving services has risen 59% in the past five years. New regulations preventing billing for case management services would mean a cut of \$250,000 in program funding. Ms. Hart asked the Board to consider reviewing the Infants and Toddlers program and possibly replacing these funds.
- 12) Mr. Mike McEwan, Athletic Director, Western School of Technology – Asked the Board to assist with pay increases to retain coaches and athletic directors.
- 13) Ms. Laura Mullen, PTA President at Ridge Ruxton School – Asked the Board to revisit the budget to ensure that there are no staff reductions at Ridge Ruxton School. The school needs additional resources to help with students.
- 14) Mr. Troy Stevenson, Athletic Director, Parkville High School – Asked the Board to improve the salaries of athletic directors. Athletic directors have many responsibilities and are usually at the school until late in the evening. Surrounding LEAs have changed how athletic directors are compensated.
- 15) Ms. Karin Yelovich, Parent – Thanked Dr. Hairston and County Executive Smith for their continued support of the Infants and Toddlers program. The program is wonderful and children should be able to start on a more equal footing with other children.
- 16) Ms. Cynthia Boutin, School Nurse, Deep Creek Middle School – Asked the Board to support funding for health assistant positions in the budget. Health assistants support the nurses to manage all the activities in the school.
- 17) Ms. Karin Hanger, School Nurse, Lansdowne Middle School – Asked the Board to support the health assistant salaries in the proposed operating budget. Health assistants are an integral part of the BCPS health program.
- 18) Mr. David Basler, Grounds Foreman – Thanked the Board for the budget reclassification effective January 1, 2008. He asked the Board to approve the compensation changes for January 2009, step increases for AFSCME, and funding of a living wage for all employees in the operating budget. Mr. Basler urged the Board to consider laundering services for uniforms and to continue funding health care benefits.

- 19) Ms. Susan Allen, Teacher, Parkville Middle School – Asked the Board to place salary increases for all teachers in the budget. (Approximately 100 individuals stood in support of this speaker’s position.)
- 20) Mr. Gregory Rowland, Parent – Supports the Infants and Toddlers program. His child was born three years ago with several complications. Every week he had someone from the program helping his child step by step. She has just graduated from the program.
- 21) Ms. Cheryl Bishop, Parent – Urged the Board to ensure that no special education teacher, social worker, or nursing position at White Oak School is lost in the proposed budget.
- 22) Mr. Gil Meerdter, Teacher, Cedarmere Elementary School – Asked the Board to support pay increases for teachers. (Approximately 80 signs were raised in support of this speaker’s position.)
- 23) Ms. Gloria Collins, President, Baltimore County Instructional Assistants & Clerical Employees (BACE) – Asked the Board to recognize the value of BACE employees by including in the budget a step increase for employees and additional funding in the salary schedule.
- 24) Ms. Christine Beard, Librarian Specialist and Vice-President, Teachers Association of Baltimore County – Requested the Board to adjust the budget by including across-the-board increases for teachers as well as step increases. Some teachers would be bringing home less money without across-the-board increases. (Approximately 80 signs were raised in support of this speaker’s position.)
- 25) Ms. Cheryl Bost, President, Teachers Association of Baltimore County Asked the Board to include raises for all teachers. Only funding step increases would move the county backwards. She stated that 20% of the teachers would take a cut in pay due to no step increase and increases in pension and health insurance. (Over 100 signs were raised in support of this speaker’s positions.)
- 26) Ms. Lora Williams, President, AFSCME Local 434 – Is generally supportive of the proposed budget; however, expressed some concerns. She stated the AFSCME would like to see the lowest-paid employees receive a salary increase and every step receive an increase, too. Employees should not have to work three jobs to support their families.
- 27) Ms. Jasmine Shriver, Representative of the Baltimore County Education Coalition – Supports the proposed operating budget. The coalition is comprised of a variety of individuals from throughout the county. She stated that only 28% of Baltimore County residents have school-aged children; some are in private schools. Teachers need to be paid more to continue doing their jobs.
- 28) Ms. Jamie Zellers, Teacher, Perry Hall High School – Asked the Board to include salary increases for all teachers in the budget. Teachers’ workload increases every year and salaries are not keeping the pace. (Approximately 50 signs were raised in support of this speaker’s position.)

- 29) Ms. Kelli Nelson, Parent – Supports the special education and Infants and Toddlers Program budgets. She also asked the Board to support MSDE’s request for increased funding in the Infants and Toddlers program. Ms. Nelson expressed concern over the possible elimination of the billing for case management services and the impact on the budget.
- 30) Ms. Aimee Therres, Teacher, Eastern Technical High School – Asked the Board to add salary increases for all teachers in the operating budget. (Approximately 30 signs were raised in support on this speaker’s position.)
- 31) Ms. Elizabeth Sabatino, Teacher, Johnnycake Elementary School – Urged the Board to fund salary increases and benefits for paraeducators.
- 32) Mr. Chris McGuinness, Athletic Director, Patapsco High School – Asked the Board to consider adding salary increases in the budget for all athletic directors and teachers.
- 33) Mr. Bill Fitzgerald, County Resident – Urged the Board to re-examine its priorities and add salary increases in the budget for all teachers. (Approximately 25 signs were raised in support of this speaker’s position.)
- 34) Ms. Susan Katz, President, PTA Council of Baltimore County – Urged the Board to show willingness to think “outside of the box” as decisions are made that affect all children. She asked the Board to: 1) place funding in the budget for sound enhancement technology, 2) renew compensation and benefits that enable them to earn an adequate living wage, and 3) support additional funding for technical support staff in every school. (Two signs were raised in support of this speaker’s position.)

The hearing was concluded at 8:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Joe A. Hairston  
Secretary-Treasurer

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