

APPROVED REPORT – 02/10/09

REPORT OF THE PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR 2010 OPERATING BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS

Tuesday, January 14, 2009
Ridge Ruxton School

The hearing was called to order by President JoAnn C. Murphy at 7:00 p.m. In addition to President Murphy, the following Board members were present: Ms. Frances A. S. Harris, Mr. Earnest E. Hines, Mr. Rodger C. Janssen, Ms. Ramona N. Johnson, Ms. Mary-Margaret O'Hare, Mr. H. Edward Parker, and Ms. Valerie A. Roddy. In addition, Dr. Joe A. Hairston, Superintendent of Schools, staff members, as well as media, were present.

Ms. Murphy informed the public that next year there will be at least one week between the proposed operating budget presentation and the public hearing.

The following persons offered testimony:

- 1) Mr. David Basler, Grounds Foreman – Asked the Board to support salary increases. Increasing the minimum wage to \$10 per hour is a good way to bridge the gap to a living wage. Mr. Basler also stated that the proposed salary restructuring is helpful, and he hopes that it will provide equally pay for equal work. If funding is not approved, he asked the Board to consider a regional salary study to address the problem.
- 2) Ms. Cheryl Bost, President, Teachers Association of Baltimore County (TABCO) – Asked the Board to recognize the need for salary increases. Last year, TABCO started the process of getting salary increases; however, there were no COLAs even though, in her opinion, “there was money;” surplus of \$22 million in this year’s budget book shows there was money. Ms. Bost stated that TABCO will work with the Board to encourage the County Executive and County Council to fund the budget. She also asked the Board to meet the needs of teachers’ workload. Teachers can address workload issues that will not cost money, such as reduced testing, ensuring curriculum is aligned, and child grade appropriateness.
- 3) Ms. Eileen Edwards, President, SEIU, and Parent – Asked the Board for salary increases for all employees and also that increased workload be addressed. She also stated that Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) needs a pool of registered nurses to draw from so that no school goes without a nurse on any given day. With specialized medical needs and requirements set by doctors, there is a need for a registered nurse in every school every day. Ms. Edwards asked that five nurse positions be placed in the budget to create a substitute pool.
- 4) Ms. Stephanie Foy, Teacher, Villa Cresta Elementary School – Thanked the Superintendent for advocating for pay increases, and asked the Board to advocate for salary increases and work to make salaries more competitive with other counties. Ms. Foy stated that her salary is no longer competitive with other school districts and that BCPS is falling behind other jurisdictions in the state.

- 5) Mr. Eric Strumsky, Teacher, Dundalk Elementary School – Asked the Board to support school employees with salary increases.
- 6) Ms. Jasmine Shriver, Coordinator, Area Education Advisory Councils – Asked the Board to approve the Superintendent’s operating budget as presented in order to continue to improve education for all students. The Education Advisory Council will work with the Board to support the budget to the County Executive and County Council.
- 7) Ms. Tracy Horch, PTA President, Westowne Elementary School – Asked the Board to fund technology equally for all county schools. She is concerned that while new schools have all the new technological equipment, other schools are suffering. Ms. Horch stated that it is unfair that older schools are left to add only the technology they can afford.
- 8) Ms. Dawn Ingle, Parent, Westowne Elementary School – Asked the Board to set aside appropriate funds for technology improvements to Westowne Elementary School. She would like to see accommodations made for older schools, such as additional LCD projectors, or Prometheus Whiteboards that can be shared among grades. Ms. Ingle also stated that teacher salaries need to improve to cover increased costs of health insurance.
- 9) Ms. Janine Kucik, Parent, Westowne Elementary School – Asked the Board to provide more funding for technology at Westowne Elementary and all the other schools that are being left behind. Specifically, she asked for interactive white boards, LCD projectors, and mobile computer labs for the teachers to share. Ms. Kucik stated that while Vincent Farm Elementary School leaders and students are experiencing a renaissance, Westowne Elementary is not.
- 10) Ms. Michelle Hart, Parent and LLC Co-Chair – Supports the Infants and Toddlers Program. Ms. Hart asked the Board to support special education students in inclusion in each school throughout the county.
- 11) Ms. Lisa Orisich, Paid-Parent Helper – Asked for support of the FY 2010 budget, which supports the strength of the work force. She stated that her employer has hired personnel from an agency at 25% more than she is paid including commission. Ms. Orisich asked that those funds be used for BCPS employees. She could make more money working for the agency; however, she would like to be an Instructional Assistant with BCPS.
- 12) Mr. Travis Barry, Student, Patapsco High School – Asked the Board to continue the AVID program at Patapsco High School. The AVID program and teachers have helped him to see his potential. Travis now receives straight A’s in high school and is taking two Advanced Placement (AP) courses.

- 13) Ms. Kelly Hall, Student, Patapsco High School – Asked the Board to continue funding for the AVID program. The AVID program has pushed her to see her potential. Kelly has gone from standard classes to honors gifted and talents (G/T) classes. AVID has also helped her with test taking and study skills.
- 14) Mr. Sean McComb, Teacher, Patapsco High School – Asked the Board to continue funding the AVID program. Students are doing amazing things, and the AVID program is wonderful for average students. Mr. McComb stated that AVID now has an academic booster club program at Patapsco High School; currently 20 parents support this club.
- 15) Mr. Doug Dunkle, Teacher, Franklin High School – Asked the Superintendent and the Board to follow-up on their words and get funds for fair and competitive salaries to fix retention problems. He stated that the Superintendent receives a high salary because the Board values him. Mr. Dunkle asked why this does not apply to teachers. He could go to other school districts and receive a higher salary.
- 16) Ms. Nancy Ostrow, President, PTA Council of Baltimore County – Supports competitive salaries and benefits for teachers and instructional support personnel. She also stated that the recruitment and retention of highly qualified teachers is essential for increasing student achievement. The PTA Council also supports additional funding allocated for technical support staff in each school, specifically, an identified staff person for the computers in each school. Ms. Ostrow encouraged the Board to continue to integrate sound enhancement technology in each classroom.
- 17) Ms. Christine Beard, Librarian Specialist and Vice-President, Teachers Association of Baltimore County – Was pleased to hear that funds for raises and longevity are in the budget. She stated that it is imperative that the Board supports this budget. Technology upgrades for 18 schools are in the budget, and she hopes it includes the purchase of new computers. Teachers cannot do their jobs without the proper equipment. GX110's cannot support teachers' needs and must be replaced.
- 18) Ms. Gloria Collins, President, Baltimore County Instructional Assistants & Clerical Employees (BACE) – Asked the Board to fully fund the Superintendent's proposed budget. Office assistants and secretaries provide the first impressions in the office and are constantly addressing the demands of visitors and students. She also encouraged the Board to continue the push technology improvements so that all employees and students can have access to up-to-date computers.
- 19) Ms. Mary Daniels, PTA President, Chesapeake High School – Asked the Board to support the Superintendent's proposed budget. Teachers' salaries and technology go hand-in-hand. Teachers need salary increases to support themselves and state-of-the-art technology to support their jobs and succeed.
- 20) Mr. Mike Kinnear, Manager, Alban Tractor, and Baltimore County Resident – Supports the diesel technician training program at Soller's Point High School. He stated that the

approximately 50,000 diesel service technicians will be needed in the very near future. This problem will continue to grow unless students are trained in this field.

- 21) Ms. Julia VanHook – Asked the Board to support the Superintendent’s proposed budget. She stated that two friends left BCPS to go to Howard County Public Schools for more money. BCPS cannot afford to lose any more teachers. Ms. VanHook also asked the Board to address retention.

The hearing was concluded at 7:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joe A. Hairston
Secretary-Treasurer

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