



PUBLIC HEARING ON THE 2011 BUDGET

By unanimous agreement the Somerset County Board of Education met at the J.M. Tawes Technology & Career Center, Tuesday, April 13, 2010 to hold the Public Hearing on the FY2010 Budget. Present were Chairman Miles, Dr. Whittington, General Sumpter, Superintendent Dr. Karen-Lee Brofee, and Melissa Tilghman, recording secretary. Vice Chairman Pruitt asked to be excused due to illness. Mr. Wells was also not in attendance.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Brofee at 7:05 p.m. Chairman Miles called for a moment of silence for Louis White.

2. Roll Call

The roll was called by Melissa Tilghman indicating that three Board members and the Superintendent were present.

3. Declaration of Quorum

It was declared that a quorum was present.

4. Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Miles led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

5. Summary of 2011 Proposed Budget

The Superintendent presented a brief budget overview of the FY2011 Budget. She discussed salary considerations and comparisons to other counties. Somerset County has the lowest salary on the Lower Eastern Shore. Teacher's salaries are competitive in the beginning, and mid level, but fall short in rank when the maximum salary is reached.

6. Public Comments

Ms. Miller provided information on the online Finance Blog. She listed the different categorical comments and their areas of importance. Instructional input was very informative as bloggers wanted to see an increase in AP courses and the Summer School feedback was positive. Other comments that stood out were 1) "Somerset works hard with what we are given" and 2) "Keep students the center of our focus".

Ms. Hopkins addressed the Board with a concern for Math and Reading Intervention Teachers. These teachers help students pass and improve test scores. Students in Reading Intervention have showed a 96% increase and 90% of students in Math have shown improvement. States test scores show that ELL students are not performing well. Ms. Hopkins asked for the Board for consideration of continued funding for Math and Reading intervention teachers.

Ms. Massey, teacher and parent, provided highlights of the PBIS program. PBIS (Positive Behavior in Schools) is an incentive program offered to reward students with good behavior and to encourage those students having problems following the rules and maintaining good grades. Support Specialists help and work with students, teachers, and families develop the skills to help those students needing extra help. Teachers are being trained to help the low performing students get back on track. Data is being used to identify students and the areas that they need improvement in. Ms. Massey asked the Board to consider the importance of the PBIS incentive program when finalizing the budget.

Ms. Welch and Mr. Elebash addressed the Board requesting the Board make both elementary and secondary textbook funding a priority. Newer textbooks have been purchased using Thornton funding but as the State Standards are updated we will be required to purchase more up to date textbooks. Chairman Miles questioned the continual balance of textbook funds on the monthly finance reports. Mr. Elebash explained that purchasing the books now would be a waste of funds and it would be more beneficial if textbooks are purchased after the newer standards are out. Ms. Welch also asked the Board to take into consideration the hiring of a fifth 4th grade teacher. She is concerned that teachers will not be able to provide a quality learning environment if the class sizes are too big.

Mr. Webster thanked the Board for the approval of the computers for the CAD program. The CAD program has collaborated with Wor Wic Tech and students will be given 6-9 credits upon graduation.

Mr. Deshields, Deal Island Custodian, requested that the Board take into consideration the purchase of fold up chairs and tables at Deal Island Elementary School. He explained that with Deal Island's gym and cafeteria all in the same location, it would be easier moving fold up tables and chairs. Mr. Deshields also reiterated to the attending teachers, principals, and Board members that Students depend on all employees toward being successful.

Ms. Holland addressed the Board in place of Ms. Collins. Ms. Collins was unable to attend due to her participation in an online one to one program with the 7th and 8th grade teachers. Ms. Holland announced her excitement of the one to one laptop program and believes it will help close learning gaps. She requests that the Board keep technology funding in the budget and that Promethean Boards be purchased at Washington High School to be used in Geography and Government classes. Ms. Hickman, 10th Grade teacher at WHS, also requested consideration in the purchase of document cameras and promethean boards. The Superintendent informed Ms. Holland and Ms. Hickman that it is not in the budget to purchase new promethean boards.

Ms. Ward requested the Board's support of the one to one laptop program. She also requested support of Instructional Facilitator positions.

Ms. Sterling requested the Board's continued support of the Library media. She believes that students

achieve when media and technology are up to date. The current school media are below guidelines and consideration is requested to retain media in the current budget.

Ms. Reich requested that the Board continue funding of IEP clerks for the next year. Following Ms. Reich was Mr. Shockley and Mrs. Humphrey, WHS art teachers. They requested the Board's consideration in adding funding to the Art budget for the purchase of up to date art equipment.

Mr. Lawson provided the Board with an update on the Human Resources Website. An online application tracking software program is being installed to better organize applications and resumes in order to help meet the demands of positions. Employers can send reference information online and data can be pulled and saved in less time. This program will also decrease the amount of file space needed. There are two counties who currently have this system. Mr. Lawson also requested consideration for the purchase Ecko print 1500 time clocks.

Chairman Miles requested written information on the FY2011 Budget requests. Dr. Whittington requested information on class sizes and would like it broken down by grades.

7. Adjournment

It was moved by Dr. Whittington, seconded by General Sumpter and passed to approve the adjournment of the April 13, 2010 Proposed Budget Meeting at 9:10 p.m. The vote was unanimous.