



BULLETIN

April 2007

VOL. XXXXVIII NO. 8

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Susan Katz, President, PTA Council of Baltimore County, Inc.



Proposed FY 2008 BCPS Operating Budget: Status Report *Continue Your Involvement in the Budget Process*

In January, Baltimore County Public Schools Superintendent Joe Hairston presented his proposed operating budget for the next school year to the Board of Education. The Board of Education adopted the superintendent's budget with modifications, including an increase in funding allocation for **sound enhancement in classrooms** (see box on page 2) from \$50,000 to \$500,000.

Baltimore County Executive Jim Smith *may make additions or deletions to the budget* before sending it to the Baltimore County Council for final review in April.

The County Council may make deletions to the budget *but may make no additions to it*. Final approval of the school operating budget by the County Council will take place in May.

The proposed budget appears aligned with BCPS goals and priorities. You can review this budget on the BCPS website at www.bcps.org. Let's voice our strong commitment to our schools by contacting our elected county officials and expressing support for full funding of the proposed school board budget.

- Send a short phone message, email, fax or letter to the County Executive and County Council members. "My name is '---,' my address is '---,' and I support full funding of the proposed FY 2008 BCPS operating budget." The more communications received by Mr. Smith and Council members, the stronger our voice advocates for our children.
- A public comment hearing will be held on **Tuesday, May 1 at 7 pm** in the Baltimore County Council

Chambers, 400 Washington Avenue, 2nd Floor. Speaker registration is from 6-7 pm.

You may access contact information for the County Executive and members of the County Council at www.baltimorecountymd.gov or www.baltimorecountycouncil.org, respectively.

Remember,
PTA...*everychild.onevoice!!*

Susan Katz

Delegate Voting Cards

Every president of a PTA in good standing will be mailed four (4) Voting Delegate Cards for the PTA Council General Meeting on April 26, 2007.

Voting Delegate Cards entitle four delegates from each local PTA to vote on all matters presented to the Council at the General Meetings. Each card, signed by the local PTA president and by the delegate, must be presented, *along with a valid 2006-2007 PTA Membership Card* from the same local PTA, at the General Meeting registration table.

If you have paid your Council Dues bill and have not received your Voting Delegate Cards by April 16, contact Georgina Clevenger, Financial Secretary, at financialsecretary@bcptacouncil.org.

PTA Council of Baltimore County, Inc.

General Meeting

Thursday, April 26, 2007, 7:30 PM

Dumbarton Middle School
300 Dumbarton Road Baltimore, MD 21212



Sound Enhancement in the Classroom

At the PTA Council general meeting on October 26, 2006, the PTA membership adopted a resolution in support of sound enhancement. As strong supporters of the use of this technology in all classrooms, we have spent the last five months advocating for sound enhancement in the classroom. Its appeal lies in its scientifically-based value to all children, not just those who have hearing difficulties.

One outcome of our effort has led to increased funding for sound enhancement in next year's proposed school operating budget.

In addition, we submitted the resolution to our parent organization, National PTA, for consideration for inclusion in National PTA's legislative platform. As the resolution continues to make its way through a formal review process, we are cautiously optimistic that it will reach the general membership for a vote at the National PTA convention in June 2007. We are also educating Maryland PTA about this technology.

Special thanks are extended to Suzanne DeMallie, champion for sound enhancement and author of the resolution! More information will be shared as it becomes available.

Highlights of the PTA Council Board of Directors Meeting - March 1, 2007

Meeting Called to Order at 7:30 pm by
President S. Katz

Minutes of 2/1/07 meeting approved with
corrections by unanimous consent

Introduction of Wanda Porter, new chair of the
Minority Education Committee, appointed by
the executive committee just prior to this
meeting.

BCSC - G. Ojiera

- General Assembly cancelled due to inclement weather
- 2/26 lobby trip to Annapolis

TABCO - C. Beard

- NEA Position on 'Highly Qualified Effective Teacher' Mandate discussed
- B.O.A.S.T. Bill (school vouchers) and No Child Left Behind Act reviewed

BCPS - B. Freeman

- Inclement weather procedures explained
- *Classroom to Community Express* and *The Good News* distributed
- Translations of Office of World Languages and Equity & Assurance documents are available on BCPS website
- Board of Education Recognition Event - 4/4/07, 7 pm, Dulaney HS
- Board of Education Merit & Ethics Awards - 5/3/07, 7 pm, New Town HS
- Teacher of the Year - 5/9/07, 11 am, Greenwood
- Awards for Excellence - 5/14/07, Martin's West

Special Committee Report on School Board Selection Process

- Lengthy discussion held; special committee will continue to function

MOTION - L. Esterson moved that the Special Committee on the School Board Selection Process remain intact & active.
2nd by Gerald Judd - PASSED

First VP - N. Ostrow

- 3/22/07 General PTA Meeting with program on Gang Awareness at 7:30 pm, Dumbarton MS

Cultural Arts - J. Lee for D. Flynn

- 3/25/07 Reflections Awards Ceremony at 2 pm, Parkville MS

MOTION - J. Lee moved to transfer \$450 from budget line #301, Fall Workshop to budget line #604, Reflections. 2nd by N. Ostrow - PASSED

Treasurer - J. Ryan for L. Franklin

- Ending Balance \$38,203.11 - Financial statement filed for audit

Gifted and Talented - L. Boteach

- Assistance with crafting GT Resolution requested.

Health and Safety - T. Streb

- Healthy Kids Expo: 3/2/07, Rodgers Forge ES

Bulletin Editor - D. Mathieson

- Council email system discussed

President - S. Katz

- Special Budget Committee on National PTA Convention appointed: members include L. Franklin, J. Ryan & G. Clevenger
- 2/12/07 PTA Night in Annapolis: hosted Baltimore County delegation following MD PTA general meeting; 15 Baltimore County legislators in attendance
- FY 2008 BCPS operating budget adopted by Board of Education with modifications, including sound enhancement funding increase from \$50,000 to \$500,000
- 4/4/07 PTA Council Board of Directors meeting agenda item: discussion on school board policies
- 4/10/07 PTA Council meeting with Baltimore County Council to discuss proposed FY 2008 budget, 12:30-1:00 pm

Meeting was adjourned at 9:53 pm.

Nancy Hoffman
Secretary

Effective PTA Communication Efforts

by Sam Macer, Parent Involvement Chair

National PTA has adopted six national standards for parent/family involvement:

- ☆ **Communicating**
- ☆ **Parenting**
- ☆ **Student Learning**
- ☆ **Volunteering**
- ☆ **School Decision Making and Advocacy**
- ☆ **Collaborating with the Community**

The Standard on Communicating is the foundation upon which all the standards are built. Effective two-way communication between students, parents, caregivers, and the community promotes meaningful outcomes to strengthen partnerships between all education stakeholders.

All PTAs should create an effective communication plan to be implemented early in the school year. The communication plan should be monitored, reviewed and evaluated periodically to determine if the plan goals and outcomes are being achieved. Adjustments to the plan should also be regularly monitored and reviewed.

A well rounded communication plan will consist of many of the following efforts.

- Websites have become an essential tool for two way communications. Valuable education information specific to your school and community can be posted to the website as well as links to volumes of educational resources at the county, state and national levels. An interactive environment is created when parents and the community are invited to send in their comments.

- Emails groups, both organized and informal, encourage parent-to-parent communication and are also easily accessed by business and community entities.
- Newsletters are a basic longstanding communication tool. Although they provide one way information, they can be effective two way efforts when surveys are added or other specific requests to respond are included.
- Flyers are usually one way informational tools used to send a message of limited, but timely scope.
- School bulletin boards provide limited one way information primarily for the internal use of students, teachers, staff and a limited number of parents. Local supermarket community bulletin boards are also an excellent resource for the placement of flyers for school information and news.
- Parent/teacher conferences are the primary source of student/parent/teacher communication. These 10–15 minute conferences should be more than casual conversations about the student. The PTA or school should develop guidelines for a comprehensive conference plan to review student progress, determine a parent/teacher communication follow-up plan, determine the interventions needed to support and increase student achievement, identify the desired outcomes of the conference and identify a specific follow-up effort.

A comprehensive communication plan will be an effective tool to support student, parent, teacher, community and staff engagement. It is never too late to consider a review and adjustment to your current PTA communication efforts. For further information and assistance contact Sam Macer, Parent Involvement Chair, at parentinvolvement@bcptacouncil.org.

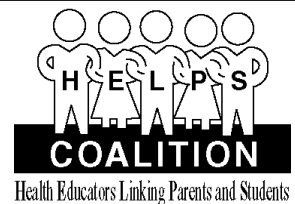
2007-2008 Insurance Premium Due March 31

PTA Liability and Bonding insurance for 2007-2008 is now due. Letters and insurance forms were mailed to PTA treasurers at the end of January .

Those PTAs that do not pay on time will not have insurance coverage unless they contact Georgina Clevenger immediately. Remember, having insurance is authorized and mandated by current PTA bylaws.

PTAs receiving free Liability insurance still owe Bonding and Directors and Officers Liability insurance, which will be listed on their forms. If there are any questions, please contact Georgina Clevenger at

*financialsecretary
@bcptacouncil.org*



MY SPACE 101 VS.
GRAND THEFT AUTO

**Presentation on
Wednesday, April 18, 2007
Dulaney High School
7-9 pm**

SRO = Safe Schools

by: Nancy L. Ostrow, First VP

What questions and concerns run through your mind when you see a patrol car parked outside your neighborhood middle or high school? Do you immediately assume that an incident has occurred at the school? Or do you view it as a reassuring sign that the **School Resource Officer**, better known as the SRO, is on duty? Although the SRO program has been in existence for several years, many parents and community members are still unaware of this highly successful safe schools initiative.

The SRO program is the result of an interagency collaboration between Baltimore County Police and Baltimore County Public Schools to maintain a safe learning environment in our middle and high schools. The SRO in Baltimore County is required to complete training provided by the National Association of School Resource Officers and receives ongoing training by the Baltimore County Police Department and the Baltimore County Public Schools. Each SRO is a certified law enforcement officer.

Each SRO is permanently assigned to a school. Although there is at least one SRO in each BCPS high school, only 21 of the 27 middle schools are currently assigned a SRO. The middle schools without a SRO are Cockeysville, Dumbarton, Hereford, Ridgely, Sparrows Point, and Sudbrook Magnet. When advocating for expansion into these remaining six middle schools, it is important to note that the SRO program is funded from the operating budget of the county police department not the school system.

To ensure a safe learning environment each SRO performs three roles:

Law enforcement officer

Provides a school with a law enforcement presence; assists a school with behavior management; evaluates a school's overall security to identify



any deficiencies and/or recommends corrective measures; investigates all complaints or criminal activity on school grounds.

Law-related counselor

Builds and strengthens relationships with the students based on trust; provides a positive role model; coordinates awareness and intervention initiatives to improve a student's poor decision-making skills and/or bad behavior.

Law-related education teacher

Implements programs that teach students good decision making skills; presents classroom instruction regarding safety, conflict resolution, and civic responsibility; shares expertise on a variety of safety related topics with administrators, teachers, parents, and/or community groups.

How can you show your support of the School Resource Officer program? Introduce yourself to the SRO and thank the officer for keeping our children and schools safe. Inform other parents about the role of the SRO. Help those in the community to understand that a police car parked outside their neighborhood middle or high school is a positive sign. Let your elected county officials and police department know that you expect the SRO program to be adequately funded.

For additional information contact Captain Thomas Busch, Facilitator, Safe Schools at 410-887-6426; Glenda Myrick, Coordinator, Safe & Drug Free Schools at 410-887-6487 or visit www.bcps.org and select Office of Student Support Services.

SPECIAL PRE-PROM "DRIVE TO SURVIVE" PROGRAM

The Sheppard Pratt Office of Substance Abuse Education is offering a special pre-prom "Drive to Survive" teen traffic safety program at the Sheppard Pratt Conference Center on Thursday, April 19, 2007 from 6-9 pm.

This 3-hour class will include presentations from Shock Trauma nurses, victims of car crashes and the mock drunk driving road course.

To make a reservation, call the Sheppard Pratt Office of Substance Abuse Education at 410-938-3100.



State-Sponsored 529 College-Savings Plans

The College Savings Plans of Maryland has placed a video presentation on its website, www.collegesavingsmd.org on the two state-sponsored 529 college-savings plans.

The video addresses the features, benefits and tax-advantages of the two plans – the Maryland Prepaid College Trust and the Maryland College Investment Plan – along with when parents can enroll their children and the steps to enroll.

The money saved in these two plans can be used to attend most colleges in the country. The College Savings Plans of Maryland offer tax-free earnings and are the only 529 plans that offer a State income deduction for Maryland taxpayers.

Add-On Endorsement Certificate for Gifted Education

by Linda Boteach, Gifted and Talented Chair

One of the main missions of PTA is to advocate for all children. Gifted children are a special needs population that has often been neglected in recent years. Many people mistakenly believe that gifted children can learn things on their own and do not need anything special. However these children have definite psycho-social as well as educational needs. Also, many gifted children are never identified in minority and economically deprived populations and therefore never reach their potential. Baltimore County Public Schools has implemented a Primary Talent Program for all students in grades K-2 to help identify gifted and highly able students and it offers staff development for their teachers. However, teachers are not currently required to participate in these programs.

Besides a strong curriculum which is differentiated for gifted children, the most important component of gifted education is a well-trained teacher who knows how to identify gifted children and uses specific strategies to implement the differentiated curriculum. Some states have mandated criteria for teachers who teach the gifted children. Maryland currently has no mandate despite several commissions and advisory groups strongly recommending that this be an essential part of an effective gifted program. The National Associations of Gifted Children (NAGC) supports special training to teach gifted children. Special training could consist of an **“add-on endorsement certificate for gifted education”** earned by teachers in addition to their teaching certificate.

One advantage of having a state mandated add-on endorsement certificate for gifted education is that

teachers who teach gifted children generally teach all children. Recent studies have indicated that most children can benefit from the strategies used to teach gifted children, teachers like having more tools in their teaching box, and teachers get satisfaction from seeing children respond to the different approaches that are employed in gifted education.

A recent Time magazine article, *“How to Bring Our Schools Out of the 20th Century”* (December 10, 2006) discussed what students will need to be able to compete in a global market in the 21st century. Some noted skills are critical thinking, creative thinking, working with others, and the ability to evaluate information. These are often part of a gifted curriculum from which many students could benefit. The question is, “Do we have enough teachers trained to teach in this manner?” It is an important question that we as PTA advocates must ask our school system and those who write policy for our children’s education.

If anyone is interested in helping to advocate for the add-on endorsement certificate for gifted education, contact Linda Boteach at gifted@bcptacouncil.org.

Maryland Summer Centers Offer Exciting Programs for Students

The Maryland State Department of Education recently announced the schedule of upcoming Maryland Summer Centers for students entering Grades 4 through 12. Summer Center programs offer unique instructional experiences for gifted and talented students and gives them the opportunity to work in settings and with resources not available during the regular school year.

Centers are located throughout the state and offer one- to three-week residential

and non-residential programs with a focus on the arts, sciences, mathematics, technology, creative writing, Chinese language and culture, engineering, law and government, and history. Activities are designed to encourage critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving while challenging students academically. Tuition ranges from \$100 to \$700. Financial assistance is available.

The **2007 Maryland Summer Centers** brochures, application forms, and a video featuring the Summer Centers may be found on the website of the Maryland State Department of Education at www.marylandpublicschools.org/summercenters.

Applications must be postmarked by Sunday, April 15, except for Fine Arts Centers, which have earlier deadlines and may require an audition. Materials are available in Korean and Spanish translation upon request. For more information, call Stephanie Zenker at 410-767-0821.

Summer Learning Expo!

Find ways to support your child’s learning over the summer. For information about summer reading programs, camps, tutoring, area parks, day trips, and everyday at-home learning activities visit a Summer Learning Expo.

The Baltimore County Public Schools in partnership with the Baltimore County Public Library will host a Summer Learning Expo at five locations from 4:00-7:00 pm at the following Libraries:

April 30 - Woodlawn
May 2 - North Point
May 7 - Randallstown
May 9 - Rosedale
May 10 - Cockeysville

For more information, contact Parent Support Services, 410-887-6489.

SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

Dr. Joe A. Hairston, Superintendent of Baltimore County Public Schools



Last month, we released the results of the Baltimore County Public Schools curriculum management audit.

As we consider the results, I want you to be aware of the context for this audit. I initiated this audit, which was conducted by Phi Delta Kappa, as an opportunity for us to better define how we will continue to build on our successes. This was not an assessment that was imposed upon us; it was one we initiated and undertook with the full involvement of our stakeholders.

The audit process included a thorough review of our curriculum, interviews with parents, teachers, students, principals, staff, Board members, and education advocates, and visits to every classroom in every school.

The audit produced a number of findings and recommendations, all of which are listed in the Executive Summary and Audit Report available online at www.bcps.org.

I also have had the opportunity to dialogue with the audit team, led by

Dr. Fenwick English. Our discussions were very positive and encouraging for our school system and community. The auditors acknowledged that we are a school system committed to delivering a high-quality education to all of our children. Phi Delta Kappa recognized our *Blueprint for Progress* as a critical and defining document that clearly states our commitment and purpose. The auditors also observed, based on their classroom visits and interviews with students, how intelligent and mature our students are. This is something I have long known to be true and something that should help us all keep focus as we move forward.

What must take place now is the focus on making our good school system even better. This important work will require everyone's full engagement. But this is also essential work that is important to this entire community.

Earlier this school year, I wrote in this column about an eye-opening statistic from the American Community Survey for 2005. According to that report, only 32% of Baltimore County households include children under the age of 18. Since some of these children are preschool age, out of school, home-schooled, or attending private schools, an even smaller percentage of house-

holds in Baltimore County – less than 32% – have children in our schools.

But the service we provide to that 32% of the population matters a great deal to the remaining 68%. In Baltimore County, home values, job creation, businesses, and population all are on the rise in large measure because of the quality of our schools. People want to live near good schools. Businesses want to locate where their future employees and customers are well-educated.

We need the entire community – including the 68% of households without children – to understand and believe that the work we do on behalf of children impacts all of us now and far into the future. This understanding is important to securing the ongoing support and community involvement that enriches the educational process. As parent leaders, you have a key role to play in modeling the value of public education and nurturing and promoting the promise of our students. By demonstrating that you care about our children and our schools – through effective parenting and advocacy, you inspire the community-wide support that will lift our school system to the next higher level.



IN MEMORIUM

The PTA Council extends our deepest sympathy to the families, school and PTA of the following individual who has passed away:

Alexis Ince
Ridge Ruxton School

*A memorial donation
will be given in her name to the
Maryland PTA Scholarship Fund.*

Council Memorials

PTA Council provides a memorial donation to the Maryland PTA Scholarship Fund whenever an administrator, teacher, or PTA officer dies while serving the Baltimore County Public Schools. PTA Council also provides a memorial donation whenever a student in grades Pre-K through 12 dies while registered in a Baltimore County Public School. Should your school suffer such a loss, please contact the PTA Council office at 410-666-6637, so that a memorial may be prepared.

2006-2007 Maryland PTA Reflections Program Winners

Congratulations to all who participated in the PTA Reflections Program.

Special thanks to all local PTA Reflections Program Chairs for coordinating the Reflections Program in their schools. The entries of two Baltimore County students earned Outstanding Interpretation of the Theme Awards. The Music entry of Merissa Winepol and the Photography entry of Cassandra Yuill were submitted to National PTA for judging. National winners will be contacted directly by National PTA by May 1, 2007.

The following Baltimore County students will be presented with state awards at the Maryland PTA Reflections Program Awards Ceremony on Sunday, May 20, 2007:

DANCE - AWARD OF MERIT

PRIMARY Pre K-2

Corey Sekulow Villa Cresta ES

DANCE - AWARD OF MERIT

INTERMEDIATE 3-5

Kiera Peterson Oliver Beach ES
Valerie Shvedok Fort Garrison ES

FILM/VIDEO -

AWARD OF MERIT

PRIMARY Pre K-2

Cali Platt Timber Grove ES

INTERMEDIATE 3-5

Daniel McLoughlin Carroll Manor ES
Katrina Young Halethorpe ES

LITERATURE -

AWARD OF EXCELLENCE

PRIMARY PRE K-2

Alison Ramirez Lutherville Lab ES

LITERATURE -

AWARD OF MERIT

SENIOR 9-12

Holly Boran Dulaney HS
Hannah Hiaasen Dulaney HS

MUSIC - OUTSTANDING

INTERPRETATION OF THEME

PRIMARY Pre-K - 2

Merissa Winepol Woodholme ES

MUSIC -

AWARD OF EXCELLENCE

PRIMARY Pre-K - 2

Tyson Dunn Seven Oaks ES

MUSIC - AWARD OF MERIT

MIDDLE 6-8

Rebecca Riter Pikesville MS

SENIOR 9-12

General Lee Towson HS

PHOTOGRAPHY – OUTSTANDING INTERPRETATION OF THEME

SENIOR 9-12

Cassandra Yuill Dulaney HS

PHOTOGRAPHY -

AWARD OF EXCELLENCE

SENIOR 9-12

Caroline Knuth Loch Raven HS
Emily Obert Loch Raven HS

VISUAL ARTS -

AWARD OF MERIT

INTERMEDIATE 3-5

Alice Friedman Fort Garrison ES

SPOTLIGHT ON YOUR PTA!

Does your PTA/PTSA have a great newsletter? Remember to put the PTA Council Bulletin Editor on your mailing list so that you may share it! Send newsletters *via inter-school mail* to: Dulaney High School, Attn: Diane Mathieson.

The following PTAs sent copies of their newsletters to share with PTA Council:

Berkshire ES PTA	Owings Mills HS PTSA
Carney ES PTA	Perry Hall MS PTSA
Catonsville MS PTSA	Pikesville MS PTA
Cockeysville MS PTA	Randallstown ES PTA
Dulaney HS PTSA	Ridge Ruxton School PTA
Fullerton ES PTA	Sparrows Point MS PTSA
Glyndon ES PTA	Stoneleigh ES PTA
Kenwood HS PTSA	Towson HS PTSA
Kingsville ES PTA	White Oak School PTA



PTA TREASURERS

PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX RETURNS

by Lisa Franklin, Treasurer

Since all local PTA units in Maryland must be incorporated, they should have received a Personal Property Return from the Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation.

If your PTA is incorporated and did not receive the Personal Property Tax return form, contact the Department of Assessments and Taxation immediately at 410-767-1180 or 888-246-5941 (toll free). It is possible that your incorporation status has been forfeited. If that is the case, you will need to pay a fee and file for reinstatement.

The filing deadline for the personal property return is April 17, 2007. Failure to file this form could jeopardize your corporate status and filing late has a penalty assessment. Extension requests may be submitted via the internet by April 17 for free, but paper requests must have been submitted before March 15, 2007.

PTAs are classified as Domestic Non-Stock Corporations and do not pay a filing fee. The Federal Principal Business Code is 813000.

For more information, contact Lisa Franklin, PTA Council Treasurer, at treasurer@bcptacouncil.org.

BULLETIN

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BULLETIN Editor: Diane Mathieson
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PASS IT ON!

Information published in the Council Bulletin is meant to be passed along to your membership!

Articles may be re-printed in local PTA newsletters by adding the credit:

"Re-printed from the PTA Council of Baltimore County Bulletin (Month/Year)"



Calendar Reminders

Wednesday Apr 4
Tuesday Apr 24
Thursday Apr 26
Tuesday May 8
Friday May 11

PTA Council Board of Directors Meeting, ESS Building, 7:30 pm
Board of Education Meeting, ESS Building, 7:30 pm
General PTA Council Meeting, Dumbarton MS, 7:30 pm
Board of Education Meeting, ESS Building, 7:30 pm
Council Awards Ceremony, Parkville MS, 7:30 pm

**PTA Council of Baltimore County, Inc.
Cockeysville Middle School, Room 5
10401 Greenside Drive
Cockeysville, Maryland 21030**

PTA[®]

everychild. onevoice.

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PTA Council of Baltimore County, Inc.

General Meeting

Thursday, April 26, 2007, 7:30 PM

Dumbarton Middle School

300 Dumbarton Road Baltimore, MD 21212