

**DETROIT PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Preliminary Budget
Public Hearing
Fiscal Year 2005-2006**

**June 30, 2005
Spain Elementary School**

PUBLIC COMMENTS

1. Gladys Wilson had the following comment(s):

I want to know about the funding for parent involvement. Is it going to be cut at all this school year?

Response: No.

2. Frances Hayes “deferred her time to Minnie Pierce” who had the following comment(s):

If they only have \$25,000 for parent involvement, how are they going to maintain the programs that they put on for parent involvement? Why did the budget get cut by 98%? We want the budget replaced. We want the budget increased.

Response: The budget has been restored.

3. Rose Starks had the following comment(s):

Parental involvement funds are being cut by 98%. Is this legal? Was there a Parent Advisory Committee that sat in on the development of budget for parental involvement? We would like to see the list of parent names who sat in on the decision to cut the budget by 98%.

Response: Please refer to response to Comment 2 above.

4. Alicia Horton: name called -- no response.

5. Mushira Masherah had the following comment(s):

How can the students grades improve without the money there?

Response: Please refer to response to Comment 2 above.

6. Teresa Lewis had the following comment(s):

Why weren't the parents notified sooner about this meeting? It is disrespectful. What is the purpose of this meeting? What is the expected outcome? How soon will you get back to us about parent involvement? We need to know a committee will be decided upon.

***Response:** CFO Dori Freelain responded: Mr. Satchel stated earlier that the purpose of this meeting was to offer the public hearing on the budget that is to be adopted. The notification of the meeting, as well as, the date was set approximately two (2) weeks ago. I cannot speak to when you received the official notification. I understand that the Public Relations Office did identify the date posting and it was identified in periodicals. It was on the website. So, again, I apologize if you received late notification. But we did identify the date approximately two (2) weeks ago and are required to provide the seventy-two (72) hour notice of the meeting date. The thirtieth was the date identified and approved by Dr. Burnley.*

7. Shaton Berry had the following comment(s):

The District has already taken monies out of our own school account. What are those monies being used for? District-wide parental involvement monies are also being taken out. I think there is double dipping going on. (Break in tape) There seems to be a lot of discrepancies. The District should be accountable.

***Response:** CEO William Coleman responded: Dr. Burnley and I found out 24 hours ago what the Title I Department had done with the parent involvement budget. We are committed to restoring as much as possible the amount of money that was allocated for the Title I parent programs. I have a total commitment to expanding parent involvement as a charge. It's actually one of the objectives the Board has placed on my shoulders going forward. I can't do that without resources. You have got to know that this was not a conscious decision on the part of Dr. Burnley or myself. We just found out what happened yesterday. All I can say is, when we leave here, we're going to go back, take a look at the budget, find ways to substantially restore the amount of money that was there before and let you know by the end of the day. As a side comment, we are also making changes in the leadership of the Title I Department.*

8. Rosella Carter: no card – no response.

9. Trevon Chester: name called – no response.

10. Terry Williams had the following comment(s):

Parent involvement increases children's and parents' literacy. I understand that the 98% cut was given to the department that your wife is over. How are you going to run a department on \$25, 000 dollars?

***Response:** Please refer to response to Comment 2 above.*

(end tape #1)

11. Beverly Morton had the following comment(s):

She is a concerned parent because her daughter's elementary school, Sanders Elementary, was closed. We need the enrichment programs and the field trips.

Response: Sanders is a small school with declining enrollment. Consolidating students into the adjacent neighborhood schools (Fairbanks, Thirkell, Brady Elementary Schools, and Durfee PK-8) will allow the District to achieve operating efficiency by increasing space utilization within these buildings.

12. Dolores Smith-Jackson has the following comment(s):

To summarize, she feels that Kenneth Burnley is doing the best that he can. Jennifer Joubert has increased parent involvement, but there are no male initiative programs or community use. She wants to continue to help in the Detroit public school system.

Response: No response required.

13. Michelle Hoover had the following comment(s):

It is good to see parental involvement and keep the parenting and education component in place for stronger families and healthier child development.

Response: No response required.

14. June Sheffield had the following comment(s):

We have accomplished so much and we make Detroit look good. Put the money back in the schools. Childhood education and early childhood education is important. But where do you go after pre-school?

Response: We have provided for full day kindergarten programs. There are approximately five schools with half-day programs due to space constraints.

15. Dr. Faizeh Faouri had the following comment(s):

Parental involvement makes a positive impact of the parenting program in children's success. But I'm sad that the program is going to be cut; it is the parents' right.

Response: Please refer to response to Comment 2 above.

16. Mariam Arraf had the following comment(s):

If you want to help the children, you must enhance the parents. How can you justify taking the programs away?

Response: Please refer to response to Comment 2 above.

17. Shirley Palmer had the following comment(s):

Statistics show Detroit schools are behind as compared to Caucasian. Less than 58% of kids in the DPS system graduate from high school. The parental involvement helps decrease the gap and increase graduation rates.

Response: No response required.

18. Claude Richards had no comment.

19. Dwight Burks had the following comment(s):

The book club is being taken away. If parents read, then they set an example for their kids to follow. Increase the budgets; don't cut it.

Response: No response required.

20. Duane Garth had the following comment(s):

We need to continue the parent liaison program. If this budget is cut, it will be a tragedy. This program helps adults and youth become more successful.

Response: No response required.

21. Huford Foskel had the following comment(s):

Don't cut the budget and support the parents.

Response: CEO Coleman responded: I would like to clarify that the Title I year ends September 30th, so we knew we had time to fix this and readjust. I think the parent liaison program was under-utilized and have put into my transition plan, some ideas I have to utilize the parent liaison program to bring back students from charter schools and help demonstrate how DPS schools are doing better than near-by charter schools. I can only do that with parent involvement-parent liaisons- who are familiar with the communities around the schools and can help us develop a marketing plan to bring back students to DPS. There was never any intent to eliminate the parent liaison program. It's the only way to turn around this enrollment decline.

22. Helen Moore had the following comment(s):

The budget is supposed to be presented to the public for them to have input – recommendations, suggestions – as to what they want – revisions, etc. We are supposed to be listened to. I/we are here to promote parental involvement in every school. There were 25 items missing from the Power Point presentation. I would like to know the items that were missing so that I can tell if they are important to our children’s education.

Response: CFO Freelain responded: Thank you Ms. Moore. I always appreciate your comments. In response to your comment on the fund numbers--if I understand you correctly where the fund numbers were listed--Fund 13 and then it went to Fund 22--it is not necessarily that there are fund numbers missing. That is just a basic designation that has been established by the District to account for those different groups of funds. So we do not necessarily go in numerical order to identify funding source. Related to the budget itself – in a more usable/community friendly document – it is my expectation to come out with a full detailed budget book at about the same time that we usually distribute the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report CAFR report to provide that level of detail so that it is understandable and it’s not in financial terminology.

Helen Moore: Are the contracts excusable or are they just contracts that will run for the rest of the 10- 15 years? Who do those contracts belong to? There should be no new contracts because of the DPS deficit. The food service contract is a sad thing. Cut administration.

Response: The Aramark (Service Master) Facilities contract expires July 14, 2011. The contract is managed by Facilities (Dr. D. Rodgers). The Aramark Food Service contract expires June 30, 2006. The contract is managed by Facilities (Dr. D. Rodgers and Mr. R. Brown). The Compuware (IT Outsourcing) contract expires April 30, 2006. The contract is managed by Mr. R. Moore, Chief Information Officer.

23. Shawn Snell- deferred time to: Leshone Hall had the following comment(s):

I am the director of the Doorstep Homeless Shelter, Highland Park. The vast majority of the children at the shelter are DPS children. The parent enriching program has been the most positive thing that the Doorstep Homeless Shelter has ever seen.

Response: No response required.

24. Stephanie Johnson had the following comment(s):

I am a parent that loves to volunteer and participate with children and teachers. It takes a village.

Response: No response required.

25. Terrance Collier had the following comment(s):

Parent involvement monies need to be increased all over the state, that's the only way we can save the Detroit School System. Parent involvement in the school is paramount.

Response: No response required.

(end tape #2)

26. Kynisha Johnson had the following comment(s):

Include parents in the DPS budget if you want our support and want to keep kids in the schools. Provide services for them. Is consideration being given to what we are saying here? I don't see any notes being taken. Six figure salaries should take a pay cut and put the money back in the budget.

Response: CFO Freelain responded: This is a public hearing so there is a taping of the event. Staff members are taking appropriate notes; but, we will go back and make certain that we get the full detail of the questions and make sure that we provide the appropriate response. Secondly, there were administrative staff salary reductions. As I mentioned earlier, concessions were obtained. The executive staff likewise took salary cuts which totaled 10%.

27. Sharmayne Law: name called – no response.

28. Carol Summers had the following comment(s):

Attended a conference "Leadership Development and Diversity." I represent the City of Detroit for PTA/PTSA. I represent 40 DPS schools. Parental involvement should not be cut because of the many resolutions that it makes in schools such as, the drop out rate. The No Child Left Behind document has the words conduct, participate, provide and involve parents. We have not seen one of you at a conference, local school or PTA meeting. The budget the president gave us took a couple of years. Why did it take you a couple of days or whatever length of time it took you to do the budget? I am asking that you sequester the budget. That means amend, change, revise the budget.

Response: Refer to response to Comment 2 above.

29. Mable Love had the following comment(s):

Do not cut out the parent involvement. Do not cut out the parent center.

Response: Refer to response to Comment 2 above.

30. Ozella Carter had the following comment(s):

Don't cut the parent's involvement, or the other programs that the parents are in such as, the enrichment programs. No P.T.A meetings, no parent rooms, equals disaster.

Response: No response required.

31. Rev William Tate had the following comment(s):

The greatest investment we can make anywhere, anytime, is in human beings. When children have the help from parents then they tend to do better. That's why a 98% reduction in funds for parental involvement should not happen. Students, teachers and parents are the most important part of DPS. You should have a parent involved in every decision made. (Miss Sheffield has requested that she receive a copy of today's sign-in sheets)

Response: Sign in sheets have been provided to Mrs. Sheffield.

32. Essie Taylor had the following comment(s):

I am the LSCO Chairperson from Stewart Elementary School. You make these cuts and then raise our taxes. Parents are getting disrespected so they are leaving DPS because of the way the schools are getting ran.

Response: Stewart Elementary School has been re-opened for school year 2005-06.

33. Verlond Herd had the following concern:

(name called –no response – Comment written on card: Why has there been such a significant cut in the parent involvement budget with no warning?)

Response: Refer to response to Comment 2 above.

34. Keenan Stringer had the following concern:

You have to hold people accountable for their actions. Staff in schools are disrespecting students and parents and should be accountable for their actions. Teachers should talk to their kids instead of being ready to leave when the bell rings. Cuts should not be made to the parent liaisons. That department has been the intervention between a lot of irate parents-stopping them from doing things they shouldn't do. If you bring kids back to DPS, then cuts won't have to be made.

Response: No response required.

35. Harriet Richards had the following comment(s):

The parent involvement programs have been enriching. The budget cut for teachers/parents communications is a shame.

Response: Refer to response to Comment 2 above.

36. Rachel Burnside had the following comment(s):

There should not be a 98% budget cut on parental involvement. Tired of city and school employees hooking friends and family members up. It is the parents and children who make up the whole DPS system. (Question on card: How do you justify 98% cut? Is this legal under Title I guidelines?)

Response: For the 2005-2006 school year, the District has allocated 3.5 Million dollars to the Parental Involvement Office for District-Wide Parental Involvement Activities. This amount is in addition to the required 1% of total Title I funds that are set aside and distributed to eligible Title I schools.

According to Title I Guidelines, the School District has considerable discretion in deciding how to distribute the Parental Involvement funds to schools.

There have been no cuts in the Parental Involvement budget for 2005-2006 school year.

(end tape #3)

37. Timothy Gary had the following comment(s):

Dr. Burnley said there are 31,000 eligible students who do not go to Detroit Public Schools. Where did the funds for the district-wide open house come from? Can those funds be redirected?

Response: CFO Freelain responded: General Fund-- and yes they can be redirected.

Timothy Gary: Instead of having the open house – use that money to market those 31,000 students. I do not believe those open houses brought in new students.

Response: No response required.

38. Bernice Williams had the following comment(s):

You make it harder for parents to get involved by cutting parental involvement money. Instead of moving down we need to move up.

Response: No response required.

39. Louise Harris had the following concern:

Parental involvement is important. Miss Pearce helped me out.

Response: No response required.

40. Ms. Bernadine Simmons had the following comment(s):

No one is a better advocate to educate the children other than the parents. You need to involve the parents in the decision making. But the funding for the prison system has increased more than the funding for the education system.

Response: No response required.

41. Shaniece Adams: name called – no response.

42. Jonathan Kinloch had the following comment(s):

To summarize, the community should receive copies of the budget to see what the money is going to do for the next 12 months. Parental involvement should be important to everyone and will be a key element for the elected Board. Public safety isn't a decision that should be made right now, the budget is more important. That is also a decision for the elected Board.

Response: No response required.

43. Adrienne Rostich had the following comment(s):

Why do you want to take 98% of the parent's funds and think it is o.k. and then turn around and want them to support you.

Response: Refer to response to Comment 2 above.

Response: CFO Freelain responded: Just as a point of clarity, the budget that is being presented to you today is a proposed budget. It has not been officially adopted. Mr. Coleman also stated to the audience earlier that plans are in place to commit the resources that are necessary to the parental involvement area. I believe that was clarified earlier in the discussion.

Response: CEO Coleman responded: I would just like to add it wasn't a backroom decision to cut parent involvement. It was a decision made by one administrator on his own. That administrator is on administrative leave right now. So there is accountability.

44. Ebony Mattison had the following comment(s): name called – no response. Question from card: What is going to happen with the other 2% of the funding? How can you expect parents to support DPS if everything is being cut.

Response: Refer to response to Comment 2 above.

45. Gail Massey had the following comment(s):

Why is William Coleman on the stage instead of the person who initially set up the budget? An administrator sitting on the stage has a child who did not like DPS and was sent back home. The administrator flies back and forth every week. Who pays that bill? Tell us the census in the area before closing schools.

Response: Mr. Coleman, as the newly appointed CEO, is the official representative of the District. As such, he is ultimately responsible for all matters concerning the Detroit Public Schools.

The District does not pay for personal travel.

46. Lareenda Sharp: name called – no response.

47. Tia Shepard had the following comment(s):

Who actually did the budget? If that administrator is on leave, when will someone be in his place to continue the Title I budget? When can parents view the budget for the 2005-2006 school year?

Response: CFO Freelain responded: There is a preliminary draft document that has been in the Welcome Center for, I believe, three days. Once the document is official and adopted, that will also be available for public viewing in the Welcome Center at the security desk and/or on the District's website: www.detroitk12.org

Tia Shepard: Can you tell me when an administrator will be in place for Title I?

Response: CEO Coleman responded: It's probably inappropriate for me to say anything more about personnel matters. But there will be someone in charge today.

48. Debra Gavin had the following comment(s):

Thank you to the Parent Liaison Office for a wonderful job of bringing helpful and informative to me and other parents. To have the program cut will devastate me because I came so far to give up now.

Response: No response required.

49. Norma Galvan had the following comment(s):

Expressed herself in Spanish. A member of the audience translated that since there is no translator at the meeting she does not know what is going on.

Response: CFO Freelain responded: Thank you. It will be taken under advisement and we will make sure that is corrected for the next time.

50. Kimberly Bishop had the following comment(s):

It is the parents that need to have a voice in the decision making planning. DPS has to help us get involved. These programs help us learn more, educate ourselves.

Response: No response required.

Closing Comment(s):

CFO Freelain: As a closing comment, I would like to reiterate a comment made by Ms. Starks earlier. This has probably been the most well attended Public Hearing for budget development in Detroit's history. I do believe that the passion and emotion that has been displayed by all the participants is valued and will be taken into consideration as decisions are made moving forward. I do thank you very much for your participation and for your time and your patience. Thank you.

(end tape #4)