

Public Commentary
5/26/10

Ann Arbor,
05/26/10.

Good evening,

I am Priyanka Menon, a sophomore at skyline high school. I am here to represent Skyline students especially the current sophomores.

We all know that the school district is facing a budget shortfall of nearly \$20 million and budget regulations have to be made to cover this deficit. However, as a skyline sophomore, I have come here to address a genuine concern among us.

~~Our~~ our counselors and some teaching staff have been given pink slips which mean that they may not be there next school year. We are the first graduating batch from Skyline and will potentially have all new counselors in our junior year. Ideally, our counselor should know us well and have the knowledge and time to help us identify a list of good-fit colleges, as well as provide us with information about and assistance with the application process itself. It is not unreasonable on our part to ask for counselors who know us for couple years and could help and guide us in this process.

Unlike the students of our batch from other Ann Arbor high schools, we are in a disadvantage that we do not have the well established programs and clubs which they use for gaining extra curricular experiences. As you all know that in addition to good grades these activities and experiences are important for us when we apply to the colleges of our choice. We need the advice and support of our teachers and counselors to establish these clubs. If we lose our current batch of teachers especially our counselors, we feel that we will be at a significant disadvantage compared to our peers at Community, Huron and Pioneer.

We urge you take this matter into consideration when you decide on implementing the budget cut propositions.
Thank you.

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Chai Montgomery
Public Comments (on county-wide consolidation)
AAPS Board of Education Meeting, May 26, 2010

Good Evening all.

County-wide consolidation is virtually privatization, not a real alternative to it.

Drivers, monitors or aides were excluded from the planning committees.

Consolidation is primarily a reduction of wage rates, hours and jobs. 17%, 69 less workers.

To ask those who earn the least to pay the most is wrong.

High turnover of workers and "strangers on the buses" will result when total compensation is cut by around 20%-25%.

Consolidation needs to be re-thought, transparently.

The transportation service contract that the WISD proposed to constituent districts to sign further extends the lack of ~~respect~~ for workers that the planning phase showed.

CONSIDERATION

- Transfer workers, don't "rehire" them.
- Offer available positions to qualified current employees on the basis of "first refusal" and merged, constituent-district seniority.
- Preserve seniority rights, job bidding, and all accumulated sick time.
- Preserve employee MIP retirement status as it currently is.
- Strictly curtail the WISD's ability to out-source transportation.

These measures cost little or nothing, but honor the dignity and commitment of transportation employees and community control of a valuable public resource. And, they can better ensure a smooth and organized transition to consolidated services.