

Outline: Comments to the Ann Arbor Public Schools Board of Trustees
By Harold Miller
March 10, 2010

Good evening.

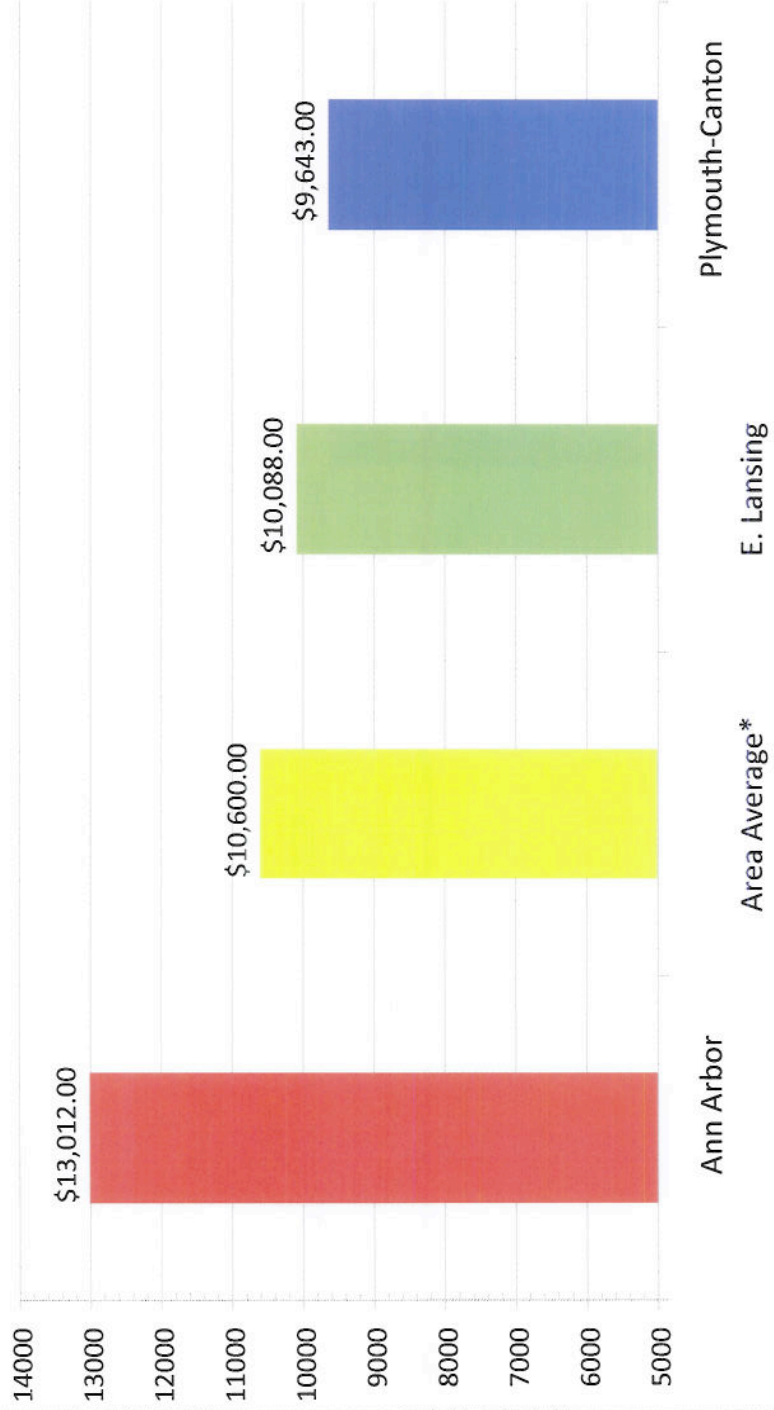
My name is Harold Miller and I am a resident of the Ann Arbor Public School District.

- AAPS will be making operating and financial decisions--now and over the next several years--that will have profound effects on the education of our children.
- There is direct relationship between nature, quality and extent of information and the quality of those decisions.
- A2CRSS--Coalition for Responsible Schools for All Students--wants to elevate and enhance the discussion and debate over the direction of our schools by researching and publicizing data and information not being provided by AAPS.
- A2CRSS is a non-partisan PAC comprised of individuals concerned about two things: high levels of achievement *for all students* and responsible financial management.
- As an accountant and consultant for Ernst & Young, one of the world's premiere accounting and professional services firms, I was involved in a number of major cost repositioning projects.
- Based on that experience, one of the first steps is to assess where an organization's costs might be high or out of line. Knowing where you're out of line helps focus the effort to reduce costs.
- A typical early step is compare yourself to other organizations.
- Because AAPS did not provide this kind of information, we've assembled it on this chart.
- Discussion of how we chose comparative districts, how we expanded the sample.
- Explanation of "current operating expenditures" and per-pupil amounts.
- Source of data: From the Michigan Department of Education--website address included in this document for the minutes.
- Explain that A2CRSS is committed to provide only relevant, credible, reliable and verifiable information. All data sources disclosed.
- Our research is also posted on our website, A2CRSS.org
- The information on this chart is important because it raises some critical questions:
 - Tells us that AAPS costs are higher, and in many cases much higher than surrounding communities--places where we would be competing for personnel and purchasing other services.
 - This information begs for further analysis--we know we're high overall, but where are we high or out of line--teaching staff? administration? support services? Is it the number of FTE's we employ, the pay rates, other costs?
 - If other districts can succeed and spend a lot less, why can't we?
- So far, AAPS has not framed the discussion by including this type of information.

A2CRSS - Citizens for Responsible Schools for All Students

www.a2crss.org

Per Pupil Expenditure
(from "Michigan School District Revenue and Expenditure Report"
2007-2008--latest available)



John Riedisser
Public Commentary
3/10/10

more of them going out of the State for collage and jobs. I am only the OP for the custodian & maintenance departments. If it goes through, I will be displaced again. I will need to bump again to have a job. (I have 23 years in the district)

BAD FOR FAMILIES, BAD FOR INDIVIDUALS, even though it saves us money and may result in a 'better' bottom line

This would be like cutting down an old tree to improve your view and then realizing too late that you no longer have any shade. We stand to lose loyalty and experience and with no hope of regaining it.

Usually, privatization has resulted eventual higher costs, lower quality service and fewer people receiving service. Prison management and municipal water system privatization around the U.S. and the world are prime examples of the above.

It is apparent on a daily basis that their jobs are more than just jobs to these staff members. I see them go above and beyond for our students again and again.

WE ARE A TEAM, TOGETHER! United we stand divided we FALL! Thank you!
Jeffrey Willets

I also believe that this is issue **OF COMMUNITY**. Yes, times are tough, but these are exactly the times when communities must pull together, support those who have worked for the district, who live here, who have kids who go to our schools. Privatizing rarely saves money in the long run and sends the wrong message to our community. Let's find a better way. ~~Rusty Fuller, AAPS Alumni, Stauson Teacher and Parent of two AAPS students.~~ TEACHER

Our bus drivers are an important part of our children's day. Getting rid of the current system is not the way to balance the budget.

This is very important! It absolutely goes against what I believe we stand for! We are a family, taking care of **OUR** children.

Privatization has been shown throughout the state to be ineffective and really does not save the district money.

How come the BOE is considering having the largest minority group and lowest paid AAPS employees taking the brunt of the cuts while their immediate supervisors remain untouched? IF there is privatization who would these supervisors and crew chiefs be supervising, since AAPS would no longer be the custodians employer? Privatization is a bad idea for custodians and bus drivers. Look at the history of it.....

Stop your Reagonimic approach to our problems or you'll ruin our once-fair city!!

We need reputable and consistant service & employee's. We must survive this education crisis together to recover stronger. Privatizing in other districts as much as 10 years ago still divides the communities, creates inconsistant service from strangers due to high turn

over. Privatizing is not the answer! Please help us help our community, support our community and build strong relationships that can foster recovery.

Privatization does not work

Privatization isn't the answer!

Our custodial staff is by far and away the best, most conscientious I have ever had the privilege of working with. We need to keep people like this in our district.

When did Ann Arbor stop caring about the kids? When do you stop and realize the value of ALL staff for Ann Arbor Schools. Custodians/ Bus Drivers and so on teach children also. Often the children feel these are safe people to go to and then A2 wants to take away safety that our children NEED! **WHAT DANGER WILL YOU PUT OUR KIDS IN NEXT?**

We have the best head custodian in our building that I've known in any building I've worked in at AAPS. I would not like to lose her, and I would not like to see her under-compensated for her excellent work. "Excellence," "All the best" ...let's find a better solution.

Please don't do this to a group of hard working people.

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Thomas Wesolowski
Public Commentary
3/10/10

We, the undersigned urge Ann Arbor Public Schools Board of Education Trustees to vote against privatization and/or consolidation of Transportation, Custodial and Maintenance services.

Real solutions to budget problems should include limiting overhead expenses and eliminating frivolous spending. But only increased funding from the State of Michigan and Federal Government can solve the crises.

I work for Walled Lake Transportation and we are going thru the same thing. Does no one understand the big picture here?

There is no way getting around the cost of excellent employees. One can replace them under the false hope of reducing expenses, or one can pay the social costs of having our neighbors and former co-workers under insured and under invested in their retirement plans... either way we will pay the cost, either now or later. Why not continue to get excellent services for the inevitable cost?

FYI, privatized bus drivers in Mt. Clemens stayed out from work for a day or two earlier this year in a work dispute... a district of some 10,000 students had no bus service. Imagine the parent calls!!!! State employees (public schools) cannot go out in this manner... just one more reason to stick with reliable, proven employees.

Privatization does not work for children or teachers!

I'm very surprised that AA would do this sort of thing!

To privatize schools takes away the quality people from the care of our children and puts strangers who are there for the money and not the care of the children. It also eliminates more money coming out of the state retirement program which in turn hurts everyone working for public education.

There are other ways of saving money and keeping reliable, trustworthy, and dependable existing workers.

Please vote against privatization of the public school drivers by the A2 Public Schools, and against consolidation of services. My son is long past school age, but I'd vote for a tax increase any day, in order to maintain the high quality of safety and student-driver interaction that is much more likely if drivers are school employees. Kids spend many hours in contact with drivers. The highest standards of quality are necessities for these professionals. This includes driving skills but also interpersonal communication. Professionals who have spent many, many years driving our children ought to be well paid and supported by our school district directly.

There are ways to keep ALL support staff if you look at all the angles. Talk to your support staff on ways to save money!! I have been here nearly 20 years and my goal is to dedicate at least 10 more years. Please think this through!!

While private industry does not automatically equal poor service, school administrations may weigh short term savings disproportionately to over long term quality and safety to our children.

Privatizing services is a bad idea!

Stop. Backup, and go in a different direction. It is not too late.

It is important to remember that money is not the only issue when it comes to support services for our public schools. Support staff around the state have provided superior services for our public schools for years. In these tough economic times, adding to the unemployed or the underemployed population is not the answer.

Privatization is not the answer, but budget savings should be clearly applicable, by the district, setting up a way for employees in all departments to suggest savings in their own departmentst that could/should reduce the budget while the State also needs to make changes in it's budget and eliminate the "raise" in state employees wages that will rise 3% this year when the legislature is restricting normal funding to the schools.

As a mother, my children's welfare is of utmost concern. Knowing the bus driver and trusting the bus driver with my children is extremely important to me. One mishap from an unknown driver, in any shape or form, would outweigh this decision instantly. I want to know who takes my family to school and I want him/her thanked and paid well. This is not a cost to cut. I don't think the Schools need this battle.

I am with you Brother , I am with Utica Community Schools and they are trying to Outsource us too. We will be a sea of Green at the Board of Education meeting on March 8th . KEEP UP THE FIGHT BROTHERS AND SISTERS KEEP PUBLIC SCHOOLS PUBLIC !

A2 parents oppose privatization/consolidation; the BOE must reflect the community's opposition!

IT DOES NOT WORK. IT RUNS THE BUILDINGS DOWN. LESS CLEANING MEANS MORE SICK KIDS. START AT THE TOP AND EVERYONE, I REPEAT EVERYONE TAKE A PAY CUT.

Privatization is a temporary fix with short term financial benefits. Over the long haul all privatization does is to divert taxpayer money away from wages - and the community - to corporations. Privatization does long term damage to communities AND to the economy. Middle class workers spend their money where they earn it. Keep Michigan tax dollars in the communities where it belongs.

We are the back bone to our schools.

education is not a commodity, it is a right

Students of the world, unite!

Don't privatize our schools!

I have two grandchildren who ride the Ann Arbor Public School buses. I know this will not save money but it will affect the safety of the students!

Public schools ... public funding

understand that beside the issue of safety, yearly recertification and the fact that current drivers are vested in our schools...you run the risk of substandard replacement drivers and historically, "privatization" has not proven to save any money for the school district in the long run!!!!

I also feel that privatization is not the solution to Ann Arbor Schools budget problem. I do feel there need to be cutbacks and more importantly revising spending waist including the Dept of Trans., but I don't believe that privatization will offer the savings to the district it claims that is can do. There are better solutions; I like to see the Board cut back in other ways.

YIKES ! ...

Every table at the forum that I went to said don't privatize. What is the point of those forums if you don't intend to listen to the parents?

Consider saving money by shortening routes and having the kids walk farther. This would be healthier, too.

I have two children who have enjoyed excellent bus service and we are attached to the wonderful drivers who transport them. I am working to help save their jobs.

I am really concerned with people who aren't vested in the students. Our bus drivers, most of them, take pride in their relationship with the students. Try cutting at the top for saving \$\$ not taking from the lowest paid people.

Our bus divers, custodians and maintenance workers are excellent and such an important part of the Ann Arbor school system. Pleases show that you value that quality and expertise!

How would you like your job privatized??????????

The bus drivers, custodial staff and the maintenance folks are our tax paying community members and neighbors. These are tough economic times, I realize, but we should not privatize their services. Maybe they will need to offer pay and benefit concessions, but they should not be outsourced or privatized. It is an immoral and unethical course to take.

I believe if they go through with it. They will not only be losing the loyalties of these groups but of all the personal in the district. No job will be safe. Also they are showing the students that no matter what, the dollar matter's more then they do. And you will have