

**BOE Budget Forum**  
**Input from Participants**

*Slauson Middle School      4/9/13*

*Attendance ~ 100*

*Compiled by Deb Mexicotte*

**Input from participants (not verbatim, but as scribed for content and spirit):**

- What is the context in which the previous budget cuts have happened? **(Budget Context)**
- What are the thoughts about Skyline's trimester system and block scheduling? **(Trimesters, Block Scheduling)**
- What is the current budget target as 17 million was reported and now it seems we are down to 8.6 million? **(Budget Transparency)**
- Concerned about Roberto Clemente. Merging with another program get only \$200,000, there is a large special education population (70-80 %?), and each student from Ypsilanti brings \$84,000 to Ann Arbor. Uniforms bring students a discipline they need, at Pioneer that would stick out and be uncomfortable. There should be a year's grace and a move to a2Tech would be better. Staff is opposed to a move to Pioneer. **(Roberto Clemente, Out of District Revenue, Uniforms, Move to Pioneer)**
- Why move Roberto Clemente to Pioneer? **(Roberto Clemente, Move to Pioneer)**
- Class size and teacher morale. Morale has plummeted, I am not a classroom teacher, but there is so much for them to do. Tracking data, doing assessments, class size going up, and kindergarten classes of 28-30. What can the Board do about this burden and unhappiness? Maximize building enrollments, pulling from other people from the State. What about Skyline change Trustee Thomas was talking about, 3FTE, not in favor of costing out; administration is doing a bad job and what about Quad A's list? **(Class Size, Teacher Morale, Building Enrollments, Quality of Budget, Quad A List)**
- Class size, TA support, large number of TA's were surprising to the Board. 40 kids in a classroom need support. Imperative to keep appropriate staff ratios. TA cost is \$75,000 for every 20 kids in classroom, with contract size, expertise, and personnel. Clemente and Special Ed are very vulnerable. Do a good job, we will attract students. Class size and good staff. **(Class Size, Teacher Support, Quality Staff, Roberto Clemente, Special Ed, Recruitment)**
- Pioneer is too large to bring back 40 students from Roberto Clemente, where they were already unsuccessful, the school is too large, 100 doors, no monitors at doors, it is a real mistake, among most vulnerable. Program needed to eliminate achievement gaps and increase graduation. It is a program not a school. **(Roberto Clement, Pioneer Move, Pioneer Overcrowding, Academic Failure, Graduation)**
- There is a trend toward inequity between the high schools with the allocation of resources. **(Building Equity)**

- Roberto Clemente – why was Pioneer chosen? Skyline has separate wings; Pioneer is overcrowded and really big. Roberto Clemente and Skyline both have trimesters – a better match. **(Roberto Clemente, Pioneer Move, RC to Skyline)**
- Athletic cuts. Without athletics and co-curriculars schools become “academic factories”, loss of joy. The Harbough brothers came through our athletic programs – ironic. Athletics are just 2% of the budget, NCAA lists coaching as good and beneficial. In college support for students is also a goal. 50% of HS students participate, all races, socioeconomic levels, they cross all boundaries. Pay to play may price this out. Important part of childhood. **(Athletics, Pay to Play, Student Development)**
- Roberto Clemente issue, have concerns that our hearts are in the right place. Move poorly communicated to the BOE and the staff at Pioneer. Trend is to have Pioneer over capacity, how would RC’s trimester system look at Pioneer. Separate wing makes them second class citizens. **Roberto Clemente, Move to Pioneer, Pioneer Overcrowding)**
- Moving Roberto Clemente to a crowded Pioneer will be a problem. We are already overcrowded in science, no seats, especially in lab. **Roberto Clemente, Move to Pioneer, Pioneer Overcrowding)**
- Reading, how do we support elementary teachers, have a 20 student class size. Media Specialists are really important to reading. We have a great teaching faculty. There is a bloated pay rate for the Superintendent of schools. **(Media Specialists, Administrative Pay Raises)**
- How do we know everything needs to be cut? What can we do that can make any difference considering the State funding? **(State Funding, Budget Accuracy)**
- Supporting concern about the “separate but equal” entrance for Roberto Clement at Pioneer. Need a student-centered thought process for moving Clemente to Pioneer. 30 kids per class over 8 classrooms would be class size there. Have we considered accessibility/relationships, recommendations for college, loss of revenue from out of district students? **(Roberto Clemente, Equity, Pioneer Overcrowding)**
- What does the Board get out of administration relating to information? Concerned if the numbers just float up. Don’t trust central administration. Can’t just take the numbers that come. Middle School athletic program ideas – solutions proposed don’t get to you. 3<sup>rd</sup> Elective, afterschool program is not transferrable to outside organizations. Not a simple transfer to Rec and Ed. Lose connection to buildings, certification of plans for what reductions or revenue increases can look like. Want to bypass central administration. The process for this is difficult for the people in the buildings. **(Communication Admin to BOE, MS Athletics)**
- It is “terrifying” to come to the Board podium – so thanks for the forum. Class size – 29-31 kids in first grade classes. Adds to behavior management, teacher stress. With 24 kids in current classroom everyone is thriving. Let’s do an enhancement millage. **(Class Size, Behavior Management)**
- Teachers are stressed, frustrated and overworked. Too busy, tired, stressed, angry – comes at great expense to relationships. Worried about athletics. **(Teacher Stress, Athletics)**

- How is input from building staff gathered? **(Communication between Admin/BOE and Buildings)**
- Need an enhancement millage – Lansing is bleeding public education like a “stuck pig” **(Enhancement Millage)**
- Moving Roberto to Pioneer is hard enough – increased travel time to class, larger class size, loss of connections, would need more “disciplinary help”. Should take resources from Community. **(Roberto Clemente, Equity)**
- Need Enhancement Millage to preserve programs, reduce class size. Eliminating something like Roberto Clemente that took a long time to develop will be hard to recreate after elimination or programmatic breaking. Should go out for a survey about a millage. Increase pay to play. Problem with central administration having no institutional memory. **(Enhancement Millage, Class Size, Roberto Clemente, Pay to Play, Institutional Memory)**
- Transportation, important issue for equity. **(Transportation, Equity)**
- Transportation needs to be offered to everybody. Hikone or Carrot Way, no transportation leads to streets or jail. **(Transportation, Equity)**
- Need to talk to neighbors without kids for support, retirees. They don’t know about the budget cutting. **(Budget Communication with the Community)**
- Need to fundraise for this together, Give to district overall. **(District Fundraising)**
- Rec and Ed, Roberto move are/will contribute to overcrowding at Pioneer. Appearance only of being equal – the wing where RC would move is currently being used. Already difficult to get appointments and had to fight to get appointment at Pioneer. Roberto Clemente if integrated into electives will affect class sizes, will add competition for electives. Why is Community sacred? Maybe those kids should be integrated into the system. “Open Door” considerations for all High schools for attendance at any. Rec and Ed – outside thinking is not encouraged or positive. Athletics, theatre – there is a need for special programming, safe haven for kids. Should look an inequality between club sports and varsity, esp. foe college purposes. **(Roberto Move to Pioneer, Pioneer Overcrowding, Building Enrollments, Athletics)**