Community Area Advisory Meeting
West Montgomery High School
October 21, 2010

What do you expect from the Montgomery County School System?

- Expectations of Schools: keep our children safe; provide a positive learning environment to challenge the students to succeed.
- Expectations of MCS: That students are prepared to be competitive w/students in other systems.
- College bound students are truly prepared w/same level of education as other systems.
- Our students are being put in a position of shock when they enter college and have lack of knowledge but same transcripts.
- Is there any way for children from Learning Academy to be picked up at home rather than allowed on the campuses they were banned from?
- Can we expect schools board members & County commissioners to be more visible in the schools in the near future?
- I need to know more about the suspension process.
- How can a child that never got in trouble and a child that is always in trouble receive two different punishments? The trouble child was not suspended, but the other child was. What is the law?
- To teach the kids not only the ABC's but to be responsible and to complete tasks.
- Schools should not change in middle grades – there is a need for transition programs from the elementary to middle level.
- Additional opportunities for AIG students
- How do we provide a working environment that will retain good educators?
- Tutoring for all levels for true differentiated instruction.
- I expect MCS to create an atmosphere of mutual respect among students, teachers, and administrators. I want my child to learn to respect those who are similar and different. Most importantly, I want the teacher to be the role model for this.
- Expect the schools to provide an environment where students can safely learn and be challenged!
- Would like to have a policy enforced about the use of propriety by teachers and coaches.
- We expect that even with budget cuts, our students don't feel those effects – and they don't suffer in the education they receive.
- To provide quality staff and education to our children because our kids will be the ones that suffer.

- My expectation of MCS is that my child will receive the same quality educational offering, etc. as students in Mecklenburg, Chapel Hill, Carrboro, etc.
- I want to know that my child is going to be equally competitive when he goes off to college.
- Expectation: that MCS will provide a quality education to prepare our children for the future; to teach them key fundamentals they need to advance from year to year.
- Why is it necessary to only teach "to the test" (EOG's)? Children need more from education.
- To keep music in schools year round, for the children to grow and thrive.
- Technology, technology, technology!
- If we are leaders online, our policy on distance learning must reflect excellence. Current high school policies encourage mediocrity.
- To provide my children with the knowledge needed to become successful in life not just on an EOG test.
- How can we take each student from where they are now and move them to a well-educated future?
- We should expect MCS to offer quality education to every student during today's tough economic time. Even though we may be a small district, we need to keep up w/the "big" school systems.
- What steps are being taken to make sure West Middle and other schools are safe? This is an expectation that some parents are concerned about.
- Help children with vocational potential as well as college potential.
- Programs to help all students below grade level not just for free/reduced lunch.
- I expect children to be able to read, perform adding, subtracting, multiplication, and division, and write a simple paragraph BY 5th grade.
- Travel more than 2 hrs or overnight for profession development is unnecessary considering budget constraints.
- Increase rigor in MCC courses. The state should not grant high school credit for a college course…therefore rigor is lacking.
- Cultivate an environment where children learn by experience in a developmentally appropriate, encouraging, and low-stress environment.
- Expectation: that we will provide an excellent education.
- To keep students safe from bullying, etc.
- When the teachers have a parent conference they need to tell parents the truth about the children.
- Redistricting for schools in NW Montgomery County if any when and what?
- Give students extra credit -- they will bring the parents and food helps.
- How are AIG students served? They are being mainstreamed, not challenged. Becoming LAZY elementary up to 12th grade.
- What is the process to oversee the cleanliness of schools?
- Parent teacher conferences actual times (not just dates) need to be published earlier. This should include games, meetings, field trips, etc.

- More support to the soccer programs

Parent training

- What are defined policies about discipline (if any)?
- Is there any due process for parents who believe their child has been disciplined unfairly?
- Is there a plan to provide tutoring services to children who need educational help-when that family is not poverty level? Simply that the child needs it.
- What happens if my child does not meet quarterly benchmarks? How will they be brought "up"?
- How is the school system protecting our children from bullies?
- How can we encourage parents to partner with teachers?
- What is the district policy on retention?
- Charging snack @ Page Street
- Know about bulling law & what that means here in MCS
- AIG activities for all grade levels
- Cell phones during school day
- Uniforms either middle schools & high school or none
- Admin-training internal promotions
- At the high school, what is the policy on grades? Specifically, are all assignments supposed to weigh the same?
- What are roles & responsibilities of SROs? Who are they accountable to?
- EOG testing: how parents can help understand the rules, basics, any help. Because no child left behind is leaving our kids behind?
- Senior project: is it gone or not and if so why now? Junior and seniors have worked hard and I think that it's not to be taken away now.
- Is there any way to change the processes? Our staff is working hard the system seems to be not providing for their needs or the kids needs. Every child can learn it's just that it has to move to quickly for kids to learn.
- What is the decision making process for purchasing or not purchasing textbooks?
- My child is in the 7th grade and WMS & there aren't enough books for each student to have one. Because of this, there is less teaching time in the classroom due to homework being completed during class time.
- How are the teams decided in the Middle School? i.e. team A & B.

What do you expect from me, Dale Ellis, as the Superintendent of Montgomery County Schools?

- Visibility in the schools – very aware of how our schools run

- My expectations for the superintendent of MCS is to make sure all students are educated equally and safely. That none of our children are left behind. Make sure we have the best teachers possible.
- Don't make promises that you can't keep
- Don't keep us in the dark about changes that you know are going to happen.
- Importance of the arts in schools, loss of Elementary School year –long music is a crime.
- Instructional support @ every school
- Support outreach to community help make it possible for our kids to get their education.
- A teacher's/employee's job should NOT be jeopardy for speaking out with concerns that may disagree w/popular opinion.
- Jobs – k-3 losing aids while class size goes up: how do you insure it won't impact kids negatively here, will it affect all schools in chain?
- We expect the superintendent to not make unrealistic promises.
- I expect the superintendent to be in the schools at least 3 days a week.
- Accessibility without repercussions
- Children prepared to go to the University
- To be open & honest about how things are for students, employees & parents.
- Child goes to University
- Open to suggestions from staff members – listen to your employees
- We expect the superintendent to work closely with commissioners and other community members to provide the best resources to the education of our children.
- Have a true understanding of what is going on in each classroom so that good teachers are retained and treated as professionals and that inadequate teachers are not retained simply because of who they know, are related to, etc.
- Be active in the schools, take time to visit classrooms, and make your presence known.
- It sounds like the board made a good decision for superintendent.
- We need to do something to get the people involved. ASAP
- That teachers get interested in children's education.
- We are preparing students for college, university.
- Smaller class size should be a priority
- Expectations of superintendent accessibility

Future Topics

- Uniforms for West side Elementary Schools
- Enforcement for no sagging
- Will there be a push for an increase in teacher supplements?
- We have to do something to get parents involved. It is a shame that Montgomery County parents won't come to meeting and PTO meetings.

- Avoid getting so wrapped up in politics that those on the real front line w/front line info are ignored. Too many teachers are not being utilized to their fullest extent.

Issues Bin

- There are no AIG services for elementary students
- I would like to see Facebook and other social networks not available during schools hours to employees and students. Teachers seem to be too worried about social life while they are working.
- We need the local media to publish more good news about the schools every week.
- I am concerned about the kids at PSES and TES not having music all year. This is disheartening to all children. Music is a valuable teaching too.
- I am truly concerned about the food that these kids are being served. I invite you to come have lunch at the Montgomery Learning Academy any day. I promise you will not like what you see.
- West Middle had a great TA-Tutor until she was "shifted" to Page Street long story short, the TA @ WMS, left this week, position open.
- I am truly concerned about the food in the cafeteria.
- Why aren't supplemental services provided for children at PSES that do not qualify for F & RL? This is needed.
- Cameras to operate the whole time buses are running.