

## **Prepared Notes for Board Meeting**

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**Marc A. Schare**

**614 791-0067**

**[marc9@aol.com](mailto:marc9@aol.com)**

Here are just a few random goings-on since our last full meeting.

Last month, I attended EPP graduation night at Worthington Kilbourne High School. This was Suzanne Palmer's first EPP graduation night event and it was spectacular. Notable was the replacement of an adult graduation speaker with a series of kids reading essays about what EPP meant to them and as the saying goes, out of the mouths of babes...

A constituent asked me a question following the event that I wanted to raise here as an issue. The distribution of EPP kids looked really skewed – 3 kids in Slate Hill and 32 at Evening Street. To be sure, demographics plays a big part in this, but it's been quite some time since the BOE has been updated on our gifted services program and gifted services in general and the part that demographics plays in the identification and servicing of children might make for an interesting discussions during one of our "presentation nights".

Jennifer mentioned at our last meeting just how valuable the curriculum design council is and I really learned quite a bit about the PARCC tests at the last meeting of same. While we are busy getting ready for PARCC, our legislature is giving serious consideration to delaying its implementation for a year or cancelling it all together. HB193, already passed by the Ohio House, would delay the implementation of online assessments until the 2015-2016 school year. Presumably, the high stakes Common Core aligned assessments that are scheduled for 2014-2015 would be replaced with an alternative assessment, but who knows. In case HB193 did not find favor with the Senate, we also have House Bill 413, a bill which would outright ban Ohio from participating in the PARCC consortium. It would require ODE to provide recommendations as to new assessments for 2014-2015 by November of 2014. In other words, the assessments would be determined after the school year has started, which is sort of like adding a new 4 point play rule in football in the second quarter of a game. My message to the legislature, or at least a handful of its members, is for the love of G-d, can you just leave it alone for a year or two and let us get off the treadmill. There are tons of other legislative proposals, changes to graduation requirements, new funding models, minority proposals to delay the third grade reading guarantee, the whole mid-year budget and on and on. Suffice to say that lobbyists are getting their monies worth.

Speaking of money, we had a treasurer's advisory committee meeting to discuss our new forecast. The discussion centered on the reality that we have been gifted with a unique set of circumstances regarding our financial condition and now that we have some money in the bank, what should we do. Opinions ranged from "Give it back" (which by the way, wasn't my opinion) to "let's take more, just a slower rate", so you can see that a pretty diverse range was represented. No one had any objection to the forecast.

On the occasion of their last meeting, I just wanted to say a word of thanks to Chloe and Kaitlyn. While it was fun to hear you report on the goings on at your high schools, the insights you provided throughout the year on substantive issues contributed positively to our discussions and leant a student perspective to the decision making process. I trule hope you found the experience worthwhile. Please feel free to drop by if you ever find yourself in town on a Monday night with nothing to do...

I also want to congratulate our Treasurer on his award. I've said it a thousand times that the work product coming out of this financial office is exemplary, but Jeff's activism on financial issues in the state is reaping benefits for many, from serving on the board of Ohio School Plan to his testimony in support of allowing Ohio political subdivisions to safely eke out a slightly larger yield on investment income, to say nothing of the mentoring of his staff, this award is certainly justified. Congratulations, Jeff.