

Superintendent's Parent Advisory Council  
April 24, 2008  
Mt. Savage Middle School

A Summary  
by Butch Bowersox

Here's a quick summary of what happened at the previous PAC meeting. Underneath, you will find a "My take" on the situation as I believe it applies specifically to Beall Elementary School.

- **Substance Abuse Task Force Forum** – Lorelee Farrell presented information on the emerging "emo culture" ("emo" is short for "emotional"). This presentation focused on the dress, music, and language of this emerging culture that has actually been around since the 1990's.
  - **My take:** While the information was extensive, I felt that this is something that would be more helpful to middle and high school parents. It would be good for 5<sup>th</sup> grade parents to become more aware of this as it will become more prominent in the Middle School years. The sites Lorelee used to present some of the information:
    - <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emo>
    - <http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=emotional+hardcore>
- **Parent Survey** – Janet Wilson presented the most current information on the annual Parent Survey that is sent out by the Board of Education. This year's survey has been revamped and parents will have the option of taking an online version of the survey. For those without online access, a written version will be available as well. The target date for the survey is the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of May. The survey correlates to the six types of parent involvement and is useful for helping schools and the BOE improve communication, volunteering, decision making and more.
  - **My take:** The Parent Survey is something each parent is encouraged to take part in. I believe the improvements to this year's survey will make the survey much easier to take. While the results will affirm the strengths of Beall Elementary, it will also help identify weaknesses that need to be addressed. Please be watching for more information on this in the very near future!
- **SPIRIT Program Follow-up** – Dr. AuMiller talked about the progress that is being made in the county-wide SPIRIT program to educate students and prevent racial discrimination.
  - **My take:** This primarily affects high school students at this time. There is talk in the future of taking this to the Middle School level but not at this time so there is no impact for Beall Elementary.
- **Block Scheduling** – Janet Wilson and Dr. AuMiller gave an update on their exploration of Block Scheduling for the local Middle Schools. It appears that the BOE is still in the exploration phase of this and having dialogue with Middle School Administrators and Staff.
  - **My take:** Parents of 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders at Beall Elementary may want to keep an open ear for more information on this subject as it may impact the educational process of your future middle school student. At the PAC Meeting, I encouraged the BOE to be sure to solicit input/feedback from parents regarding this shift in paradigm. We'll wait and see how this unfolds in the future. In the meantime, parents may want to search the Internet for information on block scheduling to begin to be informed.
- **Next Meeting:** May 15<sup>th</sup> – Ft. Hill High School

*This information and more can also be found at:*  
<http://www.beallpto.org/pac/index.htm>