

January 9, 2014 Duanesburg Education Summit
Small group discussion notes

The following comments were made during the Jan. 9, 2014 Education Forum during small group discussions and on the event exit surveys. Abbreviations used: Duanesburg Central School: DCS, Elementary School: ES, High School: HS, Middle School: MS.

Question 1:

What do you value most about the academic program of the Duanesburg Central School District?

- Small-school, close community environment.
- People want to send their kids here. Move here for the school.
- Teachers and a school district who go above and beyond to put children first.
- Close relationships and open communication with teachers.
- Hands-on teaching approach.
- Teachers who are shaping me for the future; teachers' positive attitudes.
- Variety of electives and opportunities for Career & Technical Education.
- Strong academic ranking, especially for a small school.
- Basic skills such as reading, literacy and math are excellent at the elementary level. The programs really provide a firm foundation for learning in MS and HS.
- The variety of advanced courses.
- Well-rounded opportunities for sports, music, arts.
- Math and science programs are strong, but could be better.
- Advanced Placement, University in the HS, Project Lead the Way, Distance Learning.
- Like the Parent portal.
- New technologies in classrooms, i.e. smart boards that get students interested in learning.
- Should increase access to technology: its use by students is a pillar of Common Core Standards.
- More and better laptops and carts in all schools needed.
- High graduation rate, success of grads, high number of grads who go on to college.
- Family involvement, especially at ES level.
- Excellent Special Education services.
- Guidance counselors who prepare students for college.
- Safe schools.
- A number of DCS alumni said the district prepared them well for their lives and careers.
- Want to preserve or grow opportunities for future graduates, younger students.
- Parental involvement Duanesburg Area Community Center (DACC) to engage HS students after school.
- Homework hotline is good.
- Cuts in state aid at same time as having to implement Common Core and make students college and career-ready is tough for schools.
- Do not like increased class sizes in ES or elimination of ES librarian position.
- Teachers are negatively impacted by APPR process.
- Elimination of late bus negatively impacted both extra help and activities.
- Do not like lack of gifted and talented program.
- Do not like elimination of 4th grade band.
- The HS Leo Club helps others as volunteers, with community service.
- Explore ways to write grants to raise money, even if use volunteers.
- Would like more foreign language offerings.

- Merging would cause loss of identity – this is our school district, our community.
- Can there be afterschool and summer remedial help for students re Common Core?
- Add more education in the trades.
- Explore geothermal heating system.

Question 2:

The results of our recent community survey indicate that our facilities play an important role in helping to meet the needs of our students and community. Should the district consider taking a closer look at improving its facilities to benefit the overall program?

- Update facilities in general; some of the buildings are very old.
- Need new public address and phone systems.
- Improve the audio system in the HS MOCC.
- More athletic and arts facilities, including a track and auditorium.
- Need better drainage on athletic fields.
- Driveway in front of MS/HS is too narrow.
- MS/HS climate control/temperature needs improvement.
- MS roof leaks, windows.
- ES roof leaks, some places smell like mold.
- Need a bigger ES library and a media center.
- Improve bus garage climate control/temperature.
- Greater accessibility.
- Some of the students at the forum said the buildings are not so bad.
- Can the district share a five-year capital plan?
- Want new facilities, but don't want to pay for it.
- Could you move MS into the HS and build a new, high-tech HS?
- Bigger maintenance budget.
- Regulation basketball court at the ES.
- Renovate school bathrooms.
- An auditorium would allow us to have graduation here instead of Proctors.
- Need a working scoreboard.
- Uncomfortable bleachers.
- Grounds and landscaping look much better than in the past.
- Collaborate with SCCC, DACC, other districts on sports facilities.

Question 3:

What would you like to see the district do to further enhance opportunities for community involvement?

- More events like the Education Summit.
- More volunteer recruitment and involvement. An organized program with clear requirements and a process and protocol.
- Volunteers both in the school, after school and even to do construction.
- Increase involvement in PTA and at sports events.
- Odyssey of the Mind, science fairs are good opportunities.
- Lack of high-speed internet in the area is a challenge; lack of cable is partly to blame.
- Town library has only two computers – a challenge.
- Would it be possible for DCS or a community business to house an internet cafe'?

- Work with the DACC to provide more opportunities for students. DACC offers computers, sports, an excellent facility and welcomes closer relationship with school.
- Highlight student achievement and success.
- Increase use of website, SNN, emails. Paper reminders in addition to SNNs.
- Provide more advance notice of school events.
- Engage more non-parents, regular taxpayers.
- What about a breakfast with the Board of Education event?
- Make sure people feel their involvement will matter.
- Continue to keep us all informed. Continue to foster communication in the area.
- Maybe partner with Stewart's for a bulletin board/student showcase.
- Electronic sign or lighted sign at junction of Routes 7 and 20.
- A track could be used by the community.
- Summer trade institute where professionals teach for credit.
- Coffee/tea with the principal.
- Work with the Duanesburg Business Association.
- Increase school involvement with the town.
- Involve/reach out more to senior citizens, retirees, fire house.
- Provide babysitting on BOE meeting nights.
- More involvement in the Booster Club.
- Work with town board, historical society, political parties, clubs.
- Establish a parent council to work with administration, meet monthly.