

FACTS & FICTIONS

ABOUT THE SIGNAL MOUNTAIN SCHOOL DISTRICT



Top 7 Facts

Top 7 Fictions

<p>#1 Smaller & Local Better for Student Outcomes. Studies indicate smaller school districts with local control lead to better student outcomes.^{SSVC pp. 6, 13}</p>
<p>#2 10% Operations Budget Surplus. SM School District (SMSD) budget by the School System Viability Committee (SSVC) had a \$1.9 million annual operations surplus that could be used for new programs or savings.</p>
<p>#3 Capital Funds Still Flow from Hamilton County. SMSD would receive a pro rata allocation of bond funds spent by Hamilton County on schools in the future. Based on historical experience, this would add another \$1.5 million per year on average for the SMSD in addition to the operational surplus listed above.</p>
<p>#4 2.1% from Town of SM. 2.1% (\$440K) of the total school district budget would come from the Town of Signal Mountain.</p>
<p>#5 \$30M over 10 Years. SSVC capital and operations budget showed roughly \$30 million of surplus funds over 10 years that could be used for new programs or capital projects.</p>
<p>#6 MEF Down 20%. MEF contributions have been down 20% in the last 3 years.</p>
<p>#7 \$1 Million for Basics. The Mountain Community and parents pay roughly \$1 million each year to SM schools through MEF donations, school fees, and extracurricular fees to cover the basics.</p>

<p>#1 Fiction: SMSD Equals Much Higher Taxes. Fact: The amount of the Town of SM contribution to the SM school district required by state law is \$0.15 per \$100 of assessed property value, which is \$37.50 per \$100,000 of home value.</p>
<p>#2 Fiction: Walden & Unincorporated Pupils Not In. Fact: SMSD not viable unless Walden & Unincorporated students can attend the schools. SMSD has sole discretion on these students attending its schools. HCDE has no say.</p>
<p>#3 Fiction: Special Needs Students Excluded. Fact: State & Federal law requires Special Needs students receive proper level of support from schools. SSVC budget included \$2.3 million to keep the same level of Special Needs services provided today by HCDE including Orange Grove, etc.</p>
<p>#4 Fiction: Teachers Lose Jobs, Pay, & Benefits. Fact: State law requires that teachers not be harmed and maintain their jobs, pay, and benefits at same or better level including keeping their retirement and tenure. SSVC budget had same level of pay and health care benefits as today.</p>
<p>#5 Fiction: HCDE No Doubt Owns the Buildings. Fact: Legal precedent says otherwise. Interlocal agreement between Town and HCDE is subject to state law. This is one for lawyers to figure out.</p>
<p>#6 Fiction: SM Property Taxes Will Remain on SM. Fact: SM property taxes would continue to flow to Hamilton County. SMSD would receive for its students the average per pupil HCDE expenditure.</p>
<p>#7 Fiction: HC Students Would Be Harmed. Fact: "The economic viability of Hamilton County schools will not be impacted" by the creation of SMSD. Why? HCDE would lose the expenses and the funding tied to those students going to SMSD.</p>