

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
REPORT TO COUNCIL

SUBJECT: ACE Student Awards

BACKGROUND: The ACE Student Awards, held on Monday, May 8, 2017, were a successful celebration of student achievement by the best of Greenbelt students. ACE appreciates the continued support of Council for our popular awards programs. We reported last year on some challenges and issues with both our Student and Educator Awards. The awards were strengthened this year by several changes made to the programs and we felt both programs ran more smoothly. We were very happy with the Educator Awards and don't feel any further changes to the process there is currently required. However, there remain some challenges for the Student Awards. This report will discuss what we feel is our biggest challenge and provide some possible solutions.

FINDINGS:

Audience size and Awards location. With the addition of Dora Kennedy French Immersion School, ACE has seven core schools. At two student awardees per school plus the Maryland State Delegate Award, presented by Delegate Anne Healey, fifteen awards are currently being presented during the Student Awards ceremony. ACE welcomes both the families and the staff and administration of the schools to celebrate with the awardees. As a result, the audience has become quite large and is filling the City Council chambers beyond capacity. The Committee was able to find some extra chairs this year but seating was not adequate and many attendees were forced to stand during the ceremony, which lasted more than an hour. Also, those forced to stand in the foyer of the chamber were unable to see the proceedings. ACE has discussed several possible solutions to this problem of overcrowding:

- a. Hold the awards instead of the usual Wednesday Council Worksession so Council could be present but the venue would be larger and provide more seating. If possible, the session would begin at 7:00 pm to better accommodate families with small children.

- b. Hold the awards at 7:00 pm immediately prior to a City Council meeting. This might limit the audience by reducing the number of non-award-related attendees. Possibly moving some of the furniture around could net additional space for seating.
- c. Continue to hold the awards during a regular City Council meeting but try to move as many of the large tables out of the chamber to make additional seating space. This wouldn't solve the overcrowding but would reduce the number of people having to stand.
- d. Limit the number of attendees per student to reduce the total number of observers.

RECOMMENDATION: We have offered our solutions in order of priority from most preferred to least preferred.

Approved by ACE on 12/12/2017 with a vote of 6-0 with 2 members absent.