Some members of the Yazoo City School Board have had some harsh words concerning this newspaper’s coverage of proposals for the district’s upcoming budget.

Everyone is obviously entitled to their own opinion, but we stand behind our coverage of the issue. Superintendent Dr. Arthur Cartlidge and others made a big deal of the fact that the district hasn’t officially asked for a millage increase, but merely submitted a proposal that would require one.

That is exactly what we reported.

The district submitted a proposal to city officials, and the Mayor and Board of Aldermen were concerned that it would require a second consecutive tax increase. The two boards were set to meet on the matter in two weeks, and we considered it our duty to inform the public so that they might have a chance to attend that meeting if they would like to have some input in the matter. It is, after all, their money being discussed.

Our efforts to contact school officials for comment on the matter last week were unsuccessful because they were attending workshops. We also noted that in our coverage.

It was important to us to get the story out in time to allow citizens time to prepare for the upcoming meeting. Working people are often most interested in tax matters, and it’s not easy for them to attend meetings during work hours without advance planning. That’s a topic for another day, but I don’t think it’s a good thing that so many important public meetings are held during normal business hours. It prevents many citizens who might otherwise be able to contribute meaningful input from attending.

But getting back to the subject of the school’s budget proposals, the matter is too important to leave the public out of the conversation. I have a great deal of respect for both Mrs. Lula Starling and John Wallace, but I think they took the matter personally instead of looking at it as a matter of keeping the public informed. We reported the facts that were available and encouraged the public to attend the meeting.

If a genie appeared from a lamp at City Hall and said he’d grant three wishes related to attracting new business and new residents to our community, the first two would probably be improving our schools and lowering our taxes. Unfortunately no amount of wishing will make these things happen. It’s going to take a lot of work.

The more people who get involved with that effort, the better.

Who knows? Maybe most Yazooans think that spending more money is the answer to the problems facing our schools and will gladly part with the extra tax dollars it will take.

I strongly doubt it, but we’ll never know if we don’t at least involve them in the conversation.

There’s still a chance for that to happen. The meeting between the Mayor and Board of

Aldermen and school officials about the upcoming budget has been rescheduled for Aug. 3 at 1 p.m. at the meeting room of the Yazoo City Police Department.