

**THEMES: Parent, Community and Staff Input Meetings on Budget
Across all Stakeholder Groups (Parents, Community, Staff)
February 2009**

Areas of Budget Priorities (what they value):

- Focus on teaching, instruction, quality education, learning goals, the classroom and engaging students
- Technology
- Small class size
- Specials (music, art, P.E.), and foreign language instruction
- Support for special populations – at-risk students, integrated education for ELL, special education and home bound
- 21st Century skills, workforce readiness, civic and career education
- Professional development – well-trained, highly qualified staff in all areas; instructional support for teachers (Rtl, PLCs, learning goals)
- Early childhood programs
- Gifted and talented education, pre-AP, AP and a wide range of course offerings
- Competitive, attractive teacher, other salaries
- Paraprofessionals (literacy, SPED, other)
- Transportation equitable for all students
- Counseling
- Grade reconfiguration and Response to Intervention (Rtl)
- Enough staff to be effective, do a good job; school administrators to effectively lead schools

The following were mentioned once (but are not considered themes):

- Keep school choice
- More instructional time/more time for students in class
- Polaris School (list of needs)
- School learning environment – safety, etc.
- Maintain equity district-wide
- Well-maintained buildings
- Assessments: high quality and essential (don't overdue)
- Current 5-day schedule and length of school day
- Math and science
- Funding schools at adequate levels of SBB
- Small schools
- Healthy foods
- Custodial – no more cuts

Areas for Budget Efficiencies (potential savings):

- Close/consolidate small schools (most dominant theme, listed by virtually every group)
- Facilities efficiencies —defer maintenance, energy efficiency, snow removal, outsourcing, necessity only, recycle, delay new construction projects, less use by community; eliminate “green” consultant, more green practices; efficiencies in telephone/data lines; outsource maintenance, custodial, outdoor services to save benefits
- Transportation efficiencies – increase coordination with Transfort; fewer field trips, fewer routes, farther/expand distances, add fees, coordinated routing, eliminate busing altogether
- Textbook efficiencies – use more online, extend life, delay buying new, careful adoption timelines, savings in consumables/instructional supplies
- Testing/assessments: reduce amount of testing; do only what’s required by the state; stop CSAP, MAPs; communicate to state the need to put testing on hold; urge state, federal government to put NCLB, Rtl, CSAP on hold; reduce funds, limit or streamline testing.
- Schedule changes: consider a 4-day school week and longer school days; shorten school year and eliminate teacher work days; more time for students to be in class.
- Fees: raise fees for lunches, parking, athletics; cut athletics before academics
- Salaries and staffing – Pay cuts, freeze salaries; Unpaid furloughs; Reduce number of staff, central office reductions; Percentage salary cuts across all areas, summer pay cuts for year round staff; Make do with what you have for 1-2 years; Outsource to save on benefits costs; Reduce benefits, be more effective with benefits; Increase salaries based only on performance; Central office staff – work 2 hours a month in schools; Curriculum Teachers on Special Assignment – reduce numbers; give responsibilities to classified staff assisting in these positions; why 2 curriculum directors?
- Community – seek more sponsorships for programs; use community resources, examine PSD policies to be more friendly; engage parents more; partnership/volunteer strengthen program; combine/subcontract to community service providers; draw on more university resources
- Summer school – examine effectiveness vs. costs; charge for summer band
- Early childhood – expand to all buildings; consolidate to one location
- Program evaluation – Evaluate for effectiveness, based on whether increases student achievement
- Grade level changes: Don’t change grade levels
- Principals, assistant principals: reduce numbers, assign to teach ½ day, job share
- Extra-curricular activities, limit distances, cut/reduce activities
- Increase class sizes
- Limit school choice, examine for costs
- Staff development – consistency across schools; create a center, offer to other agencies.
- Human resources – hire local teachers, no need to recruit out of state; hire students for some positions such as work/study, internships, custodial

The following were mentioned once (but are not considered themes):

- Special Education – consolidate SPED and at-risk program locations
- Reduce gifted/talented factor in Student-Based Budgeting (SBB)
- Technology – keep flat levels of funding
- Less communication – print publications; more electronic
- Reduce number of School Resource Officers (SROs) at middle schools
- Electives – evaluate for effectiveness; more integrated and targeted
- Mill levy – need to communicate needs and gain support to pass it
- Site based management – is it efficient? Closer overall monitoring of funds
- K-8 schools for more efficiency?