



VISION
To be a world-class school system.

Board Advisory Committee Chairs' Meeting – N O T E S
Monday, December 8, 2008

Call to Order: by Dr. James W. Browder, Superintendent (at approximately 3:45 p.m.)

Attendees: Mr. David Hall, Finance Advisory Committee
Mr. Nick Kellen, Continuous Systemic Improvement Advisory Committee
Ms. Ellen Reinig, Curriculum Advisory Committee
Mr. Keith Martin, School Board Attorney
Ms. Brenda Wall, Recording Secretary

Absent: Ms. Carrie Chase, District Advisory Council
Mr. Ron Sebring, Construction Advisory Council

1. WELCOME FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Browder welcomed the group. He explained that once again there would be major budget deficits this year. The potential is there to lose \$40-50 million dollars. He informed the group that there is about \$10 million remaining in the contingency fund. Once again there will be staff that will be cut, substantially more than what was cut last budget year. Mr. Nick Kellen of the Continuous Systemic Improvement (CSI) Committee asked Dr. Browder how these staff cuts would affect class size. Dr. Browder explained that teachers will not necessarily be lost, due to the class size amendment. Dr. Browder said that he would like for each of the committees to devise a strategy to help get the word out to the public regarding the budget cuts that the District is facing. Ms. Ellen Reinig, Curriculum Advisory Committee (CAC), stated that most people really don't realize how these budget cuts will impact education. She asked Dr. Browder if an option would be to go to a four (4) day work week. Dr. Browder answered that by law the District has to have 180 days of school, therefore a four (4) day work week would not be feasible and still qualify for the same amount of funds. Mr. David Hall, Finance Advisory Committee (FAC), brought up the fact that unemployment taxes are paid by the District and that currently unemployment is up. His suggestion would be to research if perhaps some of the staff that were let go, may be able to come back and work at the District part-time. This could perhaps save the District money. Dr. Browder agreed that this was a good idea and worth the District looking into. To that effect, Dr. Browder informed the group that in the current weekly job postings, there were only 12 positions available. David Hall posed a question regarding substitute teachers and what affect, if any, it would have on obtaining substitutes. Dr. Browder stated that substitute teachers really are not an issue, as the District currently has more than is needed. Mr. David Hall made a suggestion that every office worker at all schools be qualified as substitute teachers. Dr. Browder agreed and said that he had also considered that option. This would eliminate having to bring in a substitute teacher to cover sick days that teachers may take.

Dr. Browder brought up the issue that many people often ask about and that is the topic of neighborhood schools. He informed the group that this concept really does not work. 90% of students get their first choice of schools. Dr. Browder said that neighborhood schools reduces diversity in schools.

Mr. Nick Kellen (CSI) asked Dr. Browder about the prospect of making the District solar. He went on to say that Federal funds may be available as well as grants, to help the District

accomplish this. Initially it may cost the District money to “go green”, but if it could be accomplished, it could save the District substantial funds. Dr. Browder stated another thing that the District currently does, in relation to energy cost savings, is to have Florida Power and Light visit the various schools and provide an analysis to what the District may be able to do to save energy dollars.

2. **APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 8, 2008 MINUTES**

Minutes were accepted as submitted. Mr. David Hall moved and Mr. Nick Kellen seconded.

3. **DISCUSSION OF INDIVIDUAL COMMITTEE INITIATIVES**

- A. ***Mr. David Hall, Finance Advisory Committee (FAC)*** -- The Finance Advisory Committee has spent a large amount of time discussing the budget. Ms. Ami Desamours has met with the committee and gave them an overview of the budget. Dr. Larry Tihen also spoke to the committee regarding unifying the curriculum to help address the needs of those students moving from school to school. Dr. Browder stated that this matter was very important and that the District needed to keep the standards the same for each school. Mr. Nick Kellen agreed that this is very important and should be followed very closely by school principals.

- B. ***Mr. Nick Kellen, Continuous Systemic Improvement Committee (CSI)*** -- Mr. Kellen informed the group that he felt that his particular committee had a very good representation from both schools and the public. The CSI Committee will concentrate on communicating with school principals regarding their concerns. He stressed that parent involvement is very important to schools. Dr. Browder agreed, but added that sometimes parent support can be difficult to achieve due to the changing economy. Parents are sometimes working two (2) jobs and that makes being involved with their child’s school difficult. Ms. Reinig agreed that parent involvement is very important, but that it is a difficult task to get parents involved. Focus should be on getting parents into the schools and she stated that one way this is being implemented is that some schools are scheduling meetings on Saturdays to make it easier on parents. Dr. Browder said in past years volunteer hours have increased, but due to the changing economy, they may go back down again.

- C. ***Ms. Ellen Reinig, Curriculum Advisory Committee (CAC)*** -- The Curriculum Committee is reviewing the SAT/ACT scores and working on making them comparable with other states. Dr. Browder explained that the District encourages students to take the SAT test, however the down side to that is the more students that take the test, the lower the scores may go. Ms. Reinig stated more work needs to be done by the District regarding the high school drop-out rate. Many students are not being served. Mr. Nick Kellen stated that more work needs to be done by the District regarding drop-out intervention. Dr. Browder then shared that the drop-out intervention programs may also be cut due to lack of funding. He also said that work needs to be done regarding changing the mind-set of the public so that they are aware that students need these extra programs in the school in order to be successful. Ms. Reinig also stated that work needs to be done on improving the science curriculum. In addition, vocational programs are critical to many high school students and more should be added to schools. Dr. Browder stated that many of these programs may be dropped due to lack of funding. Ms. Reinig also passed out a handout to committee members regarding vocational classes in high schools.

4. **DISCUSSION OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Mr. Martin discussed with the committee as to when the next meeting would be held. It was decided that the meeting would be scheduled within the next three (3) months.

Mr. Martin also reminded the committee members that they would need to give their quarterly presentation to the Board at the January 6, 2009 meeting at 2:30 p.m. At that meeting they will be required to update the Board on the issues that their individual committee is working on.

5. **ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

/blw