



District Business Office

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Budget Advisory Committee

February 3, 2009

6:00 PM

Attendees: Dale Graham, Brett White, Rob Dickson, Tom Ostrander, Janice Eldridge, Craig Gray, Terry Huelskamp, Melinda Fritze, Marvin Hladik, Brett Randolph, Mark Evans, Scott Wilson, Bruce Sanderson, Sherame Kneisel, Mark Templin, Cicely Dare, Dr. Crystal Hummel, Dr. Andy Koenigs, Mary Ann Maupin, Ann Katt, Roger Elliott, Tracey Repp, Julie Clopton, Jim Freeman, Keturah Austin, five audience members

AGENDA

1. Welcome and Review

Jim Freeman called the meeting to order at 6 p.m. He welcomed committee members and noted the large number of items that need to be accomplished in this meeting. He also noted the agenda and other items at each place and said he'd reference those items as we get to them during the meeting. He reviewed the charge, norms, considerations, district vision, and the main categories of the Board of Education's goals and objectives.

Mr. Freeman noted that he's received several emails stating that Tuesday isn't the best day to meet and asked attendees to share their thoughts for this. Some noted that the next meeting – Feb. 24 - is the last ACHS home basketball game, and many would like to be there. He asked about Wednesdays, but some noted they would prefer not to meet regularly on Wednesdays. It was decided that the Feb. 24 meeting would be moved to Wed., Feb. 25, because of conflicts. Other dates remain as previously scheduled, but these dates will be reviewed during the next meeting.

2. Update on State Legislature

Mr. Freeman turned the meeting over to Superintendent Mark A. Evans to give an update of what's going on in the state legislature. He has been involved in conversations with our legislators regarding potential education cuts that are being considered. He handed out and referenced a chart with the governor's proposal, the senate proposal and the house appropriations committee proposal (this one will be debated on the floor of the House tomorrow). He noted he also sent this information out electronically to all staff this afternoon. The Legislature has decided they want to figure out this year's budget cuts first, then when that's done, they'll focus on budget cuts for next year. He has encouraged district staff to contact legislators and educate them on what potential cuts mean to our district – but to do it on their own time, from their own email address or letterhead. He also noted the federal stimulus package that many saw in the newspaper, but it may not pass and will not result in a great deal of funding for us if it does. He told the group about the district Legislative Council and the work they can do in advocating for school funding.



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3. Completion of District Background

Mr. Freeman wanted to cover more in-depth a couple of the items the group only touched on last time. He highlighted a document that attendees also have (under the district budget tab) showing growth in the district (percent increase from 2006) in the areas of total expenditures, achievement, enrollment and staff. He turned the meeting over to Dr. Andy Koenigs to discuss district achievement. He shared graphs showing overall Kansas Assessment AYP Data in reading and mathematics. Our district is well above the federal bar in these. He also shared the AYP data in reading and math for free/reduced lunch students and special education students, sharing the improvements our students had in these areas. He also noted our district has done a number of things to help improve on these areas, such as MTSS (multi-tier systems of support) and more.

Mr. Freeman had the group share programs and other things the district has added in the past couple of years. Keturah Austin wrote the items up on the Promethean Board as they were called out. In just a few minutes, the committee had come up with 37 things added in the last few years. Mr. Freeman noted that many of these productive items are now on the list for potential cuts. Mr. Evans noted that many of the items on the list came from a variety of different funding sources – certain funds can only be spent on certain items. He emphasized the importance of this group understanding this – especially when they talk to others in their schools and in their community.

Mr. Freeman referenced a document in the attendees' books – under the district budget tab. He discussed the different budgets listed and what each includes, what can be purchased from each, etc. He also discussed salaries – approximately \$23 million of our budget. He handed out a line chart on Salary Growth (2004 to now), and a pie chart on the 2009 salary budget. Mr. Freeman also referenced a pie chart showing 2009 budget breakout by program.

Mr. Freeman said the effort tonight will be to educate ourselves on the items we're considering tonight – to learn what they are, and the costs involved with each. We'll be discussing items that impact people and programs. He defined dialogue for the group: the capacity of members to suspend assumptions and enter into genuine thinking together. He said the group will take a 10 minute break and then review the sheets that have been handed out – a "budget items for consideration" sheet for each item the group will consider tonight.

10 minute break

Mr. Freeman rang the bell to call the meeting back to order. He explained the ID numbers to the group.



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4. Items for Consideration Round One

He asked them to go to **Item #83** – Eliminate Parents as Teachers. Dr. Koenigs explained the program – we fund more than 40 slots with this money (it’s through the South Central Kansas Education Service Center – SCKESC), and there is a waiting list. Well researched program. Trains parents on parenting skills and give children a better start. Studies show that kids who go through PAT enter Kindergarten at a higher readiness level. It was asked if parents could pay for slots instead of it being free. Mr. Evans noted he’s received comments from a number of people about how great this program is. \$18,400 budget reduction

Item #122 – Eliminate Arts Partners. Dr. Koenigs noted this program is paid for out of a Title II A program. It’s a wonderful program, he said, and has done things such as murals at AMS, movie making courses and more. Much of it is free professional development; some artists in residence have a small cost. Not as many teachers have used this program as the district would have liked. Mr. Evans noted that since it’s Title II A money it doesn’t affect general fund, but Mr. Freeman noted that if we don’t pay this out of the Title II A fund, we can pay something else out of it. Title II A money is for quality professional development. \$10,000 budget reduction

Item #123 – Add Middle School Technology upgrades. Dr. Koenigs explained the technology labs at the middle schools, which teach robotics, airplanes and much more in modules. These labs are in dire need of upgrades. \$1,500 budget increase

Item #7 – Implement MyLearningPlan for staff development. Dr. Koenigs explained this is a computerized way to track professional development. It works with AESOP. We currently use a person and track this on paper. Two-thirds of Kansas districts use this – it makes the teacher more in charge of their own paperwork instead of relying on a professional development clerk. It gives both a PD calendar and a place to register and sign up for the opportunities, and also generates a transcript. Teachers can always see where their paperwork is in the process. Someone would have to maintain this. \$7,500 budget increase

Item #32 – Eliminate the Professional Development Clerk position. Dr. Koenigs explained we have a half time person who helps teachers through this process, recently assisted him with getting paperwork in for recertifications. She helps not only teachers in our schools, but anyone in district boundaries who desires recertification – per state law. Dr. Koenigs was asked who would do this if the position were eliminated – much of it – even if the software were purchased – would be absorbed in the district office by Dr. Koenigs, Annita Evans in payroll, others. \$42,721 budget reduction



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Item #95 – Reduce or eliminate NWEA testing. Dr. Koenigs said we’ve ramped up our testing, currently in the fall in grades 2 through 9, and it has helped us identify gifted, special ed, etc., and has helped us with assessments. It’s also computer adaptive and picks up right where the student left off. One student can be tested four times a year at one price, so would need to eliminate the number of students – or grades – tested to reduce and save money. NWEA gives individualized instructional plans detailing where that child is in a number of areas. \$34,000 budget reduction

Item #96 – Reduce or eliminate professional development expenditures. Mr. Freeman noted this could in essence wipe out our professional development fund. Dr. Koenigs noted that our professional development budget was doubled under Mr. Evans’ leadership and staff and administration alike have been pleased with the progress that’s been made. Half is for buildings, half is for district. \$80,000 budget reduction

Item #98 – Eliminate expenditures for mentoring beyond the state reimbursement. Dr. Koenigs said the state reimburses a mentor of a first year teacher \$1,000, and \$500 if they mentor a second year teacher. We have staff who are good mentors but don’t meet the state’s criteria. We pay them out of our pocket so all mentors in the program receive the same stipend. For instance, the state says a staff member would have to have been in this district for four years, but we have great longtime teachers who don’t fit this criteria. \$3,500 budget reduction

Item #124 – Eliminate off year testing for social studies. Dr. Koenigs said we like to see this data every year instead of every other year to help measure curriculum improvement. He said it was important especially in light of the large history grant the district received. \$500 budget reduction

Item #126 – Eliminate Plan and Explore Tests (ACT Prep). Dr. Koenigs noted that juniors and seniors pay for their own ACT, but we pay for this test for every student to help prepare them for the ACT test. A teacher noted that the Plan test is a huge part of her sophomore curriculum. \$2,700 budget reduction

Item #125 – Eliminate ASCD District Memberships. Dr. Koenigs noted this is the main journal for educational research for administrators and teachers. It also pays for 10 free professional development classes for teachers. \$1,000 budget reduction

Item #69 – Eliminate all non-mandated unfunded programs. Mr. Freeman noted he added this to the list. Dr. Koenigs noted there are many mandated unfunded programs, but not as many non-mandated unfunded. He said there may be others that we think of that fall into this category. Mr. Freeman noted much of what’s in this category are electives and fine arts. Mr. Freeman noted this is one item that we can’t define well enough to put a dollar amount on it. Unknown budget impact



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Item #6 – Add Chinese II to the curriculum. Mark Templin said AHS had no one enroll, ACHS had 14 or 15. At semester there were only 4. He said the IDL format is difficult to compete with traditional foreign language classes with a teacher physically in the classroom. He noted we may not have enough students to take Chinese II whether we drop it or not. If we don't offer Chinese II, we shouldn't offer Chinese I, because the Board of Regents requires two foreign language courses (in the same language). \$3,750 budget increase

Item #9 – Eliminate transfer to textbook fund. Mr. Freeman noted we already eliminated that this year. It helped support curriculum adoptions, but because of budget issues this year's curriculum adoption has been delayed. Textbook fees only pay for about half of what we spend on a yearly basis. If we don't reinstate the transfer, we can probably do a curriculum adoption because we'll have enough fees built up, but then will have to skip the following year. No budget impact if transfer is not reinstated

Item #11 – Eliminate extensions to teacher contracts. Tom Ostrander noted some district positions have extended contracts that go beyond regular duties (lead nurse, band, counselors, etc.). It is an IBB item and would have to be worked through. It is an option to reduce as well as eliminate. One committee member noted perhaps we could offer comp days to these people as well. The rate is whatever their daily rate is. \$135,000 budget reduction

Item #12 – Eliminate committee pay. Mr. Ostrander noted that various building and district committees exist. Staff members get paid \$15 an hour to serve on these. Meeting during the day would incur sub costs, we could request volunteers instead. \$26,563 budget reduction

Items #13, 14 and 15 – Reduce, freeze or eliminate high, middle and elementary school supplemental pay. Mr. Ostrander noted these are for athletics, activities, etc. A reduction could be, for instance, fewer coaches per sport. A committee member noted that the difference between first time and longtime coaches is minimal and feels that coaches would not notice if we paid all the same. However, he feels if we cut the pay the coaches would not do this for free. Mr. Freeman noted there is a supplemental committee, and if the Budget Advisory Committee recommends a reduction in supplementals, the supplemental committee – not this group – would look at how best to do that. Total HS supplementals equal \$550,526, MS supplementals are \$189,574, and Elementary supplementals are \$17,883

Mr. Freeman reminded the group to remember "return on investment." Where are we spending our money and what is it producing?

Item #16 – Eliminate BOE contracts. Mr. Ostrander explained that some staff works on specialized board contracts (department chairs, for example) and are paid a specific amount for those activities. It's very similar to the supplementals, and most are smaller contracts,



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though middle school athletic directors and the energy manager are also included in this line item. \$107,000 budget reduction

Mr. Freeman noted that every time the double slash is used in the comments on the individual item pages, it denotes that the next comments are from a different person. This was done because several people provided input for the same items.

Item #79 – Reduce all building budgets. Building budgets are based partly on enrollment and partly on a flat amount that goes into the budget for activities. When reallocations took place in the fall, the building budgets also included some professional development and other items that are not included in this item. The budget impacted listed is 10% of the building budgets. The easiest way to reduce this budget is to reduce the amount per student. The reallocation in the fall varied a bit by building. The average was around 25%. Mr. Templin said it was okay to absorb this year, but will be tough next year – some of what he does in his building will need to be altered. Brett White noted at middle schools they spent \$10,000 on new textbooks, classroom budgets (materials, supplies, etc.), technology and other replacements. He said it funds the day to day expenses of having a school and the costs associated with it. The middle school athletic budget is part of that as well. Mr. Freeman explained fall reallocations and noted that building administrators seem to be doing a good job at using these budgets – they are not wasteful. Craig Gray noted that all their music is purchased out of this budget, but other teachers don't have a lot to purchase out of classroom budgets. Mr. Templin noted that as we make cuts in other places, these items may fall back to the building budgets. Tracey Repp noted how significant such a decrease would be in his building. Mr. Freeman reaffirmed that nothing that we do is "fluff," which is why this is a difficult process. 10% of the building budgets equals \$67,708

Item #81 – Eliminate Chinese. (Also see earlier discussion about Chinese II). Mr. Freeman also noted that there's another item about our membership in the South Central Kansas Education Service Center. Mr. Templin noted that a certified teacher serves as a proctor in the IDL classroom. If we aren't members of the SCKESC, that would eliminate this program. \$3,500 budget reduction

Item #82 – Eliminate Youth Entrepreneurs of Kansas. Mr. Evans said this is the first year for us to have this program, and it's full to capacity at both high schools. The teachers trained in Atlanta. It's a Koch program. The parents, teachers and students love this program. Mr. Templin said it does fill a need he feels our district has lacked. Mr. Evans noted that perhaps it could be paid from a different fund – such as Title II A. He said it is project based learning, which is important. Mr. Freeman noted that this class does generate a little bit of vocational weighting. Losing this program would probably lose this additional funding. The interest in this is so great that students will have to be turned away next year because we won't have room. \$20,000 budget reduction



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Item #84 – Eliminate the string program. Craig Gray noted that it was started two years ago, and we have an excellent teacher to work with the 12 students in the program. The district had some calls about string programs – this was an answer to that need. At the high school level, they encourage students to participate in the Wichita Youth Symphony program. He said we could potentially offer this program on a tuition basis. \$4,000

10 minute break

Mr. Freeman rang the bell to call the meeting back to order.

Item #92 – Eliminate AESOP. Mr. Ostrander said the system was put in place 3 years ago and it automatically contacts and places substitute teachers. Elimination of this program would need an additional half to .75 of a position to do all that the system does now. The \$4,500 is the cost of AESOP – not what the added position would cost. The person who used to do this now does Work Comp, FMLA, and other HR items in addition to the substitute piece. \$4,500 budget reduction

Item #119 – Implement 2-tier Substitute Pay System. Mr. Freeman said this was a suggestion from a substitute teacher. Currently we pay \$88 for a substitute teacher. This suggestion would have certified subs getting the \$88 a day, and non certified getting only \$80 a day. The savings number on this may or may not be accurate. 82% of daily subs are emergency – not fully certified. Certified subs are often used for long term substitute positions, which receive a different pay. \$20,000 budget reduction

Item #33 – Reduce or eliminate the music accompanist positions. Mr. Gray said accompanists are used in all fine arts programs, though primarily in the vocal music departments. It allows the instructors to focus on teaching the actual class while the accompanist handles the music. They accompany a variety of ensembles, choirs, elementary programs, etc. Mr. Freeman noted there are two accompanists who pretty much work full time (one north, one south) and a third who assists part-time as well. Total budget is \$48,390

Item #97 – Eliminate the membership to the South Central Kansas Education Service Center (SCKESC) and the Interactive Distance Learning (IDL) consortium. This is paid from the general fund. It was asked if this could be paid by Title II A money – Mr. Freeman said perhaps, but we don't get enough of this funding. Project Encore comes through SCKESC. Mr. Templin said Project Encore offers an alternative school, as well as courses for students who are under long term suspension, as well as an adult GED completion program. They also have a virtual school option. \$17,983 budget reduction

Item #25 – Eliminate the administrators' membership benefit. Mr. Freeman noted that all of the district administrators in their contract have a \$500 membership benefit to pay for USA, KASBO, other dues. If they don't use it, they don't get it. \$11,000 budget reduction



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Item #30 – Eliminate the transition administrator position. Mr. Freeman noted this one is already done. Dr. Marilyn Herr is leaving at the end of this year; the district had already planned to eliminate this position at the end of the year. It helped in the transition of all the elementaries, and has coordinated the mentoring program as well. \$43,200 budget reduction

Item #89 – Eliminate School Messenger. Keturah Austin explained that this is a parent notification system used for contacting families and staff in the case of an emergency, a snow day, for attendance issues and more. Eliminating it could result in additional costs in mailing more items to parents, as well as personnel costs because office staff would have to make attendance/other calls. \$9,650 budget reduction

Item #90 – Eliminate School Recruiter. Mr. Ostrander explained this is an automated vacancy posting and applicant tracking system. It's the third year, all administrators can view the applications in this system, and it's eliminated numerous paper files. .3 to .5 clerical would likely be needed to handle the paperwork in the absence of this program. 700 applicants in the last two years have gone through this system. A committee member asked if we're getting applicants as a result of this system. Principals overwhelmingly agreed that finding the best applicant for the job is easier with this system. \$5,360 budget reduction

Item #91 – Eliminate Teacher Insight. Mr. Ostrander said this is a Gallup Survey with a rating scale that judges how a teacher would fit into our teaching mode. A committee member asked if there was a termination fee. District staff will look into this. Brett Randolph asked if there's something they get from this that they don't get from School Recruiter. Mr. White said it's helpful. Mr. Templin said it's helpful in the screening process. Mr. Ostrander said you don't hire because of it, it just helps in the final decision. Mr. White noted that hiring teachers is truly one of the most important things he does as a principal, and he feels this is a great tool, and one more piece to help him make these important decisions. Wichita and a number of other districts use it. Dr. Crystal Hummel said it wouldn't keep her from hiring a person, but it helps her to narrow down the field. \$6,593 budget reduction

Item #100 – Reduce BOE and District Memberships. Mr. Freeman said this is primarily Kansas Association of School Boards (KASB) dues, as well as a few other items. KASB also supplies us with free legal services in many cases, and not accessing this service would likely result in increased legal fees from our district counsel. Mr. Evans said all but one district in Kansas hold memberships in KASB – they also provide advocacy. Roger Elliott said the lobbying efforts of KASB are extremely important. Dale Graham also noted the trainings available through KASB and said they have been very helpful to members of the Board of Education. The Andover Chamber of Commerce, National Association of School Boards are also in this item but are small in comparison to the KASB membership cost. Mr. Freeman



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will later provide a list of other memberships that fall into this item. \$24,000 budget reduction

Item #102 – Reduce or eliminate district awards. – These awards were started in 1987 to build morale among employees – both certified and classified – as well as volunteers. Each building has award winners. It’s the only districtwide awards/recognition program. Mr. Templin noted that if we didn’t have this, buildings would likely try to fill in and have awards from the building budgets. \$1,748.25 budget reduction

Items #77, 93 and 94. Mr. Freeman noted that to get out of the energy management contract (93) would cost us more than paying it would cost. In addition, the contract requires that we have an energy management position (94). Brad Reams, the energy manager in the district, said (77) that there are additional things we could do to save another 5% just on heating and cooling changes alone. This equals about \$65,000. Additional tightening of guidelines could save more. Bruce Sanderson said he’s confident we can pull more money from the program. He said we can not only implement stricter guidelines, but more strictly enforce the guidelines we already have. Melinda Fritze asked if delaying the start of school would help with energy management. Mr. Reams said absolutely – August is one of the biggest months, and A/C is a large cost, so starting in September – or even starting a few days later – would be a savings. Mr. Gray asked about the ramifications of lengthening the instructional day from an energy management point of view. Mr. Reams felt there may be some impact, but it would be minimal. Cancellation of the contract would increase the budget by \$117,180

Items #3, 4 and 5. Mr. Freeman noted that these items deal with the opening of the renovated Meadowlark Elementary School and it is time sensitive. The Board of Education will be making decisions about this facility at the Monday BOE meeting. “Full staff” is staffing the facility at the very same level as all the other elementary schools we have and how they are currently staffed. The principal for Prairie Creek Elementary School (the principal currently there is moving to Meadowlark Elementary School) has already been hired. Classroom teachers are a “wash” – they would follow the kids back to the school. Teachers would be transferred in from other buildings unless there’s enrollment growth. Opening Meadowlark with a full staff would increase the budget by \$700,000. Opening with a “reduced” staff would be sharing computer, music, art, P.E., library, reading specialists, etc., with other elementary schools. This would actually reduce staff at all the elementary buildings. A reduced staff opening would increase the budget by \$300,000. The third option is delaying the opening of the renovated school. Savings would primarily be in utilities (approximately \$40,000 savings). Mary Ann Maupin asked about the new school weighting money from Prairie Creek Elementary School. Mr. Freeman said there would be some additional funding from that, but he’s been trying to keep it separate. It could be \$75,000 additional if the students stayed at Prairie Creek instead of going to Meadowlark. Mr. Evans said special programs such as special education can go to Prairie



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Creek. Mr. Freeman emphasized that facility weighting money should not be used to offset cuts, because it will be gone the following year anyway. That money serves as a cushion. Many wondered if opening with reduced staff isn't worse than not opening at all. Cicely Dare said parents may not realize how little their students would see CAMP teachers at this point. Scott Wilson noted that not opening Meadowlark would be a huge PR issue for the district – it's the final fulfillment of the bond issue, and we told people we'd do that. Mrs. Maupin noted that she's a Meadowlark parent and she'd be fine with waiting and thinks others will too. Mrs. Fritze noted she has heard from many Meadowlark parents who want to be back in that building as soon as possible. Mr. Wilson agreed and said students want to get back to that building as well. Mr. Freeman noted that if we don't open it this year, we'll eventually have to and will eventually have those expenses. In addition, if we don't open it this year, we'll have to change elementary boundaries and have portables. Mr. Wilson felt we would lose students if we don't open Meadowlark.

Mr. Freeman said it's after 9 p.m. and time to end. At the next meeting, we'll finish the round 1 items we didn't get to tonight, and he noted the Budget Steering Committee will meet tomorrow. The next meeting of this Budget Advisory Committee is Wednesday, February 25, 2009, here at the District Office. The meeting was adjourned.