

SCHOOL BOARD  
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 15  
St. Francis, Minnesota  
Issues, Analysis, and Planning Session 6:00 p.m.  
December 17, 2008

The Issues, Analysis, and Planning Session was called to order by Chair Anderson at 6:02 p.m. with the following members present: Directors H. Grams, S. Grams, Haag, Kelly, Lipinski, Vogel and Superintendent Saxton.

Others present were Director of Business Affairs Mae Hawkins, Director of Human Resources Jay Reker, Director of Special Services Jacque Stein, Director of Community Services Tom Larson, staff, and community members.

Chair Anderson turned the meeting over to Superintendent Saxton.

**Transportation – Two Mile Walk**

Mr. Saxton distributed Minnesota Statute 123.B88 Independent School Districts: Transportation, and a two mile walk information handout. Five routes would be eliminated if the District went to a two mile walk zone. Ms. Grams opened discussion with comments regarding the impact of imposing the two mile walk, she did not think the District would revisit the issue, and does not think transportation should be cut. Ms. Kelly commented that she requested the two mile walk be discussed because of massive reductions to be made, and her belief that the number one priority is education in the classroom. Mr. Anderson also believes that all avenues be looked at to try to get staff back in the classroom. Discussion continued which included: other non mandated programs should be considered not just transportation, community education is also non mandated however is not funded from the general fund, fee based transportation, keeping education in the classroom, looking at everything for possible reductions, and the \$2 per day when a previous transportation fee was charged.

**2009-10 Budget Cuts**

The handout included proposed District wide cuts, high school, middle school and elementary cuts. The School Board had received the reduction numbers November 24. The proposed District wide reductions are due to the drop in enrollment. If the Board decided against the ½ mile walk zone \$50,000 would be added back and that amount reduced in other areas.

Once the reductions are complete the Board can determine what the add back priorities are if there are additional dollars that come from the State or other sources.

Every August administration automatically reviews class sizes, and how staffing is placed. The enrollment issues take care of themselves. It is the sources of revenue that are different than enrollment that we need to discuss.

**Elementary Class Size Information**

The class size information is projection of students per grade level for October 1, 2009 and what the average class size would be based on the projection.

Middle School – More 8<sup>th</sup> grade students are leaving than 6<sup>th</sup> graders coming in, which could be due to outward migration.

**ISD 15 Reductions Summary**

The handout summarizes reductions beginning in 2000-01 through 2004. Ms. Hawkins explained that the figures were created prior to the passing of the current operating referendum. The 2008-

09 was added to the existing sheet. The figures are what cuts lead up to going out for an operating referendum when the District was in Statutory Operating Debt. The numbers that were put forward as enrollment numbers were not accurate, but the District staffed according to the numbers. Then the District had to over adjust because of the inaccurate numbers. Any additions of staff would have been due to enrollment or grant dollars received. The handout also included District-wide administrative reductions.

Administrative Cost Comparisons were included and are a draft of the auditor's Management Report. The District spends \$1,445,943 less than the statewide average, and \$1,399,487 less than the seven county metro districts in 2007 for administration and support services.

#### **Timeline – Impact of Delaying Cut Decisions**

The Board will decide whether to provide notice of staff reductions in December or January.

#### **Four Day School Week**

Mr. Wirz contacted Connexus and Centerpoint Energy to inquire about energy usage for research of a four day week. During an extended length of day the energy use would move into peak hours which brings the cost up and takes away from the savings of having the site closed. The approximate energy savings would be \$3,300 per year.

A statement was received from the Union President that the Union is not in favor of the four day week based on the information on hand to date.

Transportation savings comes from reducing staff hours and one less day of fuel for buses per week for the number of weeks that are currently five day weeks and would be an estimated savings of \$300,000.

Ms. Hawkins commented that if the District went to a four day week enrollment numbers would be reduced, due to possible outward migration of students. Ms. Kelly expressed concern regarding how students would be impacted academically with a longer school day.

If the District went to a four day week a plan must be submitted to the Minnesota Department of Education. A four day week could not take place in the 2009-10 school year. The four day week will not be considered for 2009-10. More information will be gathered, focus groups could be formed for further review and consideration in the 2010-11 school year.

#### **Reductions**

If the cut takes place in the manner in which it was planned the goal is to continue to try to find additional dollars. Mr. Vogel would prefer funds be taken from the fund balance versus the ½ mile walk zone.

The District is requesting the Board's direction to move forward with the planned reductions. The District will continue to review all avenues.

The ½ mile walk zone \$50,000 reduction continues to be up for discussion, and safe paths to school will be reviewed. Mr. Vogel requested that the ½ mile walk zone be a future agenda item.

Chair Anderson inquired if there was consensus to move ahead with reductions. The Board provided consensus.

The meeting adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

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Joseph D. Haag, Clerk