

Special Board Meeting Agenda (Budget Reductions) (Wednesday, February 19, 2020)

Members present

Duane Smith, George Miller, De'Shawn Woolridge, Laura Canciamilla, Joseph Arenivar

1. Opening Items - 6:00 PM

1.01 Called to Order at 6:07 PM

1.02 Pledge of Allegiance

1.03 Public Comment on Closed Session Agenda

None.

2. Closed Session

2.01 Closed Session Agenda (Ms. Tamondong-Bradley)

3. Recall to Open Session - 6:30 P.M.

3.01 Recalled to Open Session at 6:37 P.M. with the Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Miller – We are here tonight for a Special Budget Meeting. I would ask that all of you be respectful to us because we will be respectful to you. We would like to present the budget and ask questions so that you have information and we have the information to make decisions. It was said that at the last meeting that we were sitting here and we did not know the information and I want to assure you that all of this information was presented to the Board members. We think about these things very seriously. We think about the District, we think about where we are and where we have to go. This is a very serious matter. I'm serious and I hope you're serious about it because we have given raises in the past that have amounted to 9% in one year. I didn't hear anybody rattling the cages then. Now we have to look back and say that there are some things we may or may not have to cut back on. I would like for all of us to look at the recommendations very closely before we make our decisions. To the Board, staff and our community, thank you.

4. Comments

4.01 Public Comments: Items Not on the Agenda

None.

5. Recommended Budget Reductions

5.01 Continued Discussion of Recommended Budget Reductions for 2020-2021 (Dr. Schulze)

Dr. Schulze – Thank you everyone for coming. This evening we are going to review the budget reduction possibilities that lay before the Board and also have additional information that the board requested and so we can have this meeting specifically dedicated for more discussions on this. Some of this will be a review then I'll be presenting some of the new information requested as well. Again, as I stated last week, this is a very emotional topic and many of these reductions relate to people and we have amazing people and it's painful. There is no easy way to have these discussions. We're trying to do the reductions in the most respectful way that we can and bring the information. I don't know of another district who isn't having to have these cuts and discussions. Again, we will continue our advocacy. I am proud that this Board has always been one of the first to do any resolution and advocacy work with the state, whether it's for Full and Fair Funding, resolutions and campaigns for School and Communities First, as a governance team and as individuals have always been advocating for that. There is no easy way to go through this, some of this if you were here last time will be a refresher and we will have some additional information. This is a reminder that this has been a multi-year process, it is great to see this many people engaged, we have been doing budget reductions for a few years. We have made reductions without impacting the sites as much as we could and now we are at a point where that is no longer possible.

Dr. Schulze shared a presentation detailing the recommendations for budget cuts for the 2020-2021 school year. Information presented included the summary of budget meetings held beginning during the 2018-2019 school year, a summary of reductions made in 2019, the First Interim projections summary, three scenarios of additional budget reduction recommendations, guiding principles used to determine recommended budget reductions, non-personnel and personnel reduction recommendations, and additional information requested by the Board in previous meetings. She explained that the recommendations are a product of a multi-year process which included data gathered by LCAP surveys, community input and budget meetings held throughout the District. The information gathered has been discussed and vetted multiple times by multiple people and although reductions are not good, they are something that the District must do.

She reminded that this has been a multi-year process. There were certificated reductions of 1.5 million dollars in 2019 with no classified reductions at that time. There was an additional 1 million dollars in reductions that included services and also a 10% reduction in the site allocated budgets. Many of the alternate possible reductions would have to be bargained with the PEA and CSEA bargaining teams and that would take time.

The board determines that amount of the reductions, and can be made all at once or less or more. The District has to turn in its budget in three year cycles. Whatever is reduced next year, still has to show a positive balance in the third year.

The Board can also determine areas of reduction and replace reductions presented in the recommendation. Dr. Schulze shared that the guiding principles are factored in when making recommendations, and so are laws and compliance, labor contracts, District priorities, data, feedback from surveys and feedback from the Board's Budget Advisory Committee. All Guiding principles keep the students' best interest in the center.

Dr. Schulze presented the non-personnel reductions totaling to an amount of 1.5 million dollars which included contracted services and other expenses. Personnel reductions were presented totaling an amount of 2.5 million dollars.

Dr. Schulze expressed that sadly, with the recommended personnel reductions, there will be an impact in services provided but the reductions are necessary to maintain a positive budget for the third year. Most LCAP reductions are personnel as not many programs are funded through LCAP funds. Certificated personnel reductions are not yet known and are also determined by the projected decline in enrollment. She added that the District has worked hard to maintain smaller class sizes and to avoid having class shares and will continue to do so.

New information provided:

The District is still in negotiations for the 2019-2020 school year with PEA and will begin to negotiate for 2020-2023 with CSEA.

The Governor's budget proposal was released but it is undetermined what will be final at this time. During the May Revise, we will now what the Governor will decide and the amounts that will impact the District will be known, but at this time, the District has to budget on what is actually available. One thing that has changed is the change in COLA adjustment proposed which has been 3% compared to this year's 2.29% adjustment. There was also no mention on a pension contribution in this year's proposal.

Each school receives a budget amount that reflects the student population and also varies on student need. The funding sources for school budgets are base grants, title I and supplemental and concentration funds combined. The high school does not receive Title I funds. School Site Councils assist with deciding where funds go in each school.

Other information:

Dr. Schulze shared that there have been reductions in the central office and shared data on the amount of District administrator per student ratios and showed that PUSD has one of the lowest levels of District administrator per student.

Dr. Schulze shared the information that was requested by the Board and explained the reasons why the options would not be recommended or why they would not work. The District took into consideration when making recommendations to not reduce or eliminate the services that were highly ranked by families and the community in the surveys and feedback such as School Resource Officers, Crossing Guards, and the Safety Supervisor among others.

Dr. Schulze explained that a one year freeze and furlough days would have to be negotiated
Information items: one year freeze would have to be negotiated.

She shared that it would be the time for the Board to discuss the information and ask questions.

Mr. Woolridge thanked staff for providing the additional requested information in such short notice and for putting the meeting together to share information with the public to be as transparent as possible. He shared that Dr. Canciamilla also had a proposal and asked that it be shared.

Dr. Canciamilla shared that she also prepared an alternative proposal and shared the information.

Dr. Canciamilla shared her presentation and stated that the Board is under certain rules such as the Brown Act and the Board has to conduct its business in public. Therefore, there are a lot of things that cannot be shared with one another, Mr. Smith has not seen the proposal by law due to one other Board member already have seen it. There are allotted things that other board members are not allowed to see, as she can only talk to one other board member to share ideas and the rest of the Board doesn't know.

She stated that her recommendations are not up to date as she gathered the information online and might be out of date. Her recommendations on management positions to be reduced were based on positions that were related to the recommended positions to be reduced by the District. She explained her recommendations and clarified that the suggestions are brought forward to start a discussion. She provided estimates on the cost savings amounts for step and column freezes for and also furlough days. Furlough days would be on professional development days to avoid an impact on student instruction.

Mr. Woolridge stated that he agrees with the Student Board member about retaining the Library Media Techs. He asked the Board to consider eliminating the crossing guard contract and fill those positions in-house while offering more hours to Noon Duty Supervisors as most work only two hours. He stated that he would not like to reduce Restorative Justice Facilitators because their positions deal with safety. He added that he believes School Resource Officers should also be reduced and bring those positions in-house as well to not rely on contracted services.

Dr. Canciamilla added that when she was in the Delegate Assembly, there was a safety conference where it was discussed that 25% of cities fully fund SROs and Crossing Guards. She mentioned that she would like for the District to discuss the possibility of the City of Pittsburg assisting with funding SROs and Crossing Guards. Safety is important but the District would like some help with the costs.

Mr. Woolridge commented that the City of Pittsburg pays police officers and that they could possibly negotiate the rates. He stated that he spoke to a city council member and was told the City will go into negotiations with the Police Department soon.

Mr. Arenivar apologized for not attending the previous Board meeting. He shared that he met with Dr. Schulze to discuss the proposal for recommendations. He stated that the recommended reductions were not a surprise to the Board and that the topics brought up in the previous meeting are good to discuss. The decisions are tough and the cuts are not something the District wants to do but has to. Years ago, the District projected a higher number of student enrollment and also projected a loss of enrollment due to a potential charter school opening, and although the charter school did not open in Pittsburg, many students still transferred out. The high school started. He stated that the Board needs help from the community to make decisions and stated that their focus is to make decisions that will hurt the least.

Ms. Gonzales stated that she believes that to save money, there should be a reduction in hours for the SROs and have them present only for the morning traffic and after school instead of the entire day.

Dr. Schulze responded that the District does not pay the full salary for the SROs and also does not pay the costs of their overtime and their time worked at sporting events in the District.

Dr. Canciamilla – When LCFF came out, they wanted to have class sizes to be 24:1 and the state gave us 5 years to accomplish that, we decided to make the change completely in one year. Because we went to 24:1 right away, we had to pay that much right away, the next year that and step and column raises and the third year, the same thing, fourth year and fifth year. Those district that decided to make the changes the last year, they only had to pay that much because they didn't have to pay those other years. We did it right away because we felt that as stewards of the District we wanted students and staff to have the value of small classes right away instead of using the money for something else. We invested in students and staff to have smaller classes which cost more money for the District. I want you to think about the decisions we've made on the behalf of the community to have the kinds of teaching and learning experiences that our teachers and students deserve.

Mr. Woolridge – A couple of more things that I want to bring up from the last meeting, from this proposal, 18.4 FTE is coming from Classified, 6 from Certificated and 4 from Classified Management. If you think about classified in total that comes up to 22.4 and non-classified 6. That comes out to be 64% of these cuts coming from classified not including management. We can't put the cuts on the classified. I get that we want to stay away from the classrooms but we never have the conversation on when we will be backfilling these positions.

Ms. Gonzales asked the District to look into cutting administrators from the schools as their salaries are higher. She asked if it would be possible to reduce the amount of co-coaches for sports.

Mr. Arenivar explained that the stipend for coaches are split between the co-coaches. He stated that he understands that cuts will hurt many people and there is no way around it but it will need to be done. It is not something that the District wants to be done.

Mr. Smith stated that looking back at priority areas, all of the feedback showed what was more or less valued. The SROs were highly valued. The information was used to determine the cuts. Some schools may decide to pick up some of the positions or programs with their site budgets and School Site Councils are there for that. If a school values RJ, they may be able to use site funds to balance that out. Not all schools value the same things.

Mr. Miller agreed and stated that cuts are not the best but they were all looked at prior to the Board meeting.

Dr. Canciamilla stated that if the District looks at the position it is in it would take the furlough and the step and column freeze to be able to keep all of the positions and it would take care of half of the cuts.

Mr. Miller asked if the Board be willing to keep speaker time at 2 minutes due to the amount of speaker cards. Mr. Miller decided to keep the allotted 3 minute per speaker time.

Public Comment: Keeva Maxwell, Early Literacy Coach, commented on the position of Early Literacy Coach being on the positions listed to be reduced. She shared the importance of the position, expressed her concerns and asked that the position not be reduced.

Public Comment: Kendi Kampel, Early Literacy Coach, commented on the position of Early Literacy Coach being on the positions listed to be reduced. She shared the importance of the position, expressed her concerns and asked that the position not be reduced.

Public Comment: Amanda Farzan, Early Literacy Coach, commented on the position of Early Literacy Coach being on the positions listed to be reduced. She shared the importance of the position, expressed her concerns and asked that the position not be reduced.

Public Comment: Jennifer Arndt, 4th Grade Teacher, commented on the importance of Professional Development and expressed concern regarding the cuts proposed for Early Literacy Coach positions.

Public Comment: Joanna Aragon, School Counselor, commented on the student to counselor ratios in the nation. She also commented on the importance of school counselors and thanked the Board for the support provided to school counselors.

Public Comment: Jessica Alexander, CSEA President, shared ideas on how the District can made budget reductions. She expressed concern regarding the recommended position reductions.

Public Comment: Letha Arms, Library Technician, expressed concern regarding the recommendation to reduce the Library Technician positions. She shared the importance of the Library Technician positions in the District.

Public Comment: Patti Carpino, Library Technician, expressed concern regarding the recommendation to reduce the Library Technician positions. She shared the importance of the Library Technician positions in the District.

Public Comment: Maria Espinoza, Parent Liaison, commented on the importance of Parent Liaisons in the District. She expressed concern regarding the Parent Liaison position being on the recommended positions to be reduced.

Public Comment: Rose Sanchez, Library Technician, expressed concern regarding the recommendation to reduce the Library Technician positions. She shared the importance of the Library Technician positions in the District.

Public Comment: Jen Sears, Library Technician, expressed concern regarding the recommendation to reduce the Library Technician positions. She shared the importance of the Library Technician positions in the District.

Public Comment: Heliodoro Moreno, Parent, commented on the Library Technician position and the Early Literacy Coach positions and how important he believes those positions are. He expressed concern regarding the recommended reductions. He shared the importance of the Parent Liaison position and ELA coordinator as they assist English language learners in the District who make up 60% of the student population.

Public Comment: Alma Rodriguez, Parent, commented on the recommended reductions and expressed concern about the Parent Liaison position being on the list of recommended reductions.

Public Comment: Monica Vallejo, Parent, expressed concern about the Parent Liaison position being on the list of recommended positions to be reduced. Maria Gomez translated the comment to the Board.

Public Comment: Karina Gutierrez: not present when called to speak.

Public Comment: Darlene Calimlim, Garden Specialist, commented on the importance of the garden program in the District and shared information on what the program provides for students.

Public Comment: ReJoice Frazier-Meyers, commented on the recommended reductions and stated that she believes that the Board and District will make the correct decisions.

Public Comment: Willie Mims, East County NAACP, commented on his concern on the small space of the Board meeting. He asked the District to look into the electricity bills and mentioned that it might be a way to reduce costs. He commented on the recommended reductions.

Public Comment: Leticia Preciado, Parent and Family Coordinator, commented on the recommended reductions and shared the importance of parent engagement work.

Dr. Canciamilla – As a final statement, while I was listening I was doing some writing and figuring things out. Right at this point, I would like to share as a summary that I would hope to challenge everyone out there to consider two things that I

think could solve this. One is the three furlough days for PD because with the money that we could save from that we could save the Restorative Justice Facilitators, the Library Technician positions, the Early Literacy TOSAs, Secondary TOSAs and the Communication Specialist. If we in addition, and I challenge the principals who are here, if we also in our individual site budgets agree to cover 32 thousand dollars per school of the Parent Liaison positions, we would be able to save them all. It seems to me that as we're going forward, this is me figuring it out and I'm just doing it randomly and there is no prioritization, with those coming together with the sites with their own separate individual independent budgets and with the PD days we would save most of the ones that are people who are currently in the position who are doing incredible work that should be supported to continue in this underfunded world that we live in. This is a way that we can work together. I would challenge you before next week, in the employee groups, the idea of the PD days and I challenge the site principals to consider doing that for our Parent Liaisons.

Ms. Gonzales thanked the parent who commented in Spanish. She thanked everyone who spoke and shared that she believes it is important to have bilingual staff due to the majority in the school District is Spanish speaking. She thanked the Library Technicians for attending and commenting. She stated that she welcomes anyone to email her if they would like. She thanked the Early Literacy Coaches, the Counselors, Teachers and the Garden Specialist because they all work directly with the students. She shared that it was a great thing that there was a great turnout because they can share the information with their peers about the furlough and pay freeze. She shared that she would have liked for students attend to comment.

Mr. Woolridge agreed with Ms. Gonzales and thanked everyone for coming. He stated that he does not believe the Board is prepared for next steps.

Dr. Canciamilla shared that she challenged groups for next steps.

Mr. Smith shared that if the conversations don't happen with unions, the Board will still have to make cuts and submit the budget. It would take time to speak to the unions and it would help in the future as there will be a need for additional cuts next year.

Mr. Arenivar thanked everyone who spoke.

Dr. Canciamilla shared that her hope by challenging everyone, they stand together to do something for the community. She asked that staff work together with the unions.

Speaker Card: Charlotte Zamora, Parent Volunteer Coordinator Aide, commented on her disagreement on the proposed reductions.

Speaker Card: Josefina Diaz commented on her concerns of the recommended reductions and the impact on teachers in the District.

Speaker Card: Christina Holt commented on the recommended reductions and asked that the reductions be equal all around.

Speaker Card: Heliodoro Moreno, Parent, commented on the Citizens Budget Committee's recommendations provided for the reductions.

Dr. Schulze clarified that this has been a multi-year process, the District has not made classified reductions until this year but has made reductions in prior years. She pointed out that currently, the District has the smallest central office and she is proud of this because her focus has been to give the most to the sites. This has taken years of work and no recommendations were given that affect the school sites. She shared that it is painful to her to not have summer learning at elementary sites. When the recommendations were brought up as recommendations, no recommendations were brought forward that impacted the school sites. Site based decisions were honored. As an example, some schools have used their Restorative Justice program and it might not be the case in every school that has that resource. In terms of timelines, there is a commitment to the law to notify certificated staff by March 15 and also turn in the Budget. If the

information is not available by then, the District will need to over notify. The Board can give guidance on the amount to reduce or provide more information. There are legal questions in terms of labor law that will need to be taken into consideration. She asked the Board how they would like to receive the information requested.

Ms. Gonzales asked for a timeline when the furlough days can be negotiated.

Dr. Schulze reiterated that those things have to be negotiated.

Dr. Schulze added that the School Site Council process needs to be honored. They will need to look at their site budgets as well and come up with their recommendations. They cannot use funds to fund for one single position. Every School Site Council will need to receive their community input and determine what they would like to use their funds for.

Mr. Woolridge shared that he believes the Board should agree to reduce the agreed upon 4 million dollars and discuss the reductions to be made at the next Board meeting. He asked if the Board will make a decision on the March 26th Board meeting or hold another Special Board meeting.

Mr. Miller stated that he would disagree to hold another Special Board meeting.

Dr. Schulze clarified that the information and documents from this meeting will be attached to the next meeting. Information will be provided per the Board's questions and requests. She shared that there have already been reductions to positions and not all positions are a full FTE.

Dr. Canciamilla shared that if the information provided doesn't make sense to the public, they can contact her directly.

6. Communications

6.01 Comments from the Public, Community Organizations, Employee Representatives

Employee Representative Jessica Alexander, CSEA President, commented on the recommended reductions and expressed disagreement with the positions recommended for reduction. She shared recommendations on alternative reductions.

Public Comment: Willie Mims, East County NAACP, commented on the recommended reductions. He asked the District to look into the District's electrical bill.

Public Comment: Andrea McKinney commented on the budget and asked the District to review the budget again. She commented on Black History Month and shared that she has not seen much engagement for African American Students.

7. Next Board Meeting / Future Events / Adjournment

7.01 Next Regular Board Meeting – February 26, 2020