

BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES
Governing Board of the Los Angeles Unified School District

AUGMENTED BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE NOTES

333 South Beaudry Avenue, Board Room

10:00 a.m., Thursday, October 26, 2006

Board Members Present:

Mr. Jon Lauritzen, Chairperson

Ms. Julie Korenstein

Mr. David Tokofsky

Staff Present:

Charles Burbridge, Chief Financial Officer

Dr. Roger Rasmussen, Budget Director

Dr. Randy Ross, Board of Education Director of
Educational Policy

Ms. Rima Zobayan, Independent Analysis Unit

Outside Committee Persons Present:

Mr. Robert Venegas, Ford Blvd. Elementary School

Mr. David Goldberg, United Teachers Los Angeles

The meeting convened at 10:10 a.m.

Chairperson Lauritzen gave his opening remarks and introduced the members of the Committee.

PROFILING LAUSD SCHOOLS' BUDGETS: PILOT STUDY

Ms. Zobayan addressed the major points of the pilot study and indicated that the methodology would include the selection of a small number of schools to conduct interviews with the principals about their school's budget and analyze the differences between the current budget and the budget preferred. She also commented that the study would benefit the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) by helping to recognize issues schools deal with in resolving how to use their limited resources.

Superintendent Romer inquired how the Independent Analysis Unit (IAU) would make the distinction with limited staff and how educational decisions would be handled. He stated that while the study deals with fundamental allocation of time and talent at the school level judgment should be made in relation to what is effective in improving instruction in the classroom.

In reply to Superintendent Romer, Dr. Ross mentioned some of the issues that would be addressed, indicated that the goal is to understand the connections from the perspective of those at the school site and stated that the sample size issue is important, for it is believed that there will be considerable variation.

Superintendent Romer raised the concern that the intended questions are fundamental to the strategic management of the District, and for the IAU to develop the capacity to do this with accuracy, would create a parallel administration. He pointed out that administrators should be held accountable and forced to make transparent judgments regarding their budgets.

Chairperson Lauritzen pointed out that the study would reveal how current budgets are being used to determine whether policies need to be made in relation to the budget. He stated that an evaluation is not being sought on whether funding produced certain result or not, instead the concern is whether funds are being used effectively and not being pilfered away.

Committee Member Tokofsky commented on the ten schools highlighted by the State audit and noted that the assessment revealed unused categorical monies. He stated that there is a value in looking at what work has been done in order to determine the next step.

In response to a question raised by Superintendent Romer, Dr. Ross referred to the steps previously mentioned and reiterated that the purpose is to gather information provided by staff at the school-site, present it to the Board and inform the budget decision-making process for the 2007-08 school year.

Superintendent Romer spoke about funding for the teachers in this District and indicated there is an unknown amount of dollars that need to be cut from the budget, but there is also a decision to be made on whether it will affect the quality of instruction. He noted that those decisions are not primarily school-based, but system based and encouraged the IAU to be cautious about trying to create within the Board a unit for budget analysis that is almost a duplication of what already exists.

In response to an inquiry from Committee Member Korenstein concerning the basis of the study, Dr. Ross recapped the steps and pointed out that the IAU will not be evaluating schools, but rather attempt to understand the differences in expenditures with schools that are alike.

Outside Committee Person Goldberg stated that in addition to speaking with school principals, parents, teachers and others should be included to see the effects of how the money is spent.

Ms. Zobayan and Dr. Ross responded to other comments and questions raised by the Committee.

UPDATE ON SB 1133 (QUALITY EDUCATION INVESTMENT ACT OF 2006): WHAT THE DISTRICT IS DOING TO OBTAIN FUNDS AND WHAT IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES EXIST

Dr. Rasmussen spoke about funding from SB 1133 for the 2007-08 school year and mentioned that in order to incorporate those funds in a proper manner, guidelines have to be provided from the State.

Mr. Robert Collins, Chief Instructional Officer, commented that although no guidelines for the SB 1133 had been received from the State the implementation process had been considered in anticipation of what the District would carry out.

Dr. Rasmussen mentioned some of the high points of the legislation and stated that the funding is intended for Decile 1 and 2 schools. He commented that funding would be available for about 38 percent of the eligible schools throughout this State and added that the process by which the State will be selecting schools had not yet finalized. He noted that equity and insufficient classroom space are main topics of concern and continued to outline practical issues of the legislation.

Committee Member Tokofsky mentioned there is an unstated rationale that the California Teachers Association (CTA) and the Governor have, which is deurbanization of the money and referred to the shifting of funds from the core blue parts of the State to the core red as counter intuitive.

Mr. Dan Isaacs, Chief Operating Officer, spoke about the stabilization that has been given to some of the most needy high schools, mentioned the efforts of the Human Resources Division to reduce vacancies and requested the ability and flexibility to use the resources to continue these programs and expand them to the middle schools.

Mr. Harry Gerst from Instructional Services pointed out some of the highlights of the legislation and stated that if requirements are not met funding would be removed. He also mentioned that 52 percent of the eligible schools are in LAUSD, yet this District will only receive about 35 percent of the actual funds. He commented that new schools would not be able to participate, since the API score to be considered will be from the 2004-05 school year. Mr. Gerst indicated that notification of the schools eligible to apply would be available between April and May of 2007.

SPEAKERS:

Ms. Martha Sanchez, a parent from 28th Street Elementary and John Adams Middle Schools, conveyed the community's interest in the Board of Education plans for the SB 1133 funding. She indicated that the parents' major concerns are the improvement of students' achievement and the development of an exemplary District. Ms. Sanchez noted that 28th Street Elementary School is at the highest level of poverty and that it is one of the lowest performing schools.

Ms. Sonya Renee, representing the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN) stated she was glad the Board of Education was addressing the issue of SB 1133 at an early stage and indicated how significant it is to have the parents, teachers and other staff included in the discussion.

Committee Member Korenstein pointed out that LAUSD is in greater need than any school district in the State and noted that if the method by which schools will be selected is a lottery, it will not result in an equitable distribution of funds.

Committee Member Tokofsky and Dr. Rasmussen commented about the school selection method, the application requirements and the quality of applications that will be submitted. Committee Member Tokofsky added that higher value is perceived in a school at the API 1 level and inquired whether LAUSD parents are being apprised of the SB 1133 process. Mr. Gerst informed the Committee that the matter would appear in an upcoming issue of the Parent Press Newsletter and that ongoing articles are planned.

Dr. Rasmussen, Mr. Gerst and Mr. Collins responded to other comments and questions raised by the Committee.

COUNSELORS: WHAT THE DISTRICT IS PLANNING TO DO WITH NEW FUNDING

Mr. Collins briefly commented on the AB 1802 legislation, which will provide the opportunity to reduce the student-to-counselor ratio that is currently at 1200-1300-to-one in middle schools and 600-700-to-one in high schools, but that it also has very specific targeted goals that need to be met.

Dr. Rasmussen mentioned the State had budgeted \$20 million for the improvement of the student to counselor ratio. The target is to reduce the students per counselor ratio to 600-to-1 at the middle school level and 500-to-1 at the high school level. He presented a plan that proposes vacancies be filled in a priority order, for which three cohorts have been identified based on the schools with greater need.

Dr. Rasmussen further stated that in an effort to provide other resources, it is being proposed that retired counselors be presented with the option of coming back to work and that extra work hours be approved for current counselors who are at schools that will not acquire a full complement of counselors.

Dr. Liza Scruggs, Assistant Superintendent of Instruction, made reference to some of the elements of the AB 1802, Supplemental Counseling Plan, and noted that it is an ideal alignment with the District's Individualized Culmination Plan and the Individualized Graduation Plan. She stated it was designed to reduce counselors' caseloads to 300-to-1 and 500-to-1 at high and middle schools respectively, described the District's accountabilities and outlined the required timelines for the conferences to be held. Each student, with a parent or guardian present, would meet with a counselor who would explain 1) academic and department records, 2) the necessity of passing the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE) and 3) educational options. She noted that the proposal is in line with Superintendent Romer's Strategic Plan to close the achievement gap and to provide academic, personal and career counseling for all students.

Committee Member Tokofsky requested additional information concerning:

- *The entire workforce of the District's counselors; a bar graph illustrating the career distribution*
- *How does the Supplemental Counseling Plan fit in with the Small Learning Communities plan?*
- *What is the average age of the District's secondary counselors?*

Dr. Rasmussen, Dr. Scruggs, Mr. Collins and Ms. Ronnie Parker, Director, Secondary College/Career Counseling, responded to other comments and questions raised by the Committee.

PROPOSITION 49: FUNDS FOR AFTER SCHOOLS PROGRAMS

Mr. Richard Roberts, Administrative Coordinator for Beyond the Bell Branch (BTB), spoke about the formation and the rewriting of Proposition 49, which will increase permanent funding of after school programs from \$122 million to \$550 million, annually. He noted that all existing Federal and State funded programs are grandfathered in the State funding. In addition, he pointed out the distinction between comprehensive after school programs and the Youth Services program, which is a permissive recreational program. He delineated the programs' attendance requirements and commented that in compliance with State and Federal law, providers go through a contract and selection process. Furthermore, staff and volunteers fulfill processing requirements in accordance to District policy and are properly trained.

Mr. Roberts referred to the 225 new elementary and middle schools that have requested programs; he reviewed the application process and stressed how BTB is tracking the law to do everything possible to acquire additional funding for afterschool programs.

Mr. Roberts and Mr. Al Cortez, Assistant Superintendent, Beyond the Bell Branch, responded to other comments and questions raised by the Committee.

- - - -
The meeting adjourned at 1:32 p.m.
- - - -

mg

**BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES
GOVERNING BOARD OF THE LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

AUGMENTED BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE AGENDA

LAUSD Administrative Offices
333 South Beaudry Avenue, Board Room
10:00 a.m., Thursday, October 26, 2006

Committee Members

Jon Lauritzen, Chair
Marlene Canter
David Tokofsky

District Staff Members

Charles Burbidge, Chief Financial Officer
Dr. Roger Rasmussen, Budget Director
Dr. Randy Ross, Board of Education Director of
Educational Policy
Rima Zobayan, Independent Analysis Unit

Outside Committee Persons

David Goldberg, United Teachers Los Angeles
Anthony Miller, LRN Corporation
Robert Venegas, Ford Blvd. Elementary School

Board Secretariat Contact

Marisela García
Tel: (213) 241-7002
Email: marisela.garcia@lausd.net

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Opening Remarks
(5 minutes) | Mr. Jon Lauritzen, Chairperson |
| 2. Update on SB 1133 (Quality Education Investment Act of 2006):
What the District is doing to Obtain Funds and What Implementation
Challenges Exist
(30 minutes) | Dr. Roger Rasmussen
Ms. Peggy Barber, Office of
Legislation |
| 3. Profiling LAUSD Schools' Budgets: Pilot Study
(20 minutes) | Ms. Rima Zobayan |
| 4. Counselors: What the District is Planning to do with New Funding
(30 minutes) | Mr. Bob Collins, Chief Instructional
Officer
Dr. Liza Scruggs, Assistant
Superintendent of Instruction |
| 5. Proposition 49: Funds for After School Programs
(20 minutes) | Mr. Dick Roberts, Administrative
Coordinator, Beyond the Bell |
| 6. Committee Meeting Notes | |
| 7. Public Comment – Persons who wish to address this committee may sign-up at the meeting. | |
| 8. Adjournment | |

Requests for disability related modifications or accommodations shall be made 24 hours prior to the meeting to the Board Secretariat at 333 S. Beaudry Ave., 24th Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90017, or by calling (213) 241-7002 or toll free (877) 772-6273.

If you or your organization are seeking to influence a purchasing, policy, site selection or any other LAUSD decision, registration may be required under the District's Lobbying Disclosure Code. Please visit www.lausd.net/ethics to determine if you need to register or call the LAUSD Ethics Office at (213) 241-3330.

For more information please visit www.laschoolboard.org, Budget and Finance Committee