

Budget Communications Committee Meeting Minutes

January 27, 2010

Call to Order

The meeting commenced at 12:30 p.m. with Gina Manusov welcoming everyone back after the winter break.

Committee Objectives/Meeting Norms

Gina reviewed the committee's objectives:

- Build capacity towards understanding the financial impacts to EUSD resulting from the California budget crisis
- Review potential solutions under consideration
- Effectively communicate budget information to EUSD stakeholders

Gina presented the meeting norms that were developed from the previous meeting. The meeting norms were accepted with no changes requested:

- Start and end on time
- Be respectful of other people's ideas and suggestions
- Keep things general and not personal (functions rather than people)
- Active listening (no side conversations)
- Stay focused and stick to the issues at hand
- Commit to positive problem solving

Gina mentioned that there was a request for the minutes to be more extensive; therefore, starting with today's meeting, the minutes will be more detailed.

Questions Answered (from 12/08/09 meeting)

Saturday School - Randy Garcia, Director of Pupil Services and Community Day School, spoke to the group about the possibility of implementing Saturday school in our district as a means to recover lost ADA due to unexcused absences. Currently, the middle schools offer a Friday night version that is for students with behavior issues only. Some sites offer this type of program on other days of the week as well. Randy said that each site is given \$1,500 to help defray the cost of certificated staff required to monitor students attending Friday night school. Once these funds are exhausted, the school site needs to come up with the balance out of their site budget. He has been doing some research on Saturday school. The high schools participate in an Attendance Recovery Program (ARP) and are having success with it. It is for students with excused and unexcused absences only. It is not for suspended students. For students with unexcused absences, they make up their missed classroom time and complete their course work, then a claim can be submitted to the state, and the district can recover lost ADA funds. The student has to attend for a minimum of four hours to earn ADA. The program needs to be monitored by a certificated person, which would be an added expense. You would need to determine how many students you are going to have this person be responsible for and what curriculum is going to be taught. The program also requires an administrative staff person to take care of discipline or any other problems that come up. The next step is for Randy to report back to the group with an updated template regarding how much

money this program would generate. Questions that need to be addressed: Would we do this for every region, or every middle school, and/or include elementary schools? Would we do a pilot program first? Do we want to have Friday night school as well? Randy was asked how we get students to attend. He said that it is a voluntary program, and attendance is not required. We would have to give students/parents a reason to do it. It clears unexcused absences for SARB. Gina thought that the motivation for parents might be to get their students off the SARB track. Randy was asked if a student could come to consecutive Saturday schools if absent for a week. He responded that the student would have to attend five Saturday school sessions if he missed five days of school.

Temporary Independent study isn't included in the ARP. Independent study is run differently at each site according to what the principal has developed. A concern was voiced regarding the time commitment required of a teacher to prepare and process temporary independent study paperwork. Randy responded that if teachers have concerns in this regard, they should talk with their site administrator. Randy offered to speak with them as well in order to offer them some suggestions.

Student Attendance - Carol Rouse, Fiscal Services Director, provided information to address questions regarding student attendance issues:

How much does the district earn per day of student attendance?

Attendance Sheet A is a comparison for the last six years (04/05 through 09/10) of the district's base revenue limit versus the funded revenue limit and a comparison of the funded daily rate (per student) versus the base revenue daily rate (per student). Our funded revenue limit was the same amount as our base revenue limit in 06-07 and 07-08. Last year our funded revenue limit was \$5,391, while our base revenue limit was \$5,850. This is because the state cannot fund their obligation.

How much more does the district earn if we can improve our attendance by 1%?

How much did we lose over all?

Attendance Sheet B shows that last year our enrollment average was 18,086. Our total school absences (excused and unexcused) were 120,059, and our attendance rate was 96.29 percent. The average in California is 95 percent. If we wanted to improve to 97.29 percent, that would net almost a million dollars. We lost almost \$3.6 million due to all absences last year. Every day does count. We will have a lot more absences this year due to illness/flu season. At 96.29 percent, it doesn't appear that our attendance rate can get much better as there will always be some absences due to illness.

Attendance Sheet C shows the difference in the first period attendance rates for 2008-09 and 2009-10 and how much of the difference is due to the attendance rate drop. What we are losing will affect next year's revenues. Compared to last year's first period, we are down a whole percentage point for the first part of the year.

There is the potential to recover ADA if a natural disaster or unusual event is involved. There are waiver processes built into the law. We have used attendance waivers before—during 911, a very bad flu season, and the fires in 2003 and 2005. Several things have to happen first, one of which is that the County Health Department makes a declaration,

which is passed on to us by the San Diego County Office of Education. The amount of recovery can be substantial.

In response to a committee member's request, Carol provided a chart entitled "2009-10 Combined General Fund Monthly Results Through January 26, 2010," showing revenues, expenses, and use of reserves on one graph. She will do another graph for the March meeting. Revenue collection months are December and January.

Governor's Budget Proposal – Carol presented information she received from a School Services of California workshop she attended regarding the Governor's Budget Proposal, which included national and state economies, state budget gap, education budget, and federal funding (see PowerPoint presentation for details).

Referring to 2010-2011 Mandates (PowerPoint Slide #36), Carol noted that the mandate claims for 2008-09 are not scheduled for payment this year. The state puts very little money in the mandate budgets to keep them open, and we still have to provide the claim documentation, but we receive no money.

Referring to the summary of EUSD ARRA Funding (PowerPoint Slide #39), figures in the column entitled "Amount Spent in 2009-10" are projections and will change. We won't have replacement dollars next year.

Clarification was requested regarding the potential for reduction in school days by five days. Carol stated that if we continue with our current calendar, we would not get any more revenue than if we reduced the school calendar.

A committee member asked about "Investing in Innovations." Paula Pendell said that this is part of Race to the Top and is about getting technology into schools. It is very competitive. We are working on a full application, although all of the regulations are not out yet. It takes many months to get things in place to apply. The committee has begun. Strategies must be research based. We've been able to gather a lot of data from teachers doing iRead and those that have been involved in Project Live with Kathy Shirley. Most districts in the area are working on it. To receive one of the larger grants, the district needs to show student data, capacity, and a clear plan for continued growth.

Budget Reduction Suggestions

Gina asked the committee to work in groups to review the budget suggestions worksheet from several years ago, and mark each item as appropriate in one of the columns to the right, whether the item is not viable, a poor return on investment, or should be reconsidered. The groups were asked to come to a consensus at their tables as to each item. Time permitting, they were to also review the list entitled "2010-11 New Suggestions" and mark those items in the same manner. If any of the members had feedback from their sites with new suggestions, they were to add those items to the list as well. Gina collected the suggestion sheets at the end of the meeting, which would be returned to the groups for completion at the next meeting. Based on the committee's feedback on the suggestion sheets, an updated list of viable suggestions will be generated for the committee to discuss at future meetings.

Gina said that all materials distributed at the meetings would be posted on the district's web site.

Comments/Questions

Gina told the group that she would get a revised handout on attendance recovery from Pupil Services with the correct figures before the document goes on the web site.

A committee member said that we have to be careful about what information we put out there as School Services of California is very conservative, and other organizations have different opinions.

A committee member asked if summer school is actually profitable. Paula said it used to be, but the money is now provided as flexible categorical funding. We get one lump sum and it is not dependent on the number of students participating in the program. She was asked if she had heard that Obama is going to make funding available for schools to have summer school. She had not.

A committee member asked if there is a way of looking at the last 10 years to see what the progression is based on audited actuals.

Talking Points

Gina asked the committee if they had any questions or had suggestions for talking points to take back to their sites.

Gina said that even School Services of California said the budget situation could be worse. There is the hype that education is going to be protected; however, there are some things that may not come to fruition—gas tax and funding from the federal government (\$6.9 billion). Don't forget that we are at the beginning of the process. The revenue limit is pretty flat, which is good news in a sense, but we have a big reduction related to federal stimulus money. We expect to have some carry over that we can use next year. We received \$12 million this year, compared to \$4 million in carry over for next year.