
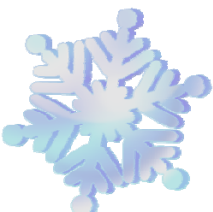





## Parent Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

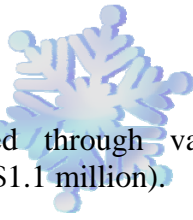
January 28, 2010

Present: *Chris Biernat, Michelle Catanese, David Fowler, Lynne Froehlich, Christine Garling, Lisa Hennekam, Jacquelyn Herbart, Donald Hubler, Stacey Krystyan, Jennifer LaPorte, Jennifer Martin, Shelly Meade, Terry Nicholson, Sandra Purvin, Danielle Roberts, Julie Schroeder, Michelle Skoney, Tammy Stanson, Kerri Stewart, Darla Taravella, Lori Tipton, Gayle Vore, Diane Werthmann*

1. The district is using ARRA Funds to promote Problem Based Learning (PBL) throughout the district. Two consultants, Susan Trebilcock and Liz Allen, were introduced by Lisa McFee from the Department of Curriculum & Instruction. Ms. Trebilcock and Ms. Allen provided a PowerPoint presentation defining Problem Based Learning and demonstrating how it is being applied at the elementary and secondary levels throughout the district. The greatest strength of PBL is that it makes learning authentic, meaningful and relevant to students. Under the guidance of their teacher(s), students identify a problem, develop key questions to focus and direct their learning, and actively engage in the research process as a group. Curriculum standards are incorporated into lessons and are integrated across multiple disciplines. The intent of this approach is to help students develop higher level, critical thinking and problem-solving skills. The two consultants are working with a target group of teachers in an effort to build capacity and a self-sustaining program.
  2. Mr. Larry Brender, Executive Director for Support Services, and Mr. Bill Bartman, Transportation Supervisor, informed the group of the recommendations of the Transportation Study Committee, which have been approved by the Board of Education. This is Phase II of the study, and the focus is on middle school bus stops. While current bus stops are not out of line, the committee agreed that bus stops could be placed farther apart without compromising student safety. The change in practice may require students to walk up to 500 feet to the closest bus stop.
  3. Dr. Pellerin and Mr. Robert Burke, Assistant Superintendent for Business, provided information about State Economics and a School Aid Budget Update. The School Aid Fund is estimated to be short \$423 million next year. This is a consequence of Michigan's poor economy and the current method of funding schools.
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This year, schools received a \$165 per pupil reduction in state aid. This resulted in a budget deficit for L'Anse Creuse Public Schools of \$1.6 million. The budget



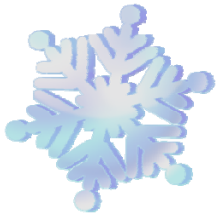


deficit has been reconciled through various cost containment initiatives (\$500,000) and fund equity (\$1.1 million).

The anticipated deficit for 2010-2011 is \$8.8 million. The district relies on a number of budget reconciliation strategies such as: providing services for a fee to other districts; fees for use of district facilities; using grant money to offset general fund expenditures; and participating in Schools of Choice to avoid declining enrollment. In addition, this year an incentive to sever employment in the district is being offered to teachers who qualify.

Over the past 10 years, the district has made a total of \$19.1 million in reductions for a cumulative savings of \$86.6 million. Consequently, it is becoming more and more challenging to make reductions.

Eighty-seven percent of the district's operating budget is spent on the salaries and benefits of staff. The district will need to reduce the work force in their efforts to compensate the anticipated deficit. Mr. Burke indicated that the district will utilize \$4.2 million of fund equity (a.k.a. as "rainy day funds") and make budget cuts in the amount of \$4.6 million.



**NEXT MEETING:**

**MARCH 25, 2010**

**HIGGINS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

