

## **Budget Committee Update**

### **February 25, 2009**

David Collins opened the meeting by explaining that there were over 400 budget savings ideas that were brought forth to the district. Some were eliminated based on the fact that they were illegal or unconstitutional. Some were implemented immediately, and the ones that might be considered volatile were brought forth to this committee.

#### **Two ideas were brought to the committee:**

**1. Half Day Kindergarten:** Peggy Rivers shared a brief history of the curriculum changes and requirements of Kindergarten. All day kindergartens were established in the early 1980's. Currently kindergarten is required to have a 90 minute reading block and mandated sunshine state standards. Currently there are 619 teachers serving apx. 12,000 students. By reducing the work force in half the district would save 18.2 million dollars. However, there would be an increase in transportation costs, estimated at 6 million dollars, and in lost FTE funds estimated at 6 million dollars. The constitution states that a half day must be no less than 630 hours a year. The student day would have to be 3.5 hours instead of 3 hours, thus making the teacher day 9.25 hours with planning and lunch. The additional responsibilities of twice as many students would require the hiring of paraprofessionals at a cost of 6.8 million dollars. **Bottom line this idea would actually cost the district 5.6 million dollars.** The committee questioned why this would even be brought to us. The committee rated this as a severe impact on some staff, parents and the strategic plan and a minimal impact on the community.

**2. Four Day Work Week:** Bob Proie discussed the prospect of operating on a four day work schedule. The legislatures must pass a bill that would all districts the flexibility to convert the 180 school days to equivalent hours. Mr. Proie stated that not all departments could go to a four ten hour day work week. The district would save money in transportation costs and energy at a projected savings of 10.5 million dollars a year. This idea could decrease the salary of bus drivers and cafeteria workers since they would work fewer days. The committee felt like this would affect all staff, students and the community and the effect would be moderate. It could have a significant impact on the strategic plan.

The rest of the meeting was spent rating the ideas and putting them into three categories: minimal impact, moderate impact and severe impact.

Respectfully submitted  
*Judy Frank*  
OCASA President