



Grosse Pointe Board of Education
Minutes of the Work Session of September 28, 2009
Wicking Library, Grosse Pointe South High School
11 Grosse Pointe Blvd, Grosse Pointe Farms, MI 48236

**MEETING
MINUTES****CALL TO ORDER**

President Kosinski called the meeting to order at 7:16 p.m.

Board members present: Trustees Dindoffer, Gafa, Kratz, Kosinski, Minturn, Steininger and Walsh

Also Present: Superintendent Klein; Assistant Superintendents Harwood and Fenton, Executive Director Warras

**BUDGET
PLANNING FOR
2010-11**

President Kosinski stated that this Board work session is to discuss the Budget process for the 2010-11 budget.

Trustee Walsh then presented information he prepared for discussion about the budget process. He noted that the Board should optimize and organize the way they work through the budget process. That process is based on the goals of the district as clearly stated in the Strategic Plan, which are non-negotiable. If budget and staff decisions threaten achievement of goals, then the tactics must change.

Mr. Walsh noted that district data shows that staffing costs are at the heart of the budget and the biggest concern when budgeting for the next school year. He added that the Board needs to be precise in how staff is allocated. The chart presented shows that employee compensation on a per pupil basis has risen since the 2007-08 school year and that total compensation costs outpace revenue increases.

He then presented core tenets for the budget process which include: re-evaluation of all tactics to ensure positive impact on achievement of goals as efficiently as possible; no investment automatically "rolls forward"; predetermined and documented decision logic; consistent, logical, prioritized methodology of investment; and transparency and input throughout the entire process. Mr. Walsh explained the staffing request process, the utilization ratio and unit costs details.

Administrative budget responsibilities were then discussed as well as the Board's budget decision process that begins with transparency to the public via open meetings and web postings; pre-established agreement on the proposed process; pre-validation process that incorporates all aspects the Board will require for approval; holistic evaluation of options to avoid isolated decisions; and the Board's right to amend/edit the final budget.

Mr. Walsh noted specific areas of interest to the Board: class size, electives, specials, and core services. He provided a calendar for development and delivery of the proposed budget as well as final budget approval in late spring.

	Board members then had an opportunity to discuss their views on the process presented. After discussion, there was a consensus on proceeding with the proposal presented by Trustee Walsh.
PUBLIC COMMENTS	Dan Quinn, district teacher and Grosse Pointe resident, addressed the current state of school funding in Michigan imploring the community to contact their representatives and voice their displeasure at potential cuts to school funding, adding that the state budget impacts greatly what is being done at the district level.
ADJOURNMENT	President Kosinski adjourned the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

Board Secretary

THE GROSSE POINTE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM
Grosse Pointe, Michigan

AGENDA TITLE:

2009-10 Teaching Staff Allocation

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Many challenges confront Michigan school districts in regards to budget development. Among them are union contracts that require layoff notices months before a budget is approved, enrollment variations, and changes in funding sources between the time of budget passage in June and the start of the school year in September.

The 2009-10 budget development process required the administration to abide by a various parameters established by the Board, among them a student to general education teacher ratio of 18.6 to 1. In ensuing budget development parameters the Board and the community may be better served by establishing different parameters to account for the different scheduling attributes among elementary, middle and high schools. Both middle and high school schedules offer far more flexibility than elementary schools.

With a currently projected average of 22.5 students per class, elementary class size levels are favorable. However, 5th grade sections at Maire, Monteith, and Trombly exceed this average by 7, 6, and 7 students respectively. While studies do not conclusively demonstrate that such higher class sizes result in diminished student performance, the Board is sensitive to the absence of pre-defined decision logic governing such matters, an area where we will seek improvement in the 2010-11 budgeting process.

Since the June approval of the 2009-10 budget, three developments are relevant to this resolution:

1. The development of a robust list of cost savings opportunities developed collaboratively by the Board, but not in enough time to be executed before budget passage. Many could be evaluated for execution within the 2009-10 budget year to generate in year savings.
2. A favorable enrollment pattern for the 2009-10 school year that may reasonably result in the incremental revenue of as many as 50 student FTE's beyond what has been budgeted.
3. The recognition of various new grant and American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds not contemplated at the time of budget passage.

For these reasons there is an opportunity to impact the enrollment concerns at the 5th grade level at Maire, Monteith, and Trombly. Since .5 teacher FTE's have already been allocated to both Maire and Trombly, the allocation of 2.0 FTE's would provide for the opportunity to run an additional section at each of the three schools.

REQUEST: That the administration allocate 2.0 incremental teacher FTE's to allow an additional 5th grade section to run at Maire and Trombly, as well as an additional elementary section at Monteith (at the discretion of the principal) that would result in more staffing for the Monteith 5th grade. The funding for these investments should be found from 2009-10 in-year cost controls, potential incremental enrollment revenues, and/or newly identified grant and/or ARRA funds, but not from Fund Equity.

Submitted by:

B. Walsh

J. Dindoffer