

BCAC Minutes
October 20, 2009

7:30 Introductions/Updates/Questions regarding BCAC structure

Kahan opened the meeting with introductions.

Old Business

Opened discussion regarding last meeting's business about operating structure to take a look at how we run the council.

Nell Hurley questioned the 3 year service term limit.

Kahan reiterated that current members would be grandfathered.

Lynn Gilmore not comfortable with companies/corporate presence. She feels the business community need more representatives to this council.

Karen Corbett Sanders suggested reaching out to Northern VA Technology Corp.

Patrick Forrest seconded.

Luke Chung asked if there is a voting system? He explained that all committees he has served on have had term limits to bring in new blood/ideas.

Karen spoke of advisory council's role which addressed the need to have different voices. Should have consensus-making role for recommendations

Jay spoke about reaching out to different groups. 15 organizations/councils/businesses have been contacted to send a representative (4 of which are businesses).

Ramona Morrow questioned how businesses are selected.

Dr. Dale answered that most of the current businesses are from a former business advisory group. We have lots of organizations that we seek to appoint, but also look for new ideas, perspectives. It's nice to get different people at the table. One of the values of having different groups business/councils is to get feedback especially on the difficult nature of the budget this year.

7:55 Superintendent's Updates

Dr. Dale gave update on the state of the budget and some reasons for how the shortage came about.

- Anticipated loss of state revenue

- Flat county transfer (negative)
- Increased mandatory contributions county, own, state (insurance benefits)

All of the above point to an anticipated 172 million budget shortfall.

87% of our money in people, quite a few to make cuts comes close to 1700 people.

Wants to share with council to get feedback on some of the internal wrestling we are beginning to experience.

At the same time performance indicators are improving.

Kahan shared that the council is trying to make this a more productive environment and we need to interact to become engaged. Kahan explained that we will be breaking into 4 groups and discussing the topic among our group. He urged members to go to constituencies to discuss the budget.

8:00 Small groups (4) topic of discussion...The budget – What can we do without or how can we do things differently?

8:50 Reconvene & Share Ideas

Team 1

- Shorten CTE contracts
- Stop paying AB/IB test fees
- Curtail special transportation for out of area students
- Change minimal distance for walking vs. bus
- Close GT centers
- Close TJ
- Increase revenue by charging user fees
- Tweak incentives, get more years from teachers
- 4 day school week
- WAR – working after retirement
- Countywide boundary change with transportation savings as key motivator
- Cut use of paper
- Work more closely with county to eliminate duplicate services
- Student parking fees (raise, more affluent schools share w/lesser)
- Sponsors & business partnerships - chamber members pool \$, combine funding
- Funding day to staff not field trips, extras?

Team 2

Fees & Revenue

- Corp sponsors - athletic/academics/career center
Specialists/programs
- Fees (means – tested) strings, academy transportation
- AP/IB Exams – administered only to students w/certain grade avg.

- Athletics
- Rent out buses & schools in summer

Do Without

- 100% funding
- Freshman athletic
- FLES
- IT office focused on writing software to deliver classroom materials (temp.)

Concerns

- Cut staff by seniority?
- Modified calendar eliminate in high-performing Title 1 school (& extend learning opportunities)

DON'T TOUCH

- Class size
- Extra staffing formula for at-risk groups
- Counselors, assistant principals, SBTS

Reduce/Cost Saving

- Athletic seasons
- Retirement benefits for new hires
- Fully automate bus routing
- “Fancy” brochures
- Travel
- Furloughs/contract-length reductions
- Credit card usage

TEAM 3

- Increase walking distance
- Eliminate duplicate programs
- Cut retirement benefits
- Reduction in # of clusters
- Eliminating GT transportation (out of boundary programs)
- Eliminating electives that are offered at community colleges
- Eliminate 4th grade strings, convert to afterschool activity
- Raise fees for parking, sports, clubs, AP/IB exams
- Increase class size – engage volunteers
- Eliminate FLES
- Bring in ‘retired’ teachers back without benefits to replace teacher leaving system
- Go electronic...reduce paper/no glossy paper
- Make ESOL programs more efficient
- Revisit admin staffing (AP’s in small schools)

- Assess using Kings Park/Kings Glen model (K-3 elementary/4-6 elementary)
- Budget from bottom up capturing learning curve
- Use schools year round

TEAM 4

Feedback from Constituency

- Strongly opposed to increase class size across board
- Going to college type model w main lecture & smaller breakouts
- Transportation other than federally mandated needs should be eliminated (listed, but group disagrees)
- Proportionate cut in administrative overhead

What can we do without?

- Remediation in summer school
- Review FLES program & provide facts & metrics
- Limit new programs

How can we do things differently?

- 4 day work week
- Asking County to give tax break to teachers to offset salary cuts
- Salary cuts for high level / “freezes” for mid-level
- Expand externship programs beyond academy
- Expand partnership w/industry countywide
- Research national level of class size (i.e. K-2, 3-6, 7-8, 9-12)
- Differentiate between GT, Special Ed., etc.
- Summer school as revenue generator

FEEDBACK

Nell Hurley commented that we actually make money from games, don't cut athletics.

Question: What does cutting TJ cost? Answer: 1 – 2million dollars

Steve Dietz recommended redistricting; students take classes at NOVA and George Mason. More likely to get college credit vs. AP.

Karen speaking as a representative from her constituency (FCAG) feels strongly about not closing GT or TJ meets needs of county all students achieve potential. Even with Level 4 Advanced Academics, schools are not meeting challenges of gifted. GT Center does provide a focal point. A refocusing of TJ science & technology.

Sue Hoppin as parent of student who goes to TJ. TJ is a great marketing tool for FCPS.

Pat Hynes questions we are spending money where there may not be a need. Is there a way to get teachers feedback?

Dr. Dale mentioned TIPS as a way FCPS get teachers' feedback.

Gwen Fishel student representative urged to stay away from larger class sizes, cuts resources, cuts ability to learn. Make sure students are excelling. 31 kids in AP. Most classes are around 30.

Rajni Goel stated that AP classes are better if they are large classes because they are college classes and students are then better prepared.

Brian Willey mentioned the value of employees' incentive ideas.

Michele Menapace suggested it would be helpful to have a list of what programs cost.

Luke stated that it doesn't seem credible that school system can't cut 5%, and that in the business world, cutting 5% is a regular expectation.

Steve Dietz added that a school system is not a business. If Dr. Dale didn't have constituencies to work with, he likely could easily cut 5% as well. We ought to look at it as \$800 per student. There needs to be as much focus as increase in revenue, not just cuts.

Brian question 1700 positions is that this year's number?

Sandy Knox made a statement that a couple groups talked about cutting FLES. Reported that the Office of Accountability evaluating the program and recommended keeping the program. Studies show it increases test scores.

Dr. Dale reiterated...

In excess of 5% cuts, looking at 7 – 9 % (student increase budget).
Distributed list of possible cuts to display urgent need.
Does not contemplate any **increase** of the county transfer.
Cut 5% of dept. nonschool based staffing
Will add brainstorming suggestions from this group to current list.
Go online to program budget book.

Patrick commented on the preference of increasing class size to reducing autism teachers. Dr. Dale talked of the long term negative impact of reducing autism teachers.

Karen suggested taking to constituencies about “bellying up” \$800 for their student.

Final note interesting statistic when we disaggregate performance in SOL in math and reading our ESOL students who have exited, ESOL students outperform our other students
Next meeting December 8. You will hear back from us. Interactive process is well worth it.

9:40 Adjournment