

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

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**School Board Retreat
February 27, 2008**

Budget Update:

The Superintendent opened the discussion regarding the budget for the rest of this year and for 2008-09, as to what to expect for funding from the State. The Governor promised that education would be held harmless, but the reality is the State has reduced Broward County's budget this year several times for 07-08. There is also a fear that the state will not fund Class Size at all this year. What is known for sure is that it will be under funded, even though the Class Size Amendment states that the State is obligated to fund completely. Not funding Class Size appropriately would place a huge financial hardship on the school districts of Florida. Teachers still need to be hired to meet the criteria for class size, even if we do not get funded.

The State started this year with a \$12.5 million cut, and then another cut of \$21.7 million, which totals to a budget cut for this year of \$34.2 million. This cut creates a new budget threshold lower for next year, 2008-09 funding, and will start out being cut at least \$34.2 million. Because of this loss of funding, the School District has had to adjust this year's budget and funding for the 4th quarter. With the guidance and the early proactive decisions by the School Board relating to controlled hiring and purchasing the district has been able to mitigate further financial hardship.

The Chief Financial Officer proceeded to explain the District's expenditures, what we expect to receive from the State and the School Districts financial decisions to save money. The budget for 2008-09 is projected to be almost \$72 million less. The North Area Superintendent, Dr. Joanne Harrison, headed up the Budget Forecast Committee. The Executive Leadership Team and Principals made up the members of this committee. This committee determined what must be funded for the 2008-09 school year, what dollars can be realigned or reduced, and what we can stop doing or do more efficiently. The Executive Leadership Team and Principals made up the members of this committee. This group met weekly November 13, 2007 to January 30, 2008. All schools and departments were surveyed to identify needs and reductions, and the data was compiled for review. Each item was reviewed and researched as to its feasibility. District needs were recommended if they met certain criteria, such as preserving district resources; i.e., class size consultants, student achievement state requirement; i.e., the Superintendent's Schools; and student safety; i.e., resource officers.

District cost savings items were grouped by the following criteria: achievable, achievable with obstacles, or unrealistic for the 2008-09 school year.

The final recommendations for "**School Needs**" totaled \$23,700,000, and the recommended "**Cost Savings**" totaled \$15,200,000. This left the School District still needing approximately \$9.5 million. The Board Members then reviewed the **Budget Forecast needs Recommendations**, discussing item-by-item and possible further cuts in order to balance the budget.

Board Members had discussions regarding funding Class Size Consultants, one Board Counsel position, Superintendent Schools, and agreed they should be funded. The Board requested that

the Superintendent reconsider adding SIU investigators and Guidance Counselors. The Board Chair recommended before making any decision regarding the additional Guidance Counselors to have a further discussion. Guidance Counselors is a topic for the March 11, 2008 Retreat. With the bullying issue and economic demands on families and students today, Guidance Counselors are a very needed resource. Also, reinstate the middle school swimming.

Other Needs Reviewed But Not Recommended were discussed by the Board Members such as: Wellness Strategic Plan, FTE Support and transportation for Enterprise Village. The Wellness Strategic Plan added position was not recommended. The plans for enterprise Village had already been stopped, so transportation is not needed.

The Board Members continued their discussion regarding the **Budget Forecast Savings Recommendations**. The Board Members agreed that the mobile custodial unit should be eliminated. There are other permanent personnel that can take care of this service. The Board Members did want to realign 82 Teachers on Special Assignment. The magnet late activity buses will be consolidated. Broward Virtual funding will be picked up by BECON. The Board Chair did want to slow down BRITE, at least until the March 20, 2008 Workshop, and the Board Members can further discuss this project and determine the total impact to the School District. The Superintendent stated he would cut 2 million from his organizational chart. Board Members would like the Budget Forecast Committee to take a look at their office budget for possible savings.

The Board Members then discussed **Other Savings Reviewed But Not Recommended**, such as eliminating all Magnet or Nova transportation, discontinue bottled water, eliminate BAT Testing, and reduce employee calendars. The Magnet and Nova transportation will not be eliminated but the Magnet Activity buses will be consolidated. Board Members also asked that all Magnet students and schools be reviewed regarding transportation to make sure they are not from CHOICE schools which does not supply transportation. Staff is asked to review bus schedules for Magnet schools and only picking up a few students from across town to see if there is another alternative or suggestion for this transportation. Board Members suggested creating more Nova and Magnet schools across the District. This would also help to reduce transportation costs. Board Members discussed the BAT testing and whether or not it is needed. There are definitely pros and cons to this testing and further information is needed. Board members would like further information regarding moving high schools to different class scheduling, as this is a huge savings to the School District. They did agree that we should move to a centralize book purchasing program which would save money.

This budget update discussion was the first review by the Board Members and they complimented the Superintendent and staff on this enormous budget project that was undertaken.

A complete listing of budget update recommendations can be found on the eAgenda site for the February 27, 2008 Budget Update Retreat.

JFN:jd