

Dec 2, 2015 – Oakridge Budget Meeting

Priorities

- Compensation is number one priority
 - Teachers obtained master's degrees in order to get salary increases during the tenure but they did not receive the increases
 - Difficult for teachers to plan their futures with the inconsistency and unpredictability of step increases
 - New hires are making the same salary or more than veteran APS teachers
 - New hires may be willing to come in at a lower salary if they are guaranteed step increases even if it is every two years
 - Some teachers leave and may come back in order to get the higher paid salaries
- Do not increase class size
 - Unrealistic trade to increase class size and increase workload but not provide teachers with adequate compensation
 - How would common areas be taken into account with increased enrollment?
- High quality teachers

Tradeoffs

- Technology
 - 1:1 Initiative
 - Eliminate iPads at the elementary school level and phase them in in middle school (majority agree)
 - Reading is the most important initiative so iPads are not that important at this level—iPads take away instructional time
 - The device does not replace instruction or intervention/remediation
 - Why give devices to every student if some students already have them? (BYOD)
 - Technology carts that can be used by the teachers when they need them is sufficient
 - Providing iPads does not eliminate the gap
 - Smartboards
 - Currently have broken smartboards which will not be fixed any time soon and staff is functioning fine – doesn't miss the functionality of the smartboard.
 - Would do fine with an Apple TV and iPad and is less expensive than smartboards
- FLES
 - Takes away from reading and writing instruction. Relook at model.
 - Some classrooms have students struggling to learn English so adding another language makes it even more difficult for them
 - Not always added planning time since the teacher is helping with discipline during FLES time
 - Collaborative teaching model results in the need for less planning time
 - FLES is costing more than originally thought and now the schools are required to find something to give up in order to keep funding the initiative

- Library assistants no longer need to come in a week earlier than the teachers to prepare for the school year. Coming in earlier was most likely due to legacy systems such as the card catalog.
- Eliminate or reduce the Community Relations department. There is a large staff dedicated to doing work that could be done at the school level or department level.
- All field trips to the zoo, cox farm etc should be eliminated. Maintain the Planetarium, Humanities, Swimming Pool, Outdoor Lab field trips.
- Pilot programs are costly and takes away from classroom time.
- Replacing a curriculum that is working (i.e., why change math curriculum every x number of years if working)
- Stipends
 - Give teachers step increases and they would not need stipends to compensate for what they are not receiving in their salary
 - Teachers participating in the education field for the right reasons would continue to help students with or without a stipend
 - ACT II in middle schools not an option for elementary school teachers. ACT II staff receive full salary, not stipends.
 - Some teachers already doing the work and do not receive stipends

Comments

“As an Arlington resident, teacher, and parent, I would prefer high quality teachers versus foreign language and iPads.”

“Why isn’t the school budget growing at the same rate as enrollment?”

“Teachers are at their tipping point due to no step increases and are on the verge of leaving for another school district with guaranteed increases.”

“New hires are under the impression they are being brought in under a step system that will provide adequate increases on a yearly basis but this is not reality.”