

Questions sent on Tuesday 4/21/20 at 12:45 PM

I need to follow up on a couple things mentioned already. I've gone back and reread all communication to the board regarding ASB store managers and I'm not understanding what is being asked for. I will need clarification tonight on what positions are currently occupied in the district in relation to the 3 stores and what would happen to those positions as well as how they relate to the position(s) being asked for. Is this additional work/responsibilities for those currently employed? Or is this a new position altogether?

Please know that we understand that the timing of this issue for the student stores, faced with budget concerns and COVID19, is not optimal. We have worked for several months on possible solutions and a plan moving forward to resolve the issues.

The 3 positions related to ASB Student Store are occupied and have been occupied for several years, as was reported in Didi's Friday Update.

If the Board decides to lay off the positions, this will need to go through an emergency lay-off process. The positions would no longer exist, and there would be no student stores.

Additional Board Member Question on Tuesday 4/21/20 related to ASB/Student Store.

Since the ASB Student Store does not impact student learning, is this an essential position? Can we move salaries from ASB to the general fund versus a teacher stipend paid for the work?

The Board will decide what are essential positions as we face our current situation.

The District would need to add the salaries to the general fund and not pay them out of ASB funds. We cannot continue to fund the positions with ASB store revenues.

Currently the ASB/Activities Directors (teachers) are paid an additional stipend for their work on ASB.

The board agenda item is the revised job description. The Board will decide on approval of the revised job description.

During the budget study session, the Board will also give staff direction on moving the ASB student store salaries/benefits to the general fund.

If the board's direction is to not move those salaries to the general fund, then staff will work with Food Service and CSEA on other options including a possible emergency layoff, finding other positions in Food Service etc..

We can also consider putting a resolution on the May board agenda for layoffs of those positions and any other positions in the classified service in light of COVID19 and school closures.

Also, I'm completely confused on the substitute teacher line item. In the previous email it was said that there were some unexpected substitute teacher expenses this year but in the MYP it is saying there is a substitute teacher cost savings for this year.

Yes, both of these apply. The unexpected substitute teacher expenses were specifically in relation to Special Ed coverage required due to personnel issues. The MYP sub teacher savings are unrestricted fund, year-to-date savings based on school closures for the remainder of the year.

Do we have any \$ numbers yet from SCOE on OT? Is there any chance they will lower their fee for services cost due to the strain on district budgets due to COVID fallout?

We do have numbers and it did come in at the higher rate. We have asked about a lower rate and according to SCOE they are meeting their expenses and unable to reduce. Please remember, by us taking back the program, the District is saving a considerable amount of money.

Also went back to see what the harvest was from the Utah job fair. But I believe the fair happened almost simultaneously with CA COVID crisis. Was Didi still able to attend? Were we able to find any potential teaching/spec ed talent? (...would there have been SLP candidates there?)

The event was cancelled. SLP and Math Teachers are a prime commodity that we continue to look for.

Question sent Tuesday 4/21/20 at 10:25 a.m.

Can you attach to the agenda or send in email the MYP combined sheet? The attachment only shows the unrestricted.

We do not have a full MYP at this time, only the unrestricted funds. The study session only presents the unrestricted budget MYP; a very early estimate. The preceding has always been the practice. The sections of the unrestricted MYP that have been updated are all included in the budget study session agenda and will be presented tonight.

Questions posed prior to Friday, April 17, 2020

On page 5, Is there anything that we can do to increase enrollment in the school district? Example we have more kids leaving than coming in on inter-district transfers.

At a recent Board meeting, the Assistant Superintendent of Ed Services requested and was provided with direction from the Board to proceed with an exploratory committee in 2020-21 to determine the feasibility of Sylvan implementing a dual-immersion program in 2021-22. This is one action to provide parent choice and an incentive to families to choose an educational program within our District.

The Director of Student Services and Assistant Superintendent of Business worked on intra-district transfer requests as part of the enrollment work for 2020-21. Student Services is currently vetting inter-district transfers for 2020-21. At the same time, staff is working on methods to track enrollment for 2020-21, during the school closure.

On Page 7, Are there any other employee positions in the school district that are currently vacant that we can get by without filling to save money?

Staff has already identified savings in the positions as noted on page 13 of the Budget Packet. Staff will continue to look at positions as they become vacant, to determine if it is necessary to fill the position without impacting programs.

On page 7, (Staffing) With reduced enrollment, have we taken a look at all the staffing ratios, such as - certificated ratios, classified ratios and administrative ratios and compared them with prior years to see how we compare?

Certificated staff ratios are continually monitored and when it is determined we have space/seats in a classroom/school we have and will continue to make adjustments, including overflowing students, while staying within classroom enrollment guidelines with our funding. As for classified ratios, we will continue to closely monitor and discuss all classified positions. Any requested additional classified position will be closely vetted by Business and HR, including staffing ratios in special education settings. Administrative staffing ratios have always been at a much lower level than we would have liked. Sylvan has always been below site administration staffing when compared to surrounding districts. As noted on page 13 of the Budget Packet, the Director of HR position is already identified to not be filled in the 2020-21 school year.

On Page 8, Can the school site funds assume the \$150 rather than the district paying those funds?

Yes, the site budgets can support the \$150; however, staff did not want to ask that this line item be eliminated from the budget as a first cut, knowing we can simply redesignate the fund code to come from restricted funds.

On page 8, Our special education costs keep going up over \$1 million next year, \$500k the following year and \$0 increase the year after that? I understand that we took back some of our special education to do in-house. This was to save money. It is hard to understand why we have such a dramatic increase in special Ed costs next year and the year following.

We have consistently reduced our numbers of students in special education and have closed classes over the last two years. This year we planned to have, and required for our caseloads, three inclusion specialists. Due to staffing availability, we were able to hire two full time inclusion specialists and hired a retired education specialist for 50 workdays to help meet the demands of the caseload. We have reduced class numbers, due to enrollment shifts, closing a mod/severe class for 2020-21. We carefully monitor our special education classrooms loading standards. In addition, we were unable to fill a resource vacancy at Ustach for this school year and divided the caseload among other middle school teachers.

Our total number of paraprofessionals and aides have decreased from previous years; we did have an influx this year (2019-2020) of many students who are visually impaired and students who moved in with one-to-one aides on their current IEPs. We have significantly reduced our numbers of ERMHS (Educationally-Related Mental Health Services) as well as Occupational Therapy but we are not sure that the total numbers and services will remain the same.

We plan to run class numbers at full capacity, and plan to only hire and open additional classes if the numbers significantly exceed loading standards and if there are safety concerns. We had one additional teaching position from March-May that was not budgeted for and some substitute teaching costs that were not anticipated, due to personnel issues. We are excited to report that part of the CORE 4 Special Education focus for the purposes of retaining staff and improving relationships has taken hold this year, and we believe this will benefit us financially. Staff retention will save us on subs, training, parent concerns, due process hearings etc. We have very little turnover in teaching staff with currently 1 teacher vacancy and 3 speech-language pathologist (SLP) vacancies. We will continue to search and recruit for our own SLPs and have signed contracts with Ardor that include 30-day termination language so that we can move away from contracted employees, with the increased costs, when possible.

Regarding the take-back of Occupational Therapists (OT) from SELPA/SCOE, our primary goal was to save money and provide quality services to our students. The program was moved from SELPA to SCOE for services and there was going to be a dramatic increase to the budget with the projected cost SCOE was going to charge with their tiered structure. By taking back the OT program, we knew we were still going to have costs but projected cost-savings

over time. All costs are dependent upon student numbers and service requirements will shift and change over time.

For next year's costs paid to SELPA for specialized programs, we have not received firm numbers from SCOE, so those are estimated costs at this time. We anticipate an update on these costs this week.

On page 8, Are there any special Ed costs that can be consolidated or reduced?

(See above)

On page 8, Are there any costs that we currently pay the county for that we could get at a better price by purchasing it from someone else?

Staff has applied in the past and will continue to apply for E-Rate funding to enable us to have our own direct internet services which could reduce the cost that we pay SCOE for internet access. Additionally we will be contacting SCOE to see if we are able to immediately capture savings with our SCOE agreement, due to the infrastructure we have put in place.

In 2017, the Director of Professional Learning/Induction presented the Board with a feasibility study to take back or offer our own induction program for new teachers. At that time, it was estimated that a district-hosted program would be estimated to cost over \$700,000 for both one-time and ongoing costs. It was determined that it is a significant cost-savings to the District to continue with our participation in SCOE's induction program.

On page 8, Have we fully analyzed the transportation department to determine if we can find any cost savings?

Our new director, Sandy Tyler, will be starting next week and will be working to analyze routes and department operations and efficiencies. Lizett will work with Sandy to identify improvements and cost saving opportunities.

On page 8, We have spent a couple million dollars in a single year on technology (Virus eradication, infrastructure, and devices). Is it reasonable to put a moratorium on technology purchases for at least one year?

In light of the required responses to recent technology challenges, a replace/refresh cycle for student devices has been developed. To avoid the catastrophic impacts of deferred maintenance, staff recommends that the

budget supports maintenance of technology to ensure that staff and students are able to fully utilize technology for the purposes of work flow, teaching, and learning. As of now, we are confident that there will need to be purchases of the following in the 2020-21 school year to: 1. Repair existing technology to keep it in working order and 2. Replace obsolete technology due to age and repair limitations

- Projectors, projector parts, projector bulbs (Classrooms)
- Chromebook replacement parts and chargers (Students)
- Laptops (Teacher)

On page 9, Are we setting aside money for the phone system and making the phone lease payments in this budget? Or are we paying the lease payments out of this special phone fund?

Yes, we are setting aside \$100,000/year in Fund 40 to offset the costs of the phone. We are making the annual lease payment out of the general fund and will transfer the annual set aside to offset this cost.

On page 9 number 13, for more than 10 years we have been using the standard of 10% for reserves on top of the 3% reserve required by the government. This practice has protected the district from times of economic uncertainty and cash flow problems. Why would we want to change this best practice that has worked so well for us?

This is a great “best practice” standard for the district to have to prepare for times of economic uncertainty. Our current reality is that we are anticipating now being in times of economic uncertainty. Ideally, it would be best if we can continue to keep the additional 10% reserve but that may not be feasible in light of the unknown revenue reductions. In the case of economic downturn, our reserves can be utilized to allow us time to make adjustments and decrease our expenses.

On page 13, ASB wages must now be paid by the district rather than from the store revenues. Due to these new accounting procedures which now cost the district a considerable sum of money (82K) should we not consider eliminating the student stores?

As was shared in the Friday Update, April 17, 2020, staff will be evaluating the ASB store during 2020-2021 to determine if it should be eliminated. There are

currently 3 employees who are impacted and we need to adhere to layoff procedures while examining the needs of the middle school sites.

On page 14, Our deficit spending for fiscal year 19/20 came in significantly higher than what we budgeted in June 2019. I am not sure if this has ever happened in the past. Additionally, revenue appears to be projected (flat) over the coming years. However, our expenditures seem to increase year after year. Significant deficit spending is laid out over the current and coming years. Would it be more prudent to begin cuts this year rather than put it off for another year? If we postponed for another year would the cuts need to be more dramatic?

Staff is working on every variable to immediately find ways to decrease expenses. Staff will continue to uncover all areas that we can recapture revenue. The State's final COLA number to the 2020-2021 budget, will also bring data our way to determine more immediate reductions for 2020-2021 or 2021-2022 school year.