

## Long-Range Planning Committee Meeting

November 14, 2006

The meeting was called to order by the Long-Range Planning Committee co-chair, Ms. Bryce Cooper at 6:32 p.m.

The meeting began with Ms. Cooper giving welcoming remarks and recapping the previous Long-Range Planning Committee Meeting held on October 10, 2006, where Mr. Charles Brown of Christner, Inc., gave a presentation on Facility Assessment Summary & Analysis. Since the last meeting, four scenarios were compiled for consideration and e-mailed to all committee members in advance in preparation of tonight's meeting. Ms. Cooper briefly explained the four scenarios and how to map each on a matrix, considering students/community, educational/curriculum/regulatory, demographics, facilities, and financial/operational costs. Ultimately, using the method of costs associated with providing a World Class school district.

The four scenarios are:

1. No change/status quo
2. Close a school
3. Close a school, seek a tax levy increase and bond issue
4. Tax levy increase, keep all elementary schools open

Each group gave a report on their matrix:

### Group 1 - Gary Aronberg, spokesperson

- Scenario 1: Fewer dollars available; quality of education would decline
- Scenario 2: Finances improve; quality of education to show a slight increase
- Scenario 3: More dollars available; programs improve
- Scenario 4: More resources - small class sizes; maintain same number of schools, spend more money

### Group 2 - Lisa Wiland, spokesperson

- Scenario 1: World Class decreases
- Scenario 2: Financial savings; however concerns about class size, distance to schools, and whether consolidation would actually be better
- Scenario 3: Spend more money; closing school
- Scenario 4: More expensive; more World Class - offers the greatest chance for positive outcomes

### Group 3 - Carole Niere, spokesperson

Took "long range" to mean 5-7 years

- Scenario 1: Less money available; farther away from World Class
- Scenario 2: More money available; little change to World Class status
- Scenario 3: Most money available (best financial picture) - tax levy for retaining teachers and textbooks; most World Class
- Scenario 4: More money available, but not as much as scenario 3 - would help in retaining and recruiting good teachers

Group 4 - Ed McCarthy, spokesperson

- Scenario 1: Essentially going backward
- Scenario 2: Decrease in costs, but nothing is improved by closing a building
- Scenario 3: Increase money (overall financial situation); educationally, what changes?
- Scenario 4: Increase money; educational quality remains the same

Based on these scenarios, Group 4 doesn't see anything that will move the District to World Class status.

Group 5 - Ed Deitzler, spokesperson

- Scenario 1: Able to retain excellent teachers; but detrimental to world class
- Scenario 2: Perception is that it is detrimental to world class
- Scenario 3: Most beneficial - allows school board to execute world class vision; a tax levy would support the educational piece and bond issue would support capital improvements
- Scenario 4: Lower world class status; lower money for capital improvements; anytime you delay capital, it catches up

Group 6 - Anders Carlsson, spokesperson

- Scenario 1: Nothing changes
- Scenario 2: Less desirable; negative impact - less money to run schools; lack of quality education; larger classrooms; would lose walkable schools
- Scenario 3: Negative impact - harder to pass tax levy
- Scenario 4: If supported, would sabotage passing a tax levy/bond issue

Upon viewing the consolidated matrix, it was determined scenarios 3 and 4 had the highest ratings.

The meeting was open to questions/comments by the committee:

Walter Daniels - a real long range plan (3-7 years); not talked about redistricting; how much money has been put into our buildings over the past 26-years and the repairs that are still needed; and to take a look where our students are now and what we will need in five years to educate them properly.

Tom Peters - what is the time frame for a tax levy and bond issue? Have we polled any constituents, and what are the District costs associated with a tax levy/bond issue campaign? Mr. Scott Hafertepe, chief financial officer, stated there is no current time frame for a campaign, however the District is not allowed to spend any money on either campaign that it has to be citizen run. Also, to maintain an annual 3 ½ - 4 percent employee raise, it generally will cost tax payers an additional 10-cents per \$100 assessed valuation per year. Also, the District is in a position for a no-tax rate increase bond issue. Central Office feels a bond issue of about \$28 million is necessary regardless of a tax levy increase.

Sue Smorodin - asked the difference between a tax levy vs. a bond issue? A tax levy generally is spent on salaries/benefits, textbooks; a bond issue can only be spent on capital improvements. Ms Cooper responded that a tax increase would maintain the current level. Pointed out that “financial” means both additional funds and costs. That the group is using financial is different ways of creating more money, or costing more money.

Sarah Heyman - the District needs a longer long-range view that will address and support those issues pertaining to MSIP points that are not met and declining student enrollment. Also, a partnership between the City and District is needed. Improve communications to the community - too often there is a time lag that hinders the communities support or input.

Beth Bender - the District needs a bigger picture and work on every part to improve the education of students - buildings are but a small piece of the picture. Some issues get addressed over and over. Confidence of staff and the community is important and critical to the success of the District.

Summary: All groups felt that Scenarios 3 and/or 4 would most improve educational outcomes in the district. Both require additional resources. There was also a general consensus that better educational outcomes result from focusing on the whole picture, and that that picture needs to be described through a more elaborate planning effort. Discussion of such an effort is a priority to recommend to the School Board. Standout issues include bringing up the basic academic skills—particularly reading—of the poorest-performing students (focus on K-2, but address at all levels), working closely with the City, engaging parents of pre-school students, understanding District demographics better, clarifying real facility needs (routine maintenance and improvements to support better educational outcomes), and educating/informing/communicating better with the community.

Concluding the committee’s remarks, Ms. Cooper reminded the committee the next meeting will be held on December 12, 2006, at 6:30 p.m., in the McNair Administration Building, and a recommendation by the committee will be presented during the January 11, 2007, Board of Education meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

