

**Input on 2010-2011 Budget
Summary of Community Conversation Comments**

The following input was received from participants in discussion groups during a Community Conversation held on November 12, 2009 at Anderson High School.

What areas should the District consider for budget reductions?

- Health insurance should be a percentage of salary
- Better utilization of support staff
- Not increase class sizes
- High performing schools should be considered for open enrollment
- Need more information on budget
- Campus-centered decisions
- Virtual distance learning online
- Dispensation from state – TRS (social security and retirement)
- \$50/month contribution for insurance applied to all employees (teachers, staff, district) – consider proportional/graduated scale to boost impact
- “Austin Insider” – really necessary?
- Align and streamline central office
- Ask students what to cut from the budget
- \$50/month employee for healthcare good idea for some if you opt out, pay to employee
- Decrease in pay teachers; expensive for families
- Title I not following kids with funding
- Dropout enrollment - \$44-\$45; how to get them there?; kids; parents getting kids to school on time
- Public awareness on this issue of funding
- Business partners to fill our gaps
- Explore legislative remedies to recapture (study whether AISD is not as property rich as we think; property values are going down)
- Investigate less costly options for health coverage (e.g., health saving accounts, etc.)
- Offer early retirement incentives to reduce the
- Technical training/maintenance
- Eliminate top heavy initiatives
- Streamline monies allocated to non-profit organizations
- Cut all programs that are not performing
- Block scheduling
- Closing schools ruins neighborhood/community (other side – Mueller wanting their own school when surrounded by under-enrolled schools)
- Cut central administration (ombudsman results?)
- Cut colored paper cost (is it really necessary?)
- Look at consolidating in transportation of students
- Percentage across the board budget cut
- Self insure
- Increase in class size a concern of geographic areas in Austin – North more congested
- East side kid’s classes too small; teaching suffers
- Low enrollment schools – increase magnet status to increase appeal; language, science
- Business grants – entrepreneurs; “Music Capital of the World”; Arts
- Optimize facility utilization by leveling school enrollment
- Evaluate/eliminate ineffective programs
- Limit luxuries (meals)
- Salary cuts for highest paid administrators
- Temporarily freeze upper administration bonuses and salaries until budget can support them
- Transportation planning to ensure efficiency

- labor force
- Not paying top dollar for travel (pre-planning to reduce costs)
- No more retreats
- Limit administrator travel (conferences for teachers a higher priority)
- Review central office budgets – all should be cut by a certain percentage
- Small school w/200 enrollment how cost effective? Base site costs; utilize current classroom space – don't send away
- Reorganize when students in neighborhood should stay in own school
- Eliminate bus transport
- Wasted time from campus staff to have to gather data and report back to CAC when same data is available to CAC staff without asking campus staff
- "Where the rubber meets the road"- class size; student/teacher ratio most critical
- Neighborhood schools are the gems of the communities – do not lose them under any circumstances. Do not consolidate them. Do not repurpose them. However, multi-purposing them (i.e., sharing the school space with other functions) is acceptable.
- Reduce transportation costs by staying in school where you live
- Get rid of staff and programs downtown who don't touch students/campuses
- No cuts that affect students and/or classroom instruction
- TAKS prep \$ - activities; expenditures spent on all rather than targeted groups
- Transportation related to transfers and choice programs is too costly; only pay for transportation required by law. Transfers in themselves are related to many schools being under-enrolled.
- Decentralized model – how to reduce our centralized program
- Ensure that services/supports tied to 504 by used efficiently for students – best practices
- Continue conversations/observations of ways to use facilities that are understaffed/or not used well
- Offer programs at under-enrolled schools that would increase attendance
- Reduce redundancy of programs
- Programs that have not met their goals should be eliminated
- Ensure that monies for students in Special Education are used efficiently

What options do you recommend for the District to generate revenue?

- Go green
- Downtown location of CAC – PRIME (downside of that – network infrastructure)
- College ready/Workforce ready – allow tech schools to use facilities
- Grants from social service agencies. Leverage funding with non-profits – collaboration; AISD difficult to work with; many hurdles
- Sell property that doesn't align with long-term plan of District (or repurpose it – think long term; not for budget purpose)
- Increase rental rates for district facilities
- Sale of surplus property
- Matching grants for corp. partners
- Work toward improved attendance (Academic Service Learning)
- Outsourcing support services
- Consolidate CAC to Reagan (parking available; central/ local)
- Solicit paid sponsorships of facilities, in exchange for naming
- Retain and attract students to middle schools by offering appealing academic, fine arts, athletic programs at non-magnet schools that they can't get at private schools
- All parents put in \$100 per student; option for families to not pay if can't; so long as this doesn't put the \$ up for recapture
- Title I money follow students
- Apartments at CAC – charge rent @ higher rates
- Can we keep the \$ amount of tax paid held steady/rate decline but keep \$ same? May require statute change
- Pair PTAs or otherwise facilitate PTAs sharing experiences in identifying funding sources and organizing fundraising activities.
- Sell surplus property
- Increase tax rate
- Reduce money for food and travel
- Using space at empty schools – not always efficient
- Talk to ACC – use AISD facilities at night? (other issues come with that)
- Air conditioning
- All kids properly classified for optimal state funding
- Appropriate bus advertising
- Increase rental rate for facilities
- Rent out space in low enrolled schools – possibly to for profit childcare
- Consider a 4-day week in summer for everyone
- Elimination of tax breaks for developments – research by legal
- E-books – either/ or; eliminate costs of warehousing
- Lease CAC as opposed to sell
- Look for legislative changes that make Robin Hood more equitable (see outlying areas w/mega-facilities that make AISD facilities look shabby)
- Look for ways to limit busing costs; stop transporting kids all over town
- Sell season tickets for Athletics
- Divesting of real property and materials is a good idea if it makes long-term sense.
- Absolutely no property tax increases.
- Rewards for schools that accomplish identified targets; monies can be put back into programs at that specific school
- Review teacher units and assignments
- Something needs to be done with Reagan – there are too few students there to make it

viable – use it for administrative offices, or even the Performing Arts Center.

- Review scheduling – 2 prep periods; only one preparation period can generate monies for the district (real money - \$17 million can be acquired for the district); Data from staff during Convocation indicated that the district staff would be willing to have 1 preparation period eliminated for generation funds
- Generate Title I monies when monies follow students (monies following students when they move from one school to another; equity issues could be addressed); Federal government picks a model for distribution of monies impacting movement of students and monies

What programs/areas should the District spend money on?

- Dropout prevention (with supporting data)
- After school programs
- Each principal given a lump sum – can choose how to spend
- Dual language program – may draw kids
- Redesign bilingual
- Facility improvements on a case by case basis (to restore equity)
- Offering more choice to increase student buy-in
- Vocational tech high schools
- DELTA programs
- Aligning of vertical teams
- Cap on 5th grade class size
- Federal matching grants/spending
- Programs to increase attendance
- Programs to increase math scores (age 10)
- Instead of magnet school, make school “even” in neighborhood
- Reallocate academic and/or instructional offerings to under-utilized schools, as informed by community interest
- Evaluate and replicate effective programs
- Protect campus morale and security
- Look at ways to combine funds for textbooks,
- Technical training and support
- Elementary art, music, and PE
- Great need to develop science curriculum (math, technology)
- Increase classroom size @ middle school level – rooms too small; no room for engagement
- Raises for teachers only (and only if money available – if so, it goes here first)
- Increase/embrace technology
- Programs like AVID to connect w/students
- Early childhood programs
- School/neighbor: resource center, dropout prevention, after school program support
- Dual immersion language
- “Basic needs” to be covered (paper, etc.) – which PTA is now covering
- Remove school consolidation from budget cut options (exception to this should be low performing schools)
- Support salary increases to stay competitive with surrounding school districts
- Study why we are losing students to private schools when they transition to middle school
- Utilize facility space efficiently
- Career/technology experiences, internships, etc. to help students “try on” specialized skills/activities
- Staff equity – increase staff to ensure best learning environment for all students
- Don’t forget to spend money on creating rigor, interest, and challenge for high achievers
- IB program for all – all levels and all

- technology, and professional development
- Reduce class size at every opportunity
- Dropout prevention/recovery – provide more options for over-aged/under-credited students
- Chances to let students learn to work in a special area – work way through school (CAD, animation, gaming, computer hardware/software, robotics, medical field, sound recording/broadcasting)
- Focus on underachieving – loud and clear
- Get rid of portables. Redistribute students to where the classroom space exists already
- Seniors visit multiple internship sites to see what student interests are; rotate so students experience multiple fields
- Use \$75 million (state mandate) take part for teacher salaries and other needs
- Change approach to teacher/staff evaluations
- Stop pouring \$ into all schools – pick one or two ways to improve and do those well
- Low performing elementary students – make sure reading and math foundational skills are there before \$ on all else
- Immersion works better for students to learn English and to assimilate into society
- Dual language program – resources to produce students with bilingual skills
- Focus on revenue enhancement rather than cost reduction – overall guiding principle
- Support regular salary increases for all staff.
- functioning levels – all students benefit
- Field trips – students go to see things in operation
- Abandon the tunnel-vision idea that all students are college bound and eliminate all other tech-ed/vocational learning opportunities
- Top notch teachers and Administrators; No money to poor teachers – empower Administrators to be able to get rid of poor/weak teachers
- Nothing tied to TAKS scores for teacher performance that determines \$ incentives
- National recruiting for admin/campus leaders; Better identification of high quality admin from all across nation
- Look at what other districts do – see how comparable districts handle same challenges
- Legislative change – require 90-95% of all state \$ to school spent only at student/campus level (may have to find right % to use)
- Support equitable facility improvements.
- Athletics
- Performing arts building facilities
- More science labs
- Use/support of technology (private co-ops and smart boards/matching support)
- Provide adequate library resources for all schools – two dollars per student isn't nearly enough.
- Consider intramural sports offerings. This can get more students involved in sports activities for much less money.