

Chair R. Cohen called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. in the Doering School auditorium.

Present: A. Bonavita, R. Doering (arrived at 5:38 p.m.), L. Galarneau, D. Juzba, K. Mouneimneh, S. Reed (arrived at 5:35 p.m.)
Dr. Czajkowski, W. Sapelli, P. Cavanaugh, R. Jury

R. Cohen turned the meeting over to Dr. Czajkowski who explained that a Joint PTO Meeting to review budget reductions to the FY'12 Budget took place on March 21, 2011, at 6:30 p.m. in the junior high school auditorium. This evening's presentation would be another set of option to fund the FY'12 Budget.

Dr. Czajkowski reviewed the following information in her PowerPoint presentation:

- Budget Assumptions
 1. No staff layoffs
 2. Do not replace retirees
 3. Some fees
 4. Eliminate Freshman Sports
 5. \$1 million dollar reduction
 6. Maintain class size
 7. Maintain 8 Reading Recovery teachers
 8. Eliminate DLC Team at junior high school
 9. Eliminate Instructional Coaches

Next, Dr. Czajkowski reviewed the following proposed reductions:

- Central office administrative assistant to Director of Finance/HR
- School Resource Officer at high school
- 10-month secretary at Doering School
- Extended day
- Instructional coaches
- Fees totaling approximately \$97,318
- Freshman Sports
- Total reduction amount of approximately \$617,877.00

Then, Dr. Czajkowski reviewed the following non-replacement of retirees:

- AHS Math teacher
- AJHS Social Studies teacher
- AJHS Math teacher
- Granger School teacher
- Phelps School teacher
- Robinson Park School teacher
- Total savings of \$392,641.00

According to Dr. Czajkowski, the total proposed reductions would amount to \$1,010,518.00 with no layoffs. However, the district would still be short by approximately \$800,000.00. This proposal is the best case scenario, which has the least impact on students and staff. Dr. Czajkowski concluded her presentation by saying she would need direction from the Committee to proceed.

A lengthy question and answer session then took place during which D. Juzba said she was pleased the proposal had no staff layoffs. She asked if one (1) DARE officer could be assigned to the high school. Dr. Czajkowski said she still needed to discuss that possibility with the Police Chief. D. Juzba also asked what the impact would be by eliminating the DLC team at the junior high school. Dr. Czajkowski said the ELA and Science positions would be maintained, and students would be dispersed among the other teams. Next, K. Mouneimneh asked if the paraprofessionals would be maintained who were assigned to the DLC team. Dr. Czajkowski said yes. K. Mouneimneh also asked if the Instructional Coaches would go back into the classroom. Dr. Czajkowski said that 2.5 of the Instructional Coaches would be funded by the Title IIA grant and the others would return to the classroom. She also asked if the SRO position could be funded by the Police Department or would he return to the Police Department. R. Cohen said the SRO would return to the Police Department as he has seniority. K. Mouneimneh then asked if a Social Studies teacher would be hired at the high school. Dr. Czajkowski said that a person would be hired to fill the vacancy. A. Bonavita said this newest proposal appears to be reasonable and well thought out as it cuts \$1million dollars from the budget, contains no layoffs, and protects the integrity of school programs.

L. Galarneau asked if more information was available regarding outsourcing. Dr. Czajkowski explained that she, Dr. Provost, & Miss Cavanaugh will be meeting on March 31st with an outsourcing organization. She also asked about what savings in benefits there would be if we outsourced. In her final question, Mrs. Galarneau asked R. Cohen how he came up with the figure of \$1.9 million dollars to cut on the school side of the budget. R. Cohen explained that he looks at all fixed costs and predicts what will need to be cut on the City and school sides of the budget. He also noted that cities and towns have been cut 7% in local aid and will receive \$1.5 million dollars less in Stimulus funds. S. Reed asked how not filling retiree positions would impact class size. Dr. Czajkowski said students would number approximately 25 – 26 per class. She also asked if the Mentor Coordinators would be retained. Dr. Czajkowski said that the two (2) stipend positions would be funded by the Title IIA grant. She then asked if opting out of bus service at the high school would help. Dr. Czajkowski said it would not help because the school buses are on a tier system, and we need them all. S. Reed also asked about increasing ECC tuition. Dr. Czajkowski said that the district will look to increase tuition, which partially funds the salary for the Director of Early Childhood Programs. In her final question, S. Reed said she was concerned about eliminating Freshman Sports. Dr. Czajkowski noted that the school department offers JV sports and there are in-town youth programs, which give students options for playing sports.

In addition, D. Juzba expressed her concern that the schools are being asked to level-fund the budget for the fourth year in a row. K. Mouneimneh said the proposed budget maintains our academic standards. She can support some fees for athletics and parking, but does not believe fees should be instituted for band and extracurricular activities. Dr. Czajkowski noted that fees for band and extracurricular activities would cover approximately \$20,000.00 in stipends for advisors. R. Doering complimented the Superintendent for doing an admirable job in developing this newest proposal. She also asked who would collect fees and when the Committee would have to approve a budget. Dr. Czajkowski said either central office or school secretaries would be responsible for collecting fees. The proposed FY'12 Budget will be presented at the April 12th school committee meeting under Reports for a tentative approval. A. Bonavita asked Dr. Czajkowski to prioritize additional cuts and layoffs in case they are necessary. R. Cohen explained that there are currently two resolutions to increase funding to the schools, cities, and towns in the Mass. Legislature, which were sponsored by him and Mr. Bonavita for the schools and George Bitzas for the Town. L. Galarneau asked when layoff notices need to be sent. Dr. Czajkowski said that June 15th is the date layoffs notices must be sent out by contract. L. Galarneau said she would like to retain positions that help those students who are struggling. She also asked if \$300,000.00 in substitute teacher pay could be reduced. P. Cavanaugh explained that the only way to do that would be to raise our substitute pay, which is very low compared to other surrounding districts. Because we cannot always hire a substitute due to low pay, teachers are asked to cover classes and their rate is much higher. L. Galarneau then said she would like to have substitute rates in surrounding communities investigated.

Dr. Czajkowski noted that collectively, the school district has made a lot of progress while offering a variety of programs to students.

Prior to adjournment, it was the consensus of the Committee to schedule another budget workshop sometime before the April 12th school committee meeting.

There being no further business, the workshop adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Alexis Ferioli
Executive Secretary to the Superintendent & School Committee

Roberta G. Doering, Committee Secretary