

BUDGET FORUMS 2008



BUDGET FORUM #1 January 24, 2008

FEEDBACK

Strategic Direction #1:

Improving student learning and the development of skilled, engaged and socially responsible individuals.

- Safe Schools/Restorative Justice addressing c) (“to establish, implement and support the programs, processes and practices to ensure all students demonstrate safe, respectful and socially responsible behavior”).
- Engaging our aboriginal learners is evident but what about “All Learners”.
- Establish programs to support families in their neighborhood and neighborhood schools even before the children are of school-age.
- Use of technology as part of and to support learning.
- Plans in future for “shelter” program at secondary?
- Focus: support for diverse learners through the development of flexible systems.
- Ed Centre students – more involved/integrated with secondary schools. Fluidity between two educational facilities – revisit registration practices – quicker time frame.
- Attend to “gifted” or higher achieving students.
- Establish peer tutoring.
- Support for families before age 5 - \$’s and time for Teacher Librarian’s to be open and available to help with literacy and language.

Strategic Direction #2:

Increasing choice of, and excellence in, programs and services to meet the current and emerging needs of our students within the parameters of the funding.

- More “District Resource” programs – space.
- On site small group early intervention (like the District Resource program) but at all schools and earlier than grade 3.
- Neighborhood schools join together to have a concentrated “resource class” – could service 18 students/year for 3 schools – rather than 18 students for all the north/south side per year.
- Board advocating for more funding from the government (let them know the amount they fund is not enough!)
- Reword b) (“to develop and implement approaches, programs and practices for chronically low achieving students”) to . . . ?
- Intervention – early or enough? Organizational skills training at middle school. Is that too late?
- Focus on literacy and how writing fits. Do we put enough focus on writing skills?
- What about increased “cry” for trades training?
- Multiple paths to graduation?
- Focus on skills other than “book smarts”. What about people skills, etc.
- Help kids figure out where they excel – not numbers, what about writing.
- Academically gifted programming? For example - how to challenge gifted readers?
- Some of the examples in #1 fit better here and vice versa.
- Like that UBC is involved in Early Intervention programs.
- We also have projects with UCFV and we just finished an earlier project with UBC and SFU – Lucid Education.
- Void in the area of supporting “gifted learners”.
- Many examples of assessment initiatives.
- Some examples of accessing additional funds from Ministry and potential from Federal government (SCIPPY).
- Choice vs. boundaries – how do we resolve questions of?

Strategic Direction #3:

Further developing committed, engaged and highly competent employees.

- Reference to CUPE employees in speaking notes is missing (notes don't reflect the work being done for all employee groups).
- Would like to see parent-student opportunities to provide evaluation/feedback to/on employees. Give constructive feedback. Important for students to be involved.
- Ensure growth in learning technology for all staff.
- Professional Learning Communities concept is big part of this.
- Can we use CUPE members to provide leadership in workshops? Peers sharing skills and best practices, etc. Why not?
- Development of staff is not just through training – recruitment and supervision strategies.
- Revisit 'passing of students' to next grade when they haven't achieved that grade level.
- Deal with each as 'individual' case – not make a blanket protocol.
- Staff need to be highly supported in dealing with students on individual basis rather than “blanket” decisions/protocols.
- Collaboration \$'s.

Strategic Direction #4:

Increasing community and stakeholder engagement, understanding and public confidence in our system.

- Concern of “information overload” – too much communication (by email).
- Can’t keep up. Need to determine how to filter. Staff can get missed.
- “Branding” (marketing strategy). Colors, websites, letterhead, PowerPoint, ads, press releases, etc.
- Improve decision/communication or values and goals of district and better integration and buy-in from culture and same from the schools.
- Better branding – easier recruiting via better marketing materials, plans, etc.
- Multiple pathways for graduation, eg. Level C Welding Ticket – double credits – positive example.
- More work on parental engagement – Middle/Secondary Review and Aboriginal is a good start.
- “Page in the newspaper” good example of building public relations.
- Reaching out to families in different ways – not always in print.
- We need comprehensive websites for schools as well as the district.
- Ability to e-mail newsletters home as well as a print copy.
- Teacher’s use of e-mail to parents and vice versa.
- Ready Set Learn Developmental Fairs are great!
- Schools open to more “preschool” opportunities.
- More communication in the decision making processes.
- Outreach Workers Literacy Supporters (OWLS) support families in communicating between family and school. eg. those families whose literacy is low and/or don’t have computers.
- Increase parental engagement with teachers and schools.
- Communicate our District/Community Literacy Plan, Middle/Secondary Review and Achievement Plan.

Strategic Direction #5:

Further developing an effective and efficient structure to support the delivery of programs and services.

- Technology – basic consistency throughout district – websites/communications.
- More work on first objective needed (“to establish and maintain an effective governance model and operating framework ensuring roles, responsibilities and authorities for the Board, administration and schools are clearly defined and understood”).
- Need to go even further to differentiate resources for schools needs - “Inner City Schools”.
- Clearer information needed on community uses that require long term stability.
- We need to be thoughtful about using surplus school space to meet community needs.
- Need to explore more community financial resources to stabilize community programs in the schools/neighborhoods.
- Schools developing technology plans – based on their unique needs – recognizing that many PAC’s have actively financed this area in the past.
- Instructional leadership in how staff can use this new technology and use it effectively without having to do off side of desk. Need direction from one or more individuals to move this forward.
- HR systems don’t have depth in the software to make full use.
- Custodial access to technology hardware for e-mail, etc. All non-teaching employees. From this, require training to use it.
- Need network accounts and e-mail accounts.