

Vancouver Board of Education
Public Meeting – Budget 2010
Vancouver Technical Secondary School
March 24, 2010

Meeting convened at 7:05 pm

Attendance: 12 adults
1 student (elementary)

7 District Staff
3 Principals
5 Trustees
2 student workers

Process: 1 small work group was formed
Discussion time approximately 1 hour

Meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm

Feedback & Questions

What are the actual savings from school closure?

A person stated the Langley Teachers' Union had published information to show there were no cost savings from school closure.

What is the impact of decreased enrolment on the overall budget – does adding more students solve the budget deficit?

Who pays for summer school?

In the discussion group, trustees explained the history of funding shortfalls, elements of the structural budget, obligations for employee wage and benefit costs and the increased costs now expected to be covered by the increase in the per student funding allocation. An analogy was made that is was similar to “raising a child’s allowance and then charging the child for food and rent”. Trustees sited the VSB website for reference to materials, meeting schedules and advocacy opportunities.

Parents agreed “teachers were gold”. There was no waste in the system. More advocacy was needed to procure adequate funding for public education.

Trustees were asked about the opportunity to increase revenues by entering business agreements or development opportunities. Trustees explained the infrastructure of the Board was to provide a funded service, not to operate as a for-profit business. Many of

the Boards who had ventured to establish businesses and foundations, had not made money. The VSB Public Schools Foundation was dissolved in June 2009.

One parent suggested that the Board needed to be more specific about what 20M would mean to schools in order for parents to react. He suggested creating a list of what services/schools/staff would be cut in order to find 20M. By creating a sense of vulnerability for all, more parents may participate in advocacy.

The idea of a “tipping point” was discussed regarding what it would take to mobilize advocacy for public education, given the indication that many parents/public are concerned. The hope was that parents could advocate for a system and not for individual programs and that advocacy for a system should begin before “your” school or program is the one affected.

A parent asked about the funding of “free” summer school and the potential use of this resource as “daycare”. How can the government fund summer school but not increase funding for the regular 10 month program?

A parent asked how the proposed school calendar change (10 closed days) would save money?

The difference between “enrolling” and “non enrolling” teachers was reviewed, in terms of what is essential to offer at a school and what services can be considered for cuts.

A staff person noted that any cuts to staff affect the “team”. She acknowledged that her 20 year career with Board centered on a team approach to supporting parents and students and any cut within the staff affected the ability of the team to continue.

A parent encouraged all present to talk with “at least 10 other parents” and the message would begin to travel through the community.

J.A.Cook
10/03/25
Area Office