

Board Declared Public Hearing Open for Staff, Parents and Community to Request to Appear Before the Board Regarding the Options Presented to the Board to Balance the 2010-11 Budget per the Procedure Previously Discussed and Approved

Chair Donnelly declared the public hearing open for comment according to the procedure previously agreed upon.

Mr. Bill Davis, PEA President – 383 Yellowstone Avenue, Pocatello, ID 83201

Mr. Davis said he wanted to review his speech with the Board. He said the Board was facing difficult decisions because of the Idaho legislature and it was getting tiresome. He said he would like to be discussing extra money for education for once, but because this was Idaho we would probably have to wait a while for that. He said he agreed with some of the budget proposals but realized that not everyone would be happy with the decisions. He said he hoped others would step forward and share their ideas with the Board. He said as a general principle he cared first and foremost for the children and for educators. He said the first tier were the classroom aides and the Para-pros that did the front line work and asked the Board to make cuts as far away from the front line as possible. He said he did not believe any cuts were necessary. He said the proposed cuts were based on a false premise that may or may not occur. He said Senator Cameron had taken issue with the announcement from House leadership that said District's should expect another 5.5% holdback in the fall. He said Senator Cameron stated that this would come from the executive branch and not from legislature and the announcement was premature and an overreaction. Mr. Davis said he believed other solutions could be found and that it was time for someone else to do more with less. He said an equal cut across the board was not fair or just. He said cutting the pay of a low income employee had far greater ramifications than cutting the salary of an employee making \$90,000 a year. He said one idea that had been shared most frequently in discussions was the idea of considering a 4 day week rather than taking pay cuts. He said he could not count the number of people that asked about that. He said there were some that were against the idea but thought it needed further study and consideration. He said he believed the previous study was done with a negative presentation and deserved further consideration. He said one teacher had worked up a proposed calendar which he would provide later. He said the PEA did not seek the elimination of extra-curricular activities. He said his own children had participated in extra-curricular activities and still benefitted from their experiences from high school. He said that being said it was unfair to ask teachers to pay so students could play. He said pay for play, fundraising and donations needed to play a bigger role in the future of extra-curricular activities. He said the elimination of the Holt Arena could possibly pay for some of the coach stipends. He said the Board had been presented with a choice of 4 reductions for extra-curricular and had been recommended by administration to choose level two reductions at 30%. He said he believed the options needed greater flexibility and a combination of reductions with the least possible amount of human damage. He said job responsibilities needed to be shifted or combined. He said this did not mean there weren't hard working employees, but hard times called for sacrifice. He said when the public talked about the administration they were not talking about school administrators but were talking about the administrators in this building. He said the Board needed to consider delaying the sixth grade move and the re-opening of Alameda Center for at least one year and move forward only when revenue improved. He said some of the funds from the recent school plant facility levy should be moved to the general fund and used to offset salary cuts. He said this had been authorized by the legislature in its last session. He said the fund balance was supposed to be used to protect the District in an emergency as a rainy day fund and we were in one and the rain was falling hard. He said the Board needed to stop the "full steam ahead" approach to every pet program that came down the pike. He said teachers wanted to relax and spend time with their families and to pretend they had normal jobs. He said he posted a poll on his blog asking PEA members if they had second or third jobs. He said 297 people had responded to the poll. He said 53% reported having a second job and 10% reported having a third job. He said many were considering a second job. He said he felt the numbers were fairly representative. He said teacher and employees felt besieged on all fronts, by the legislature, the Governor, the State Superintendent, and after the previous year by the Board. He asked the Board not to balance the budget on the backs of employees. He said he received many ideas and would

present them to the District's administration for consideration. He said there was no shortage of creative people to come up with solutions and encouraged the Board to opt out of the financial emergency. He told them not to believe the legislature and their crying wolf. He said he would leave the Board with this final statement: The reason he loved teachers so much was that he knew what they did came from their hearts, and he trusted the Board not to break their hearts. He said he had great respect for the Board and thanked them for their time.

Janice Hallinan, Labor Management Council, Chair

Ms. Hallinan said she was a Para-pro at Hawthorne and had worked in the District for 7 years. She said she attended a conference in March representing Idaho. She said the most powerful experience was not the workshops but the keynote speaker. She said over 1,200 people were in attendance and shared a meal and during the meal a young black man dressed in gangster style clothes was wandering around the dinner. She said she wondered what he was doing at the meeting and how he had gotten past security. She said she later learned that he was the keynote speaker. She said he told a story of being raised in the Virginia ghettos and was one of three children raised by a single mother. He said he watched his older brother die in a gang fight and could remember his mother having to choose whether they would have lights or water that month. He said when they had no water the school janitor let him use soap and water, and when they had no lights the bus driver drove him around letting him use the light to finish homework. He said cafeteria workers helped him with food. He said aides gave him money for field trips and helped him with work. He said the ESPs became a second family. She said he then took off his gangster clothes with underneath was a suit and tie. He said he had a doctorate because of the dedication of his teachers. Ms. Hallinan and others like her provide soap, lights, water, money, and help with homework to students just as his teachers had done. She said the classified staff was the backbone of the District and students truly came first and the District could not afford to cut or lose any of them. She said they had already lost days and taken pay cuts and said there had to be other places to trim the fat. She said just because they were not certified did not mean they did not contribute. She said the classified staff provided an invaluable service to District and asked the Board to please consider any cuts thoroughly and carefully.

Kent Hobbs, Administrative Representative

Mr. Hobbs said as the spokesperson for the administration he would provide the input on the financial emergency. He said he recognized this situation was created by the state legislature and other officials that had failed. He said he appreciated the difficulty caused by restricted resources and legislature taking away local control. He said educators care for children and realized when they started that this profession would not make them wealthy but they continued to educate themselves and continually sought out training opportunities. He said administrators spent more than a 40 hour work week doing their jobs, coming in early and staying late. He said they were expected to attend after hour meetings with no extra pay and were first in line to lead new initiative. He said they were committed and led by example. He said they regularly absorbed expenses such as travel. He said they always made themselves available even by cell phone. He said teachers and administrators always reach into their own pockets for kids. He said teachers and administrators had taken pay cuts the year before and would roll back to a pay scale of a decade ago. He said he heard from teachers and classified staff constantly that they would not take the administrators jobs and knew they were not undervalued. He said he hoped the District valued the contribution of the administrators as well. He said he did not want this to become a divide and conquer situation and that all employees needed to stand together united for families and the education of children. He said if cuts were made that all employees should be treated equally and not one person should get a larger cut than another. He said he would like to see other cost saving measures considered. He said administrators would prefer unpaid furloughs so they could return to current levels of pay. He said the District should plan its budget on what appropriations that legislature had promised and expect them to meet it. He said Mr. Reed said legislature told the District to prepare for 5.5% holdback but that legislature needed to take responsibility. He said the fund balance should be reduced to 1 or 2 percent and ask the public to support using school plant facilities funds towards the general fund. He said he was well aware of the efforts it took to past the

levy, but thought the public was becoming more aware of the crisis public education was in. He said until the state decided that education was important that nothing would change and until then we needed local support. He asked the Board to look at every other possibility before impacting salaries. He said some of his staff struggled to feed their families or have their kids get college educations as it was. He said people were stretched to the breaking point and that we needed to attempt to soften the blow. He said these cuts would have a major effect on the quality of education. He thanked the Board for their time and their support of children in the community.

Brandi Barnes, Region 5 PTA – 750 Canal Street, Chubbuck, ID 83202

Ms. Barnes said she appreciated the time to speak. She said the PTAs Mission said to “Support and Speak on behalf of Children”. She said the job of the PTA was to assist parents in developing the skills they needed and to encourage involvement in public schools. She said they had been doing that on the legislative and local level. She said she sent an email to teachers asking them to have their students tell them what was the most important thing to them in school. She said at the top of the list was PE, then lunch, friends, field trips and free choice time. She said she then asked adults what they remembered most from their childhood experience at school. She said number one was teachers. She said teachers make lasting impressions and almost every person could tell you one teacher that had made a difference for them. She said most people didn’t remember a particular class, they remembered teachers. She said District 25 needed to do “Whatever it Takes” to balance the budget. She said she had learned the difference between compromise and collaboration. She said the Government compromises which left a sour taste, but collaboration is what teachers did best. She said they found solutions and worked on solutions together and that collaboration needed to happen in the community as well. She said the District did a good job for the most part, but certain groups were always left out labeled “not for education”. She said these groups had a different point of view and we needed to open up to different points of view and different options. She said she had 4 students in the district. She said one of her sons was deaf and was covered under the Disability Act for all of his opportunities, but asked what would happen to those children without disabilities that learn better through extra-curricular activities rather than the traditional format. She said one student comment she had received said they liked PE so they could be ready for their late 30s. She said others said their favorite trip was to the rodeo and wished they could go again. She said she knew when cutting the budget it was necessary for the District to take the frosting off the cake, but asked the Board to allow the community and parents to support some of the “frosting” programs where they were able. She said a lot of those activities were the ones that kept kids in school and made lasting impressions. She said a lot of people were hurting with the downturned economy, but if everyone took a little portion it could work for everyone. She said following the Vision and Mission the PTA would do everything it could to make learning the best it could be for all students.

Cheryl Spall – 4988 Cherokee, Pocatello, ID 83204

Ms. Spall said she represented media specialists. She said there were 12 librarians in the District. She said she was here to request additional days not be cut for media specialists and had compiled a study that included 19 states to show the value and positive impact that libraries made in schools and said they needed qualified specialists. She said students that received help from a media specialist had higher test scores. She said the study showed that reading enjoyment was positively linked to achievement. She said Idaho was included in the study and over 1,000 libraries had participated and was endorsed by the Department of Education. She said part of the study looked at how librarians perceived themselves and how others perceived them. She said non-certified staff was less likely to be perceived as curricular and more likely to be seen as in-service technology providers. She said when librarians were perceived as colleagues that provided support, student ISAT scores were higher. She said when administration valued librarians students thrived academically. She said the national average for salaries was over the Districts and they were not asking for an increase, just for the Board to make an informed decision.

Wendy Shelman – 1177 Holman Avenue, Pocatello, ID 83201

Ms. Shelman said she had been teaching at Pocatello High School for 6 years and had been on the PEA negotiations team for 4 years and had some insight and experience with the issues. She asked the Board to opt out of the financial emergency or be forced to accept the position that the legislature made us take. She said District 25 had a tradition of equality and equity in how it treated and paid people. She said that tradition had been forced to be set aside due to the legislature. She said the law signed by the governor forced District's into a financial emergency but we did not have to sign on and did not need to stick to their timeline. She said the negotiations team felt forced, rushed and pressured by the administration. She said she hoped there would be camaraderie and respect during the process. She said if this was done with a business model in mind we would fail. She said the business model does not work in a school setting. She said if we work together we could make it work. She said she would support the District but asked the Board to please opt out. She submitted a letter from Becky Boegel for the Board.

Michelle Angle – 5788 Bannock Highway, Pocatello, ID 83204

Ms. Angle said she and her husband were both teachers and had over 60 years of experience between the two of them. She asked the Board to look at different solutions. She said her husband had taken a 20% cut in pay because of the high school redesign and then both took a 1% cut the following year. She said if they were made to take another 6.9% cut each it would be a 14% cut to their household income. She said they loved their jobs but they had bills to pay and would not make it. She asked the Board to please look at other options.

Megan Perryman – 427 Lark Lane, Pocatello, ID 83201

Ms. Perryman said she did not intend to duplicate Sheryl Spalls comments but had additional letters of support from media specialists and would get them to Board.

Mary Anne Hansen – 260 Noah Street, Chubbuck, ID 83202

Ms. Hansen said she was a teacher at Irving and a parent of 3 students. She said she spoke last year in support of the Board for raising the Supplemental levy. She asked the Board to opt out of the financial emergency. She said she had received the 1% pay cut last year and was the only one out of all the teachers that attended a conference in Boise that had received a pay cut. She said she was a team leader for truancy school on Fridays and had a weekend job in addition to her teaching position. She said she only had two days off all year. She said she worked full time, 7 days a week already and if there were pay cuts this year she would be forced to take a third job which would affect her family and her teaching ability. She said her son says that he knows his mom loves him but she works a lot. She asked the Board to please not affect salaries.

Jamie Carlson – 672 Moreland Avenue, Pocatello, ID 83201

Ms. Carlson thanked the Board for allowing the public a voice. She said as a parent she was concerned that cuts would negatively affect children with extra curricular activities and after school programs that kept kids out of trouble. She said she supported a 4 day school week. She said some costs could be offset and time used more wisely by eliminating early releases and starting school later.

Donna Andrews – PO Box 2294, Pocatello, ID 83206

Ms. Andrews asked the Board to opt out of the financial emergency. She said as slides were being shown by the District administrators there was a lot of generalization and that someone with an eye for writing grants could probably find a lot of areas to pull money together for educational and extra-curricular needs. She said she believed there was money to be found and people in the community that wanted to help. She said she felt it could be pulled together. She said when administrators talked about FTEs for personnel that the District needed to have all of the FTEs available to get the funding from the state. She said if the District was going to look at FTEs then they needed to look at the administrative level because we may need the money reimbursed by the state, but the District did not tell everyone how much was paid out in the District office for those FTEs.

Marlene Shurtz – 411 S. Main Street, Firth, ID 83236

Ms. Shurtz said she was a teacher at Pocatello High School. She said she lived in Firth and traveled to Pocatello to work. She said it was a pleasure to be at the Board meeting and her message to the Board

would be direct. She said her message was don't cut people. She said all education support personnel were needed from custodial, to cooks, SROs, media specialists, to Para-pros. She said she worked as a Para-pro in Shelley Idaho 21 years ago and that the District's current Para-pros only made \$500 more per year than she did 21 years ago. She said it was thievery that Para-pros only made \$500 more 21 years later. She said the District needed its teachers and needed to pay them and they deserved it. She said teachers worked with children who were not always easy to work with whether they were poor or gifted and talented. She said teachers worked hard and did everything they could to meet the student's academic needs. She said teachers were not given a raise last year and were not going to be able to move a lane this year which meant a raise was not possible that way either. She said on top of that teachers spent their own money in order to be eligible for a lane change that would not be possible anymore. She said it was robbery and thievery. She said it was her recommendation that the Board not accept the state declared financial emergency and that teachers were not social service workers. She said if the District had to go to a 4 day week it could be a negative impact but teachers were not social service workers and needed to be paid.

Pat Feuerborn – 415 Randolph Avenue, Pocatello, ID 83201

Ms. Feuerborn thanked the Board the opportunity to speak. She said she had been in the same situation 40 years ago begging the Board to not to cut certified librarians. She said a certified library teacher was an essential part of the team. She said she had come to share the library report to enforce the positive impact that it had to students and test scores. She said most of the time librarians worked directly with students. She asked the Board to keep certified library teachers in schools. She said a media specialist spent 2/3 of their time on curriculum depending on the grade level and helped kids grow a love of reading and encouraged the expansion of their interests. She said in addition to plans and materials librarians provided support to teachers in their courses. She said if budgets were stretched grants were available to help fund programs. She said librarians helped students want to learn and to read. She said they were an important part of the team at all schools and they made a difference. She said the library should not be considered an extra-curricular activity and she knew tough decisions had to be made and asked the Board to take the education of students seriously. She said children were the future and needed to be thoughtful and well read citizens.

Steve Erlandson – 13596 W. Meadowlark Lane, Pocatello, ID 83204

Mr. Erlandson said the last time he addressed the Board he forgot to acknowledge his fervent belief in how much Board members do. He said they gave a lot of their time and received no pay. He said he was a parent, a taxpayer and a counselor. He said he appreciated the open positive way the Board approached tasks. He said he believed that the Board and the administration had the best intentions at heart. He said he had great faith in the Board, the administration and the PEA to resolve difficulties without doing irreparable harm. He said the teams needed to place their faith in negotiations as he had done. He asked the Board to opt out of the financial emergency as it was based on an unfounded declaration by legislature even if the District met the requirements of a statutory financial emergency. He said a holdback may not take place and by opting out the District would not be bound to unrealistic time constraints and could wait to find out what actual revenue picture would look like. He said the negotiations team needed time to see how much money would be held. He said numbers usually came in the spring. He said planning should not be based on an "if" rather than what actually was. He said it was in everyone's best interest in the long run to wait until revenue numbers were available. He said the Board should not allow the District to be hobbled by legislative stipulations. He said the Board needed to allow the IBB method to follow its full and unimpeded course. He said he had the best interest of the kids at heart.

Megan Nolte – 9599 Katie Mountain Drive, Pocatello, ID 83204 & Lydia Delehanty – 161 S. 16th Place, Pocatello, ID 83201

Ms. Nolte and Ms. Delehanty said they were freshman at Century. Ms. Nolte said as students they were affected by budget cuts and wanted their voice to be heard. She said for teenagers school is their life. She said they were at school 7 hours a day, 5 days a week and deserved the highest quality education possible. She said the Board had the future of all students in their hands. She said if the proposed cuts were made to the budget, the quality of education could be decreased. She said students spent more days with their teachers than with their own parents. She said teachers were underpaid and were priceless and changed

lives and the future of students depended on them. She said teachers had earned their salary and deserved more and cutting salaries was cutting the quality of education. She said she knew the economy was bad, but by cutting salaries and reducing the quality of education, students would not have the education and opportunity to change the economy and bring it up. She said cutting teachers pay was cutting the students future. Ms. Delehanty said she was a cross country runner and that cutting programs that didn't bring in money was not fair. She said the choir director was trying to get enough students in the class so it would not have to be cut. She said she wanted to go into a musical career and if those programs were cut it would take away her opportunities and her future. She said without the programs there would be no college opportunities which took away the ability to get a good paying job. She said there were solutions to the budget crisis, like raising taxes and asking the state for more money. She said that should be a high priority. She said football games being held somewhere besides Holt Arena would save money. Ms. Nolte and Ms. Delehanty asked the Board on behalf of students to consider how students would be affected by the cuts and knew the state lacked money but to opt out of the financial emergency for their future.

Nicholas Tsakrios – 225 S. 18th Avenue, Pocatello, ID 83201

Mr. Tsakrios said he was there to speak on behalf of his grandkids. He said the Board should opt out for obvious reasons. He said he would like to offer a suggestion. He said a co-worker had received an email from their District asking them to come to work session to assist with problems and come up with ways to work through issues in a positive manner. He said the work session lasted 3 to 4 hours and a lot of positive suggestions were made. He said the Board could consider moving to a 4 day work week or charging for day care. He said the Board needed to opt out of the financial emergency and study the issues further and allow public input for other options on fund raising and negotiation on extra-curricular activities.

Jay Ronk – 230 Fairway Drive, Pocatello, ID 83201

Mr. Ronk said he was there as the band and choir director. He said he was a realist. He said he wanted the Board to know that when they discussed extra-curricular activities that did not only include sports, it was all of it. He said he already spent a lot of time fundraising just to run the basic program that was not paid for by fees. He said fundraising did not only pay for long trips, it was just to run the program. He said if fees were raised for extra-curricular or co-curricular activities he did not want them to become elitist activities. He said students were already scholarshiped and he was blessed to have the best of the best in his band class but he also taught kids that would not be there if it wasn't for band. He said his wife had worked in the District for 10 years and did not even make \$10 per hour. He said he understood more than most others than the Board what the sacrifice was. He said his father was a board member. He said it caused him agony and heartache but knew he loved it. He said he respected the Board members for what they do and appreciated their time.

Daphne Heath – 224 Franklin Avenue, Pocatello, ID 83201

Ms. Heath said she was a teacher at Greenacres. She said the teachers were a breed all their own. She said teachers could make anything out of construction paper, glue and egg cartons. She said they recycled and went to so many dollar stores and garage sales. She said teachers would do what they can to make it work and were team players. She said they wanted what was best for kids. She said if the Board investigated other options so the team did not have to take a hard hit everyone could win. She said there were funds available in the District's rainy day funds and it was raining and pouring right now and needed to be used. She said the Board should opt out of the financial emergency and look at other options.

Annette Dutton – 9664 Andee K Lane, Pocatello, ID 83204

Ms. Dutton said she was a teacher at Century High School. She suggested that football games be played on Saturday during the day and not at night at the Holt Arena.

Malynda Cooper – 1632 S. Von Elm #3, Pocatello, ID 83201

Ms. Cooper said she was a Para-pro at Greenacres. She asked the Board to please not reduce their pay. She said they already did not get paid for what they did. She said their jobs were important and they were the ones working with special education students and made it possible for them to learn. She said most kids did not get that at home. She asked them again to please not take their pay. She said if the pay was reduced the quality of education would be reduced and that should not be done to the kids. She said she had kids in school and wanted good quality teachers for them. She said they moved here because the teachers were

better than in the small town she lived in and if pay went down it would make it hard to stay here. She said it would become impossible with the price of living going up and the pay going down. She said teachers would have to move and asked what the District would be left with then. She asked if there was any way schools could work with the Universities to get high school and college credits together and save money that way. She said she knew the District could do better. She said she was grateful to the Board and knew how consuming it was as she had been a Board member at one time. She thanked them for their time.

Terri Thompson – Rt.2 N. Box 49D Lodge Pole Ext, Pocatello, ID 83202

Ms. Thompson said she was a teacher at Irving Middle School. She said she was there on behalf of herself as a mother, a grandmother and the Para-pros. She asked the Board to opt out of the financial emergency and find other ways to balance the budget and help kids without cutting pay and programs. She said she would not rehash previous comments but that no one deserved cuts. She said if cuts had to happen then the Board should start at the top by taking 10% from those making \$90,000 per year or more and then 8% for \$80,000 or more in \$10,000 increments. She said those making below \$40,000 per year should get a 0% decrease. She said Para-pros had tough jobs and their influence was important. She said teachers could not do their jobs without them. She said Para-pros worked with students who were impaired, emotionally challenged and had health issues. She said that was not including at risk behaviors or those in wheelchairs that required diaper changes and feeding. She said they made less than \$12,000 per year and a lot of them were the main provider or sole provider for their households.

George Chandler – 2140 Ardella Drive, Pocatello, ID 83201

Mr. Chandler was not present and asked the Board to share a note with the group saying that Idaho was not fully funding education as the constitution required and a law suit could be an option.

Chris Dungey – 9530 W. Heather Road, Pocatello, ID 83204

Mr. Dungey apologized for not hearing his name being called earlier. He said he wanted to number one address that the Board had a hard task. He said he was sorry they had to do it. He said he knew it was coming from the state and hoped things would go as smoothly as possible. He said he wanted to give his support to teachers. He said without teachers there is no learning atmosphere and whatever the public could do to support them he wanted it addressed. He said he also would like to address extra-curricular activities, specifically tennis. He said he would address music if it was part of the activity but did not think it was on the chopping block. He said he would like to see support for all programs including those that did not generate any revenue. He said just because a program generated revenue did not make it a number one priority. He said there was documentation that reported students that participated in any extra-curricular activity did well. He said if there were cuts that he hoped they would be across the board. He acknowledged the Board had a hard task. He asked them to please consider thinking out of the box on how they could fund activities. He said they could look at corporate sponsors or private sponsors for scholarships. He said this was the first Board meeting he had ever been to, but was passionate about the subject.

Chair Donnelly concluded the Public Hearing at 8:57 p.m.