

February Coal Creek PTA Meeting

February 3, 2009

Call to Order: 6:35

Attendees: Maria Scroggs, Michele Scanlon, Fawnda Hathaway, Robin Nickles, Lisa Kihn, Daphne Biener, Lisa Hughes, David Evans, Mike Schantz, Darcy Barnhill, Mark Nelson, Kirsten Brynstaed, Rob Kelly, Tony Ferguson, John Kiemele, Michele Hibl, Sue Myers, Karen Turcotte, Peggy Mercyen, Jonathan Schnee, Christina Lighthiss.

Jan Minutes Approved

Updates:

- Volunteer (Fawnda)

Science Fair: Went well, most focus on kids that were there, fewer outside people as not in conjunction w/ Eve of Sharing this year. Seemed to work better this year.

Anniversary Tile Project: If you would like to help, please talk with Fawnda

Shade Structure: while not funded by PTA, Brook will work w/ others to write Grant so that this can be an ongoing project

Running Club will be in force in spring Alicia Miller would like help: speak to Fawnda

Traffic: Parents pls be aware, Hug N' Go – move along, no parking in front of school

Spring Fling: Bigger and Better this year – tie in to 25 anniv

Movie Night: April 17th

- Heidi:

April Meeting vote on Slate of Officers and Budget for next school year

Speaker: Briggs Gamblin, Director of Communications and Legislative Policy

- Prior to BVSD Community College System, Mayer Webb: Press Secretary and Legislative Council, Social Change Activist
- Colorado is in a bad place financially, facing significant cuts in this years existing budget, revenue collections not coming anywhere near modest projections
- State Fiscal year July1-June 30
- \$300 mill cut from this budget, some will be cut from k-12
- Joint Budget Committee: Col Legislature calls shots re: the budget
3 House/3 Senate/2 Majority Party each house/1 Minority
Vice Chair: From our District: Jack Palmer from Boulder
- Some Mis-Information re: Colorado Pre-School Program and Full Day K and funding SEE Handout from Briggs Gamblin

- Amendment 23: Guarantee Col k-12 Base Funding + Inflation every year AND for first 10 fiscal years after passage inflation + 1%. In real \$\$\$ will equal to funding for 1988 when adjusted for inflation. We are now in 8th year of inflation +1% - it is possible that we may see deflation for first time since Depression.
- Why aren't we protected? Currently @ \$6838 per student, Part that is base that is protected by Amendment 23 = \$5270, other factors: (Cost of Living, Size, Personnel, At Risk \$1600) not protected, Looking at serious roll backs in these factors.
- Why don't we just locally tax our way out of this? We can to a point. Of our \$6838, we can go up to 20% over that w/ over-ride approved by voters. Have to assign a "real" number to that. We had our last over-ride in 2005: Transportation over-ride, raised additional 7.3 mill, 2.5 mill of that went to 4 year computer replacement cycle. Remainder went to cover disparity between true cost of transportation and amount allowed for reimbursement from State.
- BVSD is the most generous School District in State of Co, most supportive in commitment of taxes for education. Poll: our voters (3/4 don't have anyone under 18 in their house) did not feel enough \$\$\$\$ was going to k-12 education and also said that they did not personally pay enough in taxes for education.
- Mathematically: can we locally tax our way out of this because we are more affluent and have a strong focus on education? Not really because Colorado Constitution requires a free and Universal public education. We must have some level of equalization of funding, can only go 20% over base.
- Legislative program is asking for ability to go 25% over – meeting strong resistance
- Law was changed to allow us to go to voters to "index" over-ride at % vs \$ amount. Risk: year like this when you have a decline, then you have to take a cut. Could produce \$6-\$8 mill more
- BVSD Annual Report: Copies in lobby of School: Using TIES process board developed 5 year goals, progress toward meeting outlines in Report, Kids Climate Report included
- Superintendent Budget Hearings In March: Budget for 09/10
W/ Tabor, can't raise taxes
We had a %% income tax which has been cut down to 4.6
- January Meeting: Balance 08/09 Budget
- Feb Meeting: Federal Stimulus – what do we get and what strings attached?
Some Funds for Title 1, Some for Special Ed, 09/10 Capital Construction \$\$\$. Are \$\$\$ to be added on to current allowance? Or may we re-direct \$\$ \$ to general fund? Relief may be limited. We are in the middle of a capital construction bond now, we could better use capital construction funds in general fund.
- Class Ratios: we are trying to maintain 1:23 overall, can not maintain that in each grade level because there is variability by age group
- Planning office is usually pretty good at projections but still have to deal w/ "bubbles"
- Look at mill levy over-ride, there may be need but is this the year to ask people to pay higher taxes?

Questions:

When district is making decisions re: staffing next year, will district try to allocate differently k-2, vs 3-5 w/ regards to ratios? Need to bring this question to Chris King

What can we as parents do with legislature to affect change? 3rd Monday of Every Month: Key Communicator/E-Newsletter distributed. briggs.gamblin@bvsd.org if you want to receive it. Update on Bills that are being tracked, rationale for bills supported and opposed. Go to budget hearing and express your concerns to Superintendent. No levy over-rides are passed when pushed by administration, if pushed by parents, more likely to have success. Most success when initiated during general election. St Vrain passed over-ride, We are more aligned w/ Cherry Creek: high achieving school district – don't jeopardize the current performance.

What Difference between mill levy vs bond? Mill Levy provides money to day to day admin of district. Bond: must be capital construction or admin that directly supports capital construction.

Do we know of parents in BVSD interested in doing this now? No, we can't just run poll to check interest as it costs \$30k. We can buy questions as part of larger poll, we did this and our polling numbers show: 40%, number 1 concern is funding for education, 3 years ago before bond, it was 48%. Feeling: Didn't we just vote a bunch of money for schools?

Is revenue spent in school 100% from property taxes? No, used to be predominantly property tax in Colorado. W/ passage of Tabor, state had to start back-filling as property taxes have not risen: State monies, Fed funds, commercial RE

What can parents do with legislature? Tabor perceived as voters right to approve increase in taxes, so talking about Tabor reform is seen as removal of voters right to vote down taxes. Plenty to do, depends upon which level works for each individual – can work on policy change at capitol

Comment:

Many amendments have passed: Tabor, Amendment 23, etc – that have alternative goals, negatively impact school funding. We are 49th in school funding

St Vrain: parents drove it, talked to people one on one. Broke down \$\$\$ by school to explain benefit

Alternative view w/ regards to funding: Independence Institute Website: believe that Colorado schools not under-funded, poorly administered and structurally inefficient. Many well meaning people have dramatically different views of how challenges should be addressed, diff values re: where believe \$\$\$ should be spent.

Cuts for this year or only 2009/2010? Potential 2.6 mill 2009/2010. W/O recision, no cuts for this year, but there is no way to avoid cuts for next year.

Property taxes flattened in this district (not decline), but city taxes on large items (cars, appliances) are expected to decrease, revenue will decrease.

Out of budget: % operations= 10%, only have ability to affect 20% of this amount with mill levy over-ride with current taxing regulations

State tax structure limits ability to affect change

BVSD average school sizes much smaller than in other districts, require higher admin budget as still need basic administrators at each school

Colorado has signs for hope, recovery should come to us sooner (housing market stable her as compared to other areas)

www.greateducationcolorado for additional resources/information

Heidi: Follow up meeting to this meeting to answer any school questions 2/27 immediately following coffee @ 8a in Finer Diner

We have to rethink (as a PTA) about funding, additional sources of dunwe expect short-falls in our budget.

Meeting Adjourned: 8:07p