

Port Angeles School District
Fiscal Advisory Committee 2004-05 Report 2
2005-06 Budget Recommendations
June 20, 2005

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Port Angeles School District Fiscal Advisory Committee concluded its work for 2004-05 on June 15, preparing a ranked list of recommended expenditures to be considered by the board of directors. This work follows its first report of the year, prior to the passage of the replacement Maintenance & Operations Levy on May 17, 2005. This is the first time in four years the committee is recommending restorations or initiatives to improve student learning, rather than budget expense reductions. A summary of the ranked recommendations is presented here, with explanatory notes and rationale provided beginning on page 4.

| Rank | Proposal Description |
|------|--|
| 1 | Support elementary collaborative time (½ hour early release, for primary and intermediate grades. |
| 1 | Restore “field trip” money to building budgets. |
| 1 | Restore 1.75 FTE custodial support. |
| 4 | Restore 1.0 FTE secretarial position at Port Angeles High School. |
| 5 | Add .5 FTE elementary physical education teacher position. |
| 6 | Increase AmeriCorps workers. |
| 7 | Restore 1.0 FTE secretarial position at Central Services. |
| 8 | Add two days time for para-educator professional development. |
| 9 | Add 1.0 FTE counselor at Port Angeles High School. |
| 9 | Add ½ hour per week to elementary teachers’ time with a supplemental contract, for elementary collaborative time. |
| 11 | Replace two of the “non-instructional” days (parent conference days) with student instructional days, only at Port Angeles High School . |
| 12 | Restore 9th grade “pod” teachers’ joint-planning time |
| 13 | Restore 6th grade “Outdoor Education” program. |
| 14 | Restore JV middle school sports. |
| 15 | Restore 1 FTE grants and communication support position |
| 16 | Add 1.0 FTE, district-wide, technology support person |
| 17 | Add 1.0 FTE district-wide, groundskeeping position. |
| 18 | Add \$25,000 (to current \$50,000/year) for upgrading vocational equipment. |
| 19 | Restore two student instructional days at all grade levels |
| 19 | Add two more days of teacher professional development time |
| 21 | Add \$25,000 (to current \$50,000/year) to “special music”. |
| 21 | Restore “discretionary building budget”. |
| 21 | Eliminate “pay to participate”. |
| 21 | Add 1.0 FTE elementary physical education teacher position. |
| 21 | Support elementary collaborative time (without ANY decrease in instructional time). |

BACKGROUND

In the summer of 2002, it became clear that the financial stability of the Port Angeles School District would continue to be significantly affected by a number of issues. Foremost among these issues were a continuing decline in student enrollment since the 1997-98 school year, and reductions in state funding made by the legislature responding to a declining state economy.

The Port Angeles School Board recognized that difficult decisions would need to be made to ensure that the district would maintain an appropriate fiscal balance for the 2003-04 school year and beyond. Community input was considered essential by the board before arriving at decisions to cut highly desirable programs, student services, and support operations.

To facilitate difficult decision-making, the board established a Fiscal Advisory Committee. Its membership includes a wide array of staff and community representation. Membership was renewed during 2003-04, and again in 2004-05. Members appointed by the board of directors for 2004-05 include board members Charlie McClain and Cindy Kelly; school administrators Michelle Olsen, Kate Wenzl, and Scott Harker; union leaders Barry Burnett and Diana Tschimperle; certificated staff member Gary McLaughlin; students Britney Goodwin and Jeff Haguewood; community members Lane Richards, Michele Haworth, Robert Worthy, and Sarah Methner; and Superintendent Gary Cohn. Jim Jones chaired the committee as a non-voting member, and Nolan Duce participated in meetings as a non-voting member.

The Fiscal Advisory Committee produced two major expense reduction recommendations for the 2002-03 and 2003-04 school years (see *Fiscal Advisory Committee 2004-05 Report 1, March 14, 2005*, Appendices E and F). The district's facilities efficiency task force recommended a variety of school closure options for 2004-05, and the board of directors eventually decided to close Monroe Elementary School to balance the 2004-05 budget.

The superintendent reconvened the fiscal advisory committee, and renewed the committee's charge to analyze the district's financial position, assess the additional uncertainty of state funding, and make recommendations to the school board. The committee's focus after the levy passage was recommending programs, activities, and operations to be restored or implemented based on the reports of task forces and committees and input from school and district leadership. The committee was charged to accomplish its work with careful consideration of reasonable options, to use a consensus process, and agreed to maintain a commitment to confidentiality to promote full and free discussions during its deliberations.

The Fiscal Advisory Committee held the first of its meetings on February 23, 2005. Port Angeles School District Director Charlie McClain and Dr. Gary Cohn, district superintendent, in their initial remarks to the committee, reminded members that committee recommendations would be *advisory* in nature, and should be presented as a *priority set* of potential actions that could be considered by district leadership and the board of directors for possible implementation. The committee was reminded by Director Cindy Kelly and Dr. Cohn that the board is *not obligated* to accept in whole or in part the committee recommendations, although the history has been that the board has accepted the vast majority of committee recommendations.

PARAMETERS

It was acknowledged that there were forces beyond the control of the committee which had to be taken into consideration in making its recommendations for balancing budgets. To provide context for these recommendations, the committee reviewed the work from the 2002-03 Budget Development Committee (see *Fiscal Advisory Committee 2004-05 Report 1, March 14, 2005*, Appendix E for 2002-03 recommendations adopted by the board), as well as the set of parameters adopted by the prior committees to shape its recommendations:

1. The processes used to balance the budget will involve community and staff representation and encourage open thinking.
2. The General Fund budget for 2005-06 and beyond will be balanced. An adequate ending fund balance, in line with Board Policy 7411, will be maintained.
3. The budget will provide for compliance with applicable state and federal laws.
4. The budget will meet state and federal audit requirements.
5. The budget will be responsive to Port Angeles School District policy and procedures, together with the Strategic Plan and Board Value and Belief statements.
6. The budget will respect current collective bargaining agreements.

For this report, the committee was charged with developing recommendations for an “A” budget after passage of the replacement Maintenance & Operations Levy in May. Judgments were made within the frameworks of several financial parameters as well. Expense cuts anticipated (1) for the “A” budget an increase in levy revenue due to a 10¢ estimated rate increase and a tax base adjustment; (2) formula-driven reductions in certificated staff resulting from a 13-year trend of enrollment decline, and (3) expected state funding reductions and unfunded cost increases coupled with bargaining in spring and summer that could increase district-wide employee-related expenses.

These parameters helped to place all of the work into a context that acknowledged there were long-term considerations, study, and actions which would have to be taken in order to accomplish some of the proposed recommendations. The recommendations of the committee did not take into consideration the impact of bargaining with employee groups; four contracts are open for negotiation this summer.

PROCESS

The committee discussed each of the proposals, making modifications where needed to prevent duplications and to avoid unintended consequences where they could be anticipated. Members voted on each suggestion during their deliberations, adjusting priorities each time based upon new information or extended discussion. Items were designated as “High Priority”, “Medium Priority”, and “Low Priority” for comparative purposes. On June 15, the committee produced a set of final set of recommendations.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS & RATIONALE

The committee has used the District’s Strategic Plan and Board Value and Belief Statements, as well as Maintenance & Operations Levy publications as guides for decisions. Another touchstone for the committee’s deliberations was expenditures occurring close to the classroom and having a positive affect on students’ learning. The list of recommendations included below is *sorted by priority*. The committee understands that there will be educational, political, as well as economic impacts and consequences for every recommendation. (The reason rank numbers are repeated is the number of “ties” in vote tallies.)

| Rank | Proposal Description and Rationale | Item Cost | High Priority Votes | Medium Priority Votes | Low Priority Votes | Cumulative Cost |
|------|--|-----------|---------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| 1 | Support elementary collaborative time (½ hour early release, for primary and intermediate grades. <i>Widely supported with the assurance that each of the elementary schools would still be able to average at least 1,000 hours of instructional time per year, and that the use of this time would follow the Collaborative Time Task Force recommendations.</i> | \$0 | 10 | 1 | 0 | |
| 1 | Restore “field trip” money to building budgets. <i>Support for this item hinged around the concept that each building would be able to use this money as they saw fit, not being locked into using it only for field trips.</i> | \$60,998 | 10 | 1 | 0 | \$60,998 |
| 1 | Restore 1.75 FTE custodial support. <i>Discussion centered upon declining condition of the school buildings due to lack of time for custodians to take care of “deep cleaning” and “light maintenance”. The proposal included adding 8 hours per day at Port Angeles High School, 2 hours each at Roosevelt, Stevens and Dry Creek).</i> | \$68,000 | 10 | 1 | 0 | \$128,998 |
| 4 | Restore 1.0 FTE secretarial position at Port Angeles High School. <i>Support for this item was due to the belief that the additional work required by the new student records system, together with previous cuts that were too deep, made it impossible to get all the work done at Port Angeles High School.</i> | \$38,300 | 9 | 1 | 1 | \$167,298 |
| 5 | Add .5 FTE elementary physical education teacher position. <i>It was believed that this position was necessary in order to help meet the Nutrition & Fitness Task Force recommendation for more fitness instruction time.</i> | \$33,500 | 8 | 1 | 0 | \$200,798 |

| Rank | Proposal Description and Rationale | Item Cost | High Priority Votes | Medium Priority Votes | Low Priority Votes | Cumulative Cost |
|------|---|-----------|---------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| 6 | Increase AmeriCorps workers. <i>This increase (from 8 to 14) could assure two more adult workers at each elementary and middle school, but it was reported that there were not enough matching funds, nor people in the program to allow us this large of an increase.</i> | \$21,600 | 7 | 4 | 0 | \$222,398 |
| 7 | Restore 1.0 FTE secretarial position at Central Services. <i>Support for this item was in recognition that previous cuts were too deep, and that it was needed to meet the additional workload for managing the new Core Student Records System required by OSPI and No Child Left Behind, as well as the upcoming conversion to the SKYWARD® Human Resources and Fiscal Accounting systems.</i> | \$38,300 | 7 | 1 | 2 | \$260,698 |
| 8 | Add two days time for para-educator professional development. <i>There was general recognition that more training time would be valuable for every work group, but that para-educators, in particular, could make good use some of the information given to teachers about brain research and childhood development theories.</i> | \$20,000 | 5 | 4 | 1 | \$280,698 |
| 9 | Add 1.0 FTE counselor at Port Angeles High School. <i>Discussion centered on the very high caseload for each counselor at the Port Angeles High School, and what some of the negative impacts were for students. On the other hand, it was pointed out that the expansion of the “Advisory” program at the high school was supposed to help with these issues for next year.</i> | \$67,000 | 4 | 5 | 2 | \$347,698 |
| 9 | Add ½ hour per week to elementary teachers’ time with a supplemental contract, for elementary collaborative time. <i>The idea was to pay teachers to work a longer day, once a week, outside of the normal instructional day, in order accomplish the desired amount of time for collaboration without affecting the amount of student instructional time available.</i> | \$82,125 | 4 | 5 | 2 | \$429,823 |

| Rank | Proposal Description and Rationale | Item Cost | High Priority Votes | Medium Priority Votes | Low Priority Votes | Cumulative Cost |
|------|--|-----------|---------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| 11 | <p>Replace two of the “non-instructional” days (parent conference days) with student instructional days, only at Port Angeles High School. <i>Lots of discussion about the benefits of additional instructional time vs. the value of a formal parent conference at the high school. Several suggestions were made as to how parent conferences could take place during other times (like “WAC time”). The committee was highly polarized over this issue.</i></p> | \$8,680 | 4 | 0 | 6 | \$438,503 |
| 12 | <p>Restore 9th grade “pod” teachers’ joint planning time. <i>While discussing through the filter of “does it improve student learning” committee members heard that many “pod” teachers would rather not lose one of their other teaching periods in favor of joint planning time, but would rather be paid to not take their personal planning period in order to meet regularly with their fellow “pod” instructors. Some suggestions were offered, e.g., to only meet two to three times per week instead of every day, or to increase class size to the point that the extra “pod” planning didn’t require additional staffing costs (Roosevelt model).</i></p> | \$120,000 | 3 | 5 | 3 | \$558,503 |
| 13 | <p>Restore 6th grade “Outdoor Education”. <i>Committee members spoke highly of the program and thought that maybe it could be paid for with student fundraising support, but it was thought by most to be a luxury that would be tough to afford otherwise.</i></p> | \$40,000 | 2 | 2 | 7 | \$598,503 |
| 14 | <p>Restore Junior Varsity middle school sports. <i>The idea of returning to the previous “no-cut” levels of participation was discussed, but deemed not currently affordable.</i></p> | \$35,000 | 1 | 5 | 5 | \$633,503 |
| 15 | <p>Restore 1.0 FTE grants and communication support position. <i>This recommendation from the Communications Task Force was not believed to directly improve student learning, and so didn’t get much support.</i></p> | \$17,400 | 1 | 1 | 7 | \$650,903 |

| Rank | Proposal Description and Rationale | Item Cost | High Priority Votes | Medium Priority Votes | Low Priority Votes | Cumulative Cost |
|------|--|-----------|---------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| 16 | Add 1.0 FTE district-wide, technology support person. <i>Again, despite the obvious need for additional technical support due to significant increases in the numbers of computer labs, solo desk-top stations and software releases which were implemented over the past three years, committee members didn't think this item directly improved student learning.</i> | \$51,300 | 0 | 7 | 4 | \$702,203 |
| 17 | Add 1.0 FTE district-wide, groundskeeping position. <i>The committee heard about the increased workload as a result of new grounds being added (Lincoln Center) and quality upgrades in landscaping throughout the district, but felt that there might be better ways to address this item.</i> | \$46,800 | 0 | 6 | 5 | \$749,003 |
| 18 | Add \$25,000 (to current \$50,000 per year) for upgrading vocational equipment. <i>The committee discussed the reasons for the increased level of funding (to help meet industry-standard levels in all programs) but didn't feel this was as high a priority as some other items.</i> | \$25,000 | 0 | 2 | 9 | \$774,003 |
| 19 | Restore two student instructional days at all grade levels. <i>The committee looked at all of the non-instructional days embedded in next year's calendar and heard compelling rationale as to why each day was important to improved student learning, and decided that it just couldn't be done.</i> | \$26,000 | 0 | 0 | 10 | \$800,003 |
| 19 | Add two more days of teacher professional development time. <i>The committee felt that the overall cost for this item, outweighed its value for improving student teaching and learning.</i> | \$181,400 | 0 | 0 | 10 | \$981,403 |
| 21 | Add \$25,000 (to current \$50,000 per year) to "special music". <i>The committee discussed the reasons for the increased level of funding (for upgrading, repairing and tuning musical instruments throughout the district) but didn't feel that this was as high a priority as some other items.</i> | \$25,000 | 0 | 0 | 11 | \$1,006,403 |
| 21 | Restore "discretionary building budget". <i>Restoring these cuts (5%) made in the 2002-03 school year and each year since were deemed unnecessary after the committee voted to recommend the larger amount above.</i> | \$37,210 | 0 | 0 | 11 | \$1,043,613 |

| Rank | Proposal Description and Rationale | Item Cost | High Priority Votes | Medium Priority Votes | Low Priority Votes | Cumulative Cost |
|------|---|-----------|---------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| 21 | Eliminate “Pay to Participate”. <i>The committee felt that there was no good reason to stop charging these fees for all extra-curricular activities, at all grade levels, especially since they were told that no child was turned away for lack of ability to pay.</i> | \$44,000 | 0 | 0 | 11 | \$1,087,613 |
| 21 | Add 1.0 FTE elementary physical education teacher position. <i>The committee felt that the ½ time position was all that could be recommended for next year in order to help meet the Nutrition & Fitness Task Force recommendation for more fitness instruction time, but that maybe it could be added to in the next year.</i> | \$67,000 | 0 | 0 | 11 | \$1,154,613 |
| 21 | Support elementary collaborative time (without ANY decrease in instructional time). <i>There was no support for adding new afternoon bus routes, home from school and buying 6 new buses, in order to ensure that the running of collaborative time did not result in the loss of ANY student instructional time, at any grade, in any school. This option was just too expensive.</i> | \$590,000 | 0 | 0 | 11 | \$1,744,613 |

Questions about budget items may be sent to the Port Angeles School District at budget_questions@pasd.wednet.edu. Budget suggestions may be sent to budget_ideas@pasd.wednet.edu. Answers will be returned as soon as possible.