Special MDUSD School Board Meeting
Budget Reductions
March 9, 2020

If you would like to address the Board, please fill out a yellow comment card. If you are speaking on budget reductions, list item 19.8. For other items, list Public Comment 19.8.

Suggested Talking Points:

1. Keep the cuts away from the classroom.
2. Most certificated and classified positions directly impact students and services to students and should be retained.
3. Alternative areas in which to reduce expenses:
   a. District management
   b. Central Office Department Budgets
   c. Consultants
   d. Contracts for outside services
   e. Contracts for professional development (including AVID)
   f. Travel to conferences and external professional development
   g. Conference attendance
   h. The District’s “Capital Outlay” budget.
   i. AVID contract ($200,000)
   j. Further reduce site budgets to recognize less need for substitutes and paper if iReady and AVID are eliminated, or to shift reductions from other more direct services to students.
4. Management should give the Board more options (including the alternatives listed above). Providing a list of $14.7 M in possible reductions with a goal of $14.5 M gives the Board very little discretion. This approach appears to protect management jobs and manager’s pet projects.
5. Staffing for class size of 33:1 in Fourth and Fifth Grade will be very bad for students (include specific examples). Such a staffing plan would also leave very little room for students who register late.
6. Reducing the number of middle and high school teachers makes no sense in light of the fact that some classes are still over enrolled. Eliminating 20 Secondary positions virtually guarantees that there will be chaos in August and overages for the entire year again.
7. Replacing librarians with Instruction Media Techs would result in a significant loss of services to students for very little cost savings. We need more librarians, not fewer.
8. Eliminating instrumental music would be a serious loss of services to students.
9. Teachers on Special Assignment provide valuable support and curriculum to teachers and should not be eliminated.
10. Elementary PE teachers provide valuable PE instruction to students and should not be eliminated, especially as they provide contractually required prep time. Eliminating these positions without communicating an alternative plan would be a declaration by management that they intend to violate the contract. In addition to physical injuries and the loss of trust and legal fees associated with this action, at the very least Fourth and Fifth grade teachers would receive the payment for losing their prep with an associated annual cost of $306,000.
11. ELD Support teachers are a critical support system for English learners and their families. As we need to improve support for these students, resources should not be reduced.
12. Our students need more Counseling support, not less.
13. Our classified staff already have more than enough work to do and are struggling financially due to insufficient hours. These positions and hours should be maintained.
Questions To Which We Have Answers:

1. If they eliminate 35 elementary classes, class size averages will be more than 24 to 1. Is that legal?
   A: We have learned that EdCode allows the District to receive Class Size Reduction funds even if they do not meet the 24:1 average because we have an “alternatively bargained agreement.” This began in 2016 when we agreed to a contract that reinstated District Health Benefits and left the classes sizes as they had been historically. We were not aware at the time that we were giving up a right based in the new law. Most teachers’ unions in the state have agreed to new contracts in the last seven years that do not include the 24:1 for the simple reason that most Districts will not agree to a 24:1 limit even if the teachers go on strike. The program is really a sham: most Districts are getting the funding and most are staffed at more than 24:1. The staffing plan on which in the management recommendation for budget cuts is based sets a target of 26:1 as a site average for TK – 3.

2. Why is the PKS for 145 jobs if the reductions list is 106 and we know there have been retirements and resignations?
   A: The Board may make changes to the recommended reductions which would lead to more of one of position being eliminated and less of another. The PKS list is more broad to get necessary approval. We expect the Board to amend the PKS list after the budget reductions are finalized and before the PKS list is approved. We have confirmed that the PKS list has already taken into account retirements and resignations.

Questions To Which We Do Not Have Answers (Partial List):

1. If they eliminate Elementary PE, who will provide the prep coverage?
2. If they eliminate ELD Support Teachers, who will do this important work?
3. If they eliminate 7 Elementary Counselors, which sites will not have counselors (the contract limits assignments to 3 elementary sites per counselor)?
4. What is the nature of $2.7 M (referenced on page 15 of the PowerPoint) in reductions to departmental budgets? How much of this reduction was in departments at Dent and Willow Creek and how much was at sites?
5. What is the total amount paid to support the International Baccalaureate program by site?