

District Advisory Council Talking Points

January 30, 2014

MISD Board Room

Reminder to vote in Feb. 11, 2014 election

Ballots for the Feb. 11 special election must be postmarked by Feb. 11. Typically only 25 percent of the demographic group which includes parents, or voters equal to or under the age of 55, votes in special elections. Levy passage requires 50 percent of those voting plus one voter, or anything more than 50 percent. Bond passage requires 60 percent of voters to approve the bond, as well as a turnout of at least 3,852 voters.

Bond and levy discussion

Levy – Renewal of the Maintenance and Operations Levy would add roughly six percent of cost to the existing portion of property taxes for Mercer Island residents. For budgeting purposes, the state will not allow the district to collect funds beyond a specific number based on several factors including state funding. That means the actual local levy collection could be less than what is proposed in the levy. The district typically asks the community for more than it may be able to collect to collect the maximum local tax allowed by law.

During the 2013-13 academic year, actual revenues per student were about \$10,125. The revenue source breakdown from last year was as follows: federal, \$340; state, \$5,729; local, \$3,981; grants, \$75.

Nearly 100 teachers and staff are funded through maintenance and operations levy funds. It would be difficult to imagine district operations without this level of funding. While maintenance is often thought of as building maintenance, this levy is really about the maintenance of educational programs and staff.

Bond – The total bond package is worth \$102.6 million, though \$3.8 million would come through matching funds from the state of Washington.

The bond includes:

- [building a fourth elementary school](#) on the district-owner North Mercer campus,
- [expanding Islander Middle School](#), including 14 classrooms and lab spaces, commons and cafeteria, gymnasiums, music rooms and administrative space, and
- building 10 [additional classrooms at Mercer Island High School](#), including four lab spaces and six general education classrooms.

The proposed 4th elementary school could accommodate up to 550 students. As a result of the student capacity as well as the location, it would result in fewer and shorter bus runs, which could amount to \$100,000 in transportation savings. For the high-impact, low-incidence program there would be a program at Island Park and at the new elementary, further reducing transportation complications.

In consideration of the student population the high school was remodeled in the 1990s, but was remodeled for the same number of students as had been there 20 years prior. Current elementary student cohorts will be going to the middle school and high school, which will make them beyond current design capacity.

2014 budget

Gary asked DAC members to review the per-pupil funding from [Funding Comparison Chart 1](#) and note the COLAs eliminated by the state legislature. After the legislature put \$1 billion into basic education, the state still spends \$44.75 less per pupil than in the 2008-09 school year. Legislators were lobbied by School Board during a recent special board meeting on Jan. 6, 2014, but legislators said there was likely no more money for schools this year.

More information regarding funding during the 2012-13 school year is in the [annual report](#). Something to note is that much of the funding is on the back of the local community. If funds from 2008-09 had been maintained, we would currently have \$216 more per student than we do now.

There have been budget cuts each year while Dr. Plano has been Superintendent and no COLAs. Bridge-the-gap funding and the breakfast on April 29 will be critical to district funding.

1080 instructional hours

[Legislation from the state of Washington](#) requires 24 credits for students to graduate from high school for the class of 2016. 21 credits are currently required. Most of our students already take more than 21 credits. However, the distribution of those credits may not be in line with legislation. This could require a shift in programming over the next few years.

The biggest challenge for MISD is hitting the 1080 hour requirement, requiring grades 7-12 to be at 1080 hours. At the middle school that means MISD is short by 25 minutes per day.

Tara Stone says she, Mary Jo and Aaron are working on adding those 25 minutes per day. They are weighing several options and impacts, including cost, to find the least disruptive option. Those options include starting earlier or later, which impacts bus schedules.

Gary would like to revisit bell times one time while he is with the MISD. He is looking at several questions, such as what we would want if the bond passes, what other configurations would look like, and what research says about sleep patterns for children at different ages? He then asked how DAC members think parents will react to an elementary start time of 8:30 a.m. He pointed this is simply an idea and wanted to get a 'finger in the wind' reaction.

DAC Issues – *Different learners*

Jennifer says we spent a year with outside researchers to better work with different learners and identify if their needs are being met. The first phase of implementation has included: (1) universal screening of students to make sure we're catching all of the students who need additional assistance; (2) early literacy K-2 program needed a review; and (3) targeted professional development that could move us forward. The next update will be in March.

Future meetings of the DAC

Thursday, March 20
9:00 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.

Friday, May 30
12:00 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.