

Notes from April 24, 2018 Meeting
of the
Washington Elementary School District
2018 M&O Override Task Force

Members Present:

Jordan Blair	Angela Budovsky	Jessica Buttles
Tim Cullison	Enoch Davis	Michael Durnavich
Alyssa Glauber	Wesley Harris	Sonja Hernandez
Deb Lupnacca	Laura Mintert	Kim Nalette
Katie Piehl	Summer Schaudt	Joe Alessi

Facilitator: Cathy Thompson

Welcome and Introductions

- Reviewed the purpose of the task force
- Reviewed norms and decision-making method

Issue:

Should a recommendation be made to the WESD Governing Board to call for a bond election to take place in November 2018?

Decision-Making Process

- **Additional Story** – detailed explanation of the current programs supported by the override.
 - Team members shared facts, status and data related to each of the program areas
 - WESD provides physical, visual art and music education for all of our students
 - Research demonstrates that these programs engage students in learning, boosts literacy and English language skills as well as improves test scores in many areas
 - Override helps support enhanced programs
 - If override election isn't called or doesn't pass - WESD will still provide academic programs to meet standards, but options may be limited or reduced

- Special Programs – academic and behavioral intervention
 - Goal is for all students to receive high quality interventions from struggling to advanced
 - Qualified specialists to assist students
 - Each school has a designated intervention block built into the schedule
 - Ongoing opportunities for teacher professional development in providing intervention for students
 - Academic intervention is focused, systematic and explicit – teachers use data for reading and math to group students
 - Students move in and out of interventions based on how well they learn the targeted skills
 - Reading data is flat – need to expand intervention strategies
 - Will add more interventions at middle school level
 - Oasis volunteers are used in classrooms to help students with reading skills
 - Some schools use the “walk to read” – teachers collaborate for small group instruction
 - WESD is committed to meeting the social and emotional needs of our students in order to improve academic outcomes
 - There have been increases in behavioral issues for younger students – specifically kindergarten
 - The behavioral intervention program is being revised for next school year to include Behavior Support Advocates at all schools to work with students on behavior interventions
 - Program will include consistent districtwide training for staff

- Special Programs – Cardinals Academy
 - Supports 6-8 grade students at Royal Palm Middle School
 - Addresses needs of students and families
 - Cardinal Charities provide some support of the program
 - Focused on high school/college readiness
 - Smaller classroom settings

- Special Programs – Gifted
 - State funding for Gifted stopped in FY2012 – was very minimal
 - Currently about 1600 students receive gifted services – about 7.8% of WESD student population
 - Trying to get more students identified from all demographics
 - Currently in a multi-year plan to include students that don’t meet the 97th percentile and enrich their academic programs
 - Will have more advanced Math
 - Would like to add a gifted component to existing after school clubs or programs

- WESD added 1.5 FTE for FY19 to expand the program
- Changes in delivery model will decrease transportation costs – more programs at individual schools rather than self-contained

- Academic Programs – Art
 - Has standards that must be met with assessments
 - All students receive Art instruction
 - Override assists with enriching the experience
 - Program inspires critical thinking and creativity
 - Focusing on STEM, but adding Art for design skills
 - Program includes expanded projects for graphic design

- Academic Programs – Music
 - Has standards that must be met with assessments
 - Override assists with enriching the experience
 - Teaches students self-discipline
 - Scheduling hard with some instructional music – changes have been made for next year to address this
 - Trying to expose more students to different aspects of music to prepare for high school activities
 - All students have access to music instruction
 - Instrumental music to be offered to grades 4-8
 - Next year program changes have goal of consistency districtwide
 - No real funds for new instruments and repair is limited

- Academic Programs – Physical Education
 - Has standards that must be met with assessments
 - Program focuses on whole child – wellness, nutrition, fitness, physical literacy
 - All students receive Physical Education instruction
 - Monitor data to help students improve and make healthy choices

- Full-Day Kindergarten
 - The Group B weight intended to fund full-day kindergarten was established in fiscal year 2007 and was continued through fiscal year 2010
 - In fiscal year 2011 this weight was eliminated – over \$5 million lost
 - State of Arizona only funds one half of the day for kindergarten students
 - WESD gave priority to keeping kindergarten full day and began to fund the second half of the day from override funding
 - Should be part of regular curriculum and funded – not override
 - Must meet 142 academic standards for Kinder, 81 more for English Language Learners – builds academic skills

- Students receive 5-7 hours each week of Math, Reading and Writing instruction
 - Average kindergarten student enters school at about 22 months below grade level
 - Students need readiness and social emotional skills before they can learn – full day instruction allows time for this
 - Students in a full-day kindergarten program increase skills about 3 times as much as those in a partial day program
 - WESD has the opportunity to retain students if they start with us in kindergarten – parents like the full-day program
 - Fluency scores for WESD Kindergarten improved over 40% from the beginning of the year to January 2018 in a portion of Dibels assessments
- **Interests** - Task Force members identified interests to evaluate options against when determining what recommendation to make.
- Keep all current programs at effective levels
 - Supporting the District's vision
 - Continue to provide enrichment
 - Continue to support/educate the whole child
 - Determine what would be the effects if it the Governing Board calls the election and it doesn't pass
- **Criteria** - Task Force members identified criteria to use when determining the recommendation to forward to the Governing Board.
- How does it impact the child, taxpayer, WESD?
 - Does this keep us competitive with other districts?
 - How many students would be impacted if override doesn't pass or election isn't called?

Next Meeting

- Task force members will
- develop options;
 - evaluate options against identified interests and criteria;
 - discuss development and presentation of a recommendation to the WESD Governing Board;
 - discuss next steps based on the Governing Board's response to the task force recommendation