

**Employee's Budget Advisory Committee
Recommendations to the Des Moines School Board
March 4, 2013**

The mission of the Employee's Budget Advisory Committee is "to provide the Superintendent with suggested long and short term budget parameters, priorities and constraints, and to assist the Superintendent in communicating this information to the Board and the DMPS community."

The goals of the group were to:

- Provide a communication link between the district and the community on budget issues
- Examine and identify priorities relative to the FY 2014 budget:
 - Revenue enhancements
 - Expenditure reductions
 - Educational programming
- Provide suggestions on future budgetary issues

Our task this year provides the group an opportunity to focus on ways to enhance, expand and/or improve upon and sustain existing programs, staff, etc. due to an improved economy and projected surplus. Our team reviewed last year's ideas, discussed current issues and projected trends for the future to assist us in making our final points of emphasis. The EBAC team would like to recommend the following:

Develop a comprehensive health and wellness program for all staff

We recommend that DMPS develops a health and wellness program for all staff. Our recommendation would be to hire a **highly qualified wellness coordinator** who can work with staff and administration to fully develop a wellness program. One of the main outcomes of the program will be to lower health care costs. This will happen through educational programs, wellness programs, etc. initiated via the wellness coordinator. The lower costs will result in a happier, healthier and more productive staff. Staff will model healthy behavior for students and a happier employee makes for happier customers, our students, parents and the community. This cost savings can then be used to hire more staff when and where needed.

According to a press release from The Chicago Public Schools, February 21, 2012:

"Wellness programs implemented across the country have not only led to healthier employees, but have also found significant financial savings. The American Journal of Health Promotion reviewed published studies of dozens of workplace wellness programs and concluded that on average, every \$1 investment in wellness resulted in \$3.50 in savings from lower health care costs and lower absenteeism. A second study by the same group found average reductions of 27 percent in absenteeism from illness, 26 percent in health care costs and 32 percent in workers compensation and disability claims."

If we design and implement an effective and innovative program, it typically takes anywhere from 3 to 5 years to realize a return on a comprehensive wellness plan, based on industry averages that reflects cost savings and results. Such a plan would have a positive and dramatic impact on our schools, students and community.

Analyze and enhance current infrastructures within Purchasing/Central Stores and Technology

Our second recommendation is review the current processes and systems used with in the Purchasing/Central Stores department and technology within all of DMPS. We feel that if these systems were updated it would result in cost savings, increased efficiency, higher student achievement, as well as providing another avenue to make DMPS a “greener” community.

For instance, our current online catalogs have assisted in streamlining the ordering process for all staff that purchase items for their departments and/or classrooms, but improvements and enhancements can still be made to these areas that will provide even more time and cost savings.

The technology department has over 17,000 computers, laptops and iPads in our schools, along with printers and other devices that must be maintained and managed. According to the district website “The Technology Department strives to better prepare our students and staff to be 21st century learners by providing a reliable and responsive network with enhanced technology and improved efficiency.” Unfortunately due to such a rapid increase in products, changes in technology, DMPS has not been able to keep up with these technological advances. The classroom teacher has many of the products and tools needed to prepare our students for the 21st century but the district currently cannot provide the means to do so in an effective manner. With increased improvements in this area we will be able to provide our students with such educational and career focused opportunities to better prepare them for the world in front of them.

These recommendations are presented to you by the following members of the Employee Budget Advisory Committee 2013:

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