

PLCS Budget Autonomy Meeting
February 1, 2010

Overview of PLCS **Christy Scadden**

See website for more information
Introductions

Budget **Matt Spathas**

Changing times means changing the way we do things.
Meeting with CFO of the district today.
700 million to all of the clusters and 36 million is PLCS
Can we synergize resources in our cluster?
Can we take our district overhead allocation (about 5%/25 million)

Governance Models

- Charter-school by school
- Cluster wide charter
- Create School District
- **Cluster Governance**
Incremental
Structural

Thoughts, Ideas, Comments:

C: Much of the money that you see per school is not able to be used.

C: Staff is most of the money and that is not flexible.

C: Discretionary dollars at school sites are not very big

Q: Utilities? How much of the 25 million is money we can work with?

A: We still don't have the exact numbers.

C: 80% of money in district goes to salaries (according to the district).

C: If as a cluster we had control over our budget we could share services/professional development etc.

Q: My school (Dewey) has what we need. How does this benefit us?

A: Do we have what we need? I think we are here because we don't have what we need.

Maybe we can combine resources to get more of what we need.

Q: Would we still go through our SSC if we need something?

A: We don't know what the structure would look like. Maybe the budget would be a small part of the synergy and that the governance piece might be bigger? That is the discussion.

Q: We are the 2nd largest district in Ca. I've often thought we should be smaller. Has anyone ever broken off from the district before?

A: I don't think so.

C: I think we should look at the strategic plan as guidance to see what we can work at.

C: The "we" that we speak to is the entire school community (not the foundation only).

C: At the GATE meeting many of the attendees were interested in using the foundation as a platform to possibly fundraise for all of the schools GATE (or other) programs.

C: Having some autonomy means we don't have to get approval from a higher level to do things. We will have a smaller group to get things approved by.

Q: Arts are important to our community. What would happen if they cut the arts at the district level again?

A: We can make sure that our cluster protects what it deems important.

C: We may be able to synergize with the I21 implementation in schools. We should be able to do real time diagnostics on students. We can accelerate things that could lag. We could be leading edge.

C: Could we use staff in different ways to cut money and give a better job and better serve students?

Q: Is it possible to get the number for discretionary funds for each school?

A: Yes, but the word "discretionary" is misleading because much of the money is allocated to something very important.

C: Dewey's principal believes our strategic plan does not fit her student population. She doesn't know how to sell this to her teachers.

C: I don't think we are selling anything. We are just discussing.

C: Is it funds that are disbursed evenly?

Q: What is the staff scared of?

A: Losing their benefits, jobs, retirement.

C: This is not a charter conversation right now. This is a cluster governance conversation. There is no charter conversation. This could be really exciting for teachers.

C: There is a FAQ under the cluster governance tab of the website.

C: It is interesting that Dewey doesn't have any art emphasis.

C: I didn't say we don't care. I said we don't care about it. We don't spend money on it. Our VAPA program is awful. You can have that money.

C: At the high school we get money for a test that we don't think works. It would be great to get a choice about how we use this money. This is an example of possible governance control.

C: Many of us feel frustrated because we feel like we are working in a broken system. If you don't feel like that then let's hear it. If everything is fine then let's hear it. If we are happy then why are we doing this?

C: We have to look to other ideas. We have to have this conversation. This is brilliant. If we can't look at things this way then what are we doing in education.

C: Patty Ladd: I am not here as a "charter" person. Because I worked in an environment where we had a choice of how money can be spent I know how great it can be. It is so wonderful I don't think we can even get our heads around how good it can be. If we scale down and we work together we can actually find ourselves with more discretionary money.

C: Linda Zinta: The next tasks are getting the word out to the stakeholders including teachers.

C: Going from school to school to get the information out there. People need the face to face.

C: Mitzy: Coming together around Professional learning would be amazing. We are talking about the money tonight but that is a good conversation.

C: That is the end game. That is in the strategic plan.

Q: How can we reach staff and still be sensitive to their time.

A: Staff meeting, website, eblast

What we do next:

Get the discretionary funding numbers for each school.

What would cluster governance really look like?

Get the real district numbers.

Get our staff/parents informed.