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***“No good solutions” as Board continues budget conversations
News from state gets worse; few choices are left***

During its January 21, 2010 workshop, the LPS Board of Education continued its discussion regarding the recommended budget cuts for 2010-2011. The recommendations call for \$7.5 million in cuts for next year, and the latest information from the state is that those cuts could actually be around \$9 million instead, due to the national and state economic crisis.

During the workshop, the Board examined in greater detail the recommendations regarding:

- Furlough days for all district employees
- Loss of district funding for International Baccalaureate (IB) programs at Field Elementary and Newton Middle School
- Reductions in weighted staffing

The Board also received additional information in the following areas, which it had requested for the workshop:

- Athletic fees
- Transportation
- Middle level after-school programs (fees, transportation, participation)
- Mill levy override limitation

LPS Superintendent Scott Murphy updated the Board on the latest school finance news. It is now reported that the state of Colorado is experiencing a \$2.2 billion budget shortfall, which is higher than earlier reports indicated. This could mean even deeper cuts to K-12 education for the 2010-2011 school year and the likelihood of a mid-year rescission during the current 2009-2010 school year.

“We need the Legislature to land on funding for next year, but the information keeps changing,” said Murphy.

Board members thanked parents for their messages to the Board in support for the IB programs in their schools. Board members stated that as a Board they must make fiscally sound decisions for both now and the future that are best for the district as a whole.

It was noted that the state's funding cuts to LPS are so severe that the district would need to bring in 1,000 additional students each year without adding additional staff positions or any other related costs in order to make up the difference. LPS currently enrolls more than 2,700 out-of-district students, which – as a percentage of total district enrollment – is more than any other school district along the Front Range.

The Board will continue its conversation regarding the 2010-2011 budget at its regularly scheduled Board of Education meeting Thursday, January 28, 2010 at 6:30 p.m. in the Boardroom at the Education Services Center. While the district budget will not be finalized until later this spring when the Legislature passes the School Finance Act for next year, the Board will likely give administration direction on how to proceed with some of the recommended reductions so that the staffing process for next year can continue.

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