


MEMORANDUM

March 2, 2009

TO: School Board 
FROM: Ronald Blocker
RE: Budget Study Committee Final Report

Attached is the final report from the Superintendent's Budget Study Committee. Since you have seen preliminary drafts in the past, the group consensus on the chart should look familiar. Remember their task was to rate the impact of possible cuts on the community and on our Strategic Plan. A list of individual comments regarding the various cuts considered is also included. These comments do not represent consensus but were provided by individual members.

The Technical Committee feedback will be provided in the next few days. Feel free to contact Barbara Jenkins or me with any questions.

Attachment

Background: The Superintendent's Budget Study Committee represented a broad cross-section of OCPS stakeholders. They were charged with assessing the impact of potential budget cuts on three stakeholder groups: staff, students and parents, and the community. They were also asked to evaluate the impact of each idea on the district's strategic plan.

Methodology: The superintendent's senior staff analyzed a large number of possible ways to reduce the 2009-10 budget and identified those that represented an appropriate balance of savings and risks. District staff then presented information about these ideas to the committee and answered questions from committee members. Staff presentations included a description of the potential cut, which groups would be impacted by it, and an estimate of the savings if the idea was implemented. They also shared potential risks associated with each idea.

Committee members arrived at a consensus of the impact of each idea on relevant stakeholder groups and utilized a rubric to assign an "impact score." A similar rubric guided their assessment of the impact on the district's strategic plan. At their final meeting, the committee reviewed the complete list of potential budget reductions and sorted them into three levels of impact: minimal, moderate and severe.

Individual committee members submitted comments relative to specific budget reduction ideas to supplement the impact scores and rankings. Their comments were intended to give the superintendent and school board a clearer picture of the individual committee member's opinion concerning selected ideas for reducing the 2009-10 budget.

Format of the List: The product of the committee's work is a list of the potential budget cuts presented to the group, ordered in terms of the impact on the designated stakeholder groups. The first three columns of the attached list provide a brief description of the potential budget cut, the estimated savings that could be realized, and the impact of each idea on the strategic plan.

The fourth column displays the calculations used to arrive at the summary impact. One of the key assumptions used to make these calculations is that a budget cut that impacts all of the members of a stakeholder group has more of an impact than one that affects only some of that group. Therefore, potential cuts that touched all of a stakeholder group were assigned a score of 2 while those impacting only some of the group were assigned a 1. This score was then multiplied by the score assigned for the extent of impact. Extent of impact scores ranged from 1 to 6. As an example, a potential cut that impacted all staff to a moderate/temporary extent would be scored as $2 \times 3 = 6$.

The impact scores for all relevant stakeholder groups were added and the sum became the summary impact score; located in the far right hand column. The summary impact score was used to order the ideas and divide them into three "buckets" reflecting minimal, moderate or severe impact.

List of Potential Budget Reductions (Ordered by Summary Impact Score)

Potential Budget Reduction	Savings	Strategic Plan Impact	Stakeholder Impact	Summary Impact
Assign five days of furlough to each administrator, Director-level and above	\$607,424	1	Some Staff = 1 x 2	2
Reduce the frequency of courier delivery to each work location from 5 days a week to two days a week.	\$160,000	1	All Staff = 2 x 1 Some Students/Parents = 1 x 1	3
Delay the purchase of adopted instructional materials	\$9 million	1	Some Staff = 1 x 1 All Students/Parents = 2 x 1	3
Decrease the number of extended contract days from 15 to 10	\$1.35 million	2	Some Staff = 1 x 3 to 4	3 to 4
Modify the formula for funding special area teachers at the 37 largest elementary schools; reducing the allocation by one position at each of these schools	\$2.1 million	4	Some Staff = 1 x 2 Some Students/Parents = 1 x 1 Some Community = 1 x 1	4
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Decentralize Integrated Facilities Plan functions. 2. Decentralize commissioning functions. 3. Decentralize selected custodial functions. 4. Consolidate five existing maintenance shops into three “super-shops.” 	\$600,000 \$400,000 \$900,000 \$900,000 Total = \$2,800,000	1	Some Staff = 1 x 5	5
Eliminate busing to elementary magnet programs	\$800,000	2	Some Staff = 1 x 1 Some Students/Parents = 1 x 4 Some Community = 1 x 1	6
Increase copayments or increase premiums by 7%; raise maximum out of pocket (Note: This is a cost avoidance proposal. It avoids a \$12.7 million dollar shortfall.)	\$0	1	All staff = 2 x 3	6
Reduce the number of learning communities from 6 to 5; eliminating one learning community office (area superintendent and other positions)	\$680,000	2	Some Staff = 1 x 3 to 5 Some Students/Parents = 1 x 2	5 to 7

Minimal Impact	Moderate Impact	Severe Impact
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List of Potential Budget Reductions (Ordered by Summary Impact Score)

Potential Budget Reduction	Savings	Strategic Plan Impact	Stakeholder Impact	Summary Impact
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reorganize HR to align with the five learning community structure 2. Reduce HR staff by 12 to 14 positions 3. Scale back training 4. Close recruiting office (\$260, 521) 5. Study feasibility of bringing substitute teacher process back “in-house” 	\$939, 373	3	Some Staff = 1 x 6 Some Students/Parents = 1 x 1	7
Change selected administrative positions (Director and below) to an 11-month contract; this represents just under a 9% pay cut	\$4.2 million	2	Some Staff = 1 x 5 to 6 Some Students/Parents = 1 x 1 Some Community = 1 x 1	7 to 8
Limit summer school to grade recovery for juniors and seniors	\$1,058,000	2	Some Staff = 1 x 3 Some Students/Parents = 1 x 5	8
Phasing out programs at Hungerford Prep on an accelerated basis	\$1,200,000	1	Some Staff = 1 x 5 Some Students/Parents = 1 x 1 Some Community = 1 x 2	8
Eliminate elementary and middle school media specialist positions	\$10,624,218	4	Some Staff = 1 x 5 Some Students/Parents = 2 x 1 Some Community = 1 x 1	8
Merging smaller schools	\$5 to \$8 million	1	Some Staff = 1 x 2 to 5 Some Students/Parents = 1 x 2 Some Community = 1 x 2	6 to 9
Increase the allocation formula by 2 students	\$30,000,000	1	All Staff = 2 x 3 All Students/Parents = 2 x 2 Some Community = 1 x 1	11
Reduce the kindergarten program to a half-day program	(\$5,600,000)	6	Some Staff = 1 x 6 Some Students/Parents = 1 x 6 Some Community = 1 x 2	14
Decrease staffing of SAFE coordinators at the middle school level from 1 to .5	\$1,000,000	4	Some Staff = 1 x 5 Some Students/Parents = 1 x 5 Some Community = 1 x 5	15
Cut specialized programs such as Biz Kids, Mead Gardens and programs contracted through United Arts (some programs will be eliminated, others will be scaled back)	\$882,690	4	Some Staff = 1 x 1 All Students/Parents = 2 x 6 Some Community = 1 x 6	19

Minimal Impact	Moderate Impact	Severe Impact
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List of Potential Budget Reductions (Ordered by Summary Impact Score)

Potential Budget Reduction	Savings	Strategic Plan Impact	Stakeholder Impact	Summary Impact
Transition to a 4-day week	\$10,500,000	5	All Staff = 2 x 4 All Students/Parents = 2 x 4 All Community = 2 x 3	22
Eliminate social worker positions	\$3,036,250	6	Some Staff = 1 x 6 All Students/Parents = 2 x 6 All Community = 1 x 5	23
Reduce allocations for guidance counselors at the elementary level (from 1 to .5), at the middle school level (from ratio of 1:400 to 1:500) and at the high school level (from ratio of 1:463 to 1:600 and loss of +1 allocation)	\$8,530,000	6	All Staff = 2 x 6 All Students/Parents = 2 x 6 All Community = 2 x 5	34
Eliminate funds for coaching supplements and equipment for elementary and middle school athletics (including Special Olympics)	\$1,731,406	5	All Staff = 2 x 6 All Students/Parents = 2 x 6 All Community = 2 x 6	36
Eliminate funds for coaching supplements and equipment for elementary, middle and high school athletics (including Special Olympics)	\$7,301,769	5	All Staff = 2 x 6 All Students/Parents = 2 x 6 All Community = 2 x 6	36

Minimal Impact	Moderate Impact	Severe Impact
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1 | Comments on Potential Budget Reductions

The members of the Superintendent's Budget Study Committee were given the opportunity to submit comments to clarify and supplement the scoring of selected ideas for reducing the 2009-10 budget. Because these comments reflect the views of individual members of the committee rather than a consensus, they are at times in conflict. Where more than one committee member submitted a nearly identical comment, a note to that effect appears in parentheses following the comment.

Potential Budget Reductions appear in **bold** type

- Comments from Individual Committee Members are denoted by bullets

Assign five days of furlough to each administrator, Director-level and above

- While the Committee is not tasked with making its own recommendations, I believe the School Board should consider identifying a middle ground solution between this recommendation and the recommendation to change Director-level and below positions to 11-month contracts (i.e. consider a change that would have an equal impact on all administrators).
- Reductions in pay rather than furloughs should be considered by the Board because they are more efficient and not much more disruptive to the affected employees
- This is better than an across the board % reduction in salary for all employees.

Reduce the frequency of courier delivery to each work location from 5 days a week to two days a week.

- No comments received to date

Delay the purchase of adopted instructional materials

- No comments received to date

Decrease the number of extended contract days from 15 to 10

- This is better than an across the board % reduction in salary for all employees.
- It is still not clear what work will not get done as a result of this change. There is some concern that there may be an expectation that the same amount of work will get done without the individuals doing the work being paid.

Modify the formula for funding special area teachers at the 37 largest elementary schools; reducing the allocation by one position at each of these schools

- Very often, decreasing an arts position in a school means the elimination of an entire program. Cuts should only be made in the number of arts positions if there is more than one teacher in a discipline. Eliminating an arts program is not benign, either for the student of the future of Florida in the 21st Century economy. Arts education supports student engagement and learning; promotes inclusiveness, teaches critical thinking skills and self-discipline, and helps students develop their creativity and the ability to innovate. The state needs artists and performers to support its cultural tourism and entertainment industries, and innovative thinkers and workers in virtually every field of endeavor if it is to remain competitive.

Note: The following four potential changes deal with Facilities staff organizational structure and therefore were treated as one suggestion.

Decentralize Integrated Facilities Plan functions.

Decentralize commissioning functions.

Decentralize selected custodial functions.

Consolidate five existing maintenance shops into three "super-shops."

- Great work by this team finding efficiencies while improving service.

2 | Comments on Potential Budget Reductions

Eliminate busing to elementary magnet programs

- The district should be consistent in its magnet busing policy. If there is no busing for high school magnets there should be no busing at other levels (2 committee members submitted essentially the same comment.)
- The transportation committee should study this proposal to verify the cost savings and to determine whether more efficient routing might make it unnecessary. Perhaps transportation could continue to be offered to students on the route—in other words to those students who watch a bus to the school go by their house or a nearby stop. No satisfactory basis was provided for why that would not be possible.

Increase copayments or increase premiums by 7%; raise maximum out of pocket

- The health care program will still exceed what is offered by most employers in the Orlando area.
- The Budget Study Committee should never have been asked to review this “proposal.” A decision to contain costs of health insurance had already been made by the Board. The Committee’s time should have been spent on considering suggestions with regard to which a decision had not already been made. That we were asked to review this proposal felt very much to me, a non-union community member of the Committee, as though the Committee was being used by OCPS as leverage in the District’s upcoming contract negotiations.
- This could affect morale more negatively for those in positions impacted by the furlough and reduced contract ideas.

Reduce the number of learning communities from 6 to 5; eliminating one learning community office (area superintendent and other positions)

- More than one learning community should be eliminated. The teachers, parents, and students are being asked to bear disproportionately the direct impact of the vast majority of suggested cuts. Administrative staff must be asked to bear more. (2 committee members submitted essentially the same comment.)
- The School Board should acknowledge that a reduction in communities will provide not only an increased workload for the staff in the remaining offices, but that consideration should be given for increasing their permissible response time.

Note: The following five potential changes deal with Human Resources staff organizational structure and therefore were treated as one suggestion.

Reorganize HR to align with the five learning community structure

Reduce HR staff by 12 to 14 positions

Scale back training

- These were great ideas. Yes, it would be nice to maintain in-house training, but not feasible in the current budget situation.

Close recruiting office

- An organization is only as good as its people. Recruitment of personnel for an organization of this size and importance to the future of the County and its citizens should not be yet another task on someone’s overloaded agenda. However, the array of cuts and changes under discussion may provide a sufficient pool of manpower that in the short run is manageable. I believe rebuilding when the economy improves will take time.

Study feasibility of bringing substitute teacher process back “in-house”

- When determining the amount the district could save by bringing substitutes back “in house”, consideration should be given to what the added cost at each school would be for substitute payroll, managing vacancies etc. When a department downsizes at the district level the schools take on additional responsibilities to compensate
- This is a good example of cuts that do not directly affect teachers and students. They are still painful and affect the classroom indirectly, but these are the types of cuts on which the Board should focus first. Sadly, it is not typical of the proposals brought to the Committee.

3 | Comments on Potential Budget Reductions

- For the HR team members who are cut and those remaining who must pick up their responsibilities, there will be a significant impact.
- Costs will be reduced when you eliminate the 3rd party. Students, parents, and teachers will not notice the difference. The assistant principal charged with this responsibility will be the person most affected.
- I think this does reduce educational quality based on the number of events where substitutes were not available in a timely way when it was handled in house before. However, the situation seems dire enough to warrant the cut.

Change selected administrative positions (Director and below) to an 11-month contract; this represents just under a 9% pay cut

- If administrators need to take a cut in pay to reach a budget deficit, it is OCASA's position that all levels of administration should be cut equally.
- While the Summary Impact number is relatively low, there will be a significant negative impact on the administrators targeted.
- The Board should consider a straight pay cut rather than a reduction of time worked. This is effectively a furlough. It is significantly less efficient than a pay cut, but not much more disruptive to the lives of those impacted.
- This is better than an across the board % reduction in salary for all employees.

Limit summer school to grade recovery for juniors and seniors

- Except, obviously, for ESE Extended School Year.
- What about adding an enrichment program with tuition fees being charged to off-set the expense? This will make operating the school sites more cost-efficient.

Phasing out programs at Hungerford Prep on an accelerated basis

- No comments received to date

Eliminate elementary and middle school media specialist positions

- Rather than eliminate these programs, another option to consider might be to reduce the number of elementary positions by 50% and have an elementary media specialist go to school A in the morning and school B in the afternoon.
- The low Summary Impact score of this item does not adequately reflect my negative response to this recommendation. I have significant concerns about the loss of these positions and how school media centers would operate without the specialists.
- This will send the message to students that Library Science is not a valid career path. The Media Center is the hub of most schools. Elementary media specialists know most students, their reading levels, and their personal interests to guide them to appropriate materials that foster literacy. The media specialists also raise funds by working with the Scholastic Book Fair.
- This is a drastic measure that directly impacts classroom teaching. We need to see more, and more drastic, cuts in non-school-based administrative areas.

Merging smaller schools

- In my opinion, this option saves the most money for the least overall impact.
- It was very difficult to determine the true impact of this proposal because at the time we considered it, we had no idea which schools it might impact. Because the now-known proposal targets schools with high poverty and minority populations and whose physical plants have been long-neglected (thus possibly resulting in flight by those with means), the impact score would, in my opinion, certainly increase if the Committee were to consider it again. Are the savings here overstated? Does this proposal take into account the costs of busing the children from the closed school to the remaining school? Does it take into account the small capacity of the likely remaining schools and the need for portables on those campuses? Some of the schools were on the original sales tax list for renovation and are in largely minority neighborhoods. Are the savings worth the price OCPS

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might pay as a result of the violation of the public trust and the continuing lack of equity regarding schools in minority neighborhoods?

- School sites in communities with lower economic demographics are typically the community center. Students from these areas are not as emotionally equipped to be bussed out of their area as other students. Bussing many economically disadvantaged students will lower the family's ability to be involved in their child's education. How can we close existing schools while continuing to build new ones?
- Great idea, the same level of education is offered just in a different environment. Students and parents will adjust over time, like they do when children are rezoned to new schools.
- I am very concerned about this proposal and its impact on students, their families and two minority/disadvantaged communities. It may be feasible to consolidate schools in middle class neighborhoods where families have mobility without much impact, but to do so in a very low income neighborhood has a very different impact. There, a good school in the neighborhood is a sanctuary for their kids, welcoming and accessible to them, a source of pride and community identity. In addition to losing a center where teachers learn instruction practices, I am very concerned that closing Grant Avenue Primary Learning Center will effectively destroy the last vestige of community pride among residents in the Parramore neighborhood and any real feeling of hope for their children's future. I was involved with the Rock Lake neighborhood when closing the elementary school was under discussion in the 80's, and the neighborhood leaders made a compelling case that the school closing would decrease property values, and destroy pride, cohesiveness and the stability of the neighborhood. Most of all, I believe the children in those two schools will suffer. I think there are equity issues here...

Increase the allocation formula by 2 students

- Implementing this item will have a very positive impact on the district's budget.
- I think this is a good idea because class size reduction regulations are too stringent in relation to the State's funding model.
- The state legislature should delay the class size mandate state wide. This was an un-funded mandate to begin with.
- This is a huge cost saving. It might be required. However, it will have a direct and negative impact on almost all of the students, parents, and teachers throughout the district. Again, the community needs to see more effort by OCPS to make more, and more drastic, cuts to non-school-based administrative areas
- To me, this has a direct negative impact on ALL students and degrades the student/teacher relationship which in turn degrades the learning experience. As presented to us, there is no research that states the exact number of children per class for optimal learning but Florida voters have indicated that more is not better for their children through the adoption of the class size amendment. Cutting this in half to 1 student and increasing district level cuts would be more palatable.
- I think the District has demonstrated outstanding leadership in reducing costs, while raising student learning and achievement. Implementing the Class Size amendment at the classroom level will drain critical resources and has the potential, in my view, to affect educational quality. Short run, increasing the allocation formula by 2 to get the schools through this challenging time is good stewardship of resources.
- If the State penalty for not meeting the class size requirements can be waived or reduced for the next year, I would like the School Board to consider increasing the allocation formula by 3 students.

Reduce the kindergarten program to a half-day program

- This proposal should not have been presented to the Committee. The discussion was a waste of valuable time. Because it costs money rather than saves money, it had no more business being considered by the Committee than a proposal that would not be legal. (In fact, since we DID consider some proposals that are currently not legal, I would be very interested in knowing why some ideas were presented for our consideration. In my opinion, the work of the Committee would have been more valuable and would have carried more weight in the community if we had been able to review ALL of the community's suggestions with staff and, thus, have helped set our own agenda. That process would not have required much more time than we spent, and I, for one, would have been pleased to contribute a little additional time to improve the process and the credibility of OCPS in the community.

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- While I respect the work that was done to consider this suggestion, I was surprised that the Committee was asked to consider this proposal because of the clear \$5 million negative impact.

Decrease staffing of SAFE coordinators at the middle school level from 1 to .5

- In my opinion, this will directly and negatively impact all students.

Cut specialized programs such as Biz Kids, Mead Gardens and programs contracted through United Arts (some programs will be eliminated, others will be scaled back)

- These impact scores were based on the fact that elimination of these trips would result in elimination of arts programs and, therefore, drastically impact the overall community. It would also disproportionately impact low-income students without other opportunities to be exposed to these areas.
- It would be important to remember that we are not eliminating the arts from our schools but the free and low cost field trips at the elementary level.
- This is the only field trip option for the economically disadvantaged.
- Orange County's trips to museums and performances are curriculum-based extended learning opportunities. The curricula tie to nearly all Sunshine State Standards, with special an emphasis on reading. These cultural events stimulate and inspire students, bring what is taught in the classroom to life and help them develop cultural literacy. Just as participation in sports provides role models and pathways to scholarships and to sports careers, early cultural experiences are pathways to scholarships and arts careers. A recent regional survey of residents revealed significant support for education in the arts. If Orange County's children are to have a well-rounded education that educates the whole child, I believe these extended learning opportunities are necessary, not just nice.

Transition to a 4-day week

- I am not nearly as concerned by the resulting long days (since many industrialized countries have longer school days than we have) as I am by the shortened week. That will likely negatively impact achievement. In addition, the impact on the community is difficult to assess completely without consultation with public safety officials. In this economy, teenagers are unlikely to find jobs, and I do not believe our communities can handle largely un-supervised teenagers on the streets while much of the adult population is at work. As with the schedule flip, some families would probably love this proposal (perhaps especially wealthier families with more leisure time) and some would hate it (probably especially poor and working families who would miss out on school-day subsidized meals and/or would need either to find supervision for their children or leave them un-supervised).
- The analysis of the operational cost-savings associated with this proposal was excellent. What was lacking for me, though, was information on the impact this would have on student achievement (e.g. what happens to a student's concentration level/ability to learn over a lengthened school day, is there any negative impact on learning by having 3 days off in a row, etc.). I would hope the School Board would have this additional information available prior to making a decision (assuming the State changes the legislation to allow a 4-day week). On a personal note, I dislike this idea as I am concerned about parents' ability to afford additional day care. I also worry about the students who are on the free lunch program who may not receive a meal(s) on the "5th day."

Eliminate social worker positions

- This proposal fails to account for income generated by social workers as the result of Medicaid reimbursement for their services. The Board should consider the possibility that the savings may thus be overstated. In addition, this proposal calls for complete elimination of a position that directly impacts students and families. It is difficult to understand how elimination of such a critical school-based position could be recommended without a concomitant suggestion that entire non-school-based administrative positions be eliminated.
- Of the suggested cuts reviewed to date, this recommendation along with eliminating funding for coaching supplements and equipment for school athletics elicited my greatest emotional response. I recognize the

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tremendous work done by the district's social workers. As the economy continues to worsen, there may be an even greater need for this service

- Social workers are necessary to evaluate students at risk for ESE services. Social workers are the OCPS arm to work with students in the Juvenile Justice system.

Reduce allocations for guidance counselors at the elementary level (from 1 to .5), at the middle school level (from ratio of 1:400 to 1:500) and at the high school level (from ratio of 1:463 to 1:600 and loss of +1 allocation)

- This proposal will have a severe impact on all levels but the greatest will be at the high school level.
- It is a terrible, foolhardy, idea to reduce guidance counselors. This should not even be considered until every area superintendent and attendant staff position are eliminated and the buildings shuttered.
- This is another measure to reduce cost which will not have significant impact on the individual students. Counselors may not have the time to constantly remind students about deadlines for SAT, ACT, college enrollment, etc. Students and parents will need to take more responsibility and be more pro-active.

Eliminate funds for coaching supplements and equipment for elementary and middle school athletics (including Special Olympics)

- Special Olympics are the only recreational, extra-curricular athletic program available for most students with moderate to severe disabilities.
- See below.

Eliminate funds for coaching supplements and equipment for elementary, middle and high school athletics (including Special Olympics)

- You cannot cut over 100 million dollars without it hurting. This process should remind us that our vision is to be the top producer of successful students in the nation. Our core mission is **educating** children, and unfortunately our current legislation is requiring us to consider eliminating anything that is not directly associated with this mission.
- It has been well documented that educational based athletics are the best drop-out prevention program.
- Rather than eliminate these programs at the high school level, another option to consider might be to reduce the number of levels offered. Orange Co. is one of the few counties in Florida with 9th grade athletic teams. Also, the number of contests could also be reduced, especially at the JV level, saving transportation costs, officials costs, and other game related expenses
- Many school districts are reducing varsity contests by 20% and sub-varsity contests by up to 40%. A reduction in sports is better than the elimination of any sports. The same would apply to other co-curricular activities such as yearbook, student council, newspaper, chorus, band, etc.
- While there was much dialogue among the committee about the impact this would have to ALL students, not ALL students participate in athletics. I would much rather see this recommendation implemented than have more children added to core classes.

Other Comments

- There are two ways to balance a budget. One—reduce costs, which is what this committee has been asked to review. The second method is to INCREASE revenue. Have other means of funding been explored such as a limited tax for schools? This could be done as a 1% increase in sales tax, a tax on certain items like cigarettes and alcohol or whatever the taxpayers deem appropriate.
- I do not believe that the Committee should have been asked to group these proposals into “minimal” “moderate” and “severe” categories. I do not believe the categories have any validity. The summary impact numbers and the strategic impact numbers speak for themselves, as do the Committee's comments. The categorization requested did nothing more than dumb-down the process and the resulting analysis. It appears condescending and manipulative of both the Committee and the community. Many of these proposals and

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drastic and painful. Some of those that are drastic and painful ended up in the “moderate” impact column because they are slightly less drastic and painful than those that ended up in the “severe” impact column. Very few of these proposals cut fat. Most are likely to negatively impact student achievement. I suggest that OCPS, the press, members of the School Board, and anyone else utilizing this report keep these thoughts in mind if they make the unfortunate choice to refer to ANY of these proposals as “minimal” or “moderate.” Such references are insulting to those who will be impacted if these proposals are enacted.

- I was surprised by the “new” School Board’s decision to reverse the “flip” (i.e. change in middle and high school start times). I had hoped that the Committee would be presented with this idea. I personally oppose the change back to the “old” schedule as I believe students and parents have adjusted to the new schedule. More importantly, the “flip” was an effective way to reduce costs.