

**Transcript of a
Portion of the Board of Education
Regular Meeting**

held on

**February 22, 2010
At 7:30 p.m.**

regarding

Proposed Budget Reductions for 2010-11

Transcribed Portion of Meeting held at:
Carpentersville Middle School
100 Cleveland Avenue
Carpentersville, Illinois 6011

Transcribed by:
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for *Office Team*

Transcriptionist Note: The portion of the meeting transcribed is the agenda item titled “Superintendent’s Report” and the agenda item titled “Public Participation.” Only those portions of the meeting directly relating to budget reductions were transcribed.

Transcript Begins:

SUPERINTENDENT DR. KEN ARNDT

President Stevens and members of the Board, approximately two months ago, President Stevens lamented that it was very disappointing to the Board that we were talking about a series of significant reductions in 300 and that very few people were interested in talking about it. Well, since that comment, well over 500, maybe 600, e-mails have been received. They have all been read. They all have been responded to. And they are all on the District 300 website.

So the proposed reductions this evening are going to deal with those recommendations from approximately two months ago. I might add that it is regretful; we wouldn’t be talking about reductions if the State of Illinois could pay their bills. That’s the reason we are here. They cannot pay their bills. And in 2006 we had a very significant referendum in our community which got us out of debt, took our class sizes to a reasonable level, and renovated all of our schools. And the Board at that time made the promise, “no more excessive spending, no more \$27 million debts”; they were going to live within our means. And we have been doing that now for the last five years. We know exactly how much local revenue is coming in. We know exactly how much federal revenue is coming in, but we do not know what state revenue is coming in. And what we’ve been promised for a number of years does not materialize. I have been told the Governor in his budget speech tomorrow is going to announce serious budget reductions for all state agencies including public schools.

With that said, the Board asked the Administration to present a list of cuts of approximately \$6 million. Those cuts were announced in January. Again, that’s the reason why we are meeting tonight, to review those recommendations and for the Board to make the final action for the Administration then to proceed.

Since that time, however, I have listened and I have heard from community members and certainly Board concerns and e-mails about some of those reductions (that) would be “too drastic” because it would set us back from what we have experienced and what we appreciate, and this is our future. So based upon that community feedback, the following modifications are being made for tonight’s Board action:

The first one is Technology. The original recommendation was to reduce technology expenditures by \$500,000. (Feedback on) that one came out loud and clear: “Absolutely do not touch technology. That is our future, that is how we communicate with our parents, that’s how our kids are getting the best lessons available on the web, etc., etc.” And that is true. For us to now say we are going to reduce technology expenditures really would be two steps backwards. So that is off the table.

Second of all is regarding the cost of long-term substitute teachers. An analysis was done, and we were paying our long-term substitute teachers a little bit on the high end. For those of you who are not familiar with long-term substitute teachers, they basically do the work of a full-time teacher. They do all the work of a full-time teacher. These are teachers that we hire because of medical reasons or pregnancy or whatever long-term absences to help us run our schools. So that recommendation of a reduction from \$218 now stands at \$150 per day.

The third area of a modification was regarding counselors. Since that recommendation was made, our community has suffered through a number of serious mental health issues. There was a homicide in our community and I won’t go into any more details on that. For us to say we can operate without providing the necessary mental health services for our students would be, in my opinion, penny-wise and definitely pound foolish. However, a cut has to take place, and those reductions will occur (to social workers) at the elementary level, not middle school or high school.

The second area that created the most public outcry was reduction of custodians. Technology was by far number 1, the reduction of custodians was number 2. We have to look back upon where we have gone. Just walking down the halls here at CMS, it's like another school than it used to be. But approximately six years ago, this school did not look anything close to what it looks like today. Every school has been renovated. Every school has been modified. We have new schools. We have no more mobile units for our schools. We are very proud of our facilities and rightfully so. We probably have the best facilities in the Fox Valley right now. We truly do. But for us to think that we're going to keep our schools clean by having 11 fewer custodians is probably not going to happen. And so the staff worked together, and we're making a recommendation to just cut by five (custodians, not 11).

I just mentioned the Employee Assistance Program. Obviously, we have a number of families that are having a crisis. The Employee Assistance Program of \$38,000 helps our employees who are going through very, very difficult (emotional) times in their lives. That also was pulled from the list.

Another area I would like to Board to just remove from consideration tonight, take no action at all, deals with furlough days. The reason being it needs further examination. We are going to have a shorter window to get our schools ready this summer. To think that we are going to be able to get our schools ready with having employees not coming to work for 12 days is really stretching the envelope. However, that area is primarily a reduction in salaries for the administration and for support staff. We have to look at what we can do to reduce administrative expense, but the furlough days are off the table for tonight. It will be re-examined and brought back at a later date.

High school electives are still on the table. Basically, right now, our kids are registering for classes and some of the classes that have low enrollments will be eliminated, just because of low enrollment.

And last, but not least, food expense. That created a lot of controversy. But what we failed to do when we originally presented the food expense was to share with the public that food is being purchased for our kids primarily. For honor roll receptions, for graduations, for commencement, especially for schools that really do not have PTO's that can afford to pay for those things. We're not about to say, "Sorry, kids. We're not going to give you a donut and a juice for doing good work." Now you might say that's a lot of money. Well, we have 20,000 students in District 300.

Therefore, the recommendations as presented will remain except for those modifications. The Administration this evening is recommending budget cuts of approximately \$5.6 million be instituted after tonight. Also, almost half of these cuts need to have further negotiation with the unions. And now is the time for us to really roll up our sleeves to be able to balance this budget which is going to be very, very difficult considering the state economy.

That's all I have at this time. President Stevens?

BOARD PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. STEVENS

Thank you. I would also like to add — it's obvious, but I just want to say — the changes that Dr. Arndt mentioned are as a result of the feedback he received from the public and from the Board. And hopefully, you are reassured that the system works as best as it is able.

And we're not done. If the State tomorrow cuts education further, we may still not be done. So we're doing the best we can with what we have, trying to keep the system as intact as possible.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

STAFF NOTE: There were mechanical problems with the public microphone's connection to the recorder. Therefore, some of the comments were unintelligible on the recording.

BOARD PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. STEVENS

So with that. Just a reminder of the rules; we are going on to Public Participation. You must be 18. If not, you must have a parent here or have written permission to speak. We will limit you to five minutes. You cannot mention any staff member or any person by name or we will rule you out of order and you're done. I will give a high sign at four minutes. At five minutes we are just going to stop. We do not respond. No matter what you say, we do not respond. But believe me, we do listen. And I also would encourage you – unless you want to be here very, very late – if you could combine, if you are talking about the same topic, that's okay.

I also would like to give just another little personal note. Everybody says, "We understand you have to make cuts, but don't cut my program." It doesn't work that way. We can't do that. So please understand that when you come forward to speak. I apologize we do not have a podium, but the microphone is here in the front and first on the list is Michelle Gallo. And we would like your name and address, please.

MICHELLE GALLO

I am Michelle Gallo. I live at 5743 Breezeland Road in Carpentersville, IL. I am here with my daughter, Madelyn, who would like to address the Board and the public.

MADELYN GALLO

Transcriptionist Note: Madelyn Gallo speaks in Spanish. Her English-spoken translation follows:

My name is Maddie Gallo and I am in second grade in the Dual Language Program at Liberty Elementary School. I will be very sad if my friends can't come to the school because they won't have transportation. My friends help me to learn Spanish. Now I can talk to people and speak Spanish and I am very proud of it.

MICHELLE GALLO

Thank you, Maddie. Would all the parents concerned about the future cuts please rise?

Transcriptionist Note: Noise as if people rising is heard.

I'm sorry, I can't speak Spanish. I have written several e-mails and I'm sure some of you have seen my name. I am very concerned about this and I would like to see if there is any type of solution rather than just completely cutting transportation for this and other programs. If, in the next meeting, between now and then, if you could please look at some possible solutions, specifically at Liberty because it is one of the centrally located schools within the District and that is where the first Dual Language Program was formed after Meadowdale. So if you could please consider the possibility of looking at alternative options, we as parent organizations, as you can see, are here to support you as a Board. We understand you need to make cuts. We understand there are things that need to happen. We, again, would like to see if there are other solutions than just completely cutting transportation.

I thank you for your time and I look forward to some of your responses and maybe working with us. We are working on getting an organization together to help support you guys as well.

BOARD PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. STEVENS

Thank you very much. Appreciate it. ... Heather Forbes.

HEATHER FORBES

Hi. My name is Heather Forbes. I live at 1170 White Chapel Lane in Algonquin, IL. This is my daughter, (unintelligible), and this is Jennifer (unintelligible) her father (unintelligible).

Transcriptionist Note: Child speaks in Spanish. Her English-spoken translation follows:

Now, most of the people didn't understand that so I'll say it again in English. My name is Alanir Reznar. I am in second grade in the Dual Language Program at Liberty Elementary School. I will be very sad because my friends won't be able to come to school. I learn Spanish from my friends. Before I started

this program, I didn't know Spanish and now I can read and write and talk to people who speak Spanish. This will help me get a job after my graduation from school. I want my friends to have transportation and learn and get to school. Thank you.

BOARD PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. STEVENS

Thank you.

Transcriptionist Note: A different child speaks in Spanish. Her English-spoken translation follows:

My name is (untelligible). I am in second grade in the Dual Language Program at Liberty Elementary School. If I continue studying in the Dual Language Program, I will be able to read and write in both languages. This will help me when I grow up and will be able to have a better job because I can speak two languages. My parents are very proud my grades because I study very hard. Please don't take my bus away. I want to go to school and learn.

BOARD PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. STEVENS

Thank you.

HEATHER FORBES

(Applause over voice) spoke to you was a child who did not want to go to school during kindergarten. We looked at home schooling, we looked at private schools. When the Dual Language Program started she is now a child who probably, different than most children, begs for those school days ...

BOARD PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. STEVENS

You are at four minutes.

HEATHER FORBES

... wants to come to school, and enjoys learning now. Thank you.

BOARD PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. STEVENS

Thank you very much. ... Tiffany from Indian Trail.

TIFFANY BILANICZ

My name is Tiffany Bilanicz. I live at 266 Indian Trail in Lake in the Hills, IL. I am in the very north end of the District.

BOARD PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. STEVENS

You can pick up the mike and speak right into it. Thank you.

TIFFANY BILANICZ

In your words about taking steps backwards, I am going to say that to even consider a proposal of cutting transportation for the Dual Language Program is taking several steps backwards, but not only implicates us, but the rest of this community at large. The Dual Language Program actually pulls the community together. There are children that are friends with other children, are learning about different cultures and it benefits this community greatly and as the next generation comes and the next one. They have better opportunities in the job market. There are several jobs as we know today where they require or request that someone be bilingual. There are several jobs in the job market where they get higher pay. I ask of you, when you when you all were young and went to school, if you were bused to your school, what would your parents have done if your school bus was taken away? I don't see how the community (untelligible) that are here tonight will be able to survive staying in the program. I know that for us it would be virtually impossible for us to send our children to the program.

I was assured earlier by a member from the school that, "Oh, they're not looking to cut the Dual Language Program. They are just going to cut transportation, and you all can carpool." Now I don't

know how everyone else feels, but I do feel that that is not going to work. There are too many things that can happen with carpooling. You get someone who has sick kids; someone who doesn't have car seats. Not to mention, how would we handle it when parents are picking up their children from school? Oh, today so and so carpools so kid A, B and C goes in their car, D, E, and F goes in that car. It would be complete chaos. It just wouldn't work.

My husband is taking a second job to try to carry us through these hard economic times. I do expect that the District finds a way to pay and make this all work for transportation. I do expect that our children are eligible to stay in the Dual Language Program and it will not be affected.

I am also concerned about an issue – I was reading through the e-mails and the scripts, something about they cut Dual Language transportation, that there were savings of about \$150,000 or \$160,000, something like that. I actually called today because I was concerned. I found that perhaps that number was statistically skewed or invalid because, for example, with my family my daughter would still have to be bused to the school that we are in residency for so was that taken into account when they came up with that number of savings? I found out later in the day from some parents that that wasn't. So I believe that the number that was initially proposed of 150 some odd thousand dollars is actually much less than ...

BOARD PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. STEVENS

You can take that issue up with Dr. Scarpino. Dr. Scarpino, would you just raise your hand? That's the man to talk to. He can answer that question for you.

TIFFANY BILANICZ

I don't know if it came up ...

BOARD PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. STEVENS

He can answer it right now. You can see him after you're done.

TIFFANY BILANICZ

Basically, no matter what, this is affecting the children. I did hear that there are members of the Board that said we don't want the children to be affected in this matter, but this is going to affect them. I don't see how the program can still stay intact if you take away the bussing. I just don't see it. It would only be open to people who can walk to that school (unintelligible) to young children that are in the District. I was wondering about that as well.

I don't know if you all are aware of if you speak other languages. But I would like to propose a challenge to the Board or any other people from the general public. I don't know if you all remember, but back in my generation, we were required to take a separate language when we were in high school in order to graduate. Usually it would be a year or two of Spanish or French. I don't know one friend, not one relative, who can speak it, read it, write it, let alone understand it even in conversation. The Dual Language Program that's run at Liberty, Meadowdale, and – I believe, Gary D. Wright, correct me if I'm wrong – is such an amazing program because it actually involves what's called ...

BOARD PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. STEVENS

You're at four minutes, Ma'am.

TIFFANY BILANICZ

Semi-immersion is how we learn. Our children will grow and reap the benefits of the Dual Language Program. And this number of people tonight, I'm sure can get more for the next meeting if necessary. You'll hear from all these children, 5, 6 and 7 years old that are reading in two languages. I think it's just amazing. I think District 300 could actually be a leader at the forefront in the State of Illinois if they could not only keep this program but actually encourage it to expand to other parents in the District.

But I don't have a million dollars. So I can't solve your money problems. Sorry.

BOARD PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. STEVENS

Thank you.

BOARD PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. STEVENS

Heather Costello.

HEATHER COSTELLO

Hello. My name is Heather Costello. I live at 234 Indian Trail in Lake in the Hills, IL. This is my daughter, Cory. She is a first grader in the Dual Language Program. When she began last year, she spoke as much Spanish as I do now, which is none. These kids who are (...unintelligible) speakers (...unintelligible) they are taught to read in Spanish. Reading Spanish (... unintelligible) language. When we go to the library, she wants to go to the Spanish section to get books because that's what she reads best. So now Cory's going to read in Spanish.

CORY COSTELLO

Transcriptionist Note: Student speaks in Spanish.

This is what the paper says in English. I don't want the bus to come to not take me to school. (... unintelligible)

HEATHER COSTELLO

I have two children in elementary and because of the Dual Language Program they go to two different schools. (...unintelligible) adult (...unintelligible) take her to school (...unintelligible) same issues. If (...unintelligible) options so (...unintelligible) it is crucial (...unintelligible)

BOARD PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. STEVENS

Thank you very much. ... Joe Wallenberger.

JOE WALLENBERGER

I am Joe Wallenberger, 6824 Highgate Road, Carpentersville, IL. I am here on behalf of Maggie tonight. She's been in the Dual Program since kindergarten. She's in first grade and her progress has just been amazing. To make cuts in transportation would definitely cripple the program.

Transcriptionist Note: Student speaks in Spanish.

(...unintelligible)

JENNIFER REICHEL

My name is Jennifer Reichel, 1220 Big Sur Parkway, Algonquin, IL. I actually have two children in the Dual Language Program, one is a second grader (unintelligible) is a first grader (unintelligible).

Transcriptionist Note: Child speaks in Spanish.

CHILD

I can read, write and speak Spanish. (...unintelligible) in Spanish. I want to keep learning in both languages because this will help me in the future. Without transportation for my friends and me, there will not be a program and I am very sad. Please do not take away the transportation. Thank you for listening to me.

BOARD PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. STEVENS

Thank you.

JENNIFER REICHEL

I just have one comment to make. When we signed up for this program, we were asked to make a commitment to the program and asked to not sign them up unless we were sure we could commit to the program until they went through fifth grade. And we live on the east side of the river, and the transportation is the issue for us as well. And I just feel like we have made that commitment to you and have decided to keep our children in this program because we believe in it and we love what it has done for our children. And we would like you to consider being able to continue to make that commitment to us. Thank you.

BOARD PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. STEVENS

Thank you. ... Cathy Neilan. And Francisco Abreu, you can be waiting in the wings? Very good.

CATHY NEILAN

I am Cathy Neilan, 1112 Ash Street, Lake in the Hills, IL and I am here for my daughter, Abby, who is a first grader in the Dual Language Program at Liberty.

ABBY NEILAN

Transcriptionist Note: She speaks in Spanish. Her English-spoken translation follows:

My parents say that you want to cut transportation for my Program. If you do this, then some of my friends will not be able to get to school. My program is great. I'm know things in both languages. There are many adults that do not know two languages, but I do. This will help me when I am older. Thank you.

BOARD PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. STEVENS

Thank you.

CATHY NEILAN

I have to tell you that's an astronomical step for her to do. She wouldn't even sell Girl Scout cookies. She hid behind my back.

I feel strongly about this program, and I feel it should be expanded rather than reduced, which will likely happen if you remove the transportation. Aside from the fact that all these kids and parents who have talked about how the program will help our kids in the future, I have great hopes that if this program were to continue to grow then it would help unite not only our District community, but also the community at large by bridging the east and west side residents through better communication and reorienting them to cultures. Now, there are some things that we would like you to think about when you arrange your cuts. We wanted to have a year to work on things which would grant for transportation such as the Barrington Dual Language Program has. I also want to tell you that some of the schools on the east side have to make active yearly progress (unintelligible) otherwise parents (unintelligible) school of choice and if that were to happen I am sure that Liberty would be one of those schools of choice (unintelligible) busing children over for that reason, why can't we add some of the Dual Language kids to that? Thank you.

BOARD PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. STEVENS

Thank you, ma'am. Francisco. And Jonathan Miller can be hanging in the wings down here, please?

FRANCISCO ABREU

My name is Francisco Abreu. I live at 1625 Gleneagle Drive in Carpentersville, IL. My wife, Anna, and I are the proud parents of two kids at Liberty and also we have a third one for next year. I want to echo the sentiments of the parents and some of the kids. Obviously, the Dual Language Program is a success and that success is due to a number of factors, not least of which is busing, and I would urge you to look into other ways of closing the budget gap. Thank you.

BOARD PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. STEVENS

Thank you, sir. ... Jonathan Miller. Going once, Jonathan Miller, going twice. Missy Graf. And I would ask, please, that Jennifer from 136 Austin be down here and ready.

MISSY GRAF

Hi. My name is Missy Graf, I live at 5741 Breezeland Road in Carpentersville, IL. And this is my son, Daniel.

Transcriptionist Note: Daniel speaks in Spanish.

MISSY GRAF

I shortened that because you're getting the point. The thing of it is (... unintelligible) pursuing was a real challenge because Daniel was reading at a third-grade level before he ever started kindergarten. We didn't know what we were going to do. We thought home schooling was probably the only option until we heard about the Dual Language Program. Socially, I think he needs to be with peers of his age. He started in first grade and this was our answer. And he is being challenged, he is being challenged six hours a day, not as I read some of the e-mails that say maybe an hour or two in some Honors Programs in the District, but this is a daily challenge for him. So academically he is challenged and socially he is at the age he needs to be. To me this is like an Honors Program. It is so much more than I ever imagined when we got in. We were just seriously looking for a challenge for him, but he respects other cultures now, respects other people. Everybody is equal. More than you will ever see in our world in that class. The Spanish speakers are helping the English speakers. They need to go through the Spanish speakers first if they have an issue and then go to their teacher. So it's teamwork like I've never seen in any other classroom. And, again, as one of the other parents said, I think this needs to be expanded, not retracted. I know it's budget cuts, but that's how great this program is (... unintelligible) including our kids (... unintelligible) for us. So I hope we can all work together and come up with a solution.

BOARD PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. STEVENS

Thank you. Jennifer Conejo. Pardon me?

VOICE FROM AUDIENCE

She spoke already.

BOARD PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. STEVENS

She spoke already? Gino Colucci. And I ask Karen Gray to be standing ready, please.

GINO COLUCCI

My name is Gino Colucci. I live at 322 Hiawatha Drive. (... unintelligible) Anyway, I'm just finding out about all these (... unintelligible) very busy lifestyles so this is all new and I haven't had a chance to look at your website. I was just talking to these people and I came here mostly to listen and find out what's going on. I see that transportation, you're considering cutting which would then be a (... unintelligible) mistake (... unintelligible) would be the demise of this program since most of the students are outside of the boundaries of transportation for that school. My daughter not only – when she was at Lincoln Elementary, she was having problems at that school. She was getting in trouble a lot, just things weren't going well for her. It turns out she was not being challenged and they started putting her into (... unintelligible) curriculum at that school which was (... unintelligible) but (... unintelligible) upwards (... unintelligible) cut that program, it doesn't exist anymore. There weren't enough people to do it. So the principal at that school mentioned the Dual Language Program. We registered (... unintelligible) test scores, she got in and before (... unintelligible) extremely well. (... unintelligible).

We were told that this is a five-year plan to commit and it needs to work both ways. We commit five years, (... unintelligible). We can't have a goal (... unintelligible). The challenge is definitely a new experience. I'm sure a lot of you have kids in the class. We need that program as well because there are

not many different programs in District 300 (unintelligible). The one that we do know of starts after second grade and (unintelligible). So regardless, there's still going to be transportation.

I was noticing (unintelligible) that there are programs which – it doesn't make sense to me. You have an Employee Assistance Program. These are services that the county normally provides with tax revenue. That's \$40,000 that can be (unintelligible) to the transportation program. I'm sure there's a lot more that can be looked into that (unintelligible). This is just the (unintelligible) program and (unintelligible) public transportation will be (unintelligible) so I'm going to excuse myself. That's it. That's all I'm going to say. Thank you for your time.

BOARD PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. STEVENS

Thank you. Karen Gray. And I would ask Fred Steinhaus to be down here ready, please. Fred Steinhaus.

KAREN GRAY

Hi. My name is Karen Gray. I live at 1919 Bristol, Carpentersville, IL. I'm a (unintelligible) teacher and my parents (unintelligible) Program. I know you guys are (unintelligible) so I kind of (unintelligible) some solutions of ways to be forward going with the bus routes. This year's program was expanded (unintelligible) Hampshire. Maybe that will bring the students further in so that (unintelligible) large portion of the (unintelligible) coming from. One other solution (unintelligible) current bus routes (unintelligible). My son, his bus route. (unintelligible) on the way home and on the way to school. (unintelligible) they were combined (unintelligible). I thought perhaps that the kids who are (unintelligible) school (... unintelligible)

BOARD PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. STEVENS

Thank you, Karen.

...

BOARD PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. STEVENS

Thank you, sir. Jerry Glogowski, if you would be in the wings waiting, Jerry. Sharon, go ahead.

SHARON FETTING

My name is Sharon Fetting. I live at 3 Preston Court, Algonquin, IL. I have looked at the budget updates (unintelligible) eliminating music and gym for kindergarten is still on the table. Again, how can this Administration and Board justify taking more programs away from the general population of children, but still provide a few select children with special programs. Now kindergarteners will not have art, music or gym. I beg of this Board to vote no on the entire package and be forced to vote line by line. I believe you have the ability to do this because I did call last week to see if that is possible. Everything related to our tax dollars in light of the programs should be voted line by line.

I have more written down, but there's actually a lot of people here about the Dual Language Program and I don't know if you know, since 2007 I have been arguing with the Board that we should have Spanish classes for all kids. And nothing's ever done. I went to (unintelligible) school 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th and in high school we had Spanish. I did not look into it when Liberty first did it. There was a waiting list of 40 kids.

BOARD PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. STEVENS

Ma'am, are you addressing the Board or the audience?

SHARON FETTING

I'm addressing the (unintelligible).

BOARD PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. STEVENS

Well, please. Okay? They can hear you.

SHARON FETTING

(unintelligible) Spanish. I'm paying \$350 this summer so my daughter can go to language school, because I couldn't make the five-year commitment to Liberty because at the time I had 3-year-olds at home and I didn't know if I could be home for my daughter, be home for my other kids when they start school. They have proven here. I have written down some notes on what they said. "We are a cut above the rest." I'm sorry. Your kid is wonderful and I'm so happy for her, but why are they are more special than our kids who aren't eligible for this program? You say it's available for everyone. No, it's not. There's a waiting list, at least when I looked into it when we were applying for kindergarten. They even said, the children are saying, "I'm going to get a better job because I know a second language." But my child is being denied it and so are my friends. Because I can't be bussing them to another school. I'm just wondering why don't we look into – I noticed that we have \$671,000 for pre-school bussing and then \$157,000 for Dual Language and \$118,000 for ECC bussing (unintelligible) paying for the high school kids to go to college. That ticks me off more than anything. (... unintelligible) parent and student's responsibility after high school.

That money could be used for all kids to get some kind of Spanish lesson. Well, maybe it couldn't be a Dual Language for everyone, at least everyone would have a chance to understand it a little bit and carry it further.

I've been fighting this for three years and I've gotten nowhere with it. I'll try to finish some more of my speech on other stuff. (... unintelligible) the District plan on using the stimulus money. I'm just curious how much extra money is that going to cost District 300 for busing before we even start it. Once again, they are creating more costs when there are supposed to be cutting back.

I want to see all the schools have at least one hour per week for kids to know Spanish. I notice the Chicago School District is teaching Arabic in their elementary schools. They have set up teachers at one school and continuously offer a virtual class (unintelligible) another school. The teacher came to school every two weeks so the students will have personal interaction with the teacher. This is a matter that could be useful to look into. Let's see what else I have here.

Once again, please open up that entire package and vote each proposal line by line. Taking away gym (unintelligible) kindergarten makes no sense at all. Stop eliminating the programs and (unintelligible) for all District 300, not a select few.

I please encourage you: all our kids need to know Spanish. And I understand, maybe the Dual Language Program isn't available at all schools, but I think it would be possible to get at least an hour a week for our children. I mean, like I said, even a six-year old is telling me they're going to have a better job opportunity. And the School District doesn't seem to get it. Thank you for your time.

BOARD PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. STEVENS

Thank you, ma'am. Jerry Glogowski. Is Jerry here? Holly Veverka. And I would ask Rosa Banuelos to be standing next.

HOLLY VEVERKA

Good evening. I am Holly Veverka, 214 Rainbow Drive, Schaumburg, IL. (unintelligible) I am the fortunate mother of two boys (unintelligible). And I understand these are hard times, but I'm glad (unintelligible) to be heard. Okay. (unintelligible) what they said in light of the other (unintelligible) on the other side of the Dual Language Program, not (unintelligible) for a six-year old to do (unintelligible) Spanish (unintelligible). The research on human language and how it helps second language learners is amazing. (unintelligible) study. I can't remember (unintelligible) off the top of my head, but it seems that dual language is the only program that brings (unintelligible) expected of it. And kids that have been in dual language have remarkable (unintelligible). (unintelligible) is 10% higher (unintelligible). So kids that are not in dual language who are then resorting to a viable program will be 10% below what

(unintelligible). So my question is (unintelligible) solutions for the benefit of dual language and (unintelligible).

Now, I know (unintelligible) you guys (unintelligible) choices so have come up with my little of unpopular options that (unintelligible). But, as someone said, having their kids go to their own school and bussing them from there or (unintelligible) could I pay for my child, I won't speak for anyone else, up and beyond what it would cost to bus him to his home school versus Liberty. Is that an option (unintelligible)? Could there be a sliding scale (unintelligible) consideration for busing? Can you ask for volunteer people (unintelligible) to school and then would it be looked at as a cost savings? (... unintelligible). That's all I have. Thank you.

BOARD PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. STEVENS

Thank you. Rosa Banuelos and I would ask Lamar Davis to be standing by.

ROSA BANUELOS

Transcriptionist Note: Speaks in Spanish.

TRANSLATOR FOR ROSA BANUELOS

Good evening Board members (unintelligible) 2801 (unintelligible) Drive, Carpentersville, IL.

My name is Rosa Banuelos. I represent the District 300 Bilingual Parents Advisory Council, or BPAC. I want to express the importance of the Dual Language Program in our community. This program is necessary for the opportunities of success it provides our children with, since today is so important to know two or more languages. The children in this program are very motivated and are excited and are excelling academically. As well, they learn all cultures which enriches their lives immensely. I know that cutting transportation will have a huge impact since transportation is vital to our children. What options are being considered if we're not transporting the program. When the program started, as parents, we were asked to commit to six years. What happened to this promise?

BOARD PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. STEVENS

Thank you very much. Lamarr Davis. And I would ask Michelle Farfan please stand by.

LAMARR DAVIS

Hello.

BOARD PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. STEVENS

Hello.

LAMARR DAVIS

My name is Lamarr Davis. I live at 2718 Oak Drive. (unintelligible)

BOARD PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. STEVENS

You're going to have to speak a little louder. There you go.

LAMARR DAVIS

Transcriptionist Note: Not transcribed. Unintelligible.

BOARD PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. STEVENS

Sir. We're recording all of this. You're going to have to speak into the mike.

LAMARR DAVIS

In case you didn't hear me, I said I think my daughter actually thinks more in Spanish more than she does in English at school. In this P=program, once again, anybody from I'd say kindergarten through third grade would probably be at a (... unintelligible) Thank you for this opportunity to speak.

BOARD PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. STEVENS

Thank you, Mr. Davis. Michelle Farfan. And Allissa Witham please stand by. Hi, Michelle.

MICHELLE FARFAN

My name is Michelle Farfan. I live at 17N656 Adams Drive in West Dundee, IL. I have a first grader in the Dual Language Program at Liberty. And I am also talking not only as a parent, but I am also a language teacher in high school so I have language teacher background. And from a teacher's perspective, the best time for a student to learn a language is before 12 years old when the transmitters in the brain split. When they split, it becomes much more difficult. So, honestly, District 300 started to get on this cutting edge by getting Dual Language undergoing here. A lot of the school districts in the area, Schaumburg, Barrington, (unintelligible) and now District 300 is on that, I would just hate to see that go away. A lot of the schools have even moved it up into the junior high level to follow the students and that's something that when I have talked to the program that's interviewing, they said that is where we're looking to go is to bring it into the middle schools once the program grows – and that would never ever happen if the Dual Language Program transportation would be cut.

We have a responsibility as parents and an education system to equip our students with the things they need to compete in this global market. And, frankly, in the United States we are not there. Most of our people are not bi-lingual or literate in two languages, where 50 percent of Europeans are literate in at least 2 languages. And our students have to compete with that when they go out to the world. They have to compete in that global market and we (unintelligible) really quickly.

I would also like to reiterate, as everybody else did, that we were asked to make a commitment to this Program and a lot of us change schedules around and I also have students in two different schools. My son is a fifth-grade student who is not able to enter the Dual Language Program in the school system and it's very (unintelligible) to have that situation and to pull students out and not really have transportation (unintelligible) starting school and, as the gentlemen said beforehand, (unintelligible) don't get back full force English right at the beginning so that they (unintelligible) Spanish. Thank you.

BOARD PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. STEVENS

Thank you. Alissa. And then Jose Munoz please be standing by.

ALLISA WITHAM

Hi. I'm Allissa Witham, 1388 Acorn Court, West Dundee, IL. I'm also a Dual Language parent and my oldest son is in the first grade at Liberty and I have two younger children I am hoping to go through this program. And (unintelligible) other parents here had said that I had talked to the Board, I mean this is a program we're looking at four, five (unintelligible) District wide and can see parents are here on (unintelligible) questions, so we are very concerned as parents and I'm hoping the Board will work with us parents to try to find some solutions to keep the bussing, keep the program going because it is an awesome program and our kids really are learning a lot. We could see how (unintelligible) concern (unintelligible) chance to work with you and find a solution for this.

BOARD PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. STEVENS

Thank you. Jose, you have the distinction of being last. You still only get five minutes, though.

JOSE MUNOZ

My name is Jose Munoz. I live at 1009 Tacoma Street in Carpentersville, IL. I think you guys have heard already exactly what we want for our kids. They are doing pretty good in the Dual Language Program. Cutting the transportation to me means cutting the program already, because if you don't have enough students for this program you will cut it right away. (...unintelligible). Just think about it. The last two years Liberty has been proud to have a whole student class speaking two languages.

Another suggestion for you guys. (...unintelligible) money and other things. I'm sorry, my English, it's hard for me. This is a perfect example how hard for me as an old person to learn a different language. And how easy is it for these guys, the little kids, they are able to speak it fluent, correctly. (...unintelligible) for the future. I don't know what kind of future do you want for (...unintelligible) for this program. You are talking about music, you are talking about sports, you are talking about this program. Think about what you are doing, and I hope you find a solution for this. Thank you.

BOARD PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. STEVENS

Thank you very much.

I know I speak for all of us up here that we are listening. We do understand. I want to compliment all of the children that spoke tonight. Very impressive display. Very, very impressive display.

If it were not for the State of Illinois not meeting its financial obligations, we would not be having these discussions. So, also, write your legislators. It's great for you to get up here and talk to us. Also be writing your legislators. Because we would not be in this position if we were paid the money the state owes us, and we're expecting it to get worse. Listen to the Governor tomorrow.

So, I hear you and we're going to do everything we can to be responsive. And with that, any other Board Member wish to make a comment? Okay.

....

BOARD PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. STEVENS

Item 9.50. Could I have a motion please for the approval to proceed with the administrative recommendations to reduce current expenditures by \$5.3 million for school year 2010-2011 with the exception of Item 2 on the list which is deferred – not removed, but deferred – so can I have more discussion?

BOARD MEMBER MONICA CLARK

So moved.

BOARD MEMBER KAREN ROECKNER

Second.

BOARD PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. STEVENS

Is there discussion?

BOARD MEMBER CHRIS STANTON

Is that amount reduced by the – I mean, you said the number was 5 something, but ...

BOARD PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. STEVENS

The \$5.3 million includes the furlough days so it would be adjusted by whatever that is.

BOARD MEMBER CHRIS STANTON

So that would be \$800,000?

BOARD SECRETARY ANNE MILLER

The \$5.3 million that is listed is adjusted by the \$815,000 that's temporarily on hold covering the furlough days. It does not include any of the items that will be discussed between now and April 26, including the Dual Language Program (transportation). When I say including it means it's including not on this package.

BOARD PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. STEVENS

And I also don't want to leave a misimpression. The furlough days are deferred. They are not removed. They are deferred so that it can have more discussion. Any discussion?

BOARD MEMBER MONICA CLARK

I just want clarification. So the \$5.3 million is inclusive of the furlough?

BOARD PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. STEVENS

The \$5.3 million is as if the furlough days were included, so it is reduced by that amount.

BOARD MEMBER MONICA CLARK

Okay.

BOARD PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. STEVENS

Mr. Ryan?

BOARD MEMBER JOHN RYAN

Thank you, Mr. Stevens. There has only been two other occasions on my tenure on the Board that I felt compelled to actually make a statement prior to a vote and this is one of them, so if you would just indulge me for a moment I promise I'll make it brief.

It does seem that almost on an annual basis we do have one particular issue that kind of defines that particular year for us and I would have to say, for at least this year, this is probably it for us. Two years ago it was the division heads, last year was the boundary changes and I certainly don't mean to lessen the significance of those issues, certainly there were passionate feelings about those as well, but from my point of view, although those were passionate issues, in reality they only affected certain portions of our District. That is not the case tonight. The actions that we are going to voting on shortly are going to impact every single stakeholder in District 300 and the impact of that cannot be taken lightly and I can assure you, from my seat on the Board, it is not – I'm not going to wax poetic about how many hours we put into this and things of that nature. I assure you every single one of us have read every single e-mail and have listened passionately to what all of you have had to say.

Taking bold action does not mean that people in the position that we are in are acting with reckless abandon. The administration's recommendations were not made whimsically. Significant consideration was given to developing a course of action that would minimize the impact on students to the greatest degree possible. We can't avoid it. But again, we tried to minimize that to the greatest degree possible.

I am sincerely grateful that, unlike many other school districts, we have the EPRT process in place that allows us to objectively evaluate our expenditures on the basis of each program's merit, and thus providing practicality and sensibleness to the process. I am also grateful that our administration and my colleagues on the Board are open minded, that we encourage and greatly take to heart all the public comment that we have received. As a result of that, even as late as this evening, prior to the start of this Board, we've made some adjustments to those recommendations. We do take what you say very, very seriously.

However, there is no way to sugar coat the task that is before us this evening. As such, we are now in the position to do what we were elected to do, and that is to make very difficult decisions under very unpleasant circumstances.

I just want to conclude by saying that District 300 has made exceptional strides in our financial integrity over the past several years, and our financial transparency as well. It is indeed unfortunate that, despite the discipline we have demonstrated in our financial affairs, we nonetheless find ourselves in the position that we are in now for reasons that are out of our direct control. Both Dr. Arndt and Mr. Stevens have made reference to how what is happening in Springfield has a direct impact on what we are talking about

this evening. I cannot minimize that. I cannot even accentuate it to the degree perhaps that it even needs to be accentuated.

You know, if nothing else, this provides us a reminder of how we, as citizens, cannot take the election of our state leaders lightly. Government without integrity, both ethically and fiscally, results in chaos. I urge you to direct your comments, in addition to us, directly to Governor Quinn, to Speaker of the House Michael Madigan, and the President of the Senate John Cullerton. These are the individuals who need to hear this just as much as we do here.

You know, we made a comment at our last Board meeting about the annual legislative update that we often have. We expanded the audience for that this year. The dynamic was something unlike I had never seen. If our legislators who serve us locally didn't get the message or didn't understand the message before, they certainly got the message that day. And one audience member's comment struck me in particular, directing it to one of our state senators and saying to him that essentially, "Senator, you may think you have a lot of time to settle this. We do not." And, again, we want to urge you, as best as possible, to contact anybody who is in a position to effect some change in this regard.

Hopefully, the public outcry from decisions such as this will serve notice to our state leaders that their constituents expect and deserve leaders who take their responsibility seriously and truly conduct their fiscal affairs in a manner that benefits the public trust. Thank you, Mr. Stevens.

BOARD PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. STEVENS

Thank you. Other comments? Mrs. Roeckner?

BOARD VICE PRESIDENT KAREN ROECKNER

On the list that we have that was in our packet, the items that are in green, when will we have an update on some of those items? I don't know who can answer that question, if that's Dr. Arndt that can answer that question.

SUPERINTENDENT DR. KEN ARNDT

The items in green must be negotiated with the respective union (LEAD) and we hope to start that process within the next two to three weeks.

BOARD VICE PRESIDENT KAREN ROECKNER

Okay. Thank you.

BOARD MEMBER MONICA CLARK

As well as the red ones, Dr. Arndt? Those are the other unions?

SUPERINTENDENT DR. KEN ARNDT

Some of those do not require union action. They can be taken administratively.

BOARD VICE PRESIDENT KAREN ROECKNER

So will we get an up-to-date sheet now, Dr. Arndt, with ...

SUPERINTENDENT DR. KEN ARNDT

Yes. If the Board is in agreement, now the Administration, after tonight's meeting, will proceed with due diligence to accomplish the budget reductions.

BOARD VICE PRESIDENT KAREN ROECKNER

Okay. Thank you.

BOARD PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. STEVENS

I will respectfully disagree with Dr. Arndt. I expect the negotiations to take place much sooner than two to three weeks. We are working on that. I'm working towards next week they will start.

Other Board Members wish to make a comment? Mr. Alessio?

BOARD MEMBER DAVID ALESSIO

Some of these cuts, honestly, will be permanent and never coming back. Some programs I will work with as long as I can to try to restore, if we ever find some fiscal responsibility in this state. The one that is most painful for me is kindergarten specials and maybe PE and music. Cutting music is more painful for me than I can explain to most people. Hopefully, we will be able to bring those back in the future. I know the Art Program was cut 35 years ago and has never been restored as an elementary program. Teachers have taken the purchasing programs out of their own pocket, and my wife and other parents have divided up programs working with the teachers, also, so kids have some exposure to art. I hope these programs don't meet the same fate. Even though people say, "It's just a half day of kindergarten," the break does provide an opportunity for some of the kids who are struggling to do well in other areas and provide the break from the schedule as they get used to the school day.

I know some of these cuts are more painful than others, but this probably won't be the last of the tough times in the state for the next couple of years.

BOARD PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. STEVENS

Mrs. Miller?

BOARD SECRETARY ANNE MILLER

I think my fellow Board Members, Mr. Ryan and Mr. Alessio, have expressed very well what most of the Board Members here are feeling. Especially Mr. Ryan's comment about "we don't have a whole lot of time," and then you take that with what Mr. Alessio has said regarding the cuts in kindergarten programs and any of these maybe we'll get them back. But most students are only in kindergarten one year. So it gets cut – maybe it gets back next year, maybe it gets back in three years, but it's a cut that happens now and in a child's life every year happens to be very important.

We don't take these cuts lightly. It's just so difficult to make cuts when you know that it is going to affect a student. But by not making cuts, it's going to affect more students. That's just really heartbreaking.

The state does not understand anything. I want to send Dr. Crates down there and say, "Give them School Financing 101 on how this works!" Because we received a letter from one of our state representatives in response to something, and it was, "You're getting money over here. What don't you understand?" And I was like, "Okay, so if we get money for building, how does that affect the education (fund)?" And they just don't understand.

They look at a lot of different districts that don't have balanced budgets. They give us a lot of state mandates that we have to provide education for, but there is no funding behind it. And, unfortunately, the education process establishment that we have been trying to increase and improve for our students is going to deteriorate. It is not a happy, positive outlook picture. And I'm the Pollyanna in the group, and I don't see anything positive coming out of this – just more bleak coming ahead.

BOARD PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. STEVENS

Mr. Stanton?

BOARD MEMBER CHRIS STANTON

Real quick. I think the hardest part about this is we did nothing wrong. And I say that because being on the Finance Committee and seeing how we operate, and when I say "we, we as a community," because 70

some per cent of the revenue that we (D300) get comes from our (local property) taxes. So we are doing our job. We are paying our bills. If we didn't pay our taxes, somebody comes by and buys your tax bill and you have a couple of years and you've got to fix that.

The hardest part ... I was kind of gung ho. I was all set to vote no for this (package of cuts), because, frankly, I'm ticked off. I mean, we have done nothing wrong as a School District. We have done nothing wrong as taxpayers, but we're getting shorted of the money that's due us with the threats of more things to come. As you look at some of the comments that are floating around the State that Dr. Arndt and some others have spoken about, there could be another possible \$9 million shortfall after the \$6 million we are talking about now. Which means a whole different ballgame on top of another \$18 million the following year.

As you look around at the surrounding districts, like U-46 and some of the others, you are looking at \$40, \$50 million numbers that they are trying to struggle through cutting, it just infuriates you. It ticks you off. You go home, you think about it. And you know did nothing wrong, but you're kind of being punished as a District. In fact, we've done a lot of things good as a District over several years of just trying to get out of the red and back into the black and having money that we can actually sustain the District for several months without getting paid by the State – and even that isn't working anymore because they are so late. The last payment was probably four and a half months late from the State; we expected to see it in August and we got it in January. That means that I just don't know what else to say, other than we are making the choice of voting tonight for the Administration recommendations, either yes or no, based on each Board Member. But we don't do that very easily knowing that we didn't do anything wrong to get to this point.

BOARD PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. STEVENS

Anyone else wish to make a comment?

I would just like to clarify one of the things Mr. Stanton said so you know where that number came from. None of us know what the Governor is going to say tomorrow, but we think he might say that he is going to cut another 10% out of education. If he does that, and if the legislature follows through with that, we will have a \$9 million shortfall next year, when we've talked about an \$18 million shortfall possible for the year after, we now all of a sudden would have another \$9 million that we have to do for next year to have a balanced budget.

It is unconscionable that the state cares so little about its citizens that this happens. We don't know. We are under mandatory obligations to pass budgets at certain times and to hire teachers by certain dates, but the State doesn't help us by telling us what the funding will be. It's a very, very unrealistic situation.

Would you please call the roll?

BOARD SECRETARY ANNE MILLER

Clark?

BOARD MEMBER MONICA CLARK

Very reluctantly, yes.

BOARD SECRETARY ANNE MILLER

Roeckner?

BOARD VICE PRESIDENT KAREN ROECKNER

Yes.

BOARD SECRETARY ANNE MILLER

Ryan?

BOARD MEMBER JOHN RYAN

With sincere regret, aye.

BOARD SECRETARY ANNE MILLER

Stanton?

BOARD MEMBER CHRIS STANTON

Aye.

BOARD SECRETARY ANNE MILLER

Miller? Aye. I echo the sincere regret. Aye.

Alessio?

BOARD MEMBER DAVID ALESSIO

Aye.

BOARD SECRETARY ANNE MILLER

And Stevens?

BOARD PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. STEVENS

Aye.

BOARD SECRETARY ANNE MILLER

Unfortunately or fortunately, the motion carries 7-0.

Transcript Ends.

Certification

I, Roberta Glab, of McHenry, IL 60050, an employee of Office Team, 2800 W. Higgins Road, Hoffman Estates, IL 60195, 847 885-6228, hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of that portion of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors held on February 22, 2010 at 7:30 p.m. relating to proposed budget reductions for 2010-2011. The portion of the meeting transcribed was held at Carpentersville Middle School, 100 Cleveland Avenue, Carpentersville, IL 60110.

/s/ Roberta Glab

Roberta Glab
Transcriptionist
For Office Team