

DCSD School Board Meeting
2-16-10

Present: Ryan Stuart, John Carson, Douglas Benevento, Clifton Stahl, Justin Williams, and Meghann Silverthorn. (Dan Gerken came a little late and made it into the closed session)

5:05 p.m.: Call to Order, Roll Call, Pledge

- Roll Call: Carson, Benevento, Stahl, Stuart, Silverthorn and Williams.
- Pledge of Allegiance
- Motion made, second, voice vote taken to approve a move into a closed Executive Session.
- 6:04 p.m. conclusion of closed session.

6:05: Board Decisions

- Naming of elementary #47: School Name, Sage Canyon; Mascot, Wranglers, Colors, navy blue and silver. Vote taken and approved.
- The District Advisory Committee Activity Report and the District Budget Reduction Plan Review.
 - Annette Fante introduced the DAC. John Claxton: over the year have taken part in several activities and meetings. Appointed five new DAC members. (introduction of DAC members that are in attendance). Sue Catterall: took part in budget reduction conversations, reviewed the STEM Charter applications, etc. Claxton: looked at School Improvement Plans, looked at leadership across schools, essential skills, etc.). Claxton: the one thing that we found district wide is a high level of willingness to roll up their sleeves and get involved. Some of the primary messages we heard, were clear, from SAC meetings: recruit and retain high quality teachers and if there are cuts, focus on reading, writing and arithmetic. Also we came away with the fact that they would like to see the board consider a mil levy soon to help support the revenue side of this. We failed to go to a meeting where this did not come up with our constituents (applause from the crowd). We went through a process that included many people...the superintendent's primary goals were financial stability, do best to minimize impact on classroom and maintain options and choice. The SACs managed their process, lots of feedback from SACs saying they are not budget experts but want to know how it would impact their achievement, SIP and safety. Also defined process by BoE End Statements. Catterall: SACs have spent the last few weeks pouring over the budget reductions, had an opportunity to discuss at the recent district forum...we also have set up regional communications with our SACs. Claxton: we know this last year we could have done a better job in Castle Rock and had some transition, we will do a better job. Catterall: class size came up in every meeting. Particularly at the elementary level, however it does impact MS and HS. There was a concern of losing our SROs at the HS level. The community is focused on student achievement. A lot of discussion on fees. There was a feeling among schools of our need to educate our community on the needs of our school district. Claxton: the district budget reduction survey gave us a lot of information. Catterall: in terms of the meetings we did get a lot of engagement. Most meetings lasted an hour to two

hours, started by principal. Common themes: a lot of questions around the fees, voted yes because wary of not knowing all of the information. Claxton: when we went to SAC meetings, ½ of the meetings were spent on transportation. Many people felt that the way the question was asked they were hamstrung on how to answer. We received mixed results on mixed interpretations. Catterall: class size, quality teachers, safety, rather interesting that came out was our community was willing to pay more for fees on athletics and music. Claxton: the primary discussion centered around a mill levy discussion, we heard it very clearly that we need to start a process...some of the numbers discussed was a 4mill would bring around 20 million. Technology, we found broad and deep support. The ability to deliver technology is key and is motivating. (on the survey) 80% yes, 90% SACs said yes, 10-0 DAC vote. Transportation in the end (on the survey) 51%, 86% of SACs, DAC 9-1 vote in favor of fee support for transportation. Based on the feedback from SACs we need a lot more information. We need further study and consideration, the DAC is sure that will happen and will take part. Claxton: the survey was not supportive, SACs yes and DAC yes on instrumental music fees. In some schools it is an after school program, etc. some schools were not sure what they were voting on...depending on what they had it had an impact on the vote. Pretty strong support at the SAC level, on the other hand not a clear decision on being a part of the day or after/before school. World Language was similar to last year, survey not supportive, SACs supportive, DAC voted 6-4. Wrestled with priorities, if cutting don't touch reading, writing and arithmetic. Sports, HS stronger support. What we charge in a HS is a bargain. DAC 10-0 in asking the board to explore an override. Catterall: we felt the process was very inclusive and included community...100s of hours spent doing this. This community is ready to help you just need to ask. There are tremendous ideas out there. I think you will get a lot of support. Claxton: one of the common things we got from parents is that there is not a "do over" on education and we have one chance to get this right. The DAC voted unanimously to support the superintendent's budget reduction. Williams: did anything come up that you head over and over that we should cut this? Claxton: no we didn't hear anything based on our conversations, we did discuss wants and needs. Stahl: I am concerned that some were held in the morning and had two people show up, some at night with a lot in attendance. Claxton: if you take a look at the community survey and the attempts to engage the community...as you looked at the responses from our most invested partners...from the DAC perspective...we asked the schools to broadcast this, the SACs met and then engaged in a public meeting. Stahl: that is the challenge, it is incumbent upon us to inform...if SACs are meeting in the morning, to mix it up would help engage all of our stakeholders. Catterall: to your question, each SAC did review the results of their surveys. DACs engagement is with SACs. Gerken: what was your sense of people's knowledge of the shortfall for next year? Claxton: the presentations were very well structured. Principals and SACs walked through the dollars. Gerken: basically we are looking at a 40 mill dollar reduction for

next year...that is where we as a board need to get across to everyone.
Claxton: right now with attempting to have local control...65% of our funding streams are coming from the state, the remainder...as you point out (is local). Carson: the chair will entertain a motion to charge a fee of \$100.00 to ride the bus...silence...that was a joke.

▪ **6:58 Student and Staff Recognitions**

- Herzog: Rachel Gross, senior at TRHS. Scored a perfect 800 on her critical reading portion of the SAT. Gold Key Recognitions of the Jeremy Hillman, senior TRHS, Laura Carter, senior TRHS, Rebecca Dickensen, senior, TRHS, Nicolette Tiason (sp?), junior, TRHS. Staff: Business Services Department.
- Ranch View Middle School band members played.

▪ **7:07 Community Engagement**

- Carson: introduced the board members to the standing room only audience. I would like to provide a brief update to you, one of the priorities is to hold meetings around the district. I am pleased to announce that the financial transparency is now available. At the last meeting the board signed a MOU with the DCF and will work to better support our teachers and students. WAN (wide area network) was approved by the board and will allow our schools to make each classroom a 21st century learning space. We have not had this kind of a system in place...in some of our 2,000 student schools we currently have the internet capacity of 8 houses. Not all of the news is bad, that is a huge plus to our community. We as a board are committed to a partnership with neighborhood, charter and choice schools. All of these students are public school students and want to work together. As we ask in the future the taxpayers for additional funds we will go to them united. The community survey was open for 10 days and we received a record number of responses. If you are not aware of the budget reduction information on the website please take a look. We as a board are committed to transparency. I would like to update you on the superintendent search, 34 meetings were held and 1,300 questionnaires submitted. A report is posted on our website. The characteristics largely result that we received from the community. Finally I want to thank the individuals that put countless hours into arranging this forum, I want to thank RVMS for their hospitality. One of the purposes of tonight's meeting is to take comments on the budget reductions. As Dan stated we are looking at a 100 hundred-year flood. I want to announce that the BoE will begin to consider revenue options (applause) we will consider and have asked the superintendent to bring us proposals and have asked our financial advisors...no decision has been made. It is important to consider it and the prospects of winning it. We will need your help on that process. The members of the public can address the board and need to fill out a speaker's card. The board and staff may respond to questions and comments. This is the time for us to hear from you and you to hear from us.
- Sally Morton: as a parent in DC we hear plenty of what is not working in this district. I want to share what is working. Two sons went through CHS...received an exceptional education in DC and I applaud how our staff prepares our students for higher education. I ask this board to build upon

what is working. Thanks to the dedication and support of moderate needs teachers, aids, and regular education teachers. This will change, the para-educators' funding cuts will directly impact students. Remember their state test scores will count for our district. Maintain a successful moderate needs programs.

- Art Castro: DC has the lowest funding. Cherry Creek still does not come up to our standards. \$162/per year is what my taxes would need to be raised to break even today. My feeling this is a very small tax increase and a very small portion of what I have paid in other states. I don't ever expect the state to fund us as they have funded us in the past. We need board members who are up to the task, if anyone finds it against their political religion to raise taxes you will be doing a disservice to the kids and community. The tax increase should be up to the taxpayers and not the board. If we go into a sub standard school district we will go into lower home values, no one wants a substandard school system (standing ovation). Williams: Art volunteers five days/ week at Wildcat Mountain Elementary.

Kevin Larsen: (the letter that Mr. Larsen mentions is posted under school board notes on the www.dcf.net site).

- Thank you for the opportunity to speak at this forum. A couple weeks ago I wrote a note that received a bit of attention. Rather than read that entire essay (it took me 14 minutes the other day), Nona has kindly included it in your packet for this evening. I want to focus my remarks on the optimism I feel for this school district and why I believe we can successfully approach the community to make the necessary investment in Douglas County Schools. The need for a mill levy is a matter of when, not if. We've done the budget liposuction. We're losing muscle now and in danger of causing brain damage. Every school is trying to minimize the classroom impact, but there's no avoiding a rise in class sizes next year. If we don't supplement our anorexic funding with some financial nutrition very soon, we are going to see a starving system with drastic consequences. We have not only one of the most affluent, but also one of the most educated counties in the nation, not just Colorado. People have moved here by choice and for the most part, can afford higher value homes and other things in life than the average family. However, with that education and income comes a high degree of discretion. People want value for their money. Here's why I think our community will rise to the occasion and to borrow someone's words, "live up to its demographics": 1. Our school district is opening up and making more transparent its expenditures and budget items. Now, citizens can go online, drill down, and see how expenditures are allocated. I think that's great. It's fair to expect that if we want investment in our schools, we need to provide a transparent view of how those dollars are used. 2. We are establishing a Fiscal Oversight Committee. As this group gets into place, our district will be even better positioned to plan for the future, mitigate financial fluctuations, and audit for efficiency. This, combined with the transparency measures, is a strong statement to any investor in Douglas County Schools that we will be wise stewards of their money. 3. Our teachers and the district are working cooperatively to establish a pay-for-performance model of compensation and employment. While the details are not finalized, this direction is important to let investors know that their dollars are being spent optimally. It builds investor confidence, and is yet another way that our district is at the front end of innovative thinking. 4. We are efficient. The recent study by Augenblick, showed Douglas County Schools to be in the top level in efficiency among the dozen or so Front Range districts that were analyzed. That report is available on the district website. 5. Revenue sources to operate a school district are a combination of the state funding formula, local

override investment, and fees directly paid by users of certain services. It takes a balance of these approaches and should reflect the values of each of those entities. The parents, through the recent survey, stepped up and did back several fees that would keep certain services and programs in place. 6. At many of the SAC meetings I attended over the past two weeks were calls for a mill levy increase. On Facebook I've seen well over 1500 people in just two weeks join the call for a mill increase. 7. Around 70% of Douglas County residents don't have a child enrolled in a school, so I looked at the math on my property tax bill. Bottom line: my annual property tax bill comes out to about three quarters of one percent of my home market value, half of which goes to the school district. The numbers on the last mill levy worked out to an additional 0.04 percent. To me that's a no-brainer investment. Keeping our schools strong, even if you don't have a kid in them, keeps Douglas County a desirable place to live. That makes employers want to set up shop here. That keeps demand for homes up; that keeps home values up. The extra mill levy is a very small insurance premium for my property value and home equity. 8. Our children still perform at the highest levels of achievement. One of my favorite philosophers, Wayne Gretzky, said you miss 100% of the shots you don't take. He didn't score goals by just taking crazy, random shots. No, he got into position, and anticipated where the puck was going to be, not just where it was. Here's how we get into position. To succeed we first need to have a united board that not only approves, but wholeheartedly endorses approaching the citizens for an INVESTMENT in their community. We must unite those who prefer neighborhood schools and those who prefer charters and other options. We must engage in conversations with our friends, neighbors, business associates, sports team families, rec center buddies, churches, dance recital families – anyone we know – to see this as an investment. We must communicate the things that we are doing – and will continue to do – that gives people a reason to invest. Well, there are a bunch of eager people here who want to help create and dispatch that message. I am enlisting. Sign me up! Mr. Carson, Mr. Stuart, Mr. Stahl, Mr. Williams, Mr. Gerken, Mr. Benevento, Ms. Silverthorn, I know you are sincerely, and in good faith, looking at all the ways we can address these tough financial times. You are in a position, no matter what expectations may have been set a few months ago regarding taxes, to show that with the knowledge you now have of our financial outlook, that you can make a united statement reflective of reality and a desire to put our district on sound financial footing that will keep this school district and this county the best place to learn and to live.

- Amy Hunt: (library board of trustees, Buffalo Ridge SAC and liaison to DAC) I have a lot of knowledge...I am here with a good story. DC libraries have seen significant growth. However like the schools we are facing difficult issues, last year the public and school librarians came up with a database of what they critically need. Through this effort this ensured that students had access to critical resources and we saved the taxpayers \$100,000. Both of our organizations will continue to serve the community. We hope to sustain this partnership. This is the kind of community engagement we need to work on.
- Cindy Barnard: we would like to know from each board member their opinion on a mill levy. Williams: I think that the most important thing is how does it look. The last time we went out we had some people who fought against it. Things were significantly different when we went out. We need to get the people who fought against us on our side. Benevento: I start with the proposition that another failed mill levy is devastating. You lost one in 2008. In an even numbered year you have to get your message across. I supported the last mill levy, I voted for it, my question is can the resources be put together. The other thing that needs to be kept in mind is that taxpayers have

seen an increase in taxes. We will have to explain to voters what is going on. I want to be darn sure the resources are there. We need to talk to the union about having the resources to get the information out there. (An audience member asked Mr. Benevento to switch from “you” to “we”). Gerken: we need all options on the table. If elections were decided by intensity and feeling you could will on this room alone. If we are going to have a mill levy election you have got to have an eye on...what are you going to go out there with. If one were going to propose to solve for the 40 million it would not be successful. It depends on what it looks like. It is difficult to solve this on the expense side...to solve it purely through increases in class size. When you have 85% of operating expenses in (salaries and benefits)...if you look at the DAC. Every cut falls in employees or reduction in compensation. You cannot solve without cutting compensation or employees. I don't think you can solve it 100% on the revenue side...Audience member: do you support the mill? Give me a proposal... Audience member: that is your job...you were elected to represent children. Silverthorn: I have no children in the schools and if I weren't on the board I would have very little idea of what is going on. 70% only see it on the news. We will work with people to show you what it will look like. I have to make everyone understand. Can we get there by this fall or next fall? I want to be conscious of all of that. I have heard from many people who are afraid to stand up in this room who don't support it. I would like to support something but it would depend on what it looks like. Stuart: yes at this time (inaudible). Carson: I am certainly willing to consider it. It is my job to ask the board and I asked if they are willing to discuss it. I think you want a skeptical board if we come to the conclusion that we need a tax increase if it comes from a skeptical board. If we are looking to reform the system. The members of this board have 14 kids in this district. We have a desire to keep DC successful. My criteria has always been that we are a school district open to parental choice and we fund those as equitably as possible and pay should be based more on performance and success in the classroom. We need to have a thoughtful process. We need to get through the budget process first. Stahl: I tend to agree with the assumption of an intelligent question. My job is to do the due diligence, but to scrub the issue. Long and short of it if we craft it correctly I would be supportive of an election. Williams: just because I am hearing the same thing from all of us, I think we are the ones responsible. I would suggest we bump this up on our list of priorities, we have dealt so much with budget cuts it has consumed all of us maybe we should bump this up. If we are going to do this we need to get cracking. We spent 80,000 in the last one. We need to the fundraising to sell it. Maybe we should step it up. Stahl: many of you are coming to open night to make comments and are making great comments about the success I will turn it around and ask that I am interested to hear your personal thoughts of an across the board pay cut or release of teachers and increase class sizes. We have to address the compensation issue and need to hear from you. Carson: we need to hear for one minute each.

- Parent: I went to the SAC meeting and my eyes were opened and I attended Mr. Hart's presentation...I would expect everyone to step up. I see the teachers stepping up. But to the 70% , don't you want your reputation to be of supporting strong public schools...our reputation is the best thing we have. We need to maintain that and that is your (the board) job and your legacy.
- Kevin Leung: I think it is important to understand from a small business point of view. I want the board to keep in mind that people are the biggest asset, but I promise that if you are not taking them seriously the best and the brightest will go in a heartbeat when the economy comes back. Do not treat them badly by cutting their salaries. The elephant on the table is the party. Please go back and ask the party to support...many of these people are republicans and we will support you.
- Joellen Mitchell: we are members of the nutrition services team. We serve 32,000 customers each day. Every year our people in our kitchens help the students. We are not a capitol fund in the district, the word is (the district) may be considering outsourcing. For a firm it is all about money, you cannot find a better staff ours to help serve DC. I believe that it has to be more than the bottom line but the love they serve, so please keep us on board.
- Linda Knackstedt: this the first time I have ever been to a board meeting (kitchen manager at Mountain View Elementary). We take great pride in our jobs we are dedicated, compassionate and caring. We are able to see when a child is having a bad day, we report to teachers, we look to see if anyone is not eating because their mom forgot to pack a lunch. We know most of our friends by name. You will only get what you pay for. There have been other school districts who have changed to (outsourcing) to the cost of the student only later to realize the mistake but not before the devastation to the employees. The lack of money spent in the county. Adding to the already saturated 6% unemployment this decision may come back to haunt you later. Rethink better solutions without job cuts. Adding to this problem is not the solution. We need to cut where we can and not who and hopefully this too shall pass. Williams: I want to address head on these rumors this is another one of those. (No) plan to outsource. I am leading the charge on this I don't want to fire anyone but I intend to change the quality of the food.
- Dawn Clark: (when looking at wanting to) allocate mill levy funds to charter schools wanting to fund all students equally. If funding is equalized I hope that all students as well as those that are struggling learners are welcomed. Equal funding should mean equal services. I hope you take the level of student need and student performance when you look at PFP. Last, Mr. Gerken you were unable to attend the DAC meeting for Castle Rock and I would like to know if we could get the same information that was given to Parker and Highlands Ranch? Stahl: if you were sitting in my chair would you vote for an across the board pay cut or increased class size/reduction of teachers? Clark: I would say I already took a pay cut with benefits. I would need to know more details, I have heard 5% pay cut and furlough days, I would need more information...Carson: I did call on you Dawn and I think

your perspective on charters is important. We are going to sit down and determine what is a fair allocation.

- Melissa Wollenburg: (3 boys in DC schools) I moved from Detroit where the tsunami has already taken everything out. I was part of budget cuts in the prominent systems and I am here to tell you it is not worth it, if you want to come talk to me it is devastating to a school. I am here as a product of that...I had a chance to stay but didn't. I grew up here and came back on purpose. If you are here and you volunteer a little bit get involved and step it up. I have cashed in bonds and put it back in the school.
- Madison Staulk: (student) sophomore at TRHS. The decision to cut teachers at our school. Teachers should be cut based on merit and not tenure. My biology teacher Mr. Torbush...he has a great passion for his subject. He is an amazing teacher. Through my church in our senior year (pick favorite teacher), in my senior year I would still like him to be around. There are other things we can cut besides our teachers. New projectors have come in to our building, but there are other things that are more important to cut. Carson: that takes a lot of courage and I appreciate that. Stahl: talk to me about your school day, I just want to hear from you for a second. Staulk: I have 30-35 people in my classes. It concerns me that it would go up. Stahl: I want to do a better job of talking to students.
- Bridgett: four kids in TRHS feeder. I am not nearly as prepared as everyone else 4, 6, 8, 10 the thing that impacts me the most are the teachers. Most are fantastic and some are great and some are o.k. my son inspired me to come to day about Mr. Torbush...my son is in his honors biology class. He talked to me excitedly about his teacher and science. The other day at dinner he was explaining what puss is. I hope you guys are willing to look into his teaching.
- **Teacher Panel:**
- Alison Gehringer: (5th grade teacher at Stone Mountain Elementary) I appreciate your question on a cut versus teachers and class sizes. If you ask us to take a pay cut you will lose teachers on the second hand if you cut teachers we are hurting students. Each student deserves to be valued. I could sit here all night and talk about class size, the biggest concern is the loss of the individual child. I can not give feedback with 30+ kids. Stahl: you are a 5th grade teacher...do some of our older kids...is a high school student more able to adapt to a higher class size? Gehringer: I think class size is important no matter what. Our students will survive, but not thrive. You will see that teachers in this district will step it up, but you will also lose the best and brightest in this district.
- Mike Erickson: (TRHS teacher) It is good to be part of "we." I spent my first 22 years in the business world. I am continually grateful each year (I get to teach). Being a teacher has been the most rewarding part of my career. The "I won't raise your taxes" is getting pretty old. Locally we need to do what is best for our collective future. We must all continue to make DC schools successful. I am excited to hear what we are thinking of doing. I suggest the following next steps. Inform the public of the cuts and inform the households what the cost would be of making their investment in the schools. DC rating

is distinguished. Is it time to invest in our community. Is it time to cut expenses or also raise revenue.

- Christine Sneden: we do not produce widgets and gadgets, we produce spirits with one dream of getting the best education possible for leading their lives. We need to protect class size, educational classroom support, programs, clubs and activities, staff development, benefits. These are the things that made DC a nationally recognized district. If it isn't broken don't fix it. It is not in need of repair, what is needed are practical solutions.
- Amy Rahne: (6th grade at Stone Mountain Elementary) Differentiation goes out the window with increased class sizes. You have to focus more on the middle, it is hard to meet with small groups, please keep the kids in the forefront of your thoughts. In response to your question (cuts or teacher jobs/class sizes), are those the only two options? Stahl: I need to know what you think. The purpose of the question is...just like you ask us about a mill levy, there is not really a yes or no answer but this is the process you go through. Carson: thank you very much.
- Audience member: mom with two kids in CSE moved from California. Moved here for the schools, I am amazed by the teachers. I am against class sizes increasing. My kindergartener has 25 kids in class.
- **8:45 Adoption of Consent Agenda: accepted by voice vote**
- **8:46 Adoption of Joint Motion Agenda**
- **8:47 Board/Superintendent Updates**
- **Return to Open Comment:**
 - Terry Scanlon: we hear the 70% over and over again. Cherry Creek and Littleton have a higher %. I heard some comments about the message of losing an election. My concern is the message we send to the dedicated professionals in our schools by not going out. If losing twice were the death knoll, TABOR would not have passed. If we don't go again they are not going to believe us that we need it.
 - Mark: sophomore at TRHS. My first comment is about teacher cuts...(unable to hear the comments).
 - Bill Gregg: I would like to speak to the custodians, please keep those employees, our friends, as district employees.
 - Justin Chan: TRHS sophomore class. Massive budget cuts through the next school year. As many as 10-17 staff members at TRHS alone. In high school you learn who you are and what you can achieve. Many teachers support after school activities and if they are cut...Why must student's education suffer when there are other sources. If we want to keep a world class society...our economy can be stitched together in a few years, but a broken education lasts a lifetime.
 - Linda Newson: parent of a junior in high school. We picked here (Douglas County) as the only place to look. I still want to be able to sell my house too. I support a ballot issue next year, but we have problems this year. Let's get creative. Compensation, I asked...something has to give, the board has reached out tonight and I ask everyone to work together to come up with solutions. Lets not cut the young teachers, look at merit and not tenure.

Besides furloughs...take a year off for a sabbatical. Ask some of the teachers who make the most to take a break. Finally, I think we are all looking at the ballot measure. MOU for how to do evaluation and compensation there are some things to be able to do that would bring a lot of those parents in to vote yes.

- Kathy Landry: concerned community member from Parker, I am one of the 70%. I believe that the future of our country relates to the future of our schools. I volunteer to help, I did it in the last election. We cannot fail again, I understand politics, we understand what good education is all about and the necessity of it. I appreciate the conversation around let's be real and civil. I think we absolutely have to do this. You will have to pass a budget that will cut jobs, compensation or both.
- Polli Ring: I am here tonight as a parent, a tax- payer and a registered voter to talk about accountability. Over the last few weeks I have heard the Board address the issue of accountability including the need for responsive teachers and administrators. What I have not heard is the Board addressing its own accountability back to teachers and administrators. I am hopeful that by sharing my thinking, you will take a moment to be reflective about your decisions now and in the future. When you do, I think you will find the greatest need is how to move the system forward, not shake it from its foundation. Leadership and financial responsibility go hand in hand. In thinking about what direction this district is headed in terms of leadership, I'd like you to consider the following. As a consumer I would not seek out medical care from a hospital whose have actually never practiced the art of medicine. Nor would I book a flight for my family on an airline whose employees had never sat in the cockpit of airplane. In light of this, I have some serious concerns about sending my kids to school under the leadership of individuals who have never spent time teaching children themselves. You cannot consider hiring prospective leaders who have never been employed as educators. Our children deserve leaders with expertise, experience and a deep understanding of how kids learn and why teachers teach the way they do. Not considering an educator for the position of leading other educators is irresponsible and will certainly cost the district in the long run. Please consider every ripple effect of every budget reduction, and how these cuts will directly impact students. Did you know we have over three thousand kids in our school district with life threatening, chronic health issues? My teenage son is one of them. As you consider funding Health Services, for example, please be vigilant about who will be accountable for caring for kids needing insulin injections and nebulizer treatments. Again the theme of a retaining highly qualified staff surfaces. Reducing health services could very likely result in a lawsuit naming Douglas County as negligent for not providing necessary care. Your decision to retain school nurses and health assistants will not only save litigation dollars but could potentially save lives. Finally, I am concerned with the division I sense between the Board, the community and the employees of DCSD. As an observer it saddens me to see a sense of disengagement towards the employees and stakeholders who have made DC

Schools what they are today. Please thoughtfully consider the smallest things you do including your body language and the impact your public comments have on the employees of this district who continue to hold their heads high each and every day despite this division. Spend time with teachers, students and principals. Be visible in the schools and in the community, welcome information from those in the trenches and be cautious about change for change sake. You cannot possibly be prepared to make informed budget decisions until you do so. A key to successful change is one's ability to adapt. I'd like to know the Board is willing to adapt itself to a system that continues to embody excellence. As Winston Churchill once said, "There is nothing wrong with change, as long as that change is in the right direction."

- Gregor Avison: (TRHS teacher) we need to focus on teacher compensation and student learning. There are little ideas out there we can combine together: GIP and Outstanding Teacher. I know why it didn't work in 2008, we didn't get to everyone. We have to get the information to everyone. I will take a job loss or cut for their (student) benefit, but before I do that I want to make sure there is nothing left to do.
- Christine Harris: I helped on the past bond/budget measure. I was ill equipped to be out there. Every parent and teacher in this district needs to be out there campaigning for this. It is time. I would rather pay for buses than lose a teacher.
- David DiCarlo/ Brad Wann: **My name is David DiCarlo and I am a Wickerdale Walker. I can see the memo about red shirts got out, the children thank you. Have you sent a red crayon to the Governor? If not I hope you will tonight! Action is the antibiotic for this budget disease. The School Board for Douglas County has the unenviable task of "squeezing every penny until Lincoln screams". No one wants cuts, but the cuts are coming. We must stop this by coming together and pointing our finger at the capitol. This problem was created there, not here and the solution, unfortunately, must come from there as well. The beautiful thing about this is that those elected people who run the capitol work for you, they are your employees! If we don't speak they cannot listen. If we gather together and demand change, change will come. If it does not, it is then our duty to make ourselves be heard, to scream over the din, to beat a collective shoe on the podium and demand that this unfair system be fixed. I as you can probably imagine, have no problem screaming. We are the eighth largest county by population and have the highest median incomes in the state. Yet we are funded near the bottom of the 178 school districts in a state that already funds education at \$1400 less per pupil than the national average. 178 district and 64 counties, do the math it does not add up. No reasonable person can hear this and conclude that the system sensible; it is ill conceived and lopsided. It is time to change this funding formula; it is time to be creative about funding education and it is time to make education more than a political by-line that gets tossed about every four years. I am telling all of you that we must unite to make a shift away from this culture of complacency. The days of this county being the war chest for the rest of the state are going to end. The Capitol will find a way to be fair in the distribution of education funds and they will be resourceful about how they raise them, provided that we hold them accountable. Most of you are here tonight to show your support for a Mills Levy. I support the Levy too, but I do not support the type of economics that necessitate them. According to the CDE the DCSD currently has \$477 million dollars in outstanding bonds and levies. We must address the root cause, we can put more Band-Aids on the sieve, but it will still leak. A Mill levy will ease the pain this year but we will need another next year or the year after. In treating the symptom we**

must not ignore the source. Raise the mill but fight the state! Bonds and Levies should be raised for wants not needs.

The money to fix this issue is sitting in the trust fund of your state parks. Does your school have a trust fund? Let the parks raise a levy or bond to operate. I would rather invest in the education children, which is a mandatory venture, than invest in parks which are a luxury. We must put needs before wants. I am going to ask 3 things of each of you. 1. Send a red crayon to the Governor Ritter; we have directions on our business cards. 2. Join our facebook or blog to find out about what is happening and to tell us what is important to you. 3. **Join us on Monday the 22nd for a road-side protest. We will be holding signs proclaiming that the state is bankrupting Colorado schools. WE DID NOT GET OFF THE COUCH TO LOOSE; WE ARE HERE TO ENSURE THAT THE DOUGLAS COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT IS A MODLE FOR THE REST OF THE NATION AND NOT A SAD REFLECTION OF IT.**

Unite with us and make this your mission too.

▪ **Board Decisions II**

▪ Hart: brief budget information overview.

▪ [Update of STEM conditional enrollment and a progress report from STEM leadership.](#) (click on above link to see information included in the BoE packet) Pat McGraw and Kindra Whitmyre. McGraw: I would like to thank my staff and all of the time they have spent. By Feb. 15 needed to show 525 signed enrollment cards (75%). Board has been updated regularly, as of the 15th 186 signed enrollment cards. Stahl: with regards to communication with STEM we had been given a spreadsheet with names. When were we telling them that they need the enrollment cards? McGraw: a lot of intents to enroll were signed on line. Roxanne Hyatt: they were sent a reminder that they would need to show signed enrollment cards. Staff in terms of due diligence they were very careful and spent a lot of time to help out the staff. In the last two weeks we have had meetings. I want to turn it over the Mark Beasley and his team. Mark Beasley: let me further answer the question Mr. Stahl... the original letters of intent to enroll prior to the December meeting numbered around 700. We had the realization 426 enrolled students on line we have set out the past seven days to retrofit those onto enrollment cards. It has been a very positive relationship with Pat and Kendra. I want to address the 525 separate from the forms. That was certainly a faux pas. Stahl: how did we outline the process to keep this from happening? Roxanne: the initial communication went out with a copy of the form. I attached it to the email with instructions on how to print it out with own name. Fante: it is a standard registration form? The key component is the recognition that the parent is giving up the right to the neighborhood school and that differs from the one on the site. Stahl: the STEM electronic form doesn't have that statement? Panel Member: it does have that statement. We did start immediately collecting enrollment forms. Beasley: the other difference is a hand signature and electronic signature. Gerken: when can you get that up? Beasley: this is new to us, no excuses that's for sure, but to point out that the information is the same or similar. Wrong format and my apologies for that. Gerken: you are going to address the 426 vs. 525? Beasley: what number did we need to enroll for the PPR to run the school. Jason Lundberg: we have made some cuts to make it to the breakeven point for 426 students. Cuts made to operating reserves. We reduced our professional development for staff. Investment in people. Average with bonus programs 40,000 +. Carson: what is the date by which you cannot return to the neighborhood school. Past? Past. Fante: we request written notification by Friday of last week. Gerken: any additional students

at this point would be from the district? Lundberg: two ways, from outside the district and administrative transfers. Stuart: what is the likelihood of the neighborhood school...inaudible... Fante: when there is movement around the district...that is why we have established the parameters. Lundberg: we are not asking for an extension of the open enrollment date. Gerken: what is the effect of waiting until March 16th. Herzog: it delays our staffing in other buildings. Fante: we want parents to be fully informed...when parents click on the "open enrollment" it is two different things. Gerken: have any of the 426 that have been contacted declined to fill out the other form? Lundberg: we have had a significant amount drop their enrollment. Gerken: then where are we getting the 426? Panel member: we have had that from numerous phone calls. As soon as they indicate to us to withdraw their names. We were trying to figure out the whole thing as well. Because we were not on the official DCSD website parents couldn't find it. I couldn't find this year's registration form. Is the open enrollment period extended? Herzog: it was extended because we moved off of the 4-track calendar. Beasley: in those weekly updates you were receiving we know who those students are. Stuart: my concern is for fairness for all students in DC, my fear is that the 426 families that were informed of the wrong form. Lundberg: the 40-45% in the past 7 days have been contacted and filled out. Stahl: so you are essentially saying that you are going to convert 100% of the 426? Looking at your books your numbers will run on a deficient if 9 of these students don't enroll. Looking at the entire district that are giving up their seat in the public school and that doesn't happen. That is my consideration in tough economic times and we are looking at 9 students running that tight, we wouldn't open a public school...(applause from the crowd). I think is a wonderful concept, I don't know if the timing is right. You said yourself and we will know pretty quick if we are short. It puts us in a tough spot. This Board agreed and bent a little to give more and it is moving back to that original date you asked for. Panel member: if you say to the 100s and 100s of people who are excited for this school... Stahl: I am not sure it is 100s and 100s, it is 126. Panel member: we were also told that the Feb. 15th date...it was extended to the 18th in an email to our parents. Lundberg: if we dropped our average teacher salary to the average charter salary it would get us up to 30 students (make or break point). Carson: I am going to propose you give us a hard number for March 2nd and if you don't make the number then...(a lot of yelling from the crowd). Fante: I need to speak on behalf of the education side, but we must speak on behalf of those 54 or less in the 9th grade class, for 8th 65 students I must speak on behalf of those young people, but when they need 4-5 levels of math and English and science curriculum I have to ask is that right for them? Carson: Dan had a comment. Gerken: I was going to suggest the kind of progress they made in a week to put it on the agenda for the special board meeting on the 22nd. Beasley: we don't intend to speak of the intangibles. There are no other charter high schools south of Denver. The one in Denver is full up with quite the waitlist. The wait and sees and the back log of parents that don't want to give up their position in the neighborhood schools. Across the U.S. schools that look like this have quite the wait list. The parent meetings and the number of industries that come up to us. One anecdote is that the head of Mines Math Department, who wants to enroll his daughter, wants to make it feed into his math department. Those intangibles, I don't know how to quantify those for you but

all of the pent up desire from industry makes me very confident. Stahl: I believe we as a board must give solid choice options to our parents. When I look at this application I am intrigued. This board and this group made a public agreement for 525, but we are well short of the numbers...buyer beware is appropriate in this case. I am essentially the buyer for the community. When we look at the public dollars for this school...I highly encourage the parents and students to do the same. I want to see this school happen. However right now I am very concerned about the state of the application. Carson: any other statements? Silverthorn: have you made any contingency plans? You had to anticipate that we would defer your application for next year. What other plans do you have in place? Panel member: we have another building that would work, the average size of a charter schools is 100-200 students. What we have proposed is in line. I see that we have fallen short of the 525. The children are excited, industry is excited. We owe it to our parents we would like to discuss it with them. Stahl: who would have the voting majority (on the board)? Lundberg: the primary stakeholders (parents and students). Stahl: how big of a deal is it to go from a week to Mr. Gerken's option. I want to see these kids succeed as much as you. I would like to roll it out with a bang and have this board and families comfortable. This community would be under that kind of pressure (9 students). How do we do it in a time frame that allows this. Williams: you are asking for Friday? Gerken: we have a special board meeting on the 22nd. If this were a basketball game we would have 3 seconds on the clock. I would recommend we give you until Monday. Stahl: you have public meetings? Lundberg: yes. Carson: I want to give you the benefit of the doubt, if you can't come to us by 6:00 on Monday... Williams: you don't have a property or you are having to change that...McGraw: we have a validation process, if you are talking about 6:00 on Monday we need to validate before then. About 4 hours to go through the 180 we have. Gerken: could they be validating as they go along. McGraw: yes. Stuart: if staff represented to you as a board...inaudible. Carson: I will open it up to the floor for brief questions.

- I agree with you and this school sounds great, however I don't see how any of us can in good conscious to add a school. But we cannot do this right now.
 - All of the teachers really want to trust you as a board. As you want all of the teachers to trust you, you need to follow through with what you say. You could gain a lot of respect right now if you make the right decision.
 - I am a parent and I am speaking on behalf of the STEM school...we had 1,000 people at the informational meetings. There is so much here, the problem we are encountering tonight is the problem with the forms and deadlines. Some are waiting to hear a final answer. My child desperately wants to go there.
- Carson: I believe there is sufficient support for 425 by Monday. Stahl: I am o.k. with Monday and a 425. I want to see you succeed and will give you the benefit of the doubt. Carson: is there a motion. Benevento: I make a motion to extend the application to Feb. 22nd at 6:00 for a number of 425 students. Silverthorn: I told you at the very beginning that no one supports this more than me. My stomach hurts with this decision...I abstain. Stuart: I am o.k. with extending the deadline but not the number. Vote: Carson: yes; Silverthorn: abstain; Stuart: no; Stahl: yes; Benevento: yes; Williams: yes; Gerken: yes. Vote: 5-1-1

Adjourn: 10:47

***Notes taken by Courtney Smith, DCF Office: Courtney.smith@dcsdk12.org. If you have any questions on the content of the notes feel free to contact me.**