

ALBANY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION
Board of Education Meeting Highlights 11/13/2018

These highlights are the personal notes of Board Member Blanchard and are not official minutes.

The majority of the meeting was devoted to receiving and discussing a report prepared by the Budget Advisory Committee. The report is contained in the Board agenda of November 13, 2018 (pages 114 – 143), found at: <http://www.ausdk12.org/board/11132018BOEAgendaPacket.pdf>

The committee provided the following conclusions and recommendations:

“The Committee was struck by the sheer magnitude of the cuts required relative to the District’s budget. After spending time with the numbers and asking for and receiving additional information, it became clear that there is no path to achieving the necessary reductions that completely avoids damage to students’ educational experience or cuts to staff and impacts morale. The Committee further recognizes that these are intertwined. The amount of low-impact expenditures in the budget is insufficient to implement the reductions through low-impact cuts alone. There is simply no way AUSD can do what it has been doing, or be quite the school district it has been, with this much less money. The task, then, is for the Board to cut in such a way as to minimize negative consequences, with the understanding that avoiding them altogether is not possible. The Committee urges all stakeholders –parents, students, teachers, administrators, other staff of all kinds—to recognize this, and to bear in mind that any expenditure that is kept in the budget must be paid for elsewhere.”

“The Committee recommends that the Board think broadly and creatively about ways to make the cuts easier for students and staff to bear. Further, the Board, Staff, and community should actively pursue any potential revenue solutions to minimize the need for cuts. These might include new parcel taxes, increased fund pooling among PTAs, plans to increase facility rental revenues, increases in transfer students, among other possibilities. Above all, the Committee recommends that the Board refer back to the principles identified by this Committee as a guide post for their decisions:

- 1) Minimize impact on educational quality for all students,
- 2) Consider the ability to restore a given reduction before cutting it, and
- 3) Spread reductions widely, favoring smaller reductions for a greater number of stakeholders over larger reductions for a few.”

The Board referred a series of questions to staff to address for the November 27 Board meeting. The Board also asked the Budget Advisory Committee to continue working throughout the 2018-2019 school year to evaluate ideas and issues for which there had not been sufficient time to fully study.

The Board received staff reports on the California School Dashboard local indicators and on special education.

The Board approved a contract with Beacon Consulting to implement energy efficiency measures at existing school sites, which are expected to save \$100,000 per year in operating costs. Beacon identified a much less expensive option for installing an energy management system at AHS than had been originally planned: installing wireless thermostats will cost \$38,000 compared with \$440,000 for a traditional system with wiring.