



To: Rochester Public Schools (RPS) School Board Directors
From: Kent Pekel, Ed.D., Interim Superintendent
Subject: 2022-2023 Budget Strategy
Date: Saturday, February 5, 2022

At a study session on January 25, 2022, the School Board of the Rochester Public Schools reviewed a proposal for reductions in the school district's General Fund budget for the 2022-2023 school year and directed the administration to seek feedback from key stakeholders on those proposed reductions. This memo provides School Board members and those stakeholders with a summary of the feedback we received as well as the detailed feedback itself.

Contents

| | |
|--|---------|
| Review of Developments to Date | Page 1 |
| Recommended Resolution | Page 2 |
| Planned But Not Finalized Budget Reductions to Meet \$7 Million Target | Page 4 |
| Process of Collecting Stakeholder Feedback | Page 12 |
| Summary of Feedback From Input Sessions | Page 13 |
| Detailed Stakeholder Feedback From Webform | Page 15 |

Review of Developments to Date

The administration proposes that at the regular meeting of the RPS School Board on Tuesday, February 8, the board adopt a resolution that directs the administration to adopt the following strategy to guide the development of the school district's budget for 2022-2023. This strategy would direct administration to implement the first year of a three-year plan to address the district's structural deficit of approximately \$23 million. School Board members have discussed and informed the development of the components of this plan at several recent meetings:

- On December 7, 2021, the School Board reviewed a revised five-year budget forecast and discussed some of the factors that are the causes of the deficit facing the district. Those factors include the fact that the number of students in RPS has increased by 8.2% over the past twelve years, while the number of staff in RPS has increased by 30.7%. In addition, while opening new school buildings in the fall of 2022 will add space for long-term growth in student enrollment, opening those new schools will also increase operating expenses in the near-term.
- On January 11, 2022, the administration presented the School Board with four broad strategies for addressing the budget deficit, and board members directed the

administration to analyze the educational, financial, and operational impact of two of those strategies.

- On January 25, 2022, the School Board directed the administration to develop a detailed strategy for reducing the deficit that includes \$7 million in reductions to the district's General Fund budget along with making several accounting shifts, partial use of federal Covid relief funding, and use of the district's budget reserves. The School Board also asked the administration to seek stakeholder input on that strategy.

The strategy that the School Board selected on February 8th is the focus of this memo, and that strategy will be the focus of the School Board's discussion of and, we hope, vote on a resolution on the district's 2022-2023 budget at its meeting on February 8, 2022. We recommend that the School Board vote on such a resolution because while board members have discussed the development of this strategy at multiple recent meetings, the board has not yet taken formal action on the strategy at a regular meeting. We believe that such formal action is essential given the seriousness of the district's financial situation and the unavoidably difficult decisions that lie ahead.

It is important to add that while we recommend that the board approve a resolution outlining a broad strategy for the 2022-2023 budget at its meeting on February 8, approval of that resolution at next Tuesday's meeting would not, in fact, constitute approval of the 2022-2023 budget itself. Rather, that resolution would shape the process of planning the 2022-2023 budget, which must begin almost immediately following the School Board meeting on February 8 in order to present the board with a detailed budget proposal for consideration and action at the School Board meeting on June 21, 2022. If significant problems with making any of the budget reductions outlined below or alternatives to those reductions are identified through the budget planning process in the months ahead, the administration's budget reduction proposal would be revised to address those concerns or to incorporate those alternatives. It is important to stress, however, that while changes could be made in the specific budget reductions that the School Board will vote on in June, the cumulative savings from those reductions would still need to meet or exceed \$7 million to put the school district on the path to sustainable fiscal stability.

Recommended Resolution

We recommend that the RPS School Board adopt a resolution that directs the administration to develop a proposal for the school district's 2022-2023 General Fund budget that includes the following components:

1. Use of \$9.3 million in federal Covid funding to maintain critical services to students during and following the pandemic
2. Use of \$4.3 million of the school district's fund balance, which would leave the district with a 9% budget reserve
3. Delay the transfer of \$0.8 million into the OPEB health insurance savings account. All retirees would still receive full benefits despite this temporary pause in contributions to the account.

4. Delay the transfer of \$0.2 million into the GASB16 unused sick time severance savings account. Again, all retirees will still receive full benefits despite this temporary pause in contributions to the account.
5. Cancel the following three facilities leases to save \$0.2 million: the Gage East facility for girls' gymnastics, the Boys & Girls Club site for Middle School Right Fit, and the building at 415 South Broadway, which currently houses the INCubatoredu program. As is noted below, we recommend discontinuing the INCubatoredu program. Girls gymnastics and Middle School Right Fit would move to the current Friedell Middle School site for at least the 2022-2023 school year.
6. Make reductions \$7 million in the General Fund budget as outlined below with the potential to revise the specific reductions as long as the total level of \$7 million in reductions is achieved.

The list of potential reductions outlined below is largely unchanged from the version that School Board members reviewed on January 25, 2022, with one notable exception. We have retained the previous draft of our proposal first because we believe it represents a viable strategy for the first year of a multi-year effort to address the school district's structural deficit. We have also largely retained the previous version of the reductions because it was that version that stakeholders reviewed and commented on. As such, when board members review the stakeholder feedback summarized in this memo, it will align closely with the budget reduction proposals that are also included in this memo.

There is, however, one important difference in the language that we use in the version of the proposed reductions included in this memo from the version that the School Board and RPS stakeholders previously reviewed. In the previous version, several of the recommended reductions focused on cutting positions that are currently unfilled. In many cases, those unfilled positions involved staff who work with students who receive special education services. As a result, the previous version of the proposal identified the positions to be cut as *special education positions*. In fact, a more accurate way to frame our recommendation is to examine vacant positions in *all* areas of the school district's work, and to eliminate those positions if they enable us to reduce the deficit while maintaining core services to students. Those reductions could be made to positions that provide services to students who receive special education services, but they could also be made to positions that serve students who receive general education services. In an effort to more accurately communicate the substance of our recommendation, the revised version of the proposed reductions outlined below refers to unfilled positions in general, rather than to unfilled special education positions.



Planned But Not Finalized Budget Reductions to Meet \$7 Million Target

As noted above, the administration recommends that the reductions outlined below be included in planning for the Rochester Public Schools 2022-2023 budget. That planning process will begin immediately following the regular meeting of the School Board on February, 8, 2022, and will conclude with the approval of the 2022-2023 budget at the School Board meeting on June 21, 2022. If significant problems with making any of the planned reductions outlined below or alternatives to those reductions are identified through the budget planning process, the set of reductions will be revised to address those concerns or to incorporate those alternatives. If any such revisions are made, the total package of budget reductions will still meet the \$7 million target that the administration recommends the School Board approve at its regular meeting on February 8, 2022.

| Proposed Reduction | Financial Impact Statement | Educational or Operational Impact Statement | FTE Change, if applicable | Financial Impact | Cumulative Financial Impact |
|--|---|---|----------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Move money back from Workers Comp fund so there is no more than 25% fund balance | Reduce reserve funds in Work Comp fund to a 25% fund balance in Work Comp which should be sufficient. | No immediate impact should be noticed. This transaction has been done in the past. | | -\$617,361 | -\$617,361 |
| 2. Adjust budgeting methodology to allocate 5 extra general education teachers instead of 10 | For FY22 we budgeted 10.0 FTE and used all ten due to shifts in numbers at sites throughout the summer. Ten are in the December forecast; this would drop the proposed budget back to five. | No immediate impact on any employee or student. If there was a summer bump in enrollment, we'd need to come back to the School Board with a revised budget to allocate extra teachers needed beyond five. | -5.00 | -\$485,865 | -\$1,103,226 |

| Proposed Reduction | Financial Impact Statement | Educational or Operational Impact Statement | FTE Change, if applicable | Financial Impact | Cumulative Financial Impact |
|--|---|---|----------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 3. Adjust budgeting methodology to reflect approximate number of unfilled positions over the last 10 years | Assume that there will be 20% of the average of 168.8 unfilled positions in FY22 in FY23. | No immediate impact on any employee or student. Under-budgeting could result in over-spending an approved budget should all the positions become filled. Recent trends point to this not being likely, unfortunately. | | -\$1,504,244 | -\$2,607,471 |
| 4. Reduce central office contracted services and supply budgets | Reduce all central office budgets that directly impact the General Fund by 5%; excludes utilities, tuition payments for SPED/PSEO, lease/debt payments, property/liability insurance, and school busing contracts | Past trend has shown that central office staff typically underspend their allocation of General Fund budget. | | -\$352,779 | -\$2,960,250 |
| 5. Reduce site contracted services and supply budgets | Reduce all school budgets that directly impact the General Fund by 5% | Generally, school supply budgets end up with carry over at the end of the year. Sites are no longer charged for their phone lines as of October 2021 so this already offsets the reduction. | | -\$92,964 | -\$3,053,214 |

| Proposed Reduction | Financial Impact Statement | Educational or Operational Impact Statement | FTE Change, if applicable | Financial Impact | Cumulative Financial Impact |
|---|--|---|----------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 6. Eliminate an unfilled central office administrative clerical position | This position has been vacant since June 11, 2021 | No immediate impact on any student or employee. | -1.00 | -\$65,867 | -\$3,119,081 |
| 7. Reduce unfilled positions in Construction & COVID19 Response | These positions have been vacant for the entire school year | No immediate impact on any student or employee. | -4.00 | -\$365,660 | -\$3,484,741 |
| 8. Reduce building administrators based on enrollment or enrollment shifts | A principal ratio of generally 1.0 FTE per 400-450 students would be implemented | It is manageable to run a building of less than 400 students by one person; this is the current condition at Folwell, Longfellow, Pinewood, and Washington. | -5.00 | -\$814,190 | -\$4,298,931 |
| 9. Reduce unfilled teaching positions after examining the position and understanding why it has been vacant | Reduce the number of teacher positions, primarily by reducing unfilled positions | No perceived immediate impact on any student or employee if the position has been vacant. | -2.00 | -\$194,346 | -\$4,493,277 |
| 10. Eliminate INCubator edu program due to low demand, difficulty staffing, and leased facility cost | The position would be eliminated at the end of the school year when the lease is cancelled | The course would not be available for students. | -0.50 | -\$48,587 | -\$4,541,863 |

| Proposed Reduction | Financial Impact Statement | Educational or Operational Impact Statement | FTE Change, if applicable | Financial Impact | Cumulative Financial Impact |
|----------------------------------|--|---|----------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 11. Reduce Instructional Coaches | Instructional Coach allocations will be reduced by 0.2 FTE at each secondary school; secondary Instructional Coaches will need to pick up a section of a subject to maintain 1.0 FTE. More elementary Instructional Coaches will cover two schools each. | This would mean a reduction in the following supports: New Teacher Induction Plan; Personalized, job-embedded professional development; District professional development and implementation of evidence-based practices; Site professional development and achievement of site planning goals; Equitable grading and instructional practices for all students; Scaffolded support for teachers who may be struggling with instructional practices, behavior management, or mental wellness; Retention of high quality teachers; Coaches would not be able to sub for teachers as they have been doing. | -4.00 | -\$388,692 | -\$4,930,555 |

| Proposed Reduction | Financial Impact Statement | Educational or Operational Impact Statement | FTE Change, if applicable | Financial Impact | Cumulative Financial Impact |
|--|---|---|----------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 12. Reduce unfilled paraprofessional positions after examining the position and understanding why it has been vacant | Reduce the number of paraprofessional positions, primarily by reducing unfilled positions | No perceived immediate impact on any student or employee if the position has been vacant. | -4.22 | -\$187,975 | -\$5,118,530 |
| 13. Adjust budgeting methodology to assume less growth in paraprofessionals | Reduce the number of paraprofessional positions in the forecast, primarily by adjusting the future growth assumption. | No perceived immediate impact on students or employees; the positions don't currently exist today; this is an assumption change for future growth. | -7.70 | -\$343,089 | -\$5,461,619 |
| 14. Reduce tuition contracts at community nursery school | Reduce from 34 to 26 spots for special education preschoolers used to integrate them with their general education peers | The district is required to offer inclusive opportunities in the general education setting for our preschool students who have qualified for special education services. This reduction will impact the availability of those opportunities for our students. | | -\$15,240 | -\$5,476,859 |

| Proposed Reduction | Financial Impact Statement | Educational or Operational Impact Statement | FTE Change, if applicable | Financial Impact | Cumulative Financial Impact |
|--|--|--|----------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 15. Reduce central office curriculum position | The executive director of curriculum & instruction will reorganize and reduce a position in the central office | Reductions in supports for K-12 instructional staff, including new teacher induction and professional development. | -1.00 | -\$97,173 | -\$5,574,032 |
| 16. Reduce clerical positions from 7 to 6 at high schools | Reduction to administrative support in the school building office | High schools currently have more than 2x the clerical positions as middle schools. Clerical and other administrative support duties will need to be reassigned or reduced to accommodate this reduction. | -3.00 | -\$197,601 | -\$5,771,633 |
| 17. Reduce and reorganize central office C&I administrator positions | The executive director of curriculum & instruction will reorganize and reduce positions in a programmatic area | While these positions don't eliminate positions in a school building, they will diminish the quality of support central administration provides in these areas. | -1.00 | -\$162,838 | -\$5,934,471 |

| Proposed Reduction | Financial Impact Statement | Educational or Operational Impact Statement | FTE Change, if applicable | Financial Impact | Cumulative Financial Impact |
|---|--|---|----------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 18. Reduce and reorganize central office student services positions | The executive director of student services will reorganize and reduce positions in the central office | While these positions don't eliminate positions in a school building, they will diminish the quality of support central administration provides in these areas. | -2.35 | -\$183,753 | -\$6,118,224 |
| 19. Reduce and reorganize student services administrator positions | The executive director of student services will reorganize and reduce positions in a programmatic area | This will require other administrators to cover as a backup resource. | -1.00 | -\$162,838 | -\$6,281,062 |
| 20. Reduce central office support positions | Reduction to administrative support positions at the central administration office | Some impact to services provided to school buildings and the public would be noticed. | -1.50 | -\$137,123 | -\$6,418,185 |
| 21. Reduce clerical positions from 3 to 2 at middle schools | Reduction to administrative support in the school building office | With sites having 1,000 students, this could be a difficult cut to implement. | -4.00 | -\$263,468 | -\$6,681,653 |
| 22. Eliminate InSciEd Out payment | Eliminate the annual contracted services payment to the InSciEd Out Foundation | Discontinue District support for InSciEd Out at the following buildings: Lincoln K-8, Riverside, Hoover, John Adams, Friedell, and Gage. | | -\$127,800 | -\$6,809,453 |

| Proposed Reduction | Financial Impact Statement | Educational or Operational Impact Statement | FTE Change, if applicable | Financial Impact | Cumulative Financial Impact |
|--|--|--|----------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 23. Change elementary school general education paraprofessional formula to 0.0059 times number of students | Reduce the number of general education paraprofessionals in the elementary school buildings. | This change could impact ability to properly supervise playgrounds and lunchrooms. Depending on the site, this could also impact the ability to provide small group and 1:1 student support. | -4.44 | -\$197,718 | -\$7,007,171 |

Process of Collecting Stakeholder Feedback

During the week of January 31, we sought feedback on the budget strategy outlined above from stakeholders in Rochester Public Schools in two ways:

1. Feedback sessions that featured comments by and discussion among small groups of stakeholders
2. A webform available on the Rochester Public Schools website

We are extremely grateful for the time and ideas that people contributed to both of these efforts.

Four key questions were asked through during the feedback sessions and via the webform on the RPS website. Those four questions were:

1. What strengths do you see in the proposal?
2. What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?
3. What other ideas for improvement do you have?
4. What questions do you have?

A total of 49 people participated in the feedback sessions, which lasted one hour and were all conducted virtually. Participants in the feedback sessions included stakeholders from the following groups: parents, students, community leaders, teachers, administrators, paraprofessionals, counselors, social workers, and other staff. The precise number of participants in each session are listed before the transcriptions of the conversations included below. Each of the feedback sessions began with a presentation from Executive Director of Finance John Carlson on the causes of the school district's deficit and the administration's proposals for addressing it. Following that presentation, Interim Superintendent Pekel facilitated and took notes on a discussion of the proposals.

A total of 456 stakeholders completed the webform on the RPS website. 47% of the respondents identified themselves as the parent of a current RPS student, 41% identified themselves as a teacher, 36% identified themselves as a community member, 14% identified themselves as a member of the RPS staff who is not a teacher or administrator, 4% identified as an administrator in RPS, 3% identified as a member of the RPS Employees of Color Resource Group, and 2% identified as a current RPS high school student. Respondents were able to identify themselves as belonging to more than one of those or other stakeholder groups. 89% of all the respondents reported that English was the first language they learned, while 11% reported that English was not their first language. 50% reported of all the respondents reported that they have a significant relationship with a child who has a disability and 50% reported that they do not have such a relationship. Before filling out the webform, respondents were invited to watch a video of Executive Director of Finance John Carlson explaining the causes of the school district's deficit and the administration's proposals for addressing it.

Summary of Feedback From Input Sessions

Dr. Pikel analyzed transcripts from the stakeholder feedback sessions and identified a set of major themes that emerged through those interactive conversations. Each of the ideas summarized below was articulated by multiple participants in the feedback sessions.

Anonymized transcripts from the feedback sessions are available to anyone who wants to read the records of those conversations. Please contact Lori Sam in the Office of the Superintendent at sasam@rochesterschools.org or 507-328-4256 if you would like access to one or more of those transcripts.

It is worth noting that the themes that emerged through the virtual input sessions closely mirror the themes that emerged through the written feedback received through the webform on the RPS website. As such, the following 23 points can be read as a summary of all the feedback we received on the proposed strategy.

1. The plan's proposed use of budget reserves, federal funding, and accounting shifts is an appropriate way to reduce reductions in people and programs needed to close the budget deficit
2. A positive aspect of the proposal is that it does not include increases in class size
3. Preserving staff positions and supports that directly serve students such as teachers, paraprofessionals, and others should be given the highest priority
4. In addition to making reductions, the school district also urgently needs to find ways to increase enrollment and find additional sources of revenue, such as increasing billing of authorized mental health services to Medicaid and increasing enrollment of students from outside Rochester in RPS Online
5. While some positions do not directly serve students, the work they do to support staff who provide direct support has a significant if indirect impact on students' education and wellbeing
6. Addressing challenges to the mental health of both students and staff is a major concern during the pandemic, and it is difficult to support reductions to mental health services when we should, in fact, be increasing support for those services
7. Reducing funding for students who receive special education services may infringe upon legal requirements, and diminishes support for students who often have major educational, physical, and developmental needs
8. It is vitally important to maintain staff and services that ensure students are safe in our schools
9. If RPS reduces or eliminates popular or innovative programs that appeal to families and if, as a result, those families withdraw their children from the school district, the long-term deficit will become much more serious
10. Programs and supports that serve or that are effective for relatively small numbers of students deserve significant scrutiny when facing a major budget deficit

11. Despite the significant financial challenges that RPS faces, this is the time to maintain supports for students from marginalized communities and not to retreat from the school district's recent focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion
12. Reducing staff who support teachers such as instructional coaches could undermine the school district's capacity to improve student outcomes
13. While eliminating an unfilled position seems to make intuitive sense because it does not eliminate an existing employee's job, cutting that position permanently may require other employees to fill in the gap, keeping them from fulfilling other important responsibilities
14. While the work that social workers and school counselors do often isn't as visible to parents and others as the work of teachers and administrators, those employees nonetheless provide essential support for students
15. The school district needs to undertake serious analysis to understand how and why growth in the number of staff seems to have greatly exceeded growth in student enrollment over the past twelve years
16. The school district should pursue partnerships with community providers as a way to reduce funding for staff positions while maintaining or improving services to students
17. The citizens of Rochester are unlikely to support an operating referendum if they do not believe that school district is using its existing resources efficiently and effectively
18. Reductions should also be made to positions in the cabinet and elsewhere at the top of the school district in addition to positions "in the trenches"
19. Could the number of school board members be reduced or could their salaries be decreased?
20. The school district needs to communicate with families about budgetary issues such as this more often and more effectively
21. RPS should create a budget advisory group that includes a diverse group of stakeholders who serve long enough to learn the details of the school district's budget and who can advise the School Board and the administration on difficult financial issues such as the ones being discussed this year
22. It is important to adapt the forthcoming RPS Strategic Action Plan to the financial realities facing the school district, but it is still critical to move forward with that plan
23. While it is not possible to take this approach for the 2022-2023 school year, future budget reductions should be guided by the district's strategic plan along with reviews of research and data

Detailed Stakeholder Feedback From Webform

| What strengths do you note in the proposal? |
|---|
| Growth |
| Most of the reductions are related to reducing unfilled positions and staffing reductions which is appropriate. I find it astounding that enrollment has grown 8% but staffing has grown 31% over the last 12 years. |
| glad to see they are looking at cutting administration and instructional coaches. Prioritize people who work with students on a regular basis. |
| Tightening the necessary clerics staff at district office. Reduce construction services staff. |
| Reducing clerical and administrative positions (1D-J; 2D-2K) eliminating unfilled positions 2B -re-assessing/rewriting IEP move ins to reflect what RPS can offer (not just what the previous school did) 3A most of 4 options (just not 4D and 4J) |
| Reducing clerical positions and administration seems to make sense, but I admit I likely do not know what these positions do and the value of them. |
| I agree with 1: DEFGHIJ I agree with 2:A |
| ? |
| I did not note any strengths |
| I like that we are looking as best as we can at cuts that do not effect students directly. |
| I appreciate that you are looking for places to cut that will not have a direct impact on students and teachers. |
| 1F. Eliminate an unfilled central office administrative clerical position (1J. Eliminate INCubatoredu program due to low demand, difficulty staffing, and leased facility cost (EXTRA PROGRAMMING) 2I. Reduce central office support positions - FTE with the \$ amount listed means that an individual earns \$90,000 which is much higher than the teachers that are required to continue to pay for professional development to just maintain their licenses and deliver instruction daily to students. This seems like an expense that would have a lesser impact upon students. |
| Explored admin options. |
| Cuts appear to go across all areas. |

| What strengths do you note in the proposal? |
|--|
| Canceling the lease on the IncuEd space makes sense. Not filling long term infilled positions makes sense. |
| Use the money from covid and cut the leases/ programs not being used |
| The teachers and staff of RPS |
| I like that you're looking at reducing the number of positions of people who are not in classrooms. This is an EDUCATION business and when in a deficit you should cut those not directly working with the kids first. (Instructional coaches, top heavy positions outside of the schools.) It was nice to see you are starting to realize that. |
| I hope we get to the point where people who are employed by RPS do real work. There are many positions we could live without. |
| Closing a small elementary school. Expand instructional coach duties. |
| The plan is looking for ways to reduce spending in ways that will impact students and staff the least first. Thank goodness there are covid funds available. We need to use them wisely. |
| Please don't reduce the quality of education and technology. In less keep the HG classes, allow the HS students to still be a student on campus even if they do take college classes. |
| Nothing, our kids matter!!! Children matter, cut nothing |
| -Eliminating unnecessary programs, leases, and unfilled general staff positions. -Adjusting heating and cooling. |
| Asking the public for suggestions of areas of reductions. |
| I don't know. |
| Unfortunately if the school district cannot perform in their budget I think the budget committee should be looked into and people should be fired. I cannot believe a budget director could be off 23 million and still have a job. Our community deserves better. |
| -Timeline was clear -A few proposed options were clear |
| I appreciate that RPS is in a difficult position and doing its best to try to come up with creative solutions. |
| Most cutbacks are understandable. |
| Identification of options that are least likely to affect students/teachers |

| What strengths do you note in the proposal? |
|---|
| Eliminating unfilled positions and leased property. |
| Doing what you can to keep class sizes manageable. The difference between a class of 20 to 25 or 25 to 30 is huge in the classroom. |
| Reducing funding at the top. |
| Not equitable across the board |
| This sounds terrible and bleak. |
| Using COVID funds to cover part of deficit, cancelling facility leases, reducing instructional coach positions |
| I'm ok with getting rid of programs that aren't used widely and cost money. Have we thought about all of the programs offered? This sounds so bad just in general. It makes me feel sad for my children's schooling here. |
| Cutting some of the administrative and coaching positions. |
| It was well organized and well presented. |
| The elementary, middle school and high school special education teachers and general education teacher putting in a lot of work to ensure growth in students. |
| Excellent teachers |
| Keeping retiree benefits for current and future. |
| Looking at the amount of administration we are paying for at buildings based on enrollment. |
| I think cutting the budget for little used programs (INCubatoredu) and staff for PSEO students are valid suggestions. |
| The strengths are that the board recognizes that we need to cut more at the beginning of this multiyear budget problem. Going with the lesser option would leave the district in an even more precarious situation in the even that future revenue streams did materialize. |
| Attention to keeping reductions to administration/central office staffing. |
| Good to look at need and use of curriculum department positions - appear to be overstaffed. Instructional coaches positions are an "extra" sometimes nice to have but not necessary for instruction and growth of students. Students going to a "choice" school have |

| What strengths do you note in the proposal? |
|--|
| made a choice and it's good to see district reconsidering transportation for that. "Choice" schools do not help close the achievement gap. |
| Elimination of unnecessary or unused programs |
| I appreciate that the cuts are trying to stay away from the students directly. |
| Possible administrator cuts, and possible instructional coach cuts. The weakness is that this is not a definitive. These positions are grossly over staffed. There is no suggestion of cutting equity specialists. These individuals do not work directly with our students. They are inexperienced in the academic forum, and most often have no education relevant to the school system. |
| Have money from Covid Funds and Savings |
| It is very important that the cuts are away from those who directly teach our students. |
| Stopping the leases. Figuring out what jobs don't fill do taking that estimate out of budget. |
| Cutting the curriculum and instruction down and reducing or eliminating instructional coaches |
| I think the strengths of this proposal were the closing of buildings that you were leasing for other activities that can now be done in RPS school buildings and reducing administrative positions with enrollment reduction and shifts. |
| Starting with the obvious leases which can be omitted |
| Removing or reducing some positions of individuals not working directly with students. Reducing instructional coach positions. |
| I am glad that their is not specialty or quarterly/semester class being cut. |
| Reducing central office positions. Shifting or eliminating admin positions. Eliminating leases and not people. Reducing coaches. |
| Reorganizing and reducing curriculum support staff |
| Eliminating coaches and other teaching positions where working with students is not part of their job. |
| The areas all varied and show that the district is trying to allow for smaller cuts all over. |
| One strength is trying not to increase class sizes by not cutting teaching staff. |

| What strengths do you note in the proposal? |
|---|
| Tightening the admin to student ration |
| It have appears they have analyzed every level. |
| reduction of Instructional Coaches cut transportation for option schools |
| I think cutting general education instructional coaches is a great idea. However, I don't think we should cut special education coaches. |
| Trying to minimize impact on students. |
| Teacher retiree benefits maintenance |
| It looks as though cuts would be spread out so no one department would be impacted in an overwhelming manner. |
| People with non student contact being looked at |
| A prioritized list of what considerations to make and how to go about making changes with the least negative impact on student and staff outcomes. |
| reducing or eliminating programs which are underutilized by students |
| Most likely options do not have a large impact on students or staff - ie. discontinuing leases/moving programs, not filling unfilled positions, etc. |
| I do not see any |
| Being proactive for increased enrollment is good. |
| Lots of options to work with for the budget |
| I agree with potentially eliminating some of the programs not being fully utilized. I agree with discontinuing transportation for district wide programs. I agree with potentially closing a smaller school |
| Cutting positions that are not related to the classroom--coaches, district admin positions that are not in buildings, etc. |
| I saw that some cuts were made that wouldn't effect students directly |
| Reducing supply budget from the general fund in the central office. Consolidating a small elementary school with a larger building to use our new building space more effectively. |

| What strengths do you note in the proposal? |
|---|
| Edison, administration and unfilled positions should be first to be reduced/eliminated--1.F, 1G, 1H, 1J,1K, 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D, 2F, 2I, 2L plus 3A are the reductions with least impact on students! |
| Leases being stopped. |
| I appreciate that you are not just letting the deficit continue to grow and are attempting to do something to remedy it. I appreciate that you are looking at some administrative position reductions. |
| Sharing the truth that a deficit was predicted prior to the pandemic. Conveying that consideration for students' best interests come first. Sharing a list of "not recommended" seems thoughtful and transparent. |
| Attempting to keep teacher staffing formula untouched at the Middle School level. Cut some lease agreements. Utilizing attrition in some areas of open positions. |
| Some though my has been put into this and some creativity. |
| They tried to avoid cutting teachers as best they could. |
| It is important to continuously evaluate resource allocation to reduce redundancies and improve efficiencies. It appears that that is the goal of some of the cost reductions listed. |
| I like to see the accounting shifts. Glad to see that cutting direct student contact staff (teachers and programs) we not first on the list. I agree that instructional coaching could be cut. The school should be promoting mentoring among teachers instead of hiring instructional coaches. These could be eliminated by pivoting to mentoring. |
| Getting rid of extra office personnel |
| I am glad the district is working to get ahead of these issues and also spreading the impacts across a wide number of areas to reduce impact to any specific area. Also glad that relatively "small" reductions (\$500,000 or less) are being done and added up rather than large cuts to 1 or 2 areas. I support evaluation of future cuts to athletics; while I don't want to see cuts anywhere, I realize it is necessary, and historically it has felt like electives and fine arts have been areas primarily impacted and I do feel these impacts need to be spread around to other areas too. I'm never happy about it but it does feel more equitable. |
| Focus on academics. |
| Thank you for a very informative and thorough explanation. I applaud that it seems a majority of cuts/unfilled are in administration rather than teaching personnel. I am not saying these positions are not warranted, but I believe we ALWAYS need to focus first on the students and |

| What strengths do you note in the proposal? |
|---|
| teachers. I also think that instructional coaches CAN be helpful, but that is an area that can be compensated for if teacher's help each other more. |
| I like the fact that effort was made to make as little impact to students as possible. |
| None |
| Budget cut are always hard. I do agree with cutting instructional coaches. I would get rid of that position completely. |
| It seems there are considerations for budget cuts in nearly all areas so that perhaps not one single area takes all the cuts. |
| I do like to see that some of the items that are being talked about being reduced are positions that don't impact student learning and excess building space. |
| Instructional coaches, equity coaches, diverse liaisons, and many other areas have an abundance of support, which is not imperative at this moment during budget cuts. The focus should be on academic/emotional/mental health and support. |
| Reductions in non-student facing measured and positions. The district has seemed to hire more positions in the past years in administrative and non-student facing positions and has been putting money in the wrong places. I think culling this area is long overdue and much needed. |
| I think that plan is well thought out and organized in ways that we all can understand. I appreciate that the impact on students and staff is described. |
| Overall no strengths noted, you did look at low use projects and the impact that has on improving the budget deficit. Have you looked at what impact that has on the kids enrolled in the program, even if it's only a low number of students their input should be sought. |
| Elimination or reduction of unfilled positions. Reduction of instructional coaches and central office positions. Reduction and reorganization of administration. |
| The numbers seem accurate and organized. There is a plan for this year and future years. |
| Reduce building administrators based on enrollment or enrollment shifts Reduce and reorganize central office positions |
| There are many options that are presented well, and the prioritization was helpful. |
| Thinking about the future and preparing for it. New building for our growing population in areas of our community. Trying to maintain our aging buildings so they last longer. |

| What strengths do you note in the proposal? |
|--|
| None at all. |
| Non-Student Impacted reductions like administration and clerical reductions, heating and cooling optimization, some sport reductions, high school electives reduction. |
| Reducing admin and instructional coaches is great. We need more people that directly work with kids. |
| Reductions in areas that are currently infilled or where there is generally a surplus left at the end of the year. |
| I think that 3A should be addressed heavily. It would pretty much cover the deficit and have the least amount of impact. |
| At least we are talking about it. |
| Terminating leases to the multiple, minimally-used buildings is a great idea. Reduction/elimination of gen ed and special ed instructional coaches is a great idea. |
| It's difficult to think of any of these as strengths as they mean my colleagues and/or myself could lose my job and most certainly that our students will receive less support. I will say that I appreciate the fact that the reductions seem to reflect every single area so it's not just concentrated in one section/area, |
| Considering cuts from Edison. There have been many administrative positions added in the last two years. So many where we have no idea what the people are actually doing, and never see their impact in buildings. |
| I appreciate that the items on the "top" of the list are central office and unfilled positions that would (theoretically) have a smaller impact on students. |
| 1. Reduce administrative. We need to build from the bottom up. 2. Cut down on needless transportation. Send kids to neighborhood schools. Choice schools should be offered to neighborhoods first and then to open enrollment. |
| Honestly, it's hard to pick out strengths of budget cuts.. I know it's hard to cut back, but not fair that it's mostly directed toward one group of students/staff (SPED). |
| Highest priority going to cuts that will not directly impact students |
| Good quality and teachers |
| Targeting areas that do not impact students and teachers |

| What strengths do you note in the proposal? |
|--|
| You are looking at cutting administration; the people in the cabinet and at Edison are a large chunk of unnecessary positions. The board has community, equity and gate administrators and the list goes on....These are unneeded full-time positions. There are principals making 6 figures at Edison in "special assignments". |
| Wasting taxpayer money |
| That essential functions will continue. |
| I noticed very few strengths quite honestly. Anyone who is currently working in our secondary schools (I am a district wide secondary employee) would see immediately how students, staff (including teachers, paras, secretaries, custodial) are barely hanging on by a thread most days. Positions have been left unfilled because no one, literally no one, applies for educational positions. |
| Eliminating unfilled positions makes sense. |
| A variety of sources were considered |
| Cutting budgets which have a surplus historically. |
| para's and teachers |
| Many avenues considered |
| Cutting some in the administrative areas. |
| Eliminating the budge for unfilled positions. |
| Yes, cut non-student contact positions first. Cut TOSAs and POSAs - or rather, send them back into the buildings Why are there so many instructional coaches, aren't there over 70 of them across the District? That's totally unnecessary. All those people have teaching licenses, right? So, they should be in the classrooms. If they don't actually want to teach students, apparently there's a huge job market out there just waiting for them. |
| Eliminate an unfilled central office clerical position. Reduce unfilled positions in Construction Services and COVID19 Response departments. |
| It makes sense to look at overall class size. |
| Not very many honestly. |
| It's good that the district is cutting a low interest program and getting rid of a couple of leases. |

| What strengths do you note in the proposal? |
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| Administration cuts suggested |
| Consideration of a variety of tactics |
| It is important to cut from the top down. Why do we need principals on special assignment? Why do we have C & I's? In the past few years we have asked for assistance from them and have been met with resistance. I'm not entirely sure what they do all day long but when they can't help teachers with simple things, something needs to change and eliminating their position or at least reducing them greatly would be great. |
| The number of items the board is considering to refigure or eliminate; open-minds for all areas of the budget to be considered for cuts. |
| Not filling unfilled positions seems logical. We have had difficulty filling them already and have found ways to function although it has been quite difficult. So this is logical and yet unfortunate to see occur. |
| Either option does not directly effect positions that are already held by staff that are in contact with students. Instructional coaches not allowed to sub for other teachers when there is a sub shortage. |
| The team has looked into many different areas to minimize the impact on programs offered by RPS and the staff. No one area seems to be targeted. |
| Use of accounting maneuvers to limit impact. |
| Eliminating programs due to low demand, difficulty staffing, and leased facility cost. Reducing and reorganizing central office curriculum administrator positions. Reducing and reorganizing student services administrator positions. |
| I reviewed the presentation. Reducing the number of staff not directly working with children seems reasonable, but other proffered and paraprofessional positions should not be reduced |
| I liked the fact that the cuts started furthest away from the classroom and direct student contact. Reducing staff in any capacity is always difficult. |
| Coaches do not need to sub as they have been. |
| Removal of the Incubator program if it's utilization is low, lower/eliminating District level roles (those not directly related to working with students) |
| Considering a wide variety of options and supporting students. However, do not stress protecting current staff because the ONLY way you will achieve meaningful budget reductions is to reduce the insane 30% growth in staff that you mention! My teacher-neighbors tell me that |

| What strengths do you note in the proposal? |
|--|
| your instructional coaches are a waste of money and good people are out of the classroom, away from students. |
| None? |
| The proposed cuts in central office. |
| The comprehensive nature of the proposals is a strength. The use of non-academic cuts is a strength. |
| Two options for the board to consider. |
| It makes sense to eliminate positions that are empty. This seems like a line item change and could be revisited; but right now there isn't funds to hire for those positions anyway. |
| Taking away unfilled positions that aren't being utilized; cancelling facility leases; supply budgets; building admin based on numbers; choosing items that do not affect student support; downsizing central office |
| Accounting shifts to trim unused leased space and shifting those items in other ways. |
| Most recommended cuts do not impact students and staff. I appreciate seeing some budget cuts at Edison. |
| None |
| +The accounting shifts seem to be well thought out +Very fiscally responsible to eliminate paying rent and utilize RPS facilities in different ways (1J) +Thank you for the video and an opportunity to give feedback |
| -cuts at central office -instructional coach consolidation |
| I'm not sure that there is any good in budget reductions. Truly, for those of us who are in it day in and day out, every person is needed. Each and every person has an impact on the students lives in our community, no matter if they have direct contact with students or not. With that said, if I had to pick a strength, it would be that we would reduce programs/spaces that are unused, no loner needed, or the enrollment is limited. |
| RPS has excellent programming that could be highlighted to draw in a higher % of local student-age children. |
| Thorough examination of each of the departments and ideas for reduction. |
| Creative use of accounting shifts to help minimize cuts. |

| What strengths do you note in the proposal? |
|---|
| clearly trying to keep the cuts away from the classroom |
| It's all very organized. Thank you explaining it so well. |
| Eliminating consistently unfilled positions seems reasonable. |
| There were several different options listed for budget reductions. |
| Trying to minimize student disruption. |
| None |
| I liked the ideas initially presented as they didn't impact students. |
| Cutting budgeted FTE's that currently have no one working in them |
| Nothing! Where in this budget cut is this in the best interest in children |
| None |
| Focused on accounting shifts and options less likely to impact students/staff |
| Rochester does have some good schools! SOME |
| None really, other than cutting programs with low student enrollment. Cut them and revamp in the future. I believe that will save a lot of money. |
| Speak up everybody |
| Clerical positions that don't impact direct student involvement were considered. |
| Many of the suggested cuts are at the administrative level where we appear to be top-heavy. |
| I agree with cutting electronics out, people usually have their own. Cutting some support services that families can access outside of schools. |
| State funding |
| There are none |
| Openness and positive approach |
| For the most part, the projected cuts for the 2022-23 school year are items that do not directly affect student learning. |

| What strengths do you note in the proposal? |
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| I think the reduction/elimination of cabinet/curriculum positions downtown would help, I think the elimination in instructional positions would help, I think reducing the number of para positions would help (we never fill them anyways), I like the idea of changing setpoints for the heating and cooling, I think reducing or eliminating district-wide transportation is a good idea, and I think reducing the technology licenses would be a good idea. |
| I like that the idea is to spread the cuts out as much as possible and that the focus is to keep them as far away from the students as possible. I also appreciate the acknowledgement that we don't need to keep budgeting for positions in areas that haven't been filled in years. |
| Getting rid of DWO transportation to families who can afford it is a great idea. |
| Clearly a lot of thought, research, and effort has gone in to these budget proposals. I appreciate that the options have been laid out so thoroughly in a way that I found accessible. I also appreciate the fact that student and staff impact was taken into consideration. Opening up this discussion to the public is also a strength and shows an increased effort in transparency and attempts at eliciting more participation through dialogue with families as well as building staff. |
| Changes that do not impact current students or staff. Eliminating unfilled positions. |
| Reducing unfilled positions, cancelling a program with limited interest, and eliminating unnecessary leases are helpful. These decisions relate to interest and efficiency which is important. |
| Budget cuts are difficult no matter the amount, and it impacts people emotionally. The communication from RPS ahead of times as well as in terms of specific dollar amounts. I also appreciate the breakdown of |
| Cutting of some positions |
| -Picking changes that would have the least amount of impact on students and staff -Reducing instructional coaches |
| reductions via ending leases and a little-used program reductions of COVID staff as we phase out of COVID protocols |
| Discontinuing lease of certain buildings. Busing for district wide options. |
| No changes in services to kids |
| The presentation was clearly communicated and covered cuts in a variety or areas. |
| Stop renting to reduce costs. |

| What strengths do you note in the proposal? |
|---|
| Hard to find strengths when you have to cut so much. It looks like many of the largest cuts were around administrative positions and unfilled position. |
| 1. not counting PSEO students in ratios at high school level (why did it take this to make a change, it should have been done already). |
| It is unrealistic to think this must reduction in budget can happen. Our schools are already drowning. I went to [my child's school] to check my child out for an appointment and there wasn't even 1 staff member who could help me. I watched as they were overwhelmed by the numbers of students needing to leave school due to CoVID. My child missed her dentist appointment because the school did not have staff to let me in the door and once I was give access, Bo one was available to call her classroom. Schools are drowning. |
| There is not enough data presented to identify strengths! |
| It looks like we have the ability to shift money from different funds. |
| There appears to have been work done to investigate the issue and propose options for remediating the budget issues. |
| Consolidatng buildings, programs, and office space to the several buildings already owned by RPS. |
| Well rounded cuts affecting lots of areas |
| Reductions |
| Losing instructional coaches is unfortunate but they do not work directly with students. |
| Some cuts were not impacting kids and reducing some staff which we can compromise on. Option 2 can be considered as a start. |
| Nothing |
| Taking a closer look at administrative support, athletics and unfilled positions make sense. Consolidating buildings and eliminating leases is wide. |
| I applaud the strategic planning and looking years into the future through a blurry COVID lense- we know that we have to go forward but do not know how COVID will stymie those efforts |
| Use of reallocating funds. |
| Board and staff members want to cut costs. |

| What strengths do you note in the proposal? |
|--|
| The cuts seem to cut across most areas of the school district. Have health insurance options been explored to reduce costs? I agree with not filling unfilled positions before eliminating current positions. |
| Ending leases at outside buildings, adjusting thermal controls to save on heat/AC. |
| The reduction of secondary clerical positions, the elimination of unfilled positions, reduction of instructional coaches, and the elimination of programs with little benefit/use. |
| Cutting admin, clerical, district level positions that could be combined to save the district money. |
| Reducing office support staff, reducing leases to buildings not owned by RPS. |
| I see the district has a plan so that's a start. |
| You are looking at removing staff which seems to be a main driver in your costs. |
| I am not sure if I saw any strengths. Many of the large cuts are set for the special education department where that is the biggest need for our most vulnerable students. |
| It appears there are quite a few administrative positions (non-student contact roles) being reduced. |
| You are addressing and focusing on the largest cost driver....personnel. You are realigning the demand for special education services and supports: while this will be upsetting to many parents of children with disabilities, the current focus on meeting those children's needs in mainstream classrooms often creates demands and conditions that reduce services and attention for other students. |
| Savings and COVID funds are being utilized to a certain extent. Looking at transportation costs and finding ways to save. |
| proposing reductions of staff that are not directly student facing; proposing reductions and reorganization to administrative positions at the district level |
| Appreciate fiscal responsibility. Like the creative thinking regarding how to best reduce and not diminish the quality of services. |
| Meets the budget constraints |
| None |

| What strengths do you note in the proposal? |
|---|
| I appreciate that you are looking forward and trying to catch things before this becomes a bigger problem. I also appreciate that you are first cutting things that won't affect a large number of teachers or students. THANK YOU for the transparency. I am very glad to have this all laid out and to have the chance to feel like my opinion matters. |
| I appreciated the focus on eliminating things that are currently vacant and have been determined to be not needed |
| The accounting shifts: Use Federal COVID19 funds: \$9.3m The plan will need to be approved by the Minnesota Department of Education Use fund balance (savings account): \$4.3m There would be 9% of the District's annual operating budget in savings after this Delay OPEB transfer: \$0.8m Retirees will still receive the agreed upon benefits Delay GASB16 transfer: \$1.4m Retirees will still receive the agreed upon benefits Cancel three facilities leases: \$0.2m Gage East for girls' gymnastics – moving to Friedell Boys & Girls Club for Middle School Right Fit program – moving to Friedell 415 S. Broadway for INCubatoredu program – eliminating due to low student interest Transfer from Work Comp Fund to General Fund: \$0.6m There will be ample funds available to pay future Work Comp claims Budget 10 “contingency” teachers instead of 15: \$0.5m If enrollment increases beyond plans, a request will be brought forward for more teachers Assume 34 vacant positions at any given time based on average of 168 vacant positions in 2021-2022: \$1.5m Unfortunately, we expect some level of attrition and vacancies will continue |
| The proposals attempt to not impact students directly. |
| I appreciate that the proposed main options minimize the impact of these reductions on students and current staff. |
| I think the direction of reducing clerical and administration is the right one. Looking forward into a long-term labor shortage, automation and outsourcing really do need to be more seriously looked at so that money can be directed to hiring and paying good quality teachers. |
| Option 2 addresses the unsustainability created by widely disparate growth rates in students versus staff. |
| Careful consideration to finding areas that could be reduced or eliminated without impacting current students or staff. (e.g. not filling currently open positions when there does not appear to be a need) |
| I agree the instructional coach positions either need to be eliminated or they need to be more versatile. |
| I appreciate the way in which the cuts were laid out and explained. I appreciate that administration roles were also considered in cuts. |

| What strengths do you note in the proposal? |
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| You will be using some of the Covid and savings dollars. You are reducing some of the district positions that, though they are essential and ideal, they are not as imperative as those positions held by staff working directly with students. INCubator.edu (spelling sorry) is a smart cut if it is not being utilized. |
| I think the consideration of reductions in staff positions at the higher district levels is important. |
| Spreading the cuts out over the different depts. limited classroom impact. |
| Strengths include the diverse array of options noticed and what could be done to fix these issues. |
| None |
| I definitely prefer the reductions that do not directly impact students (such as positions currently unfilled, central office, clerical, energy, etc.). |
| None. |
| This level of budget shortfall requires painful reductions, and I appreciate that you have prioritized cuts that have the least impact on students and staff as possible. |
| paring down on items that the district is already going without, items that don't directly impact students. |
| Cutting from the top- coaches and principals, not from classrooms |
| Getting rid of too many administrators. |
| That you focused some attention on cutting a few areas not directly affecting the staff and students at the building levels. |
| Keeping all current staff. |
| Some teachers are really responsible and put their heart and time in teaching and seeking for the best education outcome for their students. |
| It had some good ideas like getting rid of staff positions that are already unfilled to not fire anyone. I have taught for 15 years, 12 in another state and 3 in this district. In Albuquerque, NM We never had more than 2 principals per school and only 1 instructional coach. It was an urban inner city district. There were no equity specialists or CRT trainings: At Mayo HS adjust the hvac system to save heating and cooling costs. It was SO hot upstairs by the boiler room in September and May/June, while it was freezing in the inner circle science rooms on the other side of the circle away from the boiler. |

| What strengths do you note in the proposal? |
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| Some cuts seem reasonable when it comes to cabinet positions. Everything that directly impacts a school are ridiculous. |
| At least someone had the foresight to create a rps savings account. |
| The most notable strength in the proposal is reducing Instructional Coach positions. This position is 90% unnecessary and these coaches are usually at a very high pay grade. Reducing curriculum support positions of all types is a strength. The staff that offers support to educators would be better used and paid to work directly with our high population of students in the schools instead of coaching highly educated and capable teachers themselves. I would like to know more about central office support positions Who are they supporting and what is their pay scale. |
| Priority placed on eliminating programs that have limited impact on students (administrative and clerical). Also support cutting the INCubatoredu program - if business want to teach kids, they should do it on their own time and funds. |
| Emphasis on reducing the (direct) impact on students and classes, as well as staffing within the classrooms. Eliminating programs (Incubator program) that are not highly utilized. Eliminating unnecessary space rentals/leases. |
| It seems well thought through, a no stone left unturned approach (minus salary reduction for highest paid administrative employees). |
| Recognizing that unfilled positions may not be needed positions as no impacts are present with the current staffing. Looking at some central admin support may not be needed. |
| Maybe that you do want equality and not equity. But again, not sure because of the questions you're asking. |
| You have thought of many options that would reduce costs, whether good ideas or not. |
| Eliminating unfilled positions makes sense to reduce future spending. However, some introspection needs to be made here. If these positions are currently posted, one has to assume they are needed. If there is a need that is not being met, then the solution needs to be focused on how to fulfil that need. Eliminating the position does not eliminate the need. |
| None |
| Reducing amount of unfilled position, reduction of electronics (most students have their own) |
| None |
| The positions that are not fill don't fill them |

| What strengths do you note in the proposal? |
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| Capacity for future student growth is already in place |
| I didn't see any |
| Looked for cuts that don't involve laying off staff for the upcoming school year, |
| Cutting supply/contracted service budgets and cutting some central office positions. |
| The priority of budget cuts and assumption changes make sense. |
| The plan did keep most of the reductions away from staff who work directly with students. |
| Strengths I see are that the district is being forthcoming with communication about these issues. I'm glad this isn't just being decided and implemented behind the scenes. |
| Cutting enough spending to make things work. |
| There were a wide variety of options listed from many departments. |
| reducing administration positions and coaching positions |
| Cuts are just hard |
| Assessing positions that have failed to fill and noting that cut is not detrimental to the setting. I also appreciate the view of resources being used for PSEO students that aren't in the building. |
| Looking into restructuring administratively. |
| Options presented. Some of the reductions do not impact student needs. |
| Money for retired staff and future retirees going to be there!! Taking into consideration all your current employees that you still have working for the district. |
| Eliminating unused programs and leases that aren't necessary. Transferring funds out of accounts that aren't being used. Reducing administrative staff is a huge strength; seems like most administrators are making a ton of money in this district, and it doesn't seem necessary to have so many. |
| 3A looks like an obvious choice.. Reducing the unfilled positions seems obvious as long as it's adjusted for an increase in enrollment if that happens. |
| Not a single one. You're expecting your staff to do so much more than their jobs for an absolute pittance. Cut jobs from the top down I see no reason a superintendent or anyone not working in |

| What strengths do you note in the proposal? |
|---|
| a school should get paid more than a principal at most. If innovation is what we want to display to people, start from the top down. |
| Cutting budget with positions that have been unfilled. |
| I fully agree instructional coaches should ALL be cut. They do some great things, but I would like to see how much \$ goes to this. Also, many take MaNY sick days and do not get a sub. If you don't need a sub for job- it should be cut! I like how the central office is getting some cuts made to it. I know it will trickle down, but it keeps it away from classrooms. Supplies for central office- they should buy extra supplies like classroom teachers do!! |
| I think nearly every option noted in the Superintendent's memo (Items 1D through 3A) is reasonable and should be acted upon. None of the options seem to result in a loss of general, in-classroom instruction delivery. That is, the teachers are still there and the students are still there. Most of the positions being suggested for elimination--clerical staff, professional development staff--are not involved directly in student education: they are administrative staff supporting other employees, not the students. |
| I appreciate the work to trim the budget at levels that removed from student impact, especially at the administrative and instructional coach level. |
| We have great direct staff and teachers |
| Focus on eliminating excess administration positions. |
| From those who studied this situation, on the video there was obvious thought and concern was given to limit impact on students and staff. |
| Reduction of principals in schools, reduction of positions that have been vacant. |
| I think 'Reducing Instructional Coach positions' is a strength. Although they are helpful, I don't think they are as vital as staff that have direct contact with students or staff that complete required due process paperwork. The coaches that I know are very knowledgeable and have experience working with students, so maybe they could just transition to a position where they work directly with students. I also think 'reducing the number of electronic devices' is a good idea, as long as it does not affect required SPED assistive technology that is listed as required in IEPs. |
| none |
| Potential cuts to central office, smarter use of HVAC and suspending leases where they are not needed. |
| It is good that many areas are being looked at to help reduce the deficit. |

| What strengths do you note in the proposal? |
|---|
| Reducing Instructional Coaches- Sped and General Ed and using that money for direct student contact; Reduction in Admin to match the size of the building. Eliminate DWO transportation. |
| RPS is being Proactive. It is being presented in a strong arm approach. It presented in a thoughtful with the ability to support why these areas are being looked at |
| There are many proposed cuts that do not have an impact on class sizes and student supports in buildings. |
| Seems very well thought out and provides transparency of options. I liked that there was an amount "saved" listed by options. |
| Reduction in admin at Edison and reduction in coaching positions are a good move. The changes to C&I also seem fair. That department seems to have a lot of admin, but it isn't always clear what their roles are. |
| Eliminating the Incubatoredu program. Reduce or eliminate instructional coaching positions. Reudce and reorganize central office staff. Eliminating InSciEd Out. |
| I appreciate the time and thought put into this. Great point to eliminate unfilled positions. |
| Awareness of a problem regarding spending and planning for changes. |
| Budget reductions are spread across the district over multiple categories. |
| Some of the cuts seem premature, as we are likely to see some improvement to the forecasts after the next legislative session. Eliminating the IncubatorEDU makes sense if external funding can't support it but there should be some effort to see if local businesses would want to pick up the cost but it is not an efficient use of public money at present. |
| Reductions in administration over classroom instruction/teachers. Adjustments to fund assumptions to free up additional money. |
| Video was really well done. Very clear and informative. Nice work. |
| Accounting shifts, Reduction to central office |
| Removing equity specialist - hopefully the ones at the top that don't do anything. Reducing instructional coaches. |
| Not renting other facilities and finding a location to host these ourselves. |

| What strengths do you note in the proposal? |
|--|
| That staff who do not work directly with students positions are looking to be reduced. SSS is very "admin" and "coaches" not working with students heavy with fewer results. Allowing multiple groups to share their concerns during input sessions. Please listen to them. |
| Reducing clerical staff and under utilized supply demands |
| Wide range of options. |
| 1A: reducing fund balances to a minimum results in no impact on teaching and learning 1C and 1G: if the district isn't able to fill positions, this reduction is smart 1F: if secondary schools are losing clerical positions, central office should as well 1J: the program, unfortunately, was hit very hard by COVID and never really got off the ground. 2F through 2I: likely should have been done a long time ago |
| The changes appear appropriate for general budget reduction. |
| Looking at unfilled positions and items that truly have no impact, take care of all the low hanging fruit first. |
| Attempt to cur administration and maintenance before teaching and programs |
| Using accounting shift. Listing a number of different options. |
| Cutting administrative staff, not filling open positions |
| Combining small schools (Hoover etc), leases-make best use of spaces, supplying- ask parents, sports- cut coaching etc |
| Thorough, tiered approach Most of the ideas seem reasonable |
| Increased care for student well-being |
| I appreciate the school providing a clear and detailed financial breakdown of the proposed reductions, along with explanation of each service -- this shows that series thought has been put into this to do what's needed with the least possible impact on students. That contingency plans -- even if uncomfortable -- we defined shows foresight so is also appreciated. |
| Proposed reductions in administrative positions to match student enrollment. |
| None |
| Getting rid of any positions not currently employed makes sense. |

| What strengths do you note in the proposal? |
|--|
| I like getting rid of leased property that is low in attendance is a good idea. I think keeping teachers and kids and emphasis of high quality education is a first priority. |
| That “impact on students” was included as consideration on worksheet. |
| Getting rid of instructional coaches Eliminating non essential positions such as reading instructors. ...paras can do these jobs, Eliminating some administrative positions such as vice principals. Cutting some spec. Ed. Positions...gen. paras can do most of those jobs. |
| Getting rid of Incubator if it's got low interest, and getting rid of PSEO teachers on site are good things I think. The current plan is good enough. |
| Proposed plan for the upcoming school year looks okay given the need to cut costs. |
| Reducing the number of principals, instructional coaches and positions that have not been filled this year |
| Moving around funds from savings and Covid relief funds. |
| There are some budget cuts listed that will not directly impact students and student instruction. |
| The recommendations seem well thought out. I appreciate the focus on finding reductions that will theoretically have the least impact on students in the classroom. I feel like the process has been transparent and all parties are working in good faith to address the deficit. |
| Pesentation skills are solid and mostly clear. |
| You are trying to make cuts in the administrative positions to where there is excess. |
| I looked very hard but could not find any. |
| None. |
| It is evident that every possible scenario was thoughtfully considered. I liked that the priority items set to first take affect were not ones that directly affected the students. |
| Actually proposing cuts. |
| Trying to cut things first that have minimal direct impact to students |
| Noted strengths for the 2022-23 school year include a seeming effort to limit direct impact on students and a focus more on reduction of central office positions rather than teaching positions. |

| What strengths do you note in the proposal? |
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| reducing the clerical staff and administration numbers. consolidating them seems feasible. decrease or cut all instructional coaches, the extra support staff, etc... |
| None |
| I note that much of the strengths in this budget are keeping the impact minimal from the classroom. |
| None! What a mismanaged mess!! Why would you build two new schools when you have no money!? The video said you knew you would have a deficit! You should all be ashamed! Barely any raise for our teachers this year, and NO raise next year yet you managed to give yourselves a raise! Unacceptable. |
| Eliminating non essential staff and positions that have been vacant |
| There is a deeper analysis of expenses |
| There seems to be a strong focus on reductions that don't directly impact students. There also seems to be a recognition that many positions go unfilled so why not cut them. |
| Minimizes budget reduction |
| It seems like things were thought through very well. While I don't agree with all of the reductions, I do realize that reductions are necessary to align the budget. |
| Comprehensive, took a broad look at options to reduce the budget to become balanced. |
| strengths I notice in this purposed plan are the reduction of administrative staff. I have been in many buildings and way to many positions are added for admins to need 1 sometimes 2 assistants. |
| Cuts that will have no noticable impact |
| Keeping teachers |
| That there are separate items that can be completed one at a time |
| - focusing on positions that are not direct student servicing positions - I'm not sure exactly what tightening of high school and elementary teacher numbers is, but thinking that there should be more equitable teacher loads. One high school teacher who teaches required content classes shouldn't have 150 kids and another elective area teacher, far less. I am all for electives, but perhaps less sections are offered and those staff are doing other duties that are needed at the building? - looking at building needs and not just blanket amount of staff at each. Or inequitable distribution. For example, why does a small school like Riverside have 3 principals |

| What strengths do you note in the proposal? |
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| and a huge school like Mayo or JM have only 4? As someone who has worked at all building levels, high school administrators have HUGE jobs that extend way more contract hours than elementary. |
| Thoughtful/ variety of approaches to address challenges. |
| Most of these cuts miss students, that is good. |
| I like the organization of the presentation and the fact that administrative and clerical positions are first to go over teachers |
| Thank you for trying to keep the budget cuts away from middle school classrooms. Middle schools were hit hard with the last big cuts and programs did not return as much as in high school and elementary. (Noting that we want to see cuts anywhere) We have become administratively heavy over the years, so making some cuts there seem to make some sense. |
| I appreciate that this plan is very detailed, and that there is even a plan to be discussed. I also think these options are smart and well-thought out. I got a little concerned when Mr. Carlson mentioned the retirement fund, but I'm glad I won't be deeply affected by it. |
| None |
| The main strength is the elimination of instructional coach positions. The position is practically useless and a major waste of money. Funds that are used to pay for these coaches and be used on so much more impactful positions. |
| Impact is diverse, not targeting one area. I don't see anything about a reduction/reorganization to cabinet. |
| Thoughtful and creative shifts in budget items that are not utilized- underutilized programming, supplies. Bussing to choice schools, district admin positions, less instructional coaches, leasing costs. |
| Special education seems to eat up a huge portion of our budgets. It seems as though this is being considered. However, how will this impact learning and behaviors? |
| An initial emphasis on items that will have the least impact on students |
| Eliminating some services and programs that only benefit some and not all, such as InSciEd Out. I have personal experience with the program and think it is absolutely amazing, but not all of our elementary students had access to it which I always felt was unfair. If we cannot provide it to all elementary schools then it should not be offered. |
| The breadth and prioritization of options being considered. |

| What strengths do you note in the proposal? |
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| Many proposed reductions are being suggested for district-wide positions, which will have the most limited direct impact on students. These additional C&I positions, instructional Coach positions, Data Coach positions, and Equity Specialists are something that the district simply cannot afford at this time, regardless of how important they seem to the district mission. To paraphrase a home finance analogy given by a colleague: "If we can't afford both internet and heat, then we have to give one of them up. And I don't plan to surf the web in a jacket." |
| Reducing central office employees especially curriculum support and administrator positions. If you asked teachers what impact they make on us I think you would be shocked by the low response. I VERY much appreciate that eliminating filled teacher positions was not on the list. We are the ones making the biggest impact on students so it's nice to hear your team supports and agrees with that. |
| Please don't lower printing costs, Reduce unfilled positions. we are getting by without them right now. |
| None |
| Cutting unfilled positions makes sense Avoiding cuts to many positions |
| I liked that the cuts will have minimal effect on staff on students. It seems like they are doing a good job protecting student opportunities as well as staff jobs. |
| That some of the cuts being made are positions that don't directly work with students. Sports are being considered. |
| You are attempting to take a positive step in addressing this. |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| Staff shortage |
| RPS should not be proposing a referendum to fund mismanagement of the budget. Declining enrollment is directly related to incompetence in handling the covid pandemic (remote learning and aggressive contact tracing/quarantine), elementary start times, and 'woke' policies (my child is inundated with equity / inclusion / lgbtq+ messaging). Significantly higher growth in admin and teaching positions compared to student growth is unacceptable. Do not cut extracurriculars or sports to save teacher jobs in future years - if the student numbers are low, the teachers, paras, principals and admin staff need to be reduced. Finally, more reductions are needed in high-paid administration 'director of' type positions. As an example, hiring a director of 'research, assessment and evaluation' is ridiculous given the current budget issues. |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| Disappointed that the budget doesn't allow for salary increases at teachers. Teacher salaries should not have to pay for budget mismanagement. |
| <p>1. By eliminating open special education para positions, is extremely frustrating. Just because on paper it looks like there isn't a need, doesn't mean that's true. The entire special education department is running ragged making sure student needs are being met. Staff, are spread so thin, to make sure our MOST needy and vulnerable students receive the needs they require based on their identified disability/disabilities. We have their IEP that lists specifics of what we are LEGALLY obligated to provide for these students. If we continue on the path we're on, we will lose staff. Many staff. Amazing and loving staff. 2. Doing away with general education instructional coaches. I could advocate for certain smaller buildings to share instructional coaches as their enrollment is less. The impact that these coaches have on student growth, is insurmountable. Both special education and general instructional coaches are constantly working to support students, teachers, and administrators. Getting rid of them altogether, has to be a joke. When our intensive special education programs have no coverage for paras or teachers, who will cover? Or do we call families and say, sorry, we can't safely staff your child's classroom, they must stay home. Will Edison staff come to help? Especially considering the thought of doing away with additional principals. Taking away all of these positions will have immediate and direct negative impacts on ALL students. 3. Cutting positions for health office staff, and counselors and social workers....during a pandemic, and a mental health crisis?!? Again, did I read that right? Cannot believe that is even being considered.</p> |
| <p>1K -Reducing instructional coaches; this is such a vital role 2C - minimal cost savings to the district but significant impact on individual students 3B - impact on teachers noted, but significant impact on students was overlooked - large class sizes in elementary NOT good 4D (instructional coaches -see above) and 4J - eliminating mental health support in the midst of the greatest mental health need is a terrible idea</p> |
| <p>Some of the options affect the learning environment, for example changing the temperatures. You should ask the student body before doing this. Also, some of the proposals would further divide economic status. For example, eliminating transportation for district-wide programs may give the impression these programs are only available to those with a parent that can provide transportation or pay for alternate transportation.</p> |
| <p>1k - New teachers need support. I worry about reducing instructional coaches especially since many new teachers had limited real classroom management experiences due to covid and distance learning struggles. Many will need help and to be mentored to be successful. 2c little financial impact for hurting the opportunities for special Ed children.</p> |
| <p>Please do not cut special education paraprofessionals. They are critical to to our children's safety and development. Please keep coaches for teachers. They provide necessary support and guidance to staff. Without them, teachers will not be able to call for needed support. Please support early childhood education by keeping administrators designated for</p> |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| early childhood. Supporting children at this age level creates opportunities for learning and early intervention. |
| Why are there so many cabinet and administrative and coaching and POSA and TOSA assignments? Very top-heavy. Why are there so many employees in the media area? Why do the ads for RPS online enrollment have a bunch of stock photos (that RPS presumably paid for?) instead of actual photos? Does not accurately represent our community, and costs extra money. |
| Special education cuts Coaching cuts |
| Cutting paraprofessionals Cutting special education teachers Eliminating some athletic sports Eliminating electives |
| Cutting reading teachers is not a good idea when we are trying to help our most at risk kiddos catch up. The pandemic has made reading teachers more necessary than ever. |
| Even though the cuts to Special Ed will not effect jobs how are the staff fairing right now running slim? I feel that is something to consider. |
| <p>II. Reduce unfilled positions in Special Education 1K. Reduce Instructional Coaches - necessary to help support teacher development, teacher supports and implementation of research-based best teaching practices 2A. Reduce SSS Para positions - these positions are critical in implementing students' IEPs and students are currently going without these supports, not following compliance. There is a very limited number of 1:1 paras within the district and most are charged with supporting multiple students at a time when in both general education and special education classrooms. These students are not able to access their accommodations listed within their IEPs (legal document) when support staff are not present - many missing notes, check-ins, opportunities for clarification, testing accommodations, etc. 2B. Assume no growth in future SSS Para positions - this cannot be assumed as each year the number of students with disabilities that are enrolled in RPS increases. When caseloads are already maxed out and para supports are already not at appropriate levels due to vacancies, how can we expect those that are working in these positions to take on more. There are times when a para currently has to work in 2 classrooms within one hour with up to 10 students. That means some students receive less then 5 minutes of support within a class period - and some cannot even read the content material independently much less then complete any written work. When one para is absent (illness, etc) the others already pick up as much of their workload as they can out of care for the student, but this decreases the level of overall support they can give. They can only be stretched so thin before they break - and quit. We have already been told to be creative with the current staff we have and when a student with true 1:1 needs move in, how can we say it's okay to pull support from other students with special needs to ensure that this new student can move within the building, access the curriculum, complete daily life tasks (eating, toileting, handwashing, etc) and accessing their assistive and adaptive equipment? This is not a case of just rewriting the student's IEP - the IEP is based on identified NEEDS. Teams work hard to</p> |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| <p>write plans as least restrictive as possible and to incorporate independence, but some students still NEED full support and 10-12 other students shouldn't be left to fend for themselves because we need to reallocate support within the constraints of our current personnel. This is also falsely reported to reflect like it is only 4 people (most people assume a position with FTE), but paras work different contracts from teachers and most are .7 or .8 and so for each FTE listed, it is really more like 1.3 people = 6-7 positions. 2G. Reduce central office student services positions - due to the rapid changes that take place with policies, procedures and paperwork as well as keeping up with best practice, it is critical that these positions are able to support the teachers and paras working within this department. 2H. Reduce and reorganize student services administrator positions - these individuals are already stretched thin and are not always as available to help support staff when situations arrive. Reducing this number delays the support they can provide to their teams even more and puts staff and the district in jeopardy of not following the law related to special education. 3B. Tighten formula for how we staff elementary sections - the current targets of class sizes are grossly inaccurate - as a parent, my elementary daughter has NEVER had a class with less then 26 students in it K-4 so reformulating it would only mean that now her classes may have 28-29 students. As an educator with both primary and secondary training, this is not even close to the recommended number of students a primary teacher should teach. Best practice says younger children - smaller numbers which is something we have never experienced since moving here to Rochester. Now I have a new Kindergartener who will most likely have to experience these high numbers too. Such a disservice. Longer term plans: Reducing or cutting instructional coaching - these are individuals selected to lead their peers due to their high level of performance and ability to work with others to improve student learning. This will take so many high quality, high performing teachers and drive them out of the district for other positions.</p> |
| Anything impacting special education or teachers. |
| I'd prioritize non-student items for cuts before special Ed. |
| <p>Reducing staff and teachers could have long term negative consequences that might negate the budget savings. By expanding class size, many teachers may leave for other districts. Retention of teachers and staff may be an issue, especially if remaining staff and faculty are not given raises. Closing an elementary schools seems extreme. Eliminating InSciEd would be eliminating many students only exposure to research, which may result in them not having the desire to pursue higher math or science courses. I think this is a mistake.</p> |
| <p>Do not cut special education/paras. These students already are often overlooked enough and have a difficult enough time getting services and community support. Even if they are the minority of students being impacted, they are the ones that rely the most on the quality of education they receive.</p> |
| The school board |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| Taking away any money from people who directly work with kids makes no sense. This is about educating kids. We waste a lot of money paying people to work at desks and not with kids. Some of those positions are needed but NOWHERE NEAR the amount our district has. |
| We need real leadership at all levels. There is a very real disconnect between most administrators and what really happens in the classroom. Administrators who were never elementary teachers do not know how to "lead" an elementary school. Principals need to be more effectively supervised. |
| Proposed reductions to the special education program. Bigger class sizes. |
| We need more para support in regular ed and special ed. Their support makes a huge impact for our students. Para costs are low compared to other positions. Our students need more academic support (reading teachers, and social support) more than ever before. Those need to be increased, not decreased. Eliminating positions that are working directly with students does not make sense. There are positions that could be cut who are not working directly with students instead. I think this would give some confidence back with our stake holders. |
| Please invest in the safety and security of staff. On-site law enforcement at every school, weapons detection at all entrances/exits. Please keep social workers and counselors for all schools onsite at all times. |
| Your going to lose even more students than what you lost because of COVID |
| -Reducing school budget for supplies? This could be a weakness depending on what supplies you are considering. Teachers already pay plenty out of their own pockets for supplies they find necessary for their classrooms but are not funded. Are you expecting to cut items like printer ink and paper? -Why reduce special education unfilled positions? Some of those positions are necessary positions that other teachers and paraprofessionals are currently struggling to maintain until the position is filled. Also, special education staff funding doesn't come completely from the general fund so this doesn't make sense. When special education students are some of the children with the highest needs why would the district plan to cut so much from special education? -Cutting special education coaches isn't a great plan either, special education teachers rely on the coaches to stay up to date on and communicate the ever-changing rules for compliance, in addition to supporting staff with coverage when they don't get their contracted breaks or have meetings. Since the district is very concerned about compliance, coaches are essential. -Support staff including reading teachers, school counselors, social workers, etc. Students rely on what these staff members do. |
| Not stressing enough that offered suggestions are just that. Suggestions!! When Mayo Clinic and IBM need to make reductions they do not ask the community. Hard decisions need to be made based on data and with at least a working knowledge of the complex parameters that |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| School Boards must follow. A lack of long term planning regarding the impact decisions will have and how they will be sustained. |
| You spend way too much on building new schools. No wonder my taxes keep going up. |
| Special education cannot be cut anymore! We are already short paras and struggling to meet student needs. These students deserve adequate support and cutting from special education will only prevent that from happening. We don't even have money for snack items anymore and some of these children don't eat much outside school and now we've been told we can accept donation. This is absurd. |
| You seem to say that you are going to try to not impact the kids and teachers but most of what I heard you are doing exactly that. Especially the special education department. Those kids need the most help and you are cutting Paras and teachers. Why did the district repave the parking lots that were perfectly fine at Century and Mayo? Do not take away staff. Especially teachers, school nurses, and paras. You guys got a ton of money from Covid so don't blame that. Don't ask the public for more money. Someone needs to really care about our children and budget accordingly. |
| -No sense of scale of budget cuts. What percentage is 7 million of RPS operating budget? -It feels as if everyone's position is in jeopardy for 2023-2024 -Staff and students are already struggling. I understand that these positions are unfilled, but staff cannot continue with the lack of staffing and support in the following years. -Many proposals were vague, undescriptive, and nonquantitative. No sense of numbers or scale were provided. |
| I think it's absurd to eliminate the special education and para positions just because they are unfilled. This in no way indicates there isn't a need that should still be filled. To me this is instead a reflection of the current labor market and economic condition as a whole. |
| Really believe you should not borrow from retirement. |
| These are just the beginning of budget cuts that will need to be made, I would anticipate the 4th level options will be coming. Also, even though these options do not appear to affect the students/teachers, there will be trickle down effect. I don't really know how much more you can cut, it seems like the schools are already operating on barebones resources. For example, if you cut technology licenses, that will affect the access to online textbooks which are already difficult at best and there is a serious lack of physical textbooks |
| You are running out of cash no matter what you do. |
| Instructional coaches are highly valued |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| Reducing funding that directly impacts students. Special Education is especially important as these students have legally required supports and to tell staff we just can't provide what students needs is not okay. |
| Didn't consider things that are not effective |
| Money seems to be such a hot button issue. I felt like I was watching a shareholder meeting. What has the school system become? This is about the kids. |
| Reducing building administration: our admin are working tirelessly to try and take care of our students and their families. Staff are having to take care of one another because we feel we have little support from admin because of their tremendous work loads. Reduce unfilled teaching positions in SpEd: Our SpEd staff are the first people to arrive at school and the last to leave every single day. They are some of the hardest working staff in our schools with some of the tightest constraints. We need to do a better job at providing them the support they need to do their jobs. Tighten formula for elementary teachers: Our high class sizes (a few years ago I had 32 students in my 5th grade class) are a CONCERN. I am hoping the boundary change and opening Bishop, Longfellow and Dakota will help with this, but that means we will need more teachers, not less. We are the ones on the frontline providing DIRECT instruction to children. Reduce "out of classroom" student support: The mental health crisis is out of control right now. I have never worked as closely with our school social worker and school counselor than I have in the last 2 years. They are not "out of the classroom". They are in our rooms teaching lessons and providing support for ALL students. They provide specific, direct support to our students and their families that need it. We need MORE social workers and counselor in our buildings. Students' mental health impacts their learning and we need to do everything we can to create a society that can cope through life's challenges and social workers and counselors build advocacy and resiliency skills in our children. |
| We can't cut down on special education budget and helpers. They are already so stressed as it is in the classrooms! We also can't cut down on instructional coaches and paraprofessionals. They are needed so much at the elementary school level. Why can't we reduce the pay of administration? Is this an option? |
| It is very important that the special education program is improved by providing interventions and curriculum and not to cut teachers and paras. Increasing class sizes that are already high is not a good option. Reducing reading teachers is not a good idea when we have so many students that are not meeting grade level expectations. We need to keep nurses, counselors, etc. to support our students. |
| Money going to non-direct contact staff. Special education is also taking the biggest hit. With that in my our special education students are the most vulnerable in our district and taking from them is a trickle effect that affects the bigger picture because classroom teachers are going to have to pick up more work. |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| Violence in middle schools. K-5 parents are afraid for when their kids are ready for middle school. |
| <p>Why are you not looking at consolidating or eliminating from the top down? Instead you are looking at cutting Special Ed, paraprofessionals, clerical, etc. We have been shown that clerical has been reduced by 7.8% over the past ten years or so and you are looking at cutting another seven positions. The schools would suffer greatly without the support positions. One thing also noted in the 23-24 possible cuts was both nursing and maintenance. Who is going to do the job of a nurse if you cut the position and who is going to clean the buildings. The nurses have gone above and beyond the past two years and what do they get for that? If the Cabinet came up with these reductions then they should be ashamed of themselves. This is unacceptable!! Take the time to listen to the staff and the public. The comments matter. In the past the District has done the exact opposite of what a study/survey shows and it has just been to the detriment of the schools. Who helped us out when we were short substitutes - certainly not the Cabinet or Admin at Edison. This blatant disregard for the hourly employees has to stop. We are doing with less and less staff every year and more "fluff" positions have been added every year that are not positions that help us out at the schools or in the classrooms. Please ask the Cabinet to try to put themselves in the shoes of the hourly employees. They weren't all at the level they were at and at some time in their work past they were an hourly employee, too.</p> |
| Many of the cuts come from special education. Increasing student capacities (tightening the formula) in the classrooms will cause more issues that there will not be enough resources to support. |
| I believe it would be a mistake to increase class sizes or have less paras. This would have a detrimental impact on students and on teachers-ability to learn/teach, mental health and so many other areas. |
| <p>At first, I thought that the cuts were spread fairly across the board but that changed as I reflected and spoke with colleagues. The proposals for cuts for special education staff are unconscionable. While the boards is proposing to cut positions that have not been filled, it by no means indicates that the students needs no longer exist. What special education has been doing, is doing without. And what that means if these cuts are approved, is that our community's most vulnerable young people will not have their needs met. This is wrong on so many levels, so lets take a look at a few. First, lets look a district liability. If a student has a disability related need to access a free and appropriate education that includes that includes paraprofessional support, is the district going to deny this to this student? I would be interested to ask the district's lawyer how that that would play out in court. Let's take a different angle. Is the board or superintendent going to instruct sped teachers and leadership to get paraprofessional support out of IEPs? Make sure get that request in an email... IEP teams have already determined there is need and lets be honest those needs are not being addressed due to staffing issues but at least the district is trying to hire. After these proposed cuts, what the board is saying is that the district is not even going to try and meet the needs. How does</p> |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| <p>that play out in court. Guess we got to hope the parents of our most vulnerable don't get too angry about their children's federally protected educational rights. Just saying, IEP teams hand out Procedural Safeguards at every annual IEP meeting and this document outlines these very rights along with advocacy organizations that will assist the families to ensure FAPE. Ok, let's take a step back from the liability lenses and look at this from a humanistic perspective. Simply put, it is not right to not provide for our most vulnerable. It makes me think about our pre-pandemic Welcome Week at JM when the presenter on preparing students for the 21st Century (ICLE believe) who stood before the entire Rochester Public School Staff and said, (a paraphrase) "The USA has the best education system in the world not because of our test scores, but because of our commitment to educating everyone." Cutting staff for students, children, with disabilities does not seem like it.</p> |
| <p>I'm concerned with reductions in special education areas.</p> |
| <p>Possibility of increasing class sizes would not increase student growth. Taking away technology now would move our district backwards.</p> |
| <p>Many of future reductions are</p> |
| <p>I noted that there are still way too many people that are administrating and not enough actually working directly with students. How many people are on "special assignments"? It seems that the supports that have been added the past few years have been helping administration but not classroom teachers. To cut paras and supply budgets WILL effect the classrooms directly.</p> |
| <p>Budget cuts need to start with admin. We have multiple administrators in buildings with small numbers. These are the largest budget expenses in many buildings, and are unnecessary. Instructional coaches are employees that are absolutely expendable. These staff members do not engage with students, provide no workload reduction for overloaded teachers, and sit around in offices or in meetings all day. Equity specialists can be largely cut. These individuals have little to no student contact. Many are not educational professionals, and do not seem adequately educated or experienced in the academic arena</p> |
| <p>More expenses and not high enough enrollment</p> |
| <p>When I see instructional coaches cut and then it only has 2 elementary coaches cut, that is very misleading when it says cut instructional coaches. I don't consider 2 positions cutting the coaches. We have increased way too many coaches the last four or so years, and I don't see them making a huge impact on our teachers or staff. They are not working with students and many are doing administrative duties for our admin. This is an enormous amount of money being pulled away from our students that could of been used for smaller class sizes. Also, there are so many principals on special assignment, these have been added in the last four or five years too.</p> |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| Does Pekel want the job? Stop with all the consulting fees for everything! I voted for the board make a decision. |
| Cutting paras- we already don't have enough |
| The weaknesses I see with this proposal is the reduction and working with the current staff RPS has for special education. Special education educators are currently working so hard. With two new schools openings, special education educators will be stretched so thin and be burnt out. This will also not help with student progress on their IEP goals and helping them reach their maximum potential. I think any reduction in special education would be detrimental to special education students. I also think that increasing staff by 30% and having only an increase of 8% in students wasn't the way to plan for a good budget. I have seen many new administrative positions but little increase to the educators that actually work in the schools with children and with special education children. I think the best for all students would be to have as many educators working with students and meeting their needs and less administrative staff to help lower the budget deficit. |
| Why would you consider eliminating reading specialists when our reading scores are so low? The state is requiring dyslexia screening, and that is going to bring about even more students identified as needing specific interventions. If you cut reading specialists, who will provide that very specific help? Most classroom teachers don't have the training. |
| I am very worried about more cuts for special education. Especially for paras. |
| Supply budgets are already very low. I don't think we can plan for eliminating future SPED jobs. We need paras! We shouldn't eliminate any of them. Tightening teachers from any level. Keep all cleaning staff. Reading specialists are essential. They aren't just teachers for the Tier 3 kids. They fill in for unfilled classroom jobs and they run committees and have several other duties in the school. We also can't eliminate staff like social workers, school psych, counselors, etc. |
| - Not planning for growth in SPED paraprofessionals - Reduction of administrators - Supply budgets |
| Cutting paras in any area in our school would be very impactful. We could not serve the students well without them. |
| Many positions that are being cut are position that directly work with students. This is only going to cause more issues further down the line. |
| A lot of them will impact students. With all the opening positions or when schools are looking at adding in additional staff, could currently numbers be looked at? It is troubling to see that so many new staff were added and not many students. |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| Gen ed paras at the elementary level are already few and far between. Please don't decrease the formula and give us less para support. In our building the 3 admin do lunch supervision every day for 2 hours because we don't have enough para support. It's hard to get support for students who need office admin during that 2 hour window. Reading support teachers being on the "not recommended at this time" list is a weakness. They shouldn't be on the list at all because we need them to help our elementary students with our large class sizes. It's really challenging to meet their needs only in the homeroom with the large class sizes we have and all of the expectations on a gen ed elementary teacher. |
| Reducing support for mental health |
| reducing Social Workers reducing Reading Specialists |
| Cutting special education teacher and para positions that are unfilled is not going to help the problem! I do not agree with majority of the proposed cuts, especially the ideas for the school year following next year. |
| Needs of teachers not considered. |
| Spending on things that don't involve education |
| I worry most about losing certain front office staff and paraprofessionals. Teaching and support staff are already overwhelmed by student needs (mental health and academics) and losing these positions will add more work for those in building. |
| Still taking away a lot of people who work directly with students |
| Combining smaller schools in the future. |
| Please do not reduce or eliminate health office nurses, elementary reading teachers or school counselors. These are important staff and services. |
| More strain on school staff and teachers, no matter how small, will be challenging after a couple already challenging years w/ COVID. |
| Cuts in special education staffing. It overloads the staff and no support to help the students that need it most. Which brings on more work for gen ed teachers. |
| I know that this is not a cut that could occur right away, but we CANNOT get rid of counselors, social workers, equity specialists, etc. Some of these kids are only coming to school because of this support and if we take it away, the inequities that would occur would be insurmountable. |
| I have been frustrated with the constant cutting of resources at the elementary school. Students have far less resources and a failing curriculum at these sites. For a town that has destination |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| medical center, our schools should be thriving. Also, as a tax payer I am dissppointed in the lack of transparency for the athletic funding bill that passed. Knowing now that Mayo's pool will not get the improvements that we voted for makes me think, where is the money? Are the improvements we are getting, the same amount of money that was passed or is that money being sent across town? I would not have voted for the plan and have less convidence in voting for future improvements due to the lack of research and transparency. |
| I do not think cutting teachers and/or making class sizes bigger will ever be a good thing. We need smaller class sizes to help with SO many issues and concerns. |
| Looking at the needs that have arisen, particularly due to COVID, it seems out of line to even consider cutting the SPED department or our mental health support staff. These are areas that are required to meet the increasing needs of our students. |
| Why so many cuts that negatively affect kids with IEPs? |
| All the proposed cuts to special ed. It says not to fill the unfilled positions, but the special ed staff already has too many students to work with. And there are not enough paras to cover students' needs. Clerical positions at the middle schools and high schools already have been cut. They can't afford more cuts. |
| I do not think there was as much emphasis on cutting "extra" people, those that do not serve students directly. For example all instructional coaches, many positions at Edison. Let's start with positions that don't service kids on a day to day basis. |
| Cutting special education budgets due to not being able to fill them does not equate to not needing them. Staff is working harder to fill the student needs with less time and resources. Restructuring administration at the special education level will leave teahers with less support. We've already restructured the administrators in the special education department and they manage a large amount of staff. Losing support from the C&I team and restructuring coaching does not help with teachers that already feel like they are on an island. Being able to problem solve and help teachers feel supported helps with student engagement and better outcomes as well for teacher reduction. Reading has taken a major hit with COVID and reducing reading teachers seems counter intuitive. |
| Any reduction to staff with direct student interaction should not be reduced!! |
| Any reduction of paras, mental health professionals and special education support. |
| Administrative reductions should occur at the district level and not at the building level. RPS seems to be VERY top heavy with high salaries for the cabinet and subcabinet. Those salaries could be better used to support teachers and students. |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| I am not sure. I am not an accountant. I'm going to trust the integrity of our CFO and staff to do what is best for children, youth, families, teachers, and staff. |
| Cuts to special education and pre-school. Cuts to instructional coaches. Cuts to building administrators. |
| Reducing special education should not be considered. There is already a shortage of services for special education. I think RPS should admit fault for this situation as it mostly has been caused by not having in person school during the pandemic. |
| There are too many cabinet-level positions and positions directly under these cabinet-level positions that could be eliminated or consolidated. There are far too many special interest positions that could be eliminated during these dire financial times. Positions like equity specialists, native American liaison positions and the like. Tough times call for tough measures. Increasing class sizes and cutting math and reading support should be the very last thing that is done. Eliminating special interest groups that serve such a small population of RPS students would help save a substantial sum of monies. Cutting classroom teachers and increasing class sizes is not a solution. Teachers need commensurate compensation for the job that they do. Respect your teachers by paying them a livable wage. Teachers have been teaching during a pandemic. They are being asked to do more and more with less and less. The plan that has been presented needs to go back to the drawing board. |
| Nothing is being done to address underutilized schools and nothing is being done to address higher level administration positions. I imagine that one higher level administration position is equivalent to several secretaries. |
| Prior to the pandemic I felt like our elementary school needed more paraprofessionals and other support staff. I can only imagine the burnout the staff are experiencing this year as they manage a public health crisis and fill in as substitute teachers in addition to their regular workload. The children need more supports to help with academics and mental health in the next 2 years, not less. And we need to hire more support staff, so that current school employees can cut back to a manageable workload and have more balance between work and home. A lot of these proposed cuts like special education, reducing the number of school nurses, paraprofessionals, and reading specialists, affect the most vulnerable students. My child has medical needs and is on a 504 plan, and while my child does not require 1:1 support they do require a little extra support beyond what my other children need. And a decrease in even paraprofessionals and school nurses would be a significant loss to my child getting the support they need to excel at school. My child visits the nurse's office when needed, and as a parent I depend on school nurses to make assessments and call me with updates. Increasing the number of students that adults are expected to supervise or care for will decrease student safety. I'm also concerned for parents who will need to take on the financial burden of paying for tutors, mental health support, and even classroom supplies when these budget cuts go into effect. Many families will not be able to afford these if the district does not provide them. |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| Cutting special education paras and staff. These staff are HIGHLY required as the students have special needs that required close instruction. These should not be cut |
| Getting rid of reading teacher. I can't believe this is being considered. This would hurt people of color more than whites. |
| I'm specifically concerned about cuts to instructional coaches both currently and as part of future evaluations. The same goes for future evaluations of elementary reading teachers and high school electives. My son will be starting in the district in the next couple of years and cuts in these areas cause me grave concerns about what type of educational support he can expect to encounter early in his education, as well as the options he'll have to have a well rounded educational experience at the secondary level. I am especially opposed to the coaching cuts, which feels fundamentally counter-productive. |
| I am concerned about 1K. Reduce Instructional Coach positions. I think the instructional coaches help amplify the teachers ability to teach. The instructional coaches are also effective in making sure that the curriculum are consistent across classrooms. Please don't reduce this budget. |
| I think the "equipment" reductions that are NOT being considered should be considered. I have a daughter who is an elementary teacher and I am always amazed and appalled at how much "equipment" (laptops, etc) are so easily handed out and so frequently lost, damaged and freely handed out again. For instance, when Byron went on distance learning, students had to put down a "deposit" on their laptops. I know this is not possible for everyone--but when you don't have ANY consequences for 'borrowed' equipment or even expectations--there is no incentive to treat property that is school-owned property more carefully. |
| I find it hard to believe that it's possible to cut special education teachers and paras and still have enough "people power" to provide for the minutes and supports on students' IEPs. Just because a position isn't filled doesn't mean it isn't necessary. |
| Cutting reading specialists for elementary students would be lead to huge academic failures. The students need more services with the new dyslexia requirements and with so many students falling behind during COVID. |
| Special Education is getting swamped with budget cuts by this proposed plan. How do you think this is okay? Roughly 41% of the plans proposed to affect kids who receive special education services. That is not proportionate to how many students receive those services. |
| I am concerned about the proposal to cut Instructional Coaches. Instructional Coaches are the guides that help Teachers improve and reflect. Teachers need this support to continually improve and grow so they are able to best support students. We should be sending a message to |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| students that continued growth and self-reflection are important. What kind of message does it send to students if we cut the resource helping our Teachers grow? |
| not trying to fill unfilled para positions hurts. It does affect students. I have a class with over 8 SPED students. We have NOT had a consistent para to help in the classroom all year. IEPs started at the beginning of the year with needs that stated para support needed and it didn't happen. Taking an admin away from some of the schools is also wrong.... these people are ALL busy every day. Dropping from three to two would put a lot of additional stress and workload upon them. We rarely see our admin as it is, dropping to two I forsee them rarely being in the hallways/classrooms. Get rid of all instructional coaches or go to 0.5. Dropping to 0.8... what is the point?? |
| It appears we have too many employees who don't work directly with students and it seems to be a factor in the amount that needs to be cut. |
| What about Edison positions? We seem to be a very top heavy district, especially in the "administration" sector. |
| Reading specialists should NOT be on the budget cut list. These teachers have had a year of extra training and licensure to provide interventions for students struggling in reading. Reading specialists are an integral support for students who have dyslexia and providing tier 3 supports for students struggling in reading. Reading specialists were cut in the 1980's and the district saw a huge decrease in reading scores, so these roles were brought back to the district. We need to learn from history so we aren't doomed to repeat it. The focus is too much on diversity and not on academics and keeping the class sizes smaller with more support for teachers to support Tier 1, 2 and reading/math support teachers for Tier 3. support. |
| Cutting and not filling special education student facing positions. Working in special education in this district has been very defeating for several years. There are already staffing issues, especially in related services, where staff members have much too high caseloads to do effective work. It has long seemed like the district does not value actually helping these vulnerable and needy students. Taking these measured furthers that message. Increasing caseloads and lowering support will likely lead to greater turnover and longer retention in special education for students. The district needs to start taking that seriously and combating that trend, not contributing to it. |
| So many reductions in special education. I do not have a child with special needs, but this strikes me as an exceptionally vulnerable population that frequently struggles to secure very limited resources. This does not strike me as the right place to make cuts. |
| I think taking from special education is an alarming proposal, those are the students that should be getting the most support - not experiencing the cuts. |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| Many....for starters you have considered many options that have a huge impact on students. You want to eliminate infilled positions specifically for special education. Although that may sound good to someone who never sets foot in the classroom or has no involvement with kids this will greatly impact our children and their opportunity for growth. You are considering looking at cutting reading teachers, when test scores are showing that reading levels are behind. You are looking at re-doing you staffing formulas, but how are teachers suppose to plan and provide time to help students who are struggling if you continue to increase their work load. |
| Change in elementary paraprofessional formula. |
| The idea of saying that the cuts are far from students is misleading. Cutting C&I support and coaching directly touches all teachers and all students. Retention will be affected by cutting these positions and potentially end up costing more and have less trained staff for our students. Eliminating support for our Special ed students seem s counterproductive-especially if there is less instructional, curriculum support and fewer opportunities for PD and coaching. Increasing equitable teaching practices and experiences for students will need time an job-embedded support. With the plans coming our in the strategic plan, the only effective ways for implementation and change in experiences for our students need support people in our schools to be working with one another and the staff (C&I, coaches). Teachers deserve to have support and students deserve to have supported teachers. Changing the staffing formula increases class size which can be a big deal. |
| Reduce unfilled teaching/para positions in SPED- let's figure out how to fill these positions Reduce instructional coach positions- these are teacher positions, a reduction here is a reduction in teachers- we need coaches to support our teachers, especially the new teachers we are bound to see in the next several years |
| Assumptions are made that secondary impacts to teachers will not go on to impact students. |
| No transparent on where and how Covid dollars were used and what was district dollars during the pandemic and now. |
| The entire thing is a weakness. |
| Elementary reading program and para-professional reduction. Reduction in special education. |
| Cutting para expenses is irresponsible and could have negative impacts on the classrooms that need them most. |
| You can not freeze or reduce the amount of special education teachers and sped paraprofessionals. Many sped teachers are hard to find and you will lose the ones we have due to overloaded caseloads and demands of the job. This is going to effect our most vulnerable students. |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| Elimination of the instructional coach FTE. Reading the description and realizing the stress and pressure the teachers are under, it appears that the instructional coach position is an extremely important position and reduction in this area would have a detrimental effect on both much needed teacher and student support. This position should not be reduced. |
| General failure to plan for the future. This is an incredible budget gap to remedy. Where was leadership 5 years ago? Why is this being discussed now with only 6 months to go before the deficit hits? The community is faced with difficult decisions to reduce spending by millions of dollars while simultaneously playing education catch-up across all grade levels from the last two plus years. Neighborhood elementary schools will be closed and consolidated, middle school building projects need to be halted, and plans for a 4th HS need to be shut down, permanently. When the times comes, classroom space should be added to existing schools. Don't add new buildings that require land for sports facilities (football fields, track, soccer, baseball, softball, etc). What a waste. Take a field trip to Wyzata, Lakeville, etc and learn how school buildings can accommodate large numbers of students. |
| We CANNOT simply "cover students 1:1 special education needs with other FTE's". We don't have a enough special education paras as it is. Cuts to special education are not sustainable... especially at this time when students have even more needs after returning to in-person. Our office staff at the middle school level is already overwhelmed/ busy and having a hard time keeping up. This does not seem right either... they deal with so much more at the middle school level than elem. They are dealing with... middle schoolers and middle school behavior! |
| Poor spending practices. |
| Increasing class sizes at the PreK - elementary level does not sound good. Cuts to anything related to special education (with the exception of coaches) will not be effective, I think it will only exacerbate the open Sped positions we already have, as teachers and paras in that department are pretty much running on empty. Many will be leaving at the end of this year, I'm sure of it, if they don't get more support not less. |
| I am terrified to think of the cuts to coaching from both my perspective as a current coach and also how I much I valued my coach as a teacher. Currently, I have teachers in tears daily. Teachers that are sharing that they can't sleep and that they don't know if they can do it any longer. Coaching has become a life line for some teachers and if the teacher does better than the student does better. Another fear is the thought of less paras for special education in particular, but really across the board. I genuinely worry for the safety of our students. We are struggling now with our current para staffing. |
| How can you cut paras from SPED programming. Federally we are mandated to provide what students need. It is unrealistic to put that on case managers and students. All though SPED is unfunded mandate, it is also heavily monitored and parents are litigious. One due process suit from a parent can cost the district way more than cross subsidized does. Cutting admin and coaches has a very detrimental impact on student learning. If you cut admin that are already |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| <p>spread thin, you are cutting instructional leadership. Coaches carry that out and are more of the instructional leaders in schools that admin over the last few years. If you loose that you will see the closed door, do what I want in schools, impacting test scores and student achievement. Suggesting we cut the mental health programs we are finally growing, years to late, is significant to student needs as well. The impact of the pandemic on students is far beyond what anyone realizes. Some teachers just don't care and are too stubborn to take into account where a student is in their life. They need the social workers and the advocacy for their support to make it through their days and be able to access their education.</p> |
| <p>I am very worried about the number of student contact positions that are on the list to be cut. Especially with the pandemic and the increased needs of students, this is cutting positions that we need to add/fill. I am also concerned about the impact the reduction in instructional coaches will have on new and early career educators and our ability to retain staff. I am also concerned about the change in general education para ratios at elementary, as the practical impact this will have (aside from losing a caring adult in a school) is pulling support staff (counselors, social workers, etc.) and principals to cover lunch and recess more frequently than they already are. This will make it more difficult and give them less time in the day to provide direct, targeted supports (including mental health support) to students.</p> |
| <p>Possibility of increase class sizes in both high school and elementary. With teacher shortages around the country becoming an issue I worry that if RPS cuts staff and increases the burden on those who are left even more without adequately compensating them for the extra work load (which given the talks of budget cuts seems unlikely The school district would even attempt to do) could lead to bigger staffing problems, not only in numbers but in the quality of teacher.</p> |
| <p>1. Cutting electives and sports. How are we going to keep children engaged? 2. Cut nursing staff in a pandemic? Increase their roles! Not just from the pandemic. Take this opportunity to network with Mayo Clinic and improve the health of our children. As a nurse I would gladly volunteer and or give presentations.</p> |
| <p>The budget cuts are not evenly distributed amongst students/staff/programs. They are so focused on the SPED programing. Every child in the district should be equally impacted by these cuts but the proposed budget cuts are nothing of the sort. It seems like every SPED child (or with an IEP) will suffer the consequences of the of the cuts. It's not fair that all of the weight lies on these kiddos and their staff. SPED teachers and paras are some of the best around. They need to be supported just the same as any other gen ed classroom. They need not bear the whole burden of the budget cuts.</p> |
| <p>-Anything that would increase class size or reduce extra supports (ex. reading teachers) when our students are still trying to learn during a pandemic and are struggling more than ever -The possibility of closing a small elementary building-I understand larger buildings are more cost effective, but the sense of community at these buildings can't be matched. Our largest buildings seem to be the ones that struggle most with behaviors -I think there could be more cuts in</p> |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| district level positions without direct student contact before we start cutting roles like paraprofessionals |
| Too much wasteful spending on administration |
| There are A LOT of cuts to special education. That is not equitable nor ok. These kids and families NEED this support. And to see that social workers and councilors made the list is maddening. We need to stand up for our students and make sure they have what they need to be successful. With everything that has happened since Covid 19 started kids need this support more than ever! This is VERY disappointing. |
| Not enough cuts in central administrative offices. Not enough cuts in instructional coaches. |
| Why did you hire a large # of equity specialists? These positions could easily be filled or absorbed by the exorbitant number of principals on special assignment or teachers could head up these positions with supplemental pay. Edison is bursting with people who have no impact on students. How can you even consider reducing nurses????????? They have been the BACKBONE during this pandemic. How can you think about cutting back on electronics???? The elementary kids don't have laptops!!!! You are proposing cutting the bottom... the people who directly impact kids. |
| WOKE agenda |
| Cutting cast in education is the worst thing a community can do. You provide worse education, have less staff and provide worse support for teachers and students over time. I am disappointed to hear RPS is cutting funds drastically in special education. |
| Cutting so much into SPECIAL EDUCATION!!! The people or persons who suggested this needs to come to the special education classrooms and watch for ONE DAY, not even shadowing a week. In ONE DAY, you would see that we don't have enough staff, para's that do show up are constantly being let down by other para's who don't show up, or show up late and no that no one will fire them, so they keep doing it, leaving the rest of the staff to fill in and keep students safe. I don't EVER take a lunch. It doesn't feel right. I many times, arrive and the teacher is then allowed to use the bathroom, so how would I ever take a lunch? The cuts to Special Education, including coaches (who are in classrooms when many times there are loads of State of MN paperwork, sitting on their desks) cuts to Edison, and not posting the positions that are sadly not being filled so it appears to others- the positions are not needed? That is very backwards thinking. We are barely surviving this year. We will not be back next year. So many people are going to quit because the conditions are not sustainable. Much of this proposal was weak. |
| *Increasing class sizes puts a huge burden on already overworked teachers. The district might save money initially, but the district would probably have trouble with retention and recruitment of teachers. *reducing staff in clerical positions permanently in the schools seems |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| <p>short sighted. Why not instead maybe have a floating clerical position, or maybe a remote clerical person, who could help with some of the clerical issues at a handful of schools? Is that a possibility? 3. By removing programs like InSciEd and IncubatorEdu you take away unique programs to encourage our students to stretch themselves. It makes sense to not renew the lease for IncubatorEdu, but not completely end the program? InSciEd is a wonderful program, and I think it is many childrens only experience with research. It would be unfortunate if it was to be removed. *I am against closing an elementary school. I think that is short sighted with the growth rochester is experiencing.</p> |
| <p>Proposed cuts are hitting the most vulnerable first, Sped, sped paras, increasing elementary class size, reading teachers to name a few. The school board raised their pay when facing a \$23 million dollar deficit is unconscionable. Cut the wants first. Every staff position that is not in direct contact with students supporting reading/math should be cut first. Cut the cabinet to superintendent to 2 and finance position. Cut C& I and don't invest in new curriculum during this budget crunch. Cut instructional coaches and equity specialists. Cut TOSA/POSA positions. Work hard on allowing parents to be heard so they are not open enrolling to surrounding districts, online, home school, and private schools. The only option parents 6-12 had to have their children in person for a year was to leave the district. All of the surrounding districts were in person and saying RPS is too big we can't be like other districts is not enough to recover lost enrollment funding. If you raise class sizes how will parents want to come back to RPS? 29 students in first grade or go to Byron, Kasson, Stewartville at 21 students. Cuts have to come from the top down and as far away from the classroom, sped, reading/math support as possible.</p> |
| <p>Cutting special education is not a good idea. It is already difficult enough for families with children with special needs</p> |
| <p>upper man. getting paid 6 figures how about they take a pay CUT</p> |
| <p>Reducing staff will only add to teacher burnout. Many solutions involve reducing staff, but keeping the same workload</p> |
| <p>Special education staff have been stretched too far already. Cutting more in that area will be devastating. We loose top notch sped teachers because of they already are being asked to do too much.</p> |
| <p>Eliminating special education resources including but not limiting to budgeting for paraprofessionals as needs arise with new special education student enrollment.</p> |
| <p>Major cuts to special education.</p> |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| After all the mental health issues of so many of our kids, you really want to cut nurses, social workers and counselors? Really? Again, cut Instructional Coaches, or reassign them to the classroom, before you cut people who are helping our kids survive middle school! |
| 1K. Reduce Instructional Coach positions. 2C. Reduce special education tuition contracts at community nursery school. 2L. Change elementary school general education paraprofessional formula to 0.0059 times number of students. |
| I am very concerned about the possibility of cutting para positions for special education. When paras are not there, students are not receiving the modifications and accommodations that are listed on their IEP's and required by federal regulations. We are not meeting their individual needs. Today, as a member of the Behavior and Mental Health Team, I was in a DCD-SP class helping in a room with some paras were gone with a very autistic and severely profound child, who needs a one-to-one person and the room needs a high number of adults to keep everyone in the room safe. Students with high-level needs and special education services should not be penalized because of our need to cut the budget. The district also receives special education money for these students. Our kids with special educational needs need the paras and services. In addition, our special education department leads are extraordinarily busy and if they have spread any thinner, services would be diminished. |
| The budget appears to be too small. Please simply increase the budget. |
| The proposed cuts lack transparency. What is happening with the Friedel building? What other small schools and programs are running at a loss? The public needs to know this information. I also do not agree with cutting secretarial staff at the middle school level or opting not to fill open special education positions. This could likely result in lawsuits (which will result in spending more \$\$\$) if the district is not meeting student needs as stated on IEP's. |
| No more busing private school kids or open enrollment children to Rochester. Social workers, counselors, resiliency specialists and equity specialists all need to be eliminated - you cannot afford these positions!!!! |
| Some recommendations do not align with a long term strategy for robust public education |
| A large portion of the budget cuts are coming from special education. Special education is where a large amounts of the districts funding comes from. Many of the proposed cut positions that are being cut are because they are unfilled does not mean they are unnecessary or that students are not currently being affected by the lack of staff filling those position. Shifting staff into areas where there is a need also is not a way to retain staff or adequately meet the needs of students in special education. The positions that are unfilled are greatly affecting the students and staff that work in those areas. They need to be filled rather than cut to save money. Most of these positions that are open serve students who are third-party billable in-which the district receives money back from the state for services provided for the student in special education while they are attending school. Many buildings are working so short students basic needs are |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| being met but staff burn out is coming. Making the decision to make 5 of the 12 cuts come from special education doesn't make sense. That is 41% of suggested cuts, and special education is not 41% of our students. It doesn't seem equitable for how district money is being spent and utilized and now cut. |
| Increasing class sizes and reducing para support will have a negative impact on all students. Last year during hybrid we saw a huge decrease in behaviors. That has to do with class size. Families are choosing to go to other schools or school districts due to the smaller class sizes. |
| We are spending too much money at the top. Too many admin in each building and too many instructional coaches (who are often doing para work). |
| Many of the proposed items would have a direct impact on students. Some of the best practices ISD 535 have put in place are on the chopping block. Consideration is being given to reduce or eliminate SPED services. Not a good option. The consideration to reduce or eliminate counseling, mental health, equity and resiliency specialists is absolutely a NO!! Kids are coming to school for those connections and we will lose hundreds of kids if those services are available to them. PLEASE, do not cut these EBP positions. |
| Reducing Instructional Coaches is a definite weakness. To say that they do not have an impact on students is incorrect. The Instructional Coaches are essential to assist new teachers and veteran teachers to help them feel supported in their work. Classroom teachers are overwhelmed and Instructional Coaches are the support on the side that helps them feel fully supported and able to complete all the demands that are placed upon them. Students are successful when teachers are successful. Instructional Coaches help teachers feel success so therefore there is a direct impact when they are reduced in the budget reductions. |
| The reduction of administration could see concerns in regards to certain buildings who have more behaviors than others. When shifting para positions, how won't this effect students who already need para support but don't need 1:1 on support? |
| There are some specific items mentioned that seem a little vague. For example, altering the hiring practices for elementary and secondary teachers. I'm not sure what this implies |
| Difficult to discern what the districts priorities are based on these cuts. Hard to determine cuts without identifying priorities. Instruction and retention of high quality teachers will go down without instructional leadership from building leaders and coaches. |
| Reducing special ed positions (teachers, paraprofessionals, etc.) and not budgeting for growth. This seem to be shortsighted considering the current state of affairs with the pandemic. |
| On general, I feel that RPS offer less of challenging classes for high schoolers There is a lot less emphasis on the science education that it was on the pass Cutting budget in a way that it |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| hurt science education (reduced electives) will hurt students , but it will hurt RPS as well as it leads to decreased enthusiasm to keep children in RPS. |
| It seems that the district may still be heavy on positions that don't directly impact students. There are a number of POSA, TOSA, instructional coaches and cabinet positions that could be reduced if needed. I would consider this especially in an effort to keep class sizes down. Are there finishing touches on some of the buildings being built that could be done at a lower cost, or put off for a few years? Just a thought. |
| Instructional coaches are what is keeping teachers going right now. If it was not for my former coach, I probably would have left teaching years ago. Now as an instructional coach myself I see how many of our teachers are struggling. I have had many deep conversations with teachers who want to do good by their students but lack the skills of what students need during this time. As a coach I am able to provide resources, strategies to help them change their old way of thinking to adapt to our students changing needs. Without coaches, we lose our strong community. We need coaches, and coaches who can be present and NOT be pulled to sub. |
| I worry about lower the number of paras or the office staff in each building. This will directly put more pressure on the Teachers, who are already overstretched. |
| It appears we were sold a bill of goods to pass the building projects and now increased costs to open them and you now want to close a small school. Please address that issue with the public. Maybe the small one is inefficient or in a low student population area. If you're going to do it, get it done and soon. |
| The priorities of where to decrease the budget seem highly focused on students even though it was said that trying to not do that. Special education teachers and support staff are being cut even though those students have the most need and should be given more priority than what was shown |
| Every single thing is directed at the most vulnerable students in the district, who already face achievement gaps. Stop targeting these kids and families! We see you doing this. |
| I do not see an audit to explain the reasons for this huge deficit. Most of the cuts are with staff that works directly with the students. How could that be a reasonable solution? We cannot affect students! |
| Reading from an early age is proven to be the number one academic factor in increasing outcomes for students later in their academic careers, notably in subjects like math or other STEM fields. Any talk of cutting reading from an early age is counterproductive from a Return-On-Investment (ROI) perspective. We would be wasting money in future years trying to figure out how to make up for lost reading skills in the early years. |

What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?

It seems that certain departments had multiple reductions on the list. As much as we want reductions to have least impact on students, with this much of a reduction, I don't see how this is possible. However, I see that there are many that impact special education and student services. These budget reductions have a direct impact on student IEP's. So, with a connection to an IEP, these would need to be an IEP team decision and not a District decision or it could be a liability for the District down the road.

We should not be taking staffing away from special education. Those positions were created because there are students who need that assistance. Part of providing for the needs of all of our learners means making sure all students have the support they need to be successful - for some students that necessitates a 1:1 para, for others that means enrichment options. Make sure you are caring for students at all ends of the spectrum. Special education is and will always be expensive but that is just the way it is, particularly in a city like Rochester where many families move for access to Mayo Clinic.

The items on the list are based upon money and totals. There is not regard for how it will affect the others. reducing instructional coaches- How will you provide support for teachers with Prof Dev and New Teachers and all the initiatives that you starting? The admin also depend on coaches to support staff in PGP and curr and when they are on the track to being let go; reducing special education positions, tightening the formula for teachers and sp ed para staff- This will cause great stress for teachers and all students will not be able to be served. Teachers are already full to the max. Cutting reading teachers also is not the answer Using COVID funds to pay for site subs and RPS online and Equity Specialists; We are giving teachers and staff these opportunities and then they may be taken away. We can not lose curriculum and instruction positions as they need to support teachers if you take away coaches. How can we utilize this money in a better way? Why are cabinet members not on this list- could we decrease their salary or downsize?

A lot of schools have great success utilizing instructional coaches. They provide on-boarding, induction, and support for new teachers, contributing to teacher satisfaction and retention. They also provide hands-on and immediate support (both instructional and planning) and feedback for veteran teachers, and they are often in more classrooms than principals, working directly with teachers and students. Additionally, instructional coaches provide a cost-effective in-district PD alternative to expensive out-of-district PD. Reducing instructional coaching below 1.0 FTE per building would hinder the program, creating issues where coaches would be unable to support all teachers and therefor all students.

Aren't there many TOSA and POSA positions of licensed staff that are not IN buildings that could be cut or re-distributed to assist in the budget needs?? Also, how can you look at decreasing mental health supports and SEL supports next year after preaching for the past two years about how important these roles are and how vast the needs of students are?? It seem that the most disadvantaged students are continuously having their needed supports removed or cut. Social work, counselors, resiliency specialists, SPED.

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| Reducing unfilled special education teachers and para positions. Reducing elementary reading teachers potentially. |
| All of the Instructional Coach positions should be eliminated and those staff should return to the classroom. I'm disappointed in seeing admin use those positions as substitutes and also to do admin duties. It would also help with staffing the existing and future buildings. |
| Special Ed. is going to see a disproportionate amount of cuts. Less support for teachers could result in increased teacher shortage from burnout. |
| Where was it addressed we are currently too top heavy? (people making 100K plus a year and programs at Edison just to simply employ more 100k+ people.) Also Tons of redundant upper management throughout the district making 100k+. Why is it every time we go through these scenarios we always start cutting from the bottom (the people taking the least amount of money to employ) Often times the most key people we employ. (boots on the ground and in buildings daily) "You cant play football if you sit on the sidelines" Its time we start thinning from the top down. Secondly how is this budget deficit my fault. Why will I end up being punished with a pay freeze or minimal cost of living increase? Every year I work here I am actually loosing money. the districts "Cost of living" does not reflect actual cost of living. Inflation is up by 7% from the end of last year into this year already. Not to mention our insurance benefits getting any better year after year. |
| *1H - While it is necessary to shift resources, blanket statements and allocations, such as 1:400 for administration, doesn't take in to account the needs of each building. There may be additional factors, besides the number of students, that may warrant additional administrative support. Furthermore, reducing administration as well as stacking reductions will create challenges and prevent us from meeting the needs of our staff, students and families. (1I, 1K, 2A, 2G, 2H, 2L) *2G, 2H - with the increased needs that we have in our students, more students and higher levels of needs, we depend upon our student support services administrators to guide us through due process and coach us in making decisions, as well as guiding our child study teams. There is professional development in each meeting and conversation. *The options for further study are worrisome: 4D, 4E, 4F, 4G, 4J and 4L will change the work that we do AND will cause less support for our students making high levels of achievement unattainable |
| -cuts that directly affect students -mental health cuts -special education cuts -cuts that affect class size, especially K-2 |
| Here are my top 3 weaknesses that directly affect my field: Reducing unfilled SPED teaching position - our teachers want to walk out with how we are currently functioning. How can we reduce these unfilled positions when we encourage our staff that "more help is coming." Our SPED department is going to hit a crisis point, and I fear that we will see a mass exit of all teachers if we do not start with more appreciation via pay, benefits, and general appreciation. This is not a way to show any appreciation to our current staff. Reduce |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| <p>instructional coaching - I cannot express how much instructional coaching is needed. Some of our coaches - with this title - act more like an administrator in their buildings. No matter general or special ed - they are filling in the gaps that our overworked administrators do not have time to do/complete. The impact coaches have on new teachers and new to Rochester teachers cannot be measured. This has been tracked to promote longevity in teachers through other studies outside of our school district. In the field of SPED, the coaches are the first line of defense to teach due process - and there is a big impact on keeping MDE happy with our compliance measures. If not for the SPED coaches, we would see more citations on paperwork. Our out of field permission teachers are a must, as we can not produce enough SPED teachers as a whole, to fill position. Our out of field permissions teachers sometimes find the love of SPED and decided to stick with it, yay! But that is largely due to the individual coaching and teaching they receive via their coach. Reducing unfilled para position - Students require para support via their IEPs... we are federally bound to provide this... We currently don't have enough support to do this, and our support is stretched thin. How can we even consider not filling these important roles? Adults have a direct impact on children. So, where will we be without the support?</p> |
| <p>Cutting paraprofessional positions. In early childhood special education, these folks are such valuable assets to support our earliest learners with their delays, and more importantly to keep the children SAFE.</p> |
| <p>The reduction plans don't consider opportunities to increase sustainable revenue by utilizing community partners, namely Mayo Clinic, who use high quality school district in recruitment process.</p> |
| <p>Special Education needs all the support they can get, reducing paras in that category is alarming.</p> |
| <p>I believe the reduction in instructional coach staffing is short-sited. We are struggling to fill all of our positions with high quality candidates and often a reason that people come to Rochester Public Schools is the support provided. If this goes away I predict that we will have more trouble with retention of staff.</p> |
| <p>heavy hit to special education but not enough to the multitude of sped non-classroom positions Reducing middle school clerical to 2 is very concerning. This will be a safety/security risk as we need additional staff to man the doors and answer phones. Also having 3x the secretarial staff at HS vs MS when the student count is only 20-25% more is grossly inequitable.</p> |
| <p>Schools need paras and especially Sped paras. They are very valuable. The schools are cold enough in the winter. Please don't turn down the heat.</p> |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| Cuts to special education and ancillary services such as social work, equity specialists, etc. I see that as cutting resources to children who need them most |
| Some listings/categories seem deliberately vague and had me wondering exactly what would be cut/reduced. It lacked some transparency there. Budget reductions should eliminate all special assignment jobs, especially those where more than one person is doing the same job and anything that is upper management and does not directly impact students. This would include multiple departments like teachers, principals, custodians coaches and supervisors on special assignments. Put those folks back in the classrooms, cleaning, subbing, etc. Reduce the number of jobs downtown. There should be greater accountability with reduction of inefficiencies and ineffective options. |
| Thinking accounting changes will not disrupt student learning. |
| Too much spending. Building schools without care of financing. Top administrative staff paid too much. Too much focus on ethnic diversity |
| I had concerns about reducing staff when it came to the changes that require more study. Make sure you really look into that before making decisions. The reading teachers in elementary schools were utilized by all 3 of my children. I think it's important to have the staff needed to do the job without overwhelming them, but if there are too many, then reducing them makes sense. Please review carefully as it impacts both the school and the students. Same for some of the other professionals you are possibly considering reducing. |
| I do not support the potential for eliminating transportation for district wide schools. |
| EVERYWHERE! Let's say you cut special education specialists. Who is to care for and guide children with IEPs or 504 plans. Is the plan to overwhelm teachers more by removing special education help. Ive been a special education para and teachers have alot on their plates. Special education needs resources and funding. How about Early childhood intervention? If you cut them how are you going to get children who are behind caught up in time for school. |
| Did too much money get spent this past year? |
| PLEASE do not cut teachers/support staff. Staff that work with kids are already stretched way too thin. We are not able to give each child the individualized attention they need, and increasing the adult:student ratio would only inhibit this more. |
| Several reductions target special education and paras. Having a child with an IEP, it makes me concerned that we are trying to take resources from kids that struggle. Covid has had such a negative impact on kids' mental health, and many kids with behavioral issues are experiencing more challenges now. |
| You choose the pull politics into your school system. |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| Sports and reading. The kids need this. Very important. Cutting school nurses. They are needed. They are healthcare experts. It's needed. However Cutting staff nurses back would be ok. Also, make sure the ones that are kept are compensated to stay. Janitors are needed. Cutting janitorial staff to save for student programs will be ok. Do not completely eliminate. |
| To stop the cut |
| That finding from special education and mental health were considered before reducing elective classes and athletics. I'm extremely curious of the costs associated with advanced placement classes and whether those were considered. I'm also concerned that new schools are currently being built yet these deficit cuts are needed. What costs were considered in the building contracts that could have been addressed. |
| In 'option 2', 5 of the 12 items are from special education. 2A and 2B are direct student contact. The equation outline suggests a cut of 5 para positions, however, we currently have about 15 vacancies in secondary special education alone. if we freeze unfilled positions and don't allow for increase we will be at a significant loss. This week alone I had to step in when a student needed to be changed and paras were covering other duties, the teacher had to choose between student dignity and teaching the rest of the class. This room already has 2 open positions. We have teachers taking a portion of their lunch toileting, taking students to the nurse and setting them up with lunch to fit medical needs and there aren't enough paras. The list could go on, we are not in a position to freeze our situation or make cuts. These are vital roles that support vital programs. If we stay where we are there is no room for growth should we have an increase of needs or students. Please don't put staff and student safety on the line. |
| Anything that hampers student opportunity. Electives, sports, room temperatures? Really? |
| District wasting so much money |
| A high 0ercentagr of cuts are coming from special education support and it is not equitable. Not allowing for addional supports to be budgeting for special education is a mistake. Needs of students change and with that additional staff may be needed. To look at the intensive setting rooms and agree to make this change is a mistake. Teachers are struggling and it impacts the students. The para positions that are posted but are not filled are needed positions. To remove those from the budget tells the staff who count on those supports that they are not valued. These are people who are meant to work directly with students and are needed. |
| You talk about closing an elementary school ... really? Why then did you just build a new one |
| Poor planning to be in this place |
| If there have been more positions added than the rate of students enrollment, then shouldn't the added positions be the first to be considered as budget reductions. The appearance is that those positions do NOT directly impact student instruction. |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| If we eliminated administrative positions, we'd have to allow administrators to be more strict on negative student behaviors without needing to "call downtown for approval" for suspensions. They are stretched so thin as it is, and putting the power back in their hands would be a start. |
| I would like to see a reorganization happen at the Edison and roles of each position clearly defined as well as the outcomes guided by those positions. |
| Special education departments seem to be taking a lot of the cuts. - closing an elementary when two have been expanded and a new one built seems ABSURD. Public perception of that will be brutal. |
| Some of the language, such as "no immediate impact on any student or employee" in 1i. Reduce unfilled Special Education Teaching positions is misleading. From what I see on a daily basis working in Special Education, I think you mean no *additional* impact, because that is closer to our reality. There appears to be a disproportionate amount of "cutting" when it comes to special education funding and staffing. The biggest weakness I see is the false narrative that this will not have a direct impact on students/staff as it already is and ignoring a problem isn't a solution and certainly doesn't make it go away. I realize there is already a shortage, but that doesn't necessarily mean a lack of need. I urge you to reconsider some of the effects this will and already is having on Special Education if we as a district choose to reduce funding and resources. |
| We need more Sped Paras. Some are expected to be in 3-4 classrooms at the same time, supporting different students. This does not comply with the IEPs of some students who are required to have para support. I understand some positions are unfilled, but perhaps we need to do more to encourage the filling of those positions. The cleaning done in-building is already at a minimum. I don't think we can afford to cut that area. Teachers clean their own classrooms outside of contract time. Soap in the bathrooms is not filled in a timely manner. We cannot reduce social workers or counselors. Those professionals are already stressed with their workloads and don't have enough time to address all of their roles. Security paras are also necessary to the functioning of the schools. They allow students to remain safe and allow teachers to focus on the classroom. |
| Eliminating services that will directly impact students and services provided by the district. Reducing clerical and administrative positions may add to the already existing strain to employees in this position. Similarly, in some of the backup recommendations or recommendations in need of further study involve reducing teachers, paraprofessionals, counselors, nurses, and other direct student support services which seems very unwise and may have a bigger impact on the student/staff population beyond budget. |
| missed how school district got in this predicament not included is closing schools finance staff need to be replaced there are two middle schools in NW Rochester, close one. RPS Online school is not impacted |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| <p>I am concerned about the writing off of unfilled positions. We are “making do” because we need to. However, it seems that often this is at the cost of what is good for students. RPS has been very creative and proactive in trying to fill the unfilled positions, particularly for paraprofessionals. But many students are not getting their identified special education services addressed. When staff are gone, we are borrowing from one hand to support the other. We are borrowing from our resource students to address the needs of our more intensive students. In these situation not only do resource students not receive the services that are mandated, it is also a disservice to our intensive students. We are working hard to keep students safe, but staff and student safety are being impacted. Staff are working to “make do” and piece something together, this is not good for students NOR the person who is now pulled in a million directions. We are setting up everyone for failure. RPS student services works really hard to run as “lean” as possible. There aren’t people standing around or unnecessary. If we cut positions that have been determined to be necessary, we are losing any option for improvement. These are not sustainable and not safe (students or staff).</p> |
| <p>Cutting Security Paraprofessionals Cutting Clerical Cutting maintenance/custodial</p> |
| <p>-Elementary admin could be reduced, but it seems like that wouldn't be a good idea for secondary with the increase in violence and property destruction there -Increasing class sizes would have a negative affect on both students and staff -Reducing reading teachers -Why would you close a small elementary building when you have just asked us for money to build new ones?</p> |
| <p>for 23-24 - possible reduction of maintenance, social worker, counselor, equity specialist positions. All of these seem tight right now and very much needed. Also the possible closing of small elementary schools - these are important!</p> |
| <p>When we talk about supply budgets and reduction of teaching staff, paras, administrators, and building clerical, it's very concerning to me. We are already understaffed when it comes to being able to address the current needs of the students. Students and staff are struggling so much right now, so this is a big disservice to students and we are going to burn out the staff members who chose to stay after this year.</p> |
| <p>Option 2 feels very unbalanced in regards to general education impact and special education impact. While there are many positions open in the district and they have gone unfilled that doesn't mean that there aren't student needs there. There are people in the buildings being stretched to help support all those students who need access to a paraprofessional. I am also concerned about the reorganization of the SSS department and C&I. These are small departments that support large numbers of teachers and students. Their work loads are already very high and if we add more to their plates things will start to falter. The SSS department already has to deal with a number of issues when things come up regarding student behavior, parent complaints, teacher concerns, etc. Those issues can't be predicted and yet when they happen have to be dealt with. Eliminating a position within that department will cause more</p> |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| issues in the future I feel as they will have to deal with the legality issues first and other responsibilities will take a back seat. |
| reducing staff could strain staff already feeling burdened. example office staff dealing with COVID changes/restrictions are very stressful- parent frustrations taken out on these front facing staff. |
| There are heavy cuts to student services which will directly impact students and their overall services. It seems that student services is taking a heavier impact than any other area. |
| To consider evaluating health office staff reductions for 2023-24 is alarming. During the last 2-3 years, health offices have been affected with staffing concerns by COVID response. The health office is essential in safe delivery of care to students. COVID funds have not been used appropriately to increase COVID support for nursing and administration. Instead extra work has been given to the health offices and LSNs. Money is not appropriately been directed to health office and COVID support. This should not be reduced but increased. Special education para positions are also needed and should not be reduced. It is already difficult to staff our DCDSP rooms. |
| There is a lot of focus on cutting many areas of special education. It would be beneficial to understand the allocation of dollars to special education to better understand why so many cuts were made in that area. |
| 1. Not filling SPED open positions. This is the worst year possible to look at open positions because we have so many is SPED. It has been a terrible year to be a teacher in this district because of all of the para openings. The kids who receive SPED services are the most vulnerable and the last place we should be looking to not hire staff. 2. SPED float teachers are a need as 90% of the time they are filling in open positions, if we did not have the position the position would not be filled. If anything we need more float teachers, since we can't get subs to fill in. 3. SPED coaches are a must in every building. 4. Not providing transportation to choice schools - these schools are mostly white already, if we take transportation away we will just be shutting out minority populations more. |
| Please do not take any sports away from our children. They have already lost so much. |
| No detailed plan to attract new students which is necessary to increased revenue. Revenue improvement should be first goal. Plans to significantly improve outcomes in math and reading through change and innovation are necessary to improved enrollment. |
| We need to look at why the number of students attending RPS has only grown 8%. In particular, I would like someone to SERIOUSLY look at our weak, inequitable elementary curriculum which lacks a cohesive reading program, has outdated health curriculum in this Destination Medical Center, and trust me, there is no STEM or STEAM to be found in science and social studies. We may have new buildings and the capacity for future growth, but we are |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| lacking the programming to draw students and families to RPS. Ask an elementary school to "showcase" their curriculum for you and you'll quickly see the problem. |
| <p>The current proposal targets special education for MANY of the budget cuts. The district IS ALREADY NOT MEETING LEGAL REQUIREMENTS for special education students. SPED teachers and support staff are already spread thin and put in countless extra hours to complete documentation, hold required meetings, and support their students (out side of contracted hours). Cutting SPED teaching positions and paraprofessional positions will only increase the stress placed on these teachers and I can only image exacerbate issues with moral and burnout. At the board meeting it was stated that all SPED needs are currently being met. I know this to NOT be true. I know that the district is already not legally meeting documented supports defined in the legally binding IEP. We were told point blank this year that there were not enough paras to meet the support defined in our student's IEP, but that they were trying to hire the staff to fill these roles. We have tried to be understanding knowing the district's current staffing situation because you are trying to hire to meet the legally required needs. However, by cutting both SPED teacher and para positions you are now telling us that our student's needs will NEVER be met because if the district already cannot meet staffing needs, how will they be able to if they do not even positions available to fill. We happen to know our legal rights and will advocate for our SPED student, but their are MANY parents/guardians that do not know their rights. The school district is taking advantage of those parents by knowingly shorting the services provided to SPED students because the district knows that the overwhelming majority of SPED parents/guardians will not push back or even know that they can push back. If the response to my comments thus far are that all SPED students (and staff) needs are being met, then why is my daughter not getting the documented para support she should be receiving? Is it because she is Black? Is it because her needs are seen as not important enough to comply with the documented support structure defined in the IEP? It was also stated at the board meeting that teachers and staff will be asked to get creative to try and solve some of the current staffing and support shortages. If they haven't been able to be creative enough over the past year to two years to solve the issues, what will change in the next few months that will creatively solve the issues?</p> |
| Cutting back admin staff may put a larger burden on already overworked staff. |
| Not bold enough, it feels like we are kicking lots of cans down the road and not taking the opportunity to make systemic changes that the pandemic has lead us to |
| Nowhere does it say school board get pay cuts, only focuses on special education cuts and elementary school cuts. |
| The cuts of support staff that would severely and directly impact students. |
| There is no talk about closing choice schools and making them all neighborhood schools. Also eliminate transportation for schools is it even legal. For most option 2 made sense but cutting teachers at high school level in 3a made little sense. Why would you take away |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| opportunities to learn. If you want to reduce non academic offerings it is understandable but taking away teachers and reducing offerings academic kids can take was pointless. Why would anyone stay with RPS if they do t get to take classes they want . Biggest reason many parents who can afford private schools stick with RPS is because of AP courses and other rigorous courses. |
| Para, special Ed and reading reductions or eliminations?? My child is in 2nd grade and had 3 years of covid needing these areas HEAVILY. Absolutely not can these kids be this far behind and then have resources stripped. |
| At first glance it appears many special education services are being impacted. Kids with IEPs need to have quality support. I didn't see any reductions to the other end of the continuum - the gifted and talented services. At the end of the day it should be balanced and support needs to be provided to the kids without over taxing current paras and others. |
| Cutting special Ed support systems after a pandemic and immigration at its peak levels when we know that more support is likely needed on both fronts seems like we are taking a big step back off an unknown terrain. It doesn't seem fair to the kids that are struggling and many are too young to know what "normal" school days could look like without pandemic frustration-many adults are in the same situation. |
| Heavy emphasis on cuts in special education (especially at the younger ages) which is already severely understaffed yet greatly needed. I find the ethics here horribly disturbing and discriminatory. Highly recommend this be reconsidered, as the district has legal obligations to properly support these students too. Shame on you! |
| Board and staff members was to cut costs except if it impacts them. |
| With the increase in Mental Health needs of students, I am concerned about reducing support positions such as social workers or reductions in safety plans for the children |
| Our instructional coaches have made a positive impact in our buildings, and I would not want to see them eliminated. Their support of new teachers has been vital to new teacher success. Right now they are often used as substitute teachers. It is something that is necessary at this time, but it gives the impression that we do not need them because we are surviving without coaching or with limited coaching. We wouldn't field an athletic team without a coach, and in my opinion, we shouldn't staff a school without a coach. |
| Support in spec Edu being reduced, as well as classroom teachers in HS and Elementary. |
| Reduction of elementary teachers--lower classes sizes are important! Before increasing class sizes, reduce "extra" teaching positions at elementary schools that are not classroom teachers. Reduction of elementary paras! Paras are the biggest bargain in the district and are so necessary for the daily operation of elementary schools. |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| <p>I feel that any cuts that would directly affect our most vulnerable population should be the last cuts to be made. The have an obligation to serve all of our students, but to make cuts to areas (special education (next year and any SEL supports the following year) completely takes away from the very things that we have deemed to be priorities in our district.</p> |
| <p>Reducing non-teaching support staff. Students need counselors, mental health practitioners and social workers that can cover more of the student population. The need is larger than what they are currently able to support.</p> |
| <p>1. There seems to be an emphasis on reducing SSS paraprofessional positions. This is problematic as many of those supports (provided by paraprofessionals and special education teachers) are outlined in students' IEPs. This is a legal document; therefore, if we reduce those positions and do not have the ability to provide those student supports, we will be out of compliance. How does the district plan to handle the legal ramifications of not providing the services outlined in student IEPs? Just because the positions were not filled this year, does not mean this is not a need. We have just been doing without which has led to a lot of burnout amongst staff. 2. I see there is a reduction in coaching support. Coaches are valuable to teachers and students. Coaches provide resource support, support with technology, support with student needs and behaviors, and cover when there are no subs (which there is an extreme shortage of). With an emphasis on mental health support for staff and many teachers feeling at their limit due to the pandemic, why would the district propose cutting a lifeline such as coaches? Coaches benefit all students and staff. 3. I see there is a move to cut float subs. This year, Special Education float subs have had a sub job every day of the year. Sadly, they can only be at one place at a time, and there hasn't been a day when only one location was in need of a float sub. With the extreme shortages of subs, float subs are the go-to to work in our most intensive classrooms with our most medically fragile, behavioral, and high needs students. Without float subs, and reduced coaching FTE, and reduced administrators, who is going to fill those positions? Will district office staff or cabinet members come sub in intensive EBD, SP, or ASD?</p> |
| <p>You built schools you cannot afford. Now you want to close small elementary schools. Shame on you.</p> |
| <p>The majority of the cuts were in the sped department. I truly feel that you are not looking at the full child and the needs. The cuts proposed cut paraprofessionals, support staff (social workers, counselors, coaches, para's, new programs and any new teachers that are needed). You are also expanding the class number to include more which again is not a benefit to the students. When you cut sped areas are we looking at what laws we would be infringing on??? Reducing of float subs????? Will district office individuals come into our most needed areas (ASD, EBD homeroom, SP)?????</p> |
| <p>Any reduction that eliminates people who have direct daily contact with students will be a detriment to the district and to our kids. Please do not further reduce teachers, special Ed</p> |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| <p>facilitators or paraprofessionals. These are the people who have the most impact on our students and we need every single one of them (in truth, we need more of them).</p> |
| <p>Students who have family, personal, or instructional needs will have fewer school personnel available to assist them. One can expect strong pressure from parents of children with diagnosed disabilities, while many children with other needs do not have strong advocates. Thus there is a real danger that the needs of students who have great academic potential but do not have strong parental or other advocates will be ignored or curtailed because more powerful advocates will demand special education services for students with diagnosable or obvious physical, educational or developmental disabilities. Please continue to invest in those with potential not just those for whom we seek to create inclusion.</p> |
| <p>How are any of these proposed FTE cuts going to be what is best for our students? Once again, we are leaving our teachers to figure out how to equitably reach and teach more students in their classroom, while eliminating all important supports such as social workers, nursing staff, instructional coaches, resiliency and equity specialists, etc. This district lacks diversity and the spots that are the most diverse are being eliminated according to this proposed plan. How are you working to compensate teachers for their current work, and now you will be expecting teachers do more with less, and they will be doing it for the same meager pay. If this budget deficit was something that was foreseeable, why have there not been any measures taken in the years past? Instead, district has posted new job positions, opened new buildings, created new programs such as Incubator Edu, an online school option that already seems to be at its full capacity and is not taking in any new students, etc. It seems to me there has been extreme lack of effective and efficient fiscal planning and now, the year of teacher contract negotiations, the budget is being cut to its max, and teachers are publicly shamed for demanding an increase in their meager salaries. (It was stated recently, in one of the school board meetings, that the proposed budget cut will vary since the district is currently in negotiations with the teacher union, making it obvious that if teachers demand too much, the amount of the budget needing to be cut will be much higher, thus the public shaming).</p> |
| <p>Where to begin----</p> |
| <p>Many of the proposed reductions will have significant impact on students even though many staff are not directly student facing. We have made great growth in the areas of instructional coaching, curriculum supports, and equity. Some of the proposed reductions will take away the positions that are helping us take steps forward. It's hard to continue to do more and meet increasing demands with less.</p> |
| <p>Hard to understand the reductions without understanding our largest expenses and detail as to where dollars are being spent.</p> |
| <p>Impacts to our vulnerable student populations including students with mental health issues, students in special education, and students of low SES. It also impacts the amount of supports teachers and school staff would have access to while also grappling with larger classroom sizes.</p> |

What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?

1I. would affect those that have been filling the position as an overload or teachers who have been filling in during their prep. These special education positions impose a limit to other teachers time and efforts during the school day. 1K would hinder the supports given for teachers and staff who utilize the coach on a regular basis for supports in the classroom, behavior management, due process considerations, assisting with difficult situations such as at IEP meetings where parents are upset or in disagreement. Without continued support, it would be more difficult for teachers and support staff to maintain high level and quality instruction. 2B. limits the amount of growth anticipated in special education which would increase caseload sizes for all teachers and support staff. Shifting supports means taking supports from one student who needs support and giving that support to another student. Our students would lose the support that they need to help with their individualized needs for their education. 2K. Elimination of the InSciEd Out would impact students social emotional learning. Many students have benefited from the lessons in this program to grow their social emotional skills during a time of great mental health needs. 3B. Staff have already seen classroom size increases. This would further put demands and constraints on what a teacher is able to accomplish during the work day and what they take home with themselves at night. This will further cause burn out and make it difficult to retain high quality educators. This also impacts the students as those who need the most help, such as students who are in special ed or are struggling and behind due to the time in Distance Learning, would receive less individualized support from their teacher in order to make gains in the classroom. 4A. My room is already quite cold in the winter time. The heat is already set to a point where the building is cold and it becomes difficult to work and type at a computer. 4D. Cutting coaches even further would make supporting our staff even more difficult as stated previously. 4F. Reduction of our reading teachers would eliminate tier II supports that are needed prior to students entering special education. This support is vital for our students who are struggling readers but do not yet meet the threshold of a disability. Our reading support teachers provide a vital role and level of experience. Cuts to this position would increase the burden to staff to provide those tier II supports as well as interventions prior to child study referrals. 4I. Reduction in transportation to our choice schools would disproportionately affect our low SES families who depend on that transportation to be a part of the choice school. It would change the dynamics of income inequalities at our choice schools and place a burden on families who need to be at work during drop off and pick up times. 4J. Out-of-classroom support staff are important to support our students with additional needs such as mental health needs. The rise in mental health needs has been evident as more and more students are needing to access our counselors in elementary school and our social workers for help. Equity specialists are also important considering the current climate and inequities we see at a state and national level. The discussions are important and need to be continued. Without the equity specialists, our staff would not have experts to turn to as needed through out the school year.

Reducing MANY special needs programs for children who are presumably already behind from pandemic issues. Removing social and emotional health positions (social work etc.) when the need is the highest right now. Eliminating some athletics when students need these outlets and

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| keeps many students out of trouble. Eliminating reading specialists as these students struggle enough and no other affordable solution is available. |
| Getting rid of reading teachers and instructional coaches (who have often been subbing this last year because there aren't enough subs) will make it even harder to get adequate classroom coverage when needed. |
| there seems to be a large impact on special education, which is highly concerning since this is a population of highest need and at greatest risk. Much of it also focuses on clerical and office positions....has work been done to make sure there are efficiencies to be created to make this possible? |
| A lot of important/impactful staff are being projected to be reduced or removed. RPS staff should not be the ones who suffer from the mistake that was either overlooked, or not cared about. |
| Many of the proposals involve student services/special education. We are already being told it is difficult to implement IEP's as schools are short paras. How will not hiring para's for open positions help with the implementation of IEP's? |
| Reducing specialized staff (special education or paraprofessionals) will negatively impact already vulnerable and disadvantaged students. |
| Class sizes just cannot be increased more than they already are. I don't know how you can consider this, after years/decades of slow but steady increases in class sizes. Focus for hiring really does need to be on reducing the load currently on teachers. Most teachers I know have had to put in many extra hours to deal with the combination of remote and in-person learning over the past couple of years. Most teachers I know have a second job of some sort to supplement their incomes. Both of these things need to be addressed above all else. |
| Retirement payment shifts are temporary and should only be used if it can be demonstrated that the shortfall is transitory and not structural. |
| Special ed students and teachers appear likely to get hit with many of the reductions. Some ranking of the likely impacts by teachers and parents who will be affected would be great in helping prioritize. |
| We barely have enough support staff to run our schools safely now. We put so much focus on teachers we forget about support staff. The majority of clerical, paras, maintenance are doing multiple jobs this year not just their assigned job to get us by. Teachers need to have additional expectations you cannot keep shorting support staff and expecting us to cover because teachers have a contract and refuse to. |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| <p>There seem to be a disproportionate number of cuts to special education staff. This is very concerning to me as a parent of a student on an IEP. My son is currently receiving proactive speech services in early childhood. I believe these services are beneficial on so many levels. They allow him to practice skills and build confidence in a small safe controlled environment without his parents. I also believe long term they save him from struggling socially and needing more services later. Long term I also believe proactive special education services save our district a significant amount of money. These cuts are perhaps more concerning as a current staff member who sees what happens in general education classrooms when students do not have the correct amount of adult support. It not only effects the student struggling but it effects all the students trying to learn. When I think about the staff that I work most closely with, I am reminded of fatigue levels and when I add the thought of doing the same if not more work with less support I worry that we are creating circumstances that force staff (special education and general education) to look elsewhere.</p> |
| <p>Please do not reduce reading specialists in the elementary!</p> |
| <p>Reductions of staff working directly with students are not OK. I feel the buildings are already working below ideal; staff are doing their jobs and taking care of gaps left by unfilled positions. RPS is already overtaking their teaching staff, so expecting them to take on any more is unacceptable (and then to not recognize that and lowball the contract offer is a slap in the face - but that is another issue - although, you can't keep asking for more and giving less and expect your staff to thrive). Sped cannot take more cuts. There is no more room for "tightening" of formulas at any level. Electives should not be cut - students need to have choices. Instructional coaches are huge supports in the schools for teachers, admin, and students. It is crazy to even consider reducing support staff - social workers, nurses, counselors - students need these supports.</p> |
| <p>I strongly disagree with the building administration positions being cut. These positions are very important for parents and guardians to connect with. Even if a building is considered small and only requires one administrator based of headcount, I feel that more that one administrator at the building level is needed. Communication is very difficult if there is only one available. Keep more of the budget closer to the students in building administration, teachers and support staff. If necessary, make salary reductions with the union for positions at Edison including the new superintendent position.</p> |
| <p>You are disproportionately reducing supports and staff for students with disabilities. It is already incredibly difficult to get support for students in a special education setting.</p> |
| <p>Did anyone consider more structural changes that would result I. Reduced operating costs? Did the board consider what to do about the difference between student enrollment increases vs staff increases?</p> |
| <p>The low concern for special education programs when there was poor service for these teens in the first place is deeply concerning to me. It astounds me how budget cuts for disabled students</p> |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| would be considered over sports and electricity changes. Are we not going to prioritize the children over other things that are simply a bonus? |
| RPS does not budget well. They do not spend taxpayers money appropriately. If I want something I have to work, save, or make payments. Many times nice things are not within my budget so I am unable to get them. RPS should stop take take taking from the taxpayers and stop trying to please people from outside the area with Olympic size pools... |
| Sometimes the impact does need to be visible to the public in order to have support for the referendum. |
| No concrete plan, no saying where the money is coming from, no assurance that needed jobs won't be tossed aside, |
| We have already seen that with current staffing levels, administrators and teachers have been unable to keep up with contact tracing and that teachers are required to give up their planning periods to fill in as substitutes. When we start talking about reducing the number of FTEs in these positions further, the situation will only get worse. We can only hope that those needs are lessened by next school year, but they may not be. In this case, will we be talking about more remote learning and more Wednesdays where students are unable to report to school because the teachers need catch-up planning time? |
| Reducing school supports like social workers and counselors, and reducing special education staff and programs. These are important components and resources for students that need more support. |
| A suggestion in the next wave that reading Specialist could be cut, there are so many students who are below grade because of Covid and the state is mandating dyslexia screening and extra services for students who have characteristics of dyslexia - without extra reading support, these students will not make the progress needed to keep them at grade level |
| Don't reduce reading teachers in elementary |
| This hurts the students! |
| You continue to focus on saving money at the school building level and are not thinking outside the box , or the administrations comfort level. Talking about potentially closing a school and consolidating with another building AFTER asking tax payers to fund two brand new schools is a FAIL! Asking to cut technology with the potential of continued Distant Learning AND after previously seeking tax payer money to put technology in every students hand is also a FAIL! |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| <p>Not filling all open positions. We can barely manage with what we have and by not filling open position will just add more duties to those who are employed. We can only take on so much, not to mention our wages do not correspond with ALL of the added job responsibilities.</p> |
| <p>Staff training. Not every teacher and administrator have the same level of engagement</p> |
| <p>Do not increase the number of students per class without first decreasing costs not related to teaching. I once had 35 students in a secondary science class. It was horrible to manage that many students at once during labs. At our school there were unfilled janitor positions. It was awful as a teacher to empty your own trashes or have to wipe down tables after lunches. At many schools the janitors do snow removal. At another school after a staff member left the sidewalks have been horribly shoveled and it is hard to walk my son to school. I was not hired to be a janitor but teach. Don't cut janitor positions.</p> |
| <p>-reduction in on-site admin in our middle and high schools: We need more support, not less. Our kids are at the most influential and need guidance. -Items 4A-M: where do I even start other than this is offensive. One, our buildings are freezing. Kids and staff walk around in jackets. Cutting support staff and maintenance staff, expecting those employed, to pick up the slack while not paying them more is egregious. Reduction in electives is insane. We want kids to be able to explore their options, not limit their options. Reducing or eliminating reading supports. Seriously! Reading fuels everything. This is a support that needs to be increased so it's present k-12, not cut. As far as technology goes, keep it all in school and no longer allow the kids to take devices home. Place iPads in all elementary classrooms on a car and place Chromebooks on a cart in secondary schools. This helps alleviate broken devices and saves money. A MAJOR weakness I noticed is a lack of cuts to the superfluous spending we have in upper management. Look there first and foremost!</p> |
| <p>Most of the options would impact student academics, social/emotional wellness and student/staff safety. I can't believe reducing social workers, paras, reading teachers, special education teachers, janitorial and instructional coaches is even an optional. Who ever thought that was even a feasible option has never worked at rps.</p> |
| <p>This was very vague. "Reduce" doesn't really give much information. Seemed to be an emphasis on Special Ed. Why is that?</p> |
| <p>The reductions to Special Education will sabotage our students, teachers and community. 4 out of 22 points target Sped. The impact a student with EBD has on the classroom and school impacts everybody. The minutes EBD and LD students are given on their IEP, which is a legal document agreed upon with guardians and RPS, are often not met or close to being met. The number of children coming into Kindergarten has consistently risen over 10 years and skyrocketed since the pandemic. These reductions will decimate an already beleaguered educator population. Our Special Education program has been failing, we have not met their</p> |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| needs and their needs impact the entire school population. Changing the general education para formula is another weakness that impacts all students and educators. |
| No discussion of maintenance costs (aside from thermostats) such as reducing grounds keeping expenses (I just watched the snow cleared from a school three times during the 2 weeks of "at home learning"). Cutting support to teachers is a short-sighted plan - we'll have higher turn-over and more burn-out, which makes the short-staffing issues worse. |
| Concern for tightening the student/teacher ratio. Larger class sizes impede learning and make the teachers' jobs more difficult. We do not want to see class sizes any larger than what they are now. Cutting back on direct student services such as nursing, social workers, counselors, and indirect services, such as custodial. All of these pieces of the puzzle fit together to strengthen and improve the school environment for health and safety of students and staff alike. |
| The plan is probably too sugar coated in how various staffing reductions will play out in terms of student impact or staff well being. |
| Reducing the number of para support or elementary teaching ratios would be a detriment to our students leading to less support when we already know there are learning delays moving out of our distance learning year. My child was in a second grade class that was beyond the recommended ratios so the school did not need to open a 3rd classroom, para support was much needed in this classroom. Eliminating reading support at the elementary schools I do not understand this helps to achieve the goal of getting everyone to reading levels they need to be by 3rd grade. My daughter who has a good support system at home and has lots of reading help utilized this service to help get caught up after transitioning to distance learning during her kindergarten year. |
| You never think about freezing teacher salaries only increasing them. You are always giving them more benefits instead of holding them at a certain amount. |
| I don't feel you have dug far enough. |
| I don't understand how we keep building schools every year and now we are proposing to close some schools and consolidate with others. There seems to be a generalized lack of long-term planning. And how or why exactly is staff growing at 30% while students are growing at 8%? Even with over 100 positions unfilled? Again, something does not seem right with the planning and appropriate use of resources. |
| Feel good legislation |
| STOP trying to get rid of special needs programs. Every student needs support, stop trying to reduce that. Stop trying to reduce para's. Teachers are already overworked |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| STOP trying to get rid of special needs programs. Every student needs support, stop trying to reduce that. Stop trying to reduce para's. Teachers are already overworked |
| Need to get rid of administration, instructional coaches. Technology can be reduced |
| Special education should not up for cuts. The students who need the most support after these two years will pay a heavy price with these proposals. Very disappointing. |
| The action is not going to address the financial gap, more like a patch, and hope the best will happen down the road. |
| Stop some of the after school activities, and up the pay for the employees that you have now so you can keep them. |
| Should RPS be opening all of the elementary schools with the projected lower enrollment without closing an existing building. Would like to see more cuts at the top, RPS is very top heavy in admin and their pay. |
| Paraprofessionals have been working short staffed all year. We are overworked, sometimes doing the jobs of 2 people. The idea that we would stay at this staffing level, even if we get more SpEd students, is overwhelming. The lockdowns have made our students more challenging. I'm not sure if Paras will be willing to stay in these essential positions |
| It's hard to tell from the presentation, but are we chipping away at things from the edges? Is there anything that you see would be more long lasting and impactful, especially since its sounding like our enrollment is plateauing or now expected to decline? |
| Special Education still comes up as an area to cut. We need more SPED teachers and paras to teach students with special needs. Especially if there is the possibility that class sizes will increase for regular ed. |
| I am concerned about the potential reductions in staff - particularly regarding paraprofessionals, student support positions, and teachers. Our family moved to Rochester in 2018 and chose our location based primarily on the schools. I have already noticed in our time here that there is already not an adequate amount of support staff like paras, to assist teachers in class or monitor students at lunch or recess, particularly with regard to kids with behavioral struggles. So I am concerned any student facing staff reductions may cause us to consider moving to a different school system. |
| Too many cuts that effect the youngest learners. |
| There was a disproportionate number of special education cuts listed. As a special Ed teacher at an elementary school and mother of a child at RPS on an IEP, I am so disheartened by so many cuts being proposed to special education. Yes, it is a big expense, and yes, we have had to do |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| <p>without supports because many positions are unfilled, but the stress of being short staffed is showing up in our small group sizes and caseload sizes. Instead of cutting special Ed staffing support, we need to invest MORE into the department to attract highly qualified teachers to support our disabled students. Instead of punishing those of us who work in the department with fewer support staff and instructional coaches, make the positions more alluring to professionals so they want to fill the positions.</p> |
| <p>limited support in special education</p> |
| <p>I think that looking at those that directly impact students IS NEVER a good idea. Finding subs is already hard and now we will have limited staff and still a need for subs. Working short handed is a way of life most days and now it will be likely to be every single day.</p> |
| <p>4/20 cuts involve special education. Services are already being denied due to "inadequate staffing", so cutting unfilled positions isn't the same as those positions being unnecessary.</p> |
| <p>You state that you are ready to cut a number of paraprofessional positions both from SPED and from General Education. Also, you are stating that you would like to average a 26/21 student per teacher ratio. It is absurd that in the time of extreme teacher burn out, you are looking to increase their class sizes. This will create a ripple effect into the coming school years where teachers will continue to rather teach in smaller communities around the state rather than at RPS. The combination of reducing gen ed paras and increasing class sizes is a very risky combination and I would suggest starting with one of the two.</p> |
| <p>As a sped teacher these are the areas most concerning to me- Not budgeting for growth for future sped teachers and paras. My students are already not receiving enough para support in the classroom. Currently we move a para from one student to another which neither student is getting the quality support they need. Reducing unfilled teacher and para positions in sped is concerning- don't close the door here, we need to continue to look for these people to fill positions. The work load is becoming too much (too large) for a teacher and para to give quality programming. Sped Education is very very good at making things work but that does not mean that it is the best for the student and it burns out the staff. I know very very few sped teachers that stay in this area of teaching for their entire career- I am one of the very few and have seen a lot of trends along the way and can honestly say- I don't see things going in a positive directions.</p> |
| <p>Several reductions draw from student support services. We are in a time of extreme mental health needs for both students and staff. We must be prepared to meet people "where they are at" and student support services are the people that serve in roles to do just that. This department seems to have been hit hard in the reduction plan and this will, undoubtedly, negatively impact students, families and employees.</p> |
| <p>The cuts to special education is such a huge disappointment- we are already short staffed and special education teachers have high caseload numbers...and now you want to cut that down</p> |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| even more? With less paraprofessional support as well? These are the students that need the most staffing, the most support, the most help from us, and you're proposing to cut that from them. |
| 2B, 4F, 4J and 4M off the top of my head. No growth for Paras? Schools are understaffed as is and you want to make that the new normal? Reduction in reading teachers in Elementary school? Reading is the foundation upon which all other learning is built, if you can't read you can't learn effectively. period. we need MORE reading teachers, not less. and you want to reduce social workers, equity specialists, counselors and paras? Kellogg for example only has 1 counselor per grade, you want one counselor to cover 2 grades? 3 grades? |
| 1K, 2D |
| Cutting supply budgets. That puts the burden even more on teachers. |
| Sports programs. These teach team work discipline, and respect for others. Something kids need now a days. |
| Supply budgets for schools. we already have a cap on copies and we already buy A LOT of our own supplies. this should NOT be cut! "Tightening the formula" for elem. teachers should NoT be done. If I learned anything from hybrid teaching last year, it's that smaller classes make. HUGE difference!! EBD students had much more success in smaller classes along with all other students. We cannot get by with less paras at elementary level. especially sped paras. Many students cannot function in the reg classroom without support. |
| I'd like to see these options rank-ordered in terms of their impact on the AVERAGE student. How does, say, the idea that ELEMENTARY READING TEACHERS compare to, say, the idea of eliminating "resiliency specialists." I assume the average kid needs to know how to read more than they need lessons on grit. So help the public understand: when you get right down to it, what investments do district leadership think should be prioritized? |
| While not recommended, I feel the staffing formula at all levels (elementary, middle, and high school) is already tight. Especially as we come out of the pandemic (eventually), the human resources the district has in instructional staff is critical and needs to be preserved/maintained/supported. Tighter staffing formulas will only cause more challenges in this area. Additionally, high school electives need to be off the table - the savings will be miniscule in the scope of savings and only create negative responses from the community. |
| We have to many directors and supervisors. They cost the most and do the least. |
| Doesn't biggest issue, overall high salaries in both teaching and administration positions. Most businesses can't fill professional positions, when was the last time the district lacked for applicants for typical (non-specialized) positions? |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| Having the general public see the building of new schools, and yet hear about the shortfall of money to meet expenses. The messaging to the public is lacking, and I get concerned about losing support. |
| Reduction to any type of staffing that would directly impact the development and support of high quality educators which inherently impacts the high quality education provided for our students and community. |
| A weakness I see is 'reducing unfilled teaching AND reducing unfilled para positions in special education.' If this were to be done, it would be imperative that IEPs and all of the accommodations listed within them are followed. In addition, some students in special education have challenging behaviors, such as a tendency to run away from adults (even outside to the roadway) or harming themselves or others, so it's important that there's enough staff to deal with these situations. |
| Any cut of in building admin, or other personnel who are directly involved in the day to day activity of students is irresponsible. |
| Considering cutting Building Admin during such difficult times seems like a risk. They are on the front lines supporting all students, families, and staff. It seems like there are many positions downtown that are working from home in high-paying positions with little student/family contact. While I understand their jobs are valuable too, I am very concerned about cutting building administrators, especially at the secondary level. We need them. Mental health supports by licensed professionals (counselors and social workers) is also so crucial. We are in a mental health crisis. Admin and counselors and social workers work together all day to meet student's needs. It worries me that these areas were mentioned rather than TOSAs, BAMH team (that we do not see in buildings), and lead positions that could be split into current building positions. |
| Reducing EMW and Student Support Services; these services are needed more now than ever |
| This is coming on the heels of building, technically, 4 new schools. It looks shortsighted planning. To use unfilled positions as a budget cut option can be misleading or detrimental. RPS past practice has been to freeze hiring pass referendum or meet budget and within 18 months positions return or new created. Para and Clerical are the last ones to be reinstated but have a big impact on supports for students and families. Also on the low end of the pay rates. |
| Cuts to principals, classroom teachers, and support staff (coaches and paras). |
| Some of the effects of the options listed may not be known or understandable to those who are not an employee of the district |
| Our Special Ed staff are overwhelmed with all of the paperwork. Cutting so much in special ed seems like it could add to more workload for our special ed teachers and paras. Looking |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| <p>forward to potential cuts in 2023-2024--Further cutting reading specialists at elementary would be detrimental. We have more and more students who are qualifying for reading services due to disruptions in their schooling since 2020. Already our reading specialists have difficulty servicing those students, many of whom are from marginalized groups. Further cuts to their numbers would only increase the achievement gap and students who desperately need help "catching up" would not get services.</p> |
| <p>Reducing and eliminating special education staff. The students in sped are already not receiving their federally mandated IEP service minutes due to Sped staff being monopolized by a few high behavior students in each building. This will lead to good sped staff going elsewhere, as demand is high and moral is already at an all time low among sped staff. Reducing or eliminating paras. These are the people who are interacting with and supporting students daily. They are vital and without them students will suffer academically, emotionally, and behaviorally.</p> |
| <p>Only on the last slide when looking at problem solving- I'm concerned with removing social work and equity specialists.</p> |
| <p>Big picture problems remain. We still construct new schools like luxury monuments at a huge expense. Focus on education and less on administration, staff, and buildings!</p> |
| <p>Reduction of Instructional Coaching. It was disturbing to hear these options presented as "least impactful to students." In a district the size of Rochester, coaching is imperative. Studies have shown that collaborative teacher and coach relationships help transfer learning to the classroom. A teacher who has received professional development followed by coaching will understand 95% of the content, will attain 95% of the skills taught in the professional development and will have a 95% transfer to the classroom rate. Without coaching, the transfer to the classroom rate drops to somewhere between 0% and 5%. (Joyce & Showers 2002). At the time, the district is attempting to move from a balanced literacy model to the Science of Reading model (per the new state standards). This takes an enormous amount of professional development to make this kind of switch. Not having full time coaches in each building will make this process even more difficult to attain successfully and we certainly won't see the transfer to classroom rates we need to impact student reading. Another weakness is the reduction to curriculum staffing. Currently, the office of curriculum and instruction has less than 15 staff members. They are unable to support the current needs of staff in our district. Reduction in ANY staffing there is going to have a profound and negative impact on staff.</p> |
| <p>Take a look at history of clerical reductions before cutting that further at the building level. There is a serious issue of not having enough office staff to get the work done of operating our schools presently, we could probably better absorb eliminating an administrator (and perhaps adjusting teacher observation requirements to meet the minimum state requirement) rather than a clerical at each building. Altering the expectations for observations would also allow for some reduction in instructional coach positions. Replacing one administrator at some schools with a</p> |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| teacher licensed dean could also produce some savings without reducing the number of personnel available for working with students. |
| Does not address the financial drain of athletics and extra curriculars on education. We have very few athletes and many academic students. Please prioritize academics. |
| Reduction in para's |
| Reducing maintenance and clerical staff. Besides admin, they are the only employees required to be at school during DL or snow days and they are what keeps the building running (people say this all the time!) |
| To keep elementary class size down as they are still learning to read and do the basics. |
| Sports and extracurriculars should not be on the table The culture of RPS is not great, Pekel is trying to change that and the weakness is the "Cabinet"...protecting themselves vs focusing on the students. There should be no budget cuts that affect students...there are many positions out there that could be cut, where families and students wouldn't notice a thing. Case Facilitators at the high school level are paid out of the special education budget and are teachers who do paperwork. That position could be done by a para for a fraction of the cost, and they could be back in the classrooms reducing the class size for special education and actually providing the students what they need with supports. Each high school has 2 case facilitators who gather all the information. This role should go back to the case managers so they take more ownership of their students. This would benefit students. Every option on the table should be looked at what would benefit students, or how is this position benefiting students. Coaches -- coaches have become glorified secretaries and reporters for special education administrators. In order to find the answer to a special education question it needs to be asked to the coach, who asks other coaches, then they ask another person who will then go to the assistant director to get a response.....the number of hours/resources/time/money in all the back and forth to getting a response is definitely not efficient and a waste of money. Specialists -- there are behavior coaches, behavior interventionists all taking away staffing from the building special education departments. If we have tough students, could these non student contact positions work in the behavior classrooms where their expertise would be beneficial, they often come in for a short time, offer some ideas and then leave. General Education Instructional Coaches have become pseudo administration. They are not in the classrooms working with students or teachers for that matter. They send out information from the principal. |
| Looking at lowering para and instructional coaching takes away so much support that kids and teachers need. I suggest diving deeper into the roles to see the part they play. |
| Removing staff, paras - you're already short on teachers and classes are large. This doesn't make sense to do. |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| Cutting supports that would directly impact students. We should not be cutting any special education services. Our students need those and we are already stretched too thin with what we have. |
| <p>1H: the district has just spent hundreds of thousands of dollars to build an equity team and continues to fund and staff buildings based on equality as opposed to equity. To suggest that buildings like Riverside and Elton Hills can be run by one person because Folwell, Pinewood, and Washington are is, to be honest, absurd and gives me great concern for the leadership that landed on that rationale. 1K: Again, basing this staffing on an algorithm or simple enrollment is short-sided. Why not evaluate the engagement with or impact of instructional coaches by building and staff them based on that as opposed to enrollment? If a building isn't utilizing their coach or it is ineffective, then reduce, but don't reduce coaching in a building that sees great impact simply because of enrollment. Are we really committed to equity or is that just window dressing? 2E + 2J: the rationale you provide is that high schools have more than 2x the clerical positions as middle schools, yet you are reducing them to 6 and 2, which creates an even greater gap. How is this justifiable? 2L: direct impact on teaching and learning 3A: I believe the calculation and thought process on this item is flawed. The timeline for staffing and for students to declare PSEO are not congruent so how are you going to predict how many students will/will not go PSEO? 3B: Again, direct impact on teaching and learning and an entirely inequitable way to staff a building. Does not consider staff, student, family needs that differ by building.</p> |
| It appears that there is a general staff reduction which may cause staff unrest or teacher disapproval of the district. |
| 3B Completely unacceptable. Class sizes are already oversized and if you don't think there is currently unrest among teachers I'd recommend you talk to some of them and get in touch with reality. |
| The slide "reason for deficit" does NOT provide any reason why there is a deficit - forcing one to assume you have no idea how RPS ended up here and also that your plan is random flailing to recover from a problem of unknown cause. |
| Lack of detail cost breakdowns of options proposed beyond accounting shift. Lack of explanation of major reason why staff increased despite increase unfilled position. |
| You state you will cut services that won't effect students but yet most of the cuts stated do effect students such as special education staff, security, para's and teacher to student ratio. My son receives sped services and would not be successful in school without them. By not filling some positions that effects students. |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| Cutting special education- unfulfilled teachers and paras, growth in special Ed programs, Covid 19 response should not be cut, special education in nursery school should not be cut, also student services and elementary paras should not be cut |
| -A lot of money needs to be cut -Do not cut Spec Ed, that will snow ball and create more expensive problems in the long run. |
| Not enough money allocated for school staff income |
| I see two weaknesses with the plan, one minor one larger. For minor, the listed dollar amounts for class 1,2 reductions don't seem to add up to the suggested \$7M so that should be clarified or corrected to avoid confusion. For major, there are other more significant options that IMO should be practically considered before reducing staff or even even broaching a school closure - - eliminating non-essential offerings and activities. Math, reading, critical thinking are necessities in modern society. Playing a sport or singing is at the end of the day just a hobby for most and doesn't (with extremely rare exception) pay the bills. Many of these class or extracurricular offerings entail non-trivial costs in both supplies and personnel and IMO should be on the chopping block well before many other actually essential services. |
| No proposal to refinance debt or debt obligations to reduce interest payments. |
| Taking away or cutting our staff such as reading staff as well as teachers |
| I am very against 2L, I think lunch and recess needs to have enough staff to safely cover. I don't like the idea of closing a small school to combine with others, aren't we already over capacity at most schools? |
| I see a lot of waste in the lunch rooms. Kids being served food and milk and then just ends up in the garage can. I used to live overseas and this is appalling the waste that happens here in the lunch rooms. It needs to change. I would get rid of equity specialist and get more volunteers in the community, retired, multiracial, multiethnic, multigenerational volunteers helping at school! Invite the community to help/volunteer at school. They want to see their young achieve high standards of education! |
| NO mentionthst Cutting GOOD teachers should not happen! No mention to discontinue tenure..it simply allows bad teachers to secure their jobs. Cutting nurses should not happen! Need for more GOOD mental health staff and need to get rid of those who are not experienced and professional. No mention of how many paras have the education, skills, and experience to fill many staff slots ..for less pay. |
| Much of the secondary/additional options are detrimental and would severely hamper our children. (Except the heating/cooling, District Wide transportation, and electronic devices options... those can go) Don't close a small elementary school, and please don't cut nurses. |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| Those options would severely impact many families. Especially those with children who have medical conditions and deadly food allergies. |
| Weakness comes in the form of the additional considerations and the potential cuts for 2023-24 year and beyond. We cannot let this plan go that far or it will come at great cost to our students. |
| Reducing gen ed paraprofessionals, school nurses |
| Cutting special needs staff/paras with a growing student population. |
| There are definitely areas in the district that could further be cut that would not directly impact students. Some of the proposed cuts, such as teaching staff, will directly impact students. |
| I believe these reductions will have a negative end result on students, intended or not. I think that making cuts to programs like preschool scholarships and special education services, in all it's forms, will only cost us more in the future. No projection for growth in the Special Education budget? I hope what has been allocated is adequate going forward considering our current environment. |
| Why must the most vulnerable group suffer the most staffing cuts? Why are special ed students always sacrificed on the alter of the greater good? They were ignored during covid and now you short change the staff. Congratulations, you have proven yourselves totally useless as a school district and as a community advocate for those of greatest need. |
| Need to look at other special programs that are underutilized. Also, there needs to be exceptions or flexibility based on school. One school may be able to loose 2 clerical staff, while another may not. Do not tighten the formula and increase class sizes. They are already large. |
| Cuts that will effect special education. |
| Losing staff after 2 years of covid our students are behind in all academics. We need all the support they can get. Staff have already been running short staffed and are just done, if you continue to expect them to go about how it's been going you will NOT have any staff left. |
| Very concerned with the number of staffing you are proposing to eliminate. With an already strained system, adding more work onto existing employees could cause high burnout, high turned around, etc. which in turn will have an affect on the student body. Also extremely displeased to see that it was proposed to cut sports or extra curricular activities. So many things have been cut for our students throughout the years and it is so disappointing to see this trend continue. |
| Not looking at root causes. 8% growth in student body but 30% growth in staff is horrendous. Cut staff. |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| I think reducing administrative positions/costs (4e) should be considered long before many other things earlier on the list, especially cutting some school sports (4c). I would also move technology and software cuts further up the list, ahead of any staffing reductions. |
| While I understand that reducing instructional coaches has a less direct impact on students than other decisions, I worry that the implications surrounding the dispensibility of coaches is short-sighted and irrevocably damaging to our district. Instructional leadership has not been a focus of our district throughout the duration of my career in RPS. The exception to this has been the inclusion of instructional coaching. In my opinion, instructional coaching has high impact and low appreciation in our district, so I worry that teachers who rarely seek out collaboration with coaches find these positions an easy cut. However, I believe many teachers, especially those new to the district in the past 5+ years, would argue that they are constantly supported by coaches. I also believe coaches are a main factor in teacher retention; teacher attrition comes at a great expense to the district. For these reasons, among many others, I think any consideration to reduce or eliminate coaches is, again, incredibly short sighted and speaks to a lack of awareness of all the work done by these individuals to lead instruction in our schools. |
| increasing the staff/student ration. that would be the worse option. teachers are already taxed. |
| Reduce salaries of principles and administrators. Cutting programs, sports, and the mention of adjusting the thermostat is just ridiculous. RPS has been a joke for years and you wonder why your operating \$25 million over budget |
| Many of these impacts are only temporary and do not impact the solution that RPS needs more money and should not have returned referendum dollars. |
| Poorly paid, over worked and under appreciated staff will leave. Tightening the formula will increase the average number of students per class. You are reducing the number of staff to make up for YOUR mismanagement of funds. All the Covid money from the government and we still have this large of a shortfall. Disgusting over indulgence in unnecessary things. |
| Consolidating already full elementary classrooms (or possibly closing an elementary school- that might create an increased need for bus drivers). I also don't think social services and counselors should be removed. Maybe they could just be utilized differently |
| Plan B which is open for discussion, but talks about cutting essential services, will lead American public schools to be equivalent to being in third world. There is a urgent need to cater to more students and teachers, than cut on athletics and devices for example. |
| Deeper cuts in instructional coaching would have minimal impact. It feels like this is just kicking the can down the road to only cut .2 and it would be better to take a deeper cut now. It is hard to know if cutting positions that aren't currently filled will really reduce the spending or just what we project for spending. |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| <p>Most of the budget reduction is based on fte reductions, decreasing personally at a time when staff are already overwhelmed and overburdened. I do not feel comfortable with the proposed elimination of administrative staff (principals) — without context re how staff works and how staff support it structured the folwell example Carrie’s job weight. Each school is unique and I worry this elimination may jeopardize staff ability to effectively plan and pivot during these unprecedented times. How does RPS staff feel about these choices?</p> |
| <p>I'm concerned about the reductions in staff and if that will allow for the same level of service without burning out those remaining and result in greater attrition. Perhaps the reductions will not have as much impact as services can be reduced that are not needed. Hopefully that is the case.</p> |
| <p>Why is revenue not part of the strategies? If there is student growth, should there also not be tax growth? What is causing the single digit student growth which is 1/3 of the staffing growth...why not closer to each other? Reliance on COVID funds is okay short-term, but what about long-term? COVID funds are giving us a false sense of stability. Did we NOT save because we were in distance learning for almost 1 year or did the costs get absorbed in technology?</p> |
| <p>weaknesses I saw were in the optional section for next year.. with more buildings being added, there is no way we should ever reduce from the maintenance department.. they are the backbone of the district, doing all the work that goes unnoticed by all the Administrative and higher up positions. Maintenance doesn't get enough credit and recognition for all the hard work they do daily.. another weakness I saw was the reductions of heat/cooling in the buildings. if you would like to save money here, i suggest getting out of the contract the district has set up with Cenergistics. we have utility tech workers that can set temps and reduce power just as well if not better than an outside company can. and i bet many dot know that when the district first started with that company, sickness in RPS employment doubled within a month from the year previous and many schools had to get a makeover due to mold growth from lack of airflow in the buildings.</p> |
| <p>Making cuts that will cause noticable reduction in quality of care for students and teachers</p> |
| <p>Reducing office staff and administration is going to overwhelm the admin that are in place.</p> |
| <p>Paying premium dollars for search agencies for superintendents or paying outside companies big dollars to make surveys.</p> |
| <p>- looking to see if less expensive staff can do admin jobs. I'm wondering if we looked at how admin time was spent, if teacher level pay for parts of it wouldn't be better. Instead of an admin focusing on attendance and COVID and lunchroom supervision, etc... - hire less admin and hire targeted teacher staff to supported things that not just admin can do. - eliminate or reduce bussing to district wide option schools. This is a HUGE equity issue and not acceptable. I am</p> |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| a parent of DWO kiddos and believe the programs should end before you do not bus kids participating. |
| Not aggressive enough on consolidation of overhead costs (economies of scale). Sell off outdated "administrative facilities" to reduce required overhead to maintain/operate. Aggressively challenge administrative growth in existing plans. |
| You do not go far enough in reducing instructional coaches, and other middling positions that in all honesty do not help teachers or students. |
| No one likes cuts, but reality is reality. I'm not sure about all areas, but the maintenance staff is pretty thin in my building. Much of the cleaning of classrooms has been done by teachers this year. |
| Giving the impression that instructional coaches and assistant principals have little to no affect on students. |
| That your moving right fit out of the boys and girls club and into a new school. My kid with special needs that attends right fit can not be at a regular school. So having right fit where it's at currently is a huge benefit to not only my son but other students that go there for the same reason. |
| I do get a little worried about not hiring any more SPED teachers or paras because we're already low on the latter. However, I know that teachers have been advised about recommending students for the SPED program. |
| Stress |
| The lowering special Ed positions. Reducing these will impact students directly and is not desirable. |
| 1H - This may be the biggest human impact because there isn't necessarily an option for where else the admin could go. That being said. I admin seems very appropriate for 400-450 students. 1K - I'm slightly confused here because it shows only a cut of 4FTE which doesn't seem like it's as much as what the impact makes it feel. With school populations going down and admin being cut it seems logical that these positions would decrease too. With New Teacher seeming to be impacted later in the recommendations, this could be a huge impact in teacher retention if coaches are cut too much. When I read the educational impact statement, that seems to be the business we are in - supporting teachers to be great teachers. Cutting the staff that are support this when so many teachers are struggling right now could have a hugely negative impact. 2B - If this means increasing caseloads, this could be very detrimental to students. 2L - Playground/lunch positions are already difficult to cover. By reducing admin, coaches, and paras, who is left to watch students in these settings? |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| Reduction of office/clerical staff at middle school- this would be very difficult. Operating with 2 full time and 1 sub has shown major challenges and stress. 3 are needed. |
| Teachers are already at their breaking points due to the stress of the last 3 years and the pandemic. The morale issue is real. Mental health issues are real. How do we support equity? |
| Nothing mentioned about cabinet members being reduced. These positions seem excessively paid and very redundant. The top down approach that RPS has means cabinet leadership, that are never teaching in classrooms and never dealing with students get the big huge salaries that never seem to be discussed as places to reduce costs. |
| Closing elementary schools and adding the students into other school. I don't see this as a weakness as long as there are adequate classroom teachers available and it does not increase class sizes too much. Huge class sizes are a detriment to our students. |
| Some lack of explanations in terms ('tighten the formula', as an example). |
| Considerations for reducing building staff (Reading Support, Counselor Services, Social Services, Clerical) is not appropriate and would have an immediate and disproportional negative impact on students. |
| Eliminating unfilled SPED para and teacher positions. Yes they are unfilled and we've been managing without them but that doesn't mean it's sustainable for those who are picking up the extra students. |
| Please don't lower printing costs. |
| -Special education numbers will go up, but staffing will not, you will overwork and put undo stress on that department. -I noticed a reduction in almost every department that comes in contact with students on a daily basis. However, no reduction in the cabinet, and significantly lower reductions in Edison positions that have little daily contact with the students. -After building four new schools you want to close smaller elementary schools to consolidate. Really?!!!! |
| View of administrators and instructional coaches as not having a direct impact on students |
| I noticed one of the options that might be considered for the 23-24 school year is closing a small elementary and consolidating it with another elementary school. My question is why did the district just spend money building a brand new elementary if they are considering closing one in couple years? |
| That trying to reduce staffing, I feel that making sure that support is suffice and making sure that all staff are well maintained as well as supported in and out of the classroom is immensely important |

| <i>What weaknesses do you see in the proposal?</i> |
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| Any elimination of people already working to serve our staff and students. Instructional coach positions are already dwindling and those who remain are working more than their contracted hours to best support their buildings and teachers. Any support for student mental health (social work, counselors, etc) is MORE vital now than ever. Eliminating district wide enrollment transportation creates a major equity issue with access. |
| Some cuts are positions that work directly with students. |
| Cut admin not support. Anti-labor bias is evident. |
| You look at numbers and don't understand impact. While I know reductions are needed, there are some sites not even fully staffed now and not looking to be in the future. |

| <i>What suggestions for improvement do you have?</i> |
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| The declining enrollment is DIRECTLY related to RPS' handling of covid. Doing remote learning for 1 year at the middle and high school levels was disastrous, when at the same time, surrounding public and private schools provided either hybrid or full-time in person learning. RPS is lucky there are not more private school options in Rochester or the deficit would be worse. School administration and teachers, who overwhelmingly resisted in-person learning in fall 2020 - spring 2021 need to bear the brunt of the reductions. Reduce admin non-essential to direct instruction of "reading, writing and arithmetic." Reduce teaching and para positions to match enrollment and increase class sizes as necessary including closing an elementary school if necessary. |
| Take a close look at the positions at Edison. Lots of POSAs and TOSAs. |
| Prioritizing student support services as the top of the cut list? Sounds like a great way to put kids on the back burner. I would say majority of this proposal sends chills down my spine how poorly our students are being prioritized. Perhaps we should 'tighten the formula' on those who have never stepped foot in a classroom this year. To observe what is happening, let alone sub last minute, and then having to do their actual job at night and on the weekends. Unpaid. Taking away from family time, just to ensure my staff and teachers are getting my absolute best effort to support them. During an extremely hard school year(s). |
| Online learning |
| I see a lot of focus on what reductions might mean for staff (which is definitely important) but the first priority should be what the research says about the impact on student learning |
| Have we evaluated pausing on construction projects? I like the request for other ideas, but not being familiar with the budget, it's hard to provide good input. Have we done a comparison on spending compared to other districts? Are there areas with a large gap? |

| <i>What suggestions for improvement do you have?</i> |
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| 2d - evaluate and minimize all the principals on special assignment. We need teachers we don't need more administrative principals doing 'special things' outside of the actual schools. That can save even more money! 100k+ per special principal you can save 500k by dropping 5 of them in the Edison building. |
| There should not be ANY CUTS to student-facing positions (teachers, paras, custodians, etc.) Class sizes are already too large. Get rid of ridiculous grading for learning and start holding students accountable for their own practice and learning. Open your eyes. RPS is on a downward slide and it's going to be a long process to correct or save it. |
| Stop new building construction |
| Freeze administrations pay Have staff who can work remote do so, this would eliminate space and hopefully administrative buildings |
| Maybe some of the people at Edison could take a pay cut or make a reduction there. Clerical staff cuts don't add up to what one or two 6 figure positions could do. Maybe the school board should go back to their old pay. They knew we needed to make these budget cuts and still gave themselves a raise???? I support them getting a raise if we didn't need to make all these cuts. Close Pinewood and have those kids go to other schools. With the new bigger schools we should be able to do that for next year. Save on admin staffing, utilities, etc. |
| Eliminate choice schools. From what I have seen there is a lot of unfair selections, the busing kids all over town is an added expense, It encourages an elitist attitude. |
| It is time to deeply reflect upon what priorities are - which should be the students and make decisions that actually support them. When these ideas are listed - many of them impact students directly and this was inaccurately reflected within the document shared. There are many expenses at the leadership level that could be evaluated for overall cost. The current SSS department is taking a large brunt of the cuts - with the most vulnerable and needy students. What are the EXTRAs that we currently support that could be cut instead? |
| Involve the teachers. |
| Why wait on energy and technology reductions? |
| None- very well put together video that considered many options and was well thought out. |
| Can there please be a vote of confidence for the school board? |
| Reduce central office administrator positions Reduce instructional coaches- Pay current veteran teachers to mentor new teachers Keep special Ed paras. |
| Invest in teachers and roles directly working with kids. To pay for it, cut roles of desk jobs that aren't working with kids. If something needs to get done, pay a teacher a stipend. It would be a lot cheaper than a salary of someone who doesn't need to be full time sitting at a desk. (Example: on PD days, teachers are still asked to be the ones leading courses anyway so why waste money on all those fluff roles that are just ways to get paid but not work with kids.) |

| <i>What suggestions for improvement do you have?</i> |
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| I think ALL certified staff need to be working with children. We have so many layers of staff not working with kids. Please----put these people to work in our school buildings. We need help! I think instructional coaches MUST go. Our coach has said, " Oh, I don't do that". Our new teachers are struggling and our coach sits in her office. |
| Increase taxes. |
| There are too many positions in this district who are not working directly with students. Eliminate positions that do not directly work with students on a daily basis. Instructional coaches do not work directly with students. Reduce all of those positions for next year and have those teachers could go back in the classroom. This will also take away the need for contingency teachers. This would also help with some with class sizes. Look at the number of equity specialists. Most buildings do not even know who their equity special is. What impact are they making if they aren't working in the buildings and directly working with students? RPS has lost student enrollment because of the lack of discipline, especially at our middle schools. Relook at our behavior plan and let families know that there is a plan to change things and many families will come back fi they are confident that things are going to change. This will bring back revenue. Eliminate principals on special assignments. Once again, if they are not working directly in the buildings and with students then are those position critical in this time of crisis? Possibly look at closing Edison. How powerful would it be if our superintendent actually had their office in a middle school? How powerful would it be if the staff would have offices directly in the schools? It sounds like there would be some space in the new schools for that. We just need all hands on deck in this time of crisis for our students. |
| Continue with the HG classes in every school and expand this to HS. |
| Our children matter, I'm so glad we pulled our children from RPS. |
| -Have teachers shut off their computers every night. I know this has been an initiative in the past but few continue this practice. That could save on electricity costs. -Relying on natural lighting or having fewer lights on where possible, especially at night. |
| A complete evaluation of all areas with data to see if they are truly benefiting students. Not the just the "new trend" |
| Spend less. |
| Fire your budget people. No one can do there job and say I'm that short on our budget. Come on. Be real. We hear this all the time and then you want more money. You always threaten to cut teachers and staff to make the public think oh my. We better give them more money. Well guess what... everyone has to pay for inflation. |
| -Provide estimated costs for budget cuts so staff are able to have more insight. It is difficult to provide feedback when we are unsure how much will be cut from each proposed plan or category. -It is with much emphasis that I would suggest reducing positions in areas where staff is not working with students. The most critical positions to fill and maintain are special education teachers and paras, classroom teachers, social-emotional support teachers, and anyone who has direct contact with students. |

| <i>What suggestions for improvement do you have?</i> |
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| It appears that many of the cuts are targeting special education and paras who work with students that have had extra challenges during the pandemic. This seems likely to set them even further behind. While there is no great place to target, this seems a very unfortunate target. |
| Fire administration and let the teachers do their job. |
| Most people that work for the school district are not business people and have a hard time understanding how to save money, maybe a better way to say it is doing a better budget for each department. |
| Learn how to balance your budget? My god! You just built a brand new elementary school building and you are suggesting closing one? It seems our deficit = the cost of the new school on Overland. This is the most frustrating news I have heard, our taxes go up, the district asks for more money every year, cuts are made every year, school have more issues with safety than ever and teachers are doing as much as they can, but we still have this deficit? The ones loosing are the kids, the teachers and our future. Consider cuts to sports vs. education. |
| Eliminate teaching Critical Race Theory from all curriculum and programs. Eliminate Community Resource Officers from the schools which will save funding. Just raise property taxes to increase revenue. Make all restrooms, all grades gender neutral. |
| Allow teachers to have open enrollment and bring their children with them to work in the mornings to eliminate transportation and sacc staffing needs |
| When it comes to safety, more behavior support focused only at the student level would be more beneficial that more administrators taking on behavior support. |
| Start cutting instructional coaching positions and the high number of administrative jobs that aren't essential. |
| Have you thought of slashing the number of administrators? Or reducing the administration's pay relative to the teachers who do the actual face to face work. I ask you, if a small school in Bagley, MN can adhere to state guidelines and federal guidelines I don't think we can use those as an excuse. Perhaps we need to realign how we think about school. Is school supposed to be a kid factory, or is it supposed to be a house of learning. In a house of learning money a massive budget, and massive bureaucracy are not required. Perhaps we should think about how the rules that are created help the students instead of the bottom line. Administration = Indirect support. Background. Teachers = Frontline workers Kids = Clients Does the client always know best, no. If you don't know how to teach the subject, perhaps you have no right to tell teachers how kids should be taught the subject. It is about the learning, not about the money. Pay your teachers more, reduce the support. |
| Cut positions that don't directly impact our students and positions that don't serve a large majority of our students. We've created a number of positions in the last 12 years and I'm wondering if we're seeing direct impact on student learning. |
| We really need to rethink these options! Can we as parents choose the options? |

| <i>What suggestions for improvement do you have?</i> |
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| We could eliminate some of the teacher and principal on special assignment positions. We could decrease the number of cabinet members. We could look at decreasing the number of C & I positions. We can not eliminate positions for people who actually play a role in supporting students. |
| When I started my there was a single Maintenance supervisor position ---. Today in addition we have an Executive Director of Services ---. Also two Assistant Coordinators of Facilities, -- and --. There is talk of adding another position to this group. Meanwhile in the Maintenance Department we have been short Custodians since I started. Currently the department is five people short. With the new schools Dakota and Overland opening up we will be short 16 positions. Currently there are only two custodial positions posted. |
| Staff the student involved positions first. Eliminate staff that do not have direct contact with students. With the pandemic that is continuing it is very stressing to teachers to increase class sizes and caseloads. |
| No tolerance for violence in schools. ZERO tolerance. |
| It was suggested that we look at revenue building vs. position cutting. What a great idea! Let's get on that for sure. We also need to look at making parents purchase device insurance. Other districts do it. Why should the sites have to pay for a damaged iPad? |
| Find another group that is in a better position to shoulder those cuts. Special education is already asked to do too much with too little. Anyone who has had the privilege of working with students with disabilities know this fact. Special Education is constantly underfunded, understaffed, and riddled with turnover. Cutting deeper into special education will only make the problems worse. Fiscally, turnover is expensive. Not to mention bad outcomes for kids. |
| School Board becomes more future oriented and child centered. This should have been dealt with before more schools were built and they gave themselves a raise. |
| Collect data of student's needs directly from the source. The schools. Cutting positions that support the students is unacceptable. Special Education numbers cannot be predicted. In the past five years numbers have been increasing. We have proven ourselves that the District's predictions are always inaccurate. Cutting Reading Teachers and social workers who actually help, support the children is a huge mistake. Yet, counselors, equity specialist, are positions that are having very little impact in schools. By consolidating elementary schools would increase the number of students in each, already crowded class. |
| Keep Dr. Pikel Purchase some strong curriculum in Reading and writing and quit trying to invent a "Rochester curriculum" Include people from the companies to train teachers. Have flexible entry into Kindergarden so that behavior problems due to young or developmentlly delayed students can take advantage of early childhood resources. Add more planning and PLC days for teachers. |
| Cut instructional coaches, especially special education instructional coaches. Cut admin down to one per building. |

| <i>What suggestions for improvement do you have?</i> |
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| It just seems that "middle management" has grown - many coordinator positions seem to exist. Why would we cut reading teachers when our reading test scores are not that high; especially after all the DL time - reading is basic and who provides our students with the extra help? |
| Para support should not be cut or supply budgets, these both affect our students in many ways. Our behaviors have increased on our playgrounds and by cutting para support during lunch/recess that will not improve these behaviors. |
| Choice school parents drive kids... cut transportation |
| Focus on what's best for the children and what is going to impact them the most. Students need teachers, paras, and service providers to be there to help meet their needs and help them be successful. It seems you will be asking so much more of your special education staff if there are no new positions, especially with 2 new schools opening. These special education staff will end up burning out and quitting. I also don't believe that educators need as many administrators as we are all given. Many educators don't even have contact with some of the administrators. It seems like there are many 'middle men' for messages which only make things more confusing for educators when policies are changed or new directives are given. |
| Keep those things which are most necessary for the students: classroom teachers, other teachers who support reading, writing, math, and science instruction. In contrast, Instructional coaches could be cut with very few side effects. They do not coach students. Administrators should be able to pick up any "priorities" of the instructional coaches easily, such as mandatory testing. Our reading and math scores are terrible. We should do everything we can at the elementary level to focus on keeping those priorities. High school (and maybe middle school) can cut fun, but not necessarily essential, courses and extra curriculars. Elementary schools do not need so many social worker/counselors and support coaches. Finally, all the "equity" measures have been a waste of time and money. Racism is not a big problem at RPS any more than it is in the community. It is minimal. Equity training has tried to group people together based on skin color, which demonstrates a ridiculous assumption that culture and background are synonymous with skin color. If we want to use equity specialists, then their only focus should be on students of poverty, rather than students of color. Poverty affects how a student learns much more than their perceived color. "Equity" is a cool and trendy term right now, but it isn't a good use of our limited resources. Get rid of exception to attendance too, especially if it saves on transportation. Get rid of a bunch of middle management. Too much bureaucracy. Too many POSA and TOSA. |
| librarians/ media teachers Is there a way to combine these. Some buildings do not need both. I see equity specialists will not be decreased in the upcoming year. Our building has not had much contact with an equity specialist. Are they present? I personally think having more paras instead of equity specialists would help in terms of equity. Many students struggle academically which in turn leads to behaviors. If we have more para support, then we may see less behavior. Paras also cost less than equity specialists. |

| <i>What suggestions for improvement do you have?</i> |
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| There are constant additions like "specialists or coordinators" being added. Can we combine some of these roles. We need to fill the schools with people, not Edison or other district offices. People should be hired who work directly with students. You can't eliminate support roles from our buildings unless you can figure out a way for sub coverage and building duties. They are the people that keep the buildings running. |
| Eliminate all coaching positions for next year. |
| Positions should be tiered towards positions that currently do NOT work with students directly. |
| Looking at staff at each building before new ones are hired. Allowing for some programs or rooms to be empty or combined. I feel like the high schools could have one less person and still be effective. |
| Please focus your cuts on the indirect student roles. Do not make cuts towards the paras and teachers who work directly with students each day. Consolidate district admin positions for cuts. |
| Hiring freeze, not replace those that retire |
| I think they need to continue to analyze the positions with no student contact and how they are benefiting student academic growth. |
| Any cuts that would directly affect the students learning or well-being should NOT be considered. Cut a few positions from the leadership pool of people who work at Edison |
| There are currently a lot of positions at Edison that do not directly work with students and I am actually not even sure what they do at all, to be honest. They don't come help teachers during these sub shortages and I'm concerned that we have these positions that are not necessary. Maybe we need to make cuts at Edison rather than cutting teacher and para positions. Also, maybe we shouldn't be buying whole new curriculums every 2-3 years and then just let the old curriculum sit in our warehouses. We're spending tons of money on curriculums that we just replace within 2 years (Lucy Caulkins was a horrible purchase and we spent a lot of money on it and only used it for a short amount of time). I don't think school buildings need more than 2 administrators, so cutting extra administration positions would be an improvement. |
| We need a raise/retention bonus. |
| They need to look at Maintenance, do they need facility managers or could they function as leads. |
| Eliminate admin position |
| I'm not sure I do unfortunately. I just hope that we prioritize the work load of teachers and support staff to prevent burnout and to keep quality educators working with our students. |
| People who do not impact students should not be as important. |

| <i>What suggestions for improvement do you have?</i> |
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| Considering limiting positions for central office or other staff that do not have direct contact with students or services provided for them. Keep elementary reading teachers in the district. Classroom teachers express appreciation for them and the ability they have to properly address students' needs in a more intensive, explicit, systematic way than they can in the larger classroom. |
| Please make this the least impactful to students and staff. |
| 1. Difficult with different contracts/unions, but could there be some way for staff to support other departments if they are able and interested? Ex. Off-schedule staff as subs, Paras helping with maintenance, etc? Some staff, like myself, have a "quiet" day every once in a while and I'd be happy to jump in wherever else is needed. 2. Move from site-based management to district wide. |
| In the district buildings, find ways to help the budget by eliminating positions of staff "on special assignment". Our C/I has too many staff members that those jobs could be condensed in my opinion. |
| Don't make cuts. Give staff a raise and help them cover the cost of classroom supplies that they are providing at their own expense. |
| Keep the cuts AWAY FROM CLASSROOMS! This district is top heavy and middle-level management heavy. |
| See comments above. Is there any way to do a better job a budgeting so we don't find ourselves in this hole and once again don't give teachers the raise that they deserve (I find it interesting that we repeatedly find ourselves in financial trouble everytime we are trying to settle a contract) |
| Could students pay for athletics on sliding fee scale? |
| These are the reductions I believe to be the best: 1.F, 1G, 1H, 1J,1K, 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D, 2F, 2I, 2L plus 3A are the reductions with least impact on students! |
| Ways to retain or increase the numbers of students attending school in the district. |
| Student Support Service positions that are unfilled will be eliminated. Does this really help students thrive? We need to find a way to fill these positions not eliminate them! Eliminating or reducing instructional coaches is eliminating teachers. This is not a good idea. Also, if they are reduced or cut, who will support our new staff, our struggling staff, or our experienced teachers who want to grow and implement new things in the classroom? |
| Invest more in staff. Many positions are unfilled. I see the schools from the inside-out as a parent and as a teacher. I have also worked as a sub for paraprofessional staff. In order to recruit and retain effective staff, we need to offer attractive and convincing wages and better training. Invest in your foundation--the staff who work directly with children and youth (bus drivers, lunchroom workers, paraprofessionals, custodians, as well as, teachers) and everyone will benefit. Staff who feel supported professionally and financially will go above and beyond. |
| None. I wish I had some. |

| <i>What suggestions for improvement do you have?</i> |
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| Maybe stop construction or new buildings or sell them as apparently we no longer need extra schools without enough students.. a severe mistake by RPS. Reduce your administration positions.. |
| A suggestion for improvement is to wait until the state has decided what to do with 7 billion dollar surplus before making any drastic cuts. |
| Higher level administration positions should be evaluated as well. |
| Maybe we look into cabinet members. This was not part of your presentation. Over the last few years, I have been watching cuts and then we add more cabinet members. This should be considered and put forward as an option. |
| Get rid of office staff and coaches. Also all the race specific liaisons. Put money in class rooms and reading support. |
| I appreciate that administrative-level cuts are being included in the proposal and reviewed, but concerned that numbers were not put to these in the same way that they were for positions like admin assistants and other support functions. I would like to see a commitment to reduce the higher dollar impact administrative resource load at a similar (or greater) ratio to those reductions being made in the front-line and support functions. Without numbers, these have the appearance of being incomplete commitments, and previous district administrations have had a track record of increasing rather than decreasing in these areas, so it's tough to trust without specific metrics. |
| I think the instructional coaches help amplify the teachers ability to teach. The instructional coaches are also effective in making sure that the curriculum are consistent across classrooms. Please don't reduce this budget. |
| Much more attention and expectations to equipment given to students to take home. Ask staff (teachers, janitors, paras) what they see in their particular school building that could be improved to save money and waste. |
| I have none. I know this is a challenging process, but I also know that the situation in schools right now is the most challenging it has been in 20 years. Students have more needs than ever. |
| Cuts should be made of coaches and staff not working with students directly. |
| Stop taking away from special education. I hope the people in charge come to a special education classroom and see how hard it is to run a classroom without enough staff. Then paras are pulled from other parts of the building which affects the whole school. Pulling from special education affects more students, teachers, and administration than others realize. |
| We need to stop hiring non-essential staff right now especially if we will be cutting them in the near future. I suggest we keep the cuts away from the people who work directly with students and consider the importance of staff who don't work directly with students. We also need to invest in the mental well-being of students AND staff and keep cuts away from these licensed professionals. |
| Look at unnecessary Edison positions or positions that could be combined. |

| <i>What suggestions for improvement do you have?</i> |
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| KEEP the Reading specialists based on reading data and the need to support Tier 3 interventions! |
| Continue to research efficiency and effectiveness in administration and non-student facing positions. Better forward management of the budget. It's very confusing that the district is opening multiple schools in face of a budget crisis. |
| Are there technology grants or other opportunities to help streamline services and ensure that administrative staff are able to do more with less staff, over a reasonable window of time. This always causes short term discomfort, but it is an investment that I believe to be very worthwhile. |
| My thoughts are cut from the places that have the least amount of student contact first. This could have a direct impact on staff well being and could result in a little more work for adults in the building but they are adults and can handle that stress better than kids. Anything that takes away from direct student contact should be the last thing on our list for cuts. |
| Rather than look at ways you can eliminate programs, decrease social workers and counselors, and change the staffing formula, how about you look at making changes further up the ladder. Never once was there mention of decreasing the principal or assistant principal formulas. Never once was there mention that those in leadership (principals, assistant principals, superintendent, financial director) will not get their annual raise. If you except to cut services to students and increase the workload of teachers and support staff I would hope you would also look at making cuts further up the ladder, as everyone in the community knows teachers, social workers, counselors, janitors, lunch staff, social workers are the backbone of our school system while leadership sits back and twirls their thumbs demanding more and more of everyone below them while offering no assistance to actually help the problem. |
| As a district, we are top heavy. Positions that have direct contact (face-to-face) with students should be the last options for cuts. |
| Some of these options seem short-sighted and need more study and input from people who know the effects of the cuts. Have the people that are making these decisions take the time to ask questions and listen to answers from the people doing the jobs and or know what the people do. When I see some of these ideas, it looks like they are based on opinion or lack of knowledge and that seems like a poor way to make decisions. |
| Do not cut the budget for teaching coaches. This is a highly important role that provides teachers with better lesson plans and better capacity to work with students. This role definitely has a direct impact on students. |
| Admin dollars seem very high! Maybe it's not in actual number of principals, but in the areas directly below it. |
| The fact that School Districts are having to cut millions of dollars is absolutely absurd. It really tells us how much our government cares about education in this country. |

| <i>What suggestions for improvement do you have?</i> |
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| Administration pay and benefit freeze. Join a Group Purchasing Organization for supply purchase standardization and cost reduction. Central warehousing for supply management. Decrease in School Board pay by 40% since the board approved a \$7,200 to \$16,000 pay increase in May 2021. |
| Avoid cutting where it will most impact students on IEP and with programs that rightfully so, deserve the necessary attention |
| Let teachers teach their subject efficiently. Set minimum standards relating to language, behavior, performance, etc to participate in a class. This would allow teachers to lead a larger class size while reducing burnout, allow all students to maximize their learning...students not meeting minimum standards would be taught in small groups focused on their particular need...language, behavior, knowledge, etc. Main streaming does not work for anyone and comes at a very high price. |
| You should eliminate instructional coaches now. They do not work directly with kids and most of them do not help support teachers with instruction like the job entitles. Losing them will not impact the students like cutting paras and teachers will. Also we need to cut at the top. We are very top heavy of admin on special assignment or implementing specialist all that dont work directly with our students. We need to make cuts there not with the teachers who are with our students daily. |
| Cut positions that do not directly work with students. Increase positions that have direct student impact. Cut coaches |
| I would eliminate the reduction of the instructional coach positions given the valuable and continued services they provide, and concentrate on those areas in the report where services are not being utilized or positions have been unfilled for an extended period of time without noticeable detriment. |
| 1. Sell all iPads, chromebooks, and drop software licenses to support those devices. Students do not benefit from 6-7 hours of “educational” screen time and additional homework on the screens. Return to pencil/paper assignments and hands on grading by teachers to better understand student ability in real time. 2. Allow class size to max out at 26 students. The current 22:1 ratio only serves to support new construction projects that put the district in this mess. 3. Increase the rent on the national volleyball center for tournaments, adult leagues, and other non RPS use. 4. Take an honest look at the need for HS aquatic centers at each and every school. I know you likely won’t stop the project, but how will these new facilities be utilized? Turn them into a business and require them to earn a profit just as the volleyball center should do. 5. Review all non teacher salaries - what level of temporary salary reduction would be appropriate until the budget crisis is resolved? |

| <i>What suggestions for improvement do you have?</i> |
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| Education is extremely important to me and I am a proud 2008 RPS graduate. For starters- this survey needs to be improved drastically. What does my sexual orientation have anything to do with the education of my communities children? What does my race or ethnicity have to do with the spending of our tax dollars? The budget deficit RPS is currently projecting is unacceptable. I am strongly considering running for school board to get some reasonable ideas on budgeting and funding of our schools. |
| Please do not cut from special education. It's already an overworked/ burnt out staffing population. We're constantly losing good teachers/ paras to burn out. We already are unable to hire replacements- hence the "open positions." Please don't put more on their plates. |
| Be more selective on projects. |
| Reduction of TOSA, POSA, coaches, etc, all these "specialized" positions that I really do not even understand their day-to-day purpose/function in an environment that is begging for assistance at the face-to-face student contact level every single day. Reduction of upper admin positions, such as number of admin in each school, number of Sped admin. You could have additional, lower-salaried assistants do many of the things many admin are doing. |
| Please rethink coaching and paras. Please come and meet with a coach and discuss what our day entails. Please come to a classroom of 16 four year olds, half of which have varying disabilities, and then think about taking a para away. |
| Cut positions that do not have impact on student achievement. The saying, if you do not feed the teachers, they eat the students is becoming so evident in our schools. Our teachers are tired, under prepared and never have enough time to do what needs to be done. If we do not take care of them with supports such as coaches with curriculum supports, social workers to support students, proper PD at the right times you will have huge attrition, and many unfilled positions, leaving a bigger issue than ever before. |
| Given that hiring has been difficult across industries this year, I would be curious to see the difference between those positions that are unfilled this year, and those that have been unfilled historically. In looking at the potential reductions for 2023-2024: these staffing positions are overall positions who are already feeling stretched thin based on their caseloads - we need more of them, not fewer. |
| I often see large budget amounts for high school sports, focus on the education first. Extra curricular activities should be exactly that, extra. |
| Encourage volunteering and donations. Old school fundraising. Local business volunteer for gardening, painting, etc. |
| I think a more balanced approach to making budget cuts is necessary. Like stated earlier, every child should feel a tiny bit of the budget cuts rather than the SPED and IEP kids carrying the brunt. It's not fair to them and they deserve a great education too. It's not their fault that they need more adaptations to their learning. |

| <i>What suggestions for improvement do you have?</i> |
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| -Cut more from the top. There are a lot of cabinet and sub-cabinet level positions and extra administrators at the Edison building making large salaries without obvious student impact. Every time a building principal gets moved out of their position, a new position seems to be created for them at Edison. Eliminate those positions. The Executive Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion position on the cabinet was recently created. While I acknowledge the importance of this work, could it be handled in the way it was before with lower level staff and salaries? |
| Reduce costs by leaving vacant positions and increased class size averages to 25 |
| Support special education equally and equitably. |
| Your central administrative offices have way too many positions that have no value. These should be eliminated as well as ALL instructional coaching positions they are NOT effective and have no value. |
| Start at the top; look at the middle. The administration these past 12-15 years at Edison has gotten fatter and fatter with little to no impact on student behavior and academics at the schools. In fact, the schools have more behavior and academic needs that ever before. |
| Eliminate racist admin positions--anything with equity in title! |
| Don't cut funding for our kids. Provide proper pay and staffing levels to our teachers. This is not the right places to cut funds. This is not a time to cut back on providing support for our kids. I will happily pay my \$70 in taxes towards the schools so that the district can provide ethical conditions for kids, staff and faculty. |
| Cut sports. Sports could be intramural at best. Cut coaches, and anything to do with the extras. Scale back on decorating the new buildings. |
| *Instead of cutting clerical positions, could some positions be made remote and service more than one school? Instead of cutting from 3 to 2 clerical positions could instead 2 be on site and a 3rd remote position be available to help with a couple schools? |
| Work very hard on a comprehensive safety plan. Working with students and families to make RPS schools safe again. Students that assault other students, staff, violent threats and behavior should be supervised by a centralized teacher/para/social worker/counselor program to earn their way back to a classroom working with administration and classroom teacher to continue work and learning while addressing behavior goals. How will schools be safer cutting counselors and social workers? Working with parent groups like dads on duty to prevent violence in middle schools and high schools. Ending CoVid restrictions on parent volunteers and allow kids to play with their friends at recess. Make comprehensive changes to teach reading, writing, math, social studies, and science in a safe school environment to attract families back to RPS. The current policies are driving families away. Return bell times to what they were or elementary 8-2:30 to maximize learning vs the 4:00 time currently parents and staff are unhappy with as it is not best practice for our children. Please cut the wants first and not the needs. 2nd grade is already at 28 recommended same as 3rd to go higher than numbers already too high is unreasonable especially when cutting classroom support staff. |

| <i>What suggestions for improvement do you have?</i> |
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| Keep special education funding. |
| get rid of half the sec. at the schools. also get rid of over half the vp at the schools. |
| At one time there were cuts from the administration positions at Edison. It seems that we are once again heavy in those positions. We have too many teachers out of the classroom - instructional coaches are way over staffed. That would be my first area to cut. |
| Maintain current paraprofessional budgeting to allow for adequate access to paraprofessionals for special education students and their teachers. Not doing so puts students and educators at risk for injury and lack of adequate learning. |
| Do not reduce sped budgets. These programs are already hurting. |
| Maybe if you know for years and years that we're going to have a deficit, rather than waiting to ask the community for a referendum (and balancing the budget on the backs of your staff and students) maybe you just go ahead and make the ask? Look at all the communities around us who asked and got a resounding "Yes!" And here we are telling teachers and students, "You aren't worth it. Too bad for you. But enjoy that new pool at Century. Enjoy that new building, Overland." Honestly. How short sighted. Pay teachers what they're worth. What's good for teachers is good for students. Or have you not noticed what's going on all over the country: school staff are leaving in droves! |
| It would make more sense to look at decreasing sports or other services, but not special educational services. |
| Make the budget bigger. |
| Get rid of the non-teaching positions at the top: teachers on special assignment, principals on special assignment, BAMH team, etc. This is more cost effective than getting rid of secretarial staff. |
| Please protect any positions that are directly related to student support. |
| Quit moving money around and actually cut positions. Get back to educating children instead of social engineering and maybe children going to private schools or surrounding communities will come back to Rochester schools. |
| Have the effectiveness of interventions been measured to support continued funding (e.g., if a role hired to address a specific gap - was gap closed?). |
| There are more systematic changes that should be looked at in district spending before immediately going right to cutting labor cost. Labor cost is the easy route because it is always the highest cost. There are definitely other costs within the districts spending that as a whole that could be cut or reduced before reducing nearly 26 full time positions in a field with already a daunting amount of turn over due to the pandemic and the burnout of this year. Cutting labor costs is the easy option, there are more ways to cut costs in the district without eliminating people who show up every day for the kids in our district. |

| <i>What suggestions for improvement do you have?</i> |
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| Our enrollment has decreased district wide due to the behavior problems at the middle school and high schools. It's not surprising when there aren't any consequences at the elementary level. A student can hit a teacher and they are back in the classroom within an hour. They can threaten to kill their teacher and return to the classroom in less than an hour. There needs to be consequences at the elementary level so those behaviors don't escalate in middle school and high school. The other reason our enrollment has decreased is because of the covid protocols that have been put into place. Why are we spending so much time and resources contact tracing and then having young children quarantine. My grandson who lives in the cities and goes to a large school district will get an email that their was a positive case in the classroom. The parents are to watch their child and test if they have symptoms. They are keeping healthy children in the classroom. Families are opting to stay in those districts! Parents are choosing schools that are leaving it up to parents to decide what is right for their child in regards to masks. Covid should be treated like any other illness/virus. If you have symptoms, stay home and test. If you changed your policies handling Covid I know that more students would return and then you would receive more funds per student. You would also have a better chance to fill some of the important vacant positions. |
| Cut spending at the top. Do not cut reading and math support teachers - our kids need more of them. Make class sizes smaller. Teachers need to be able to do more than just babysit, and with large class sizes it's too hard to meet the needs of all students. |
| Take a closer look on mid/high level Administration; could those responsibilities be combined. My experience with high school, it's always the Administrators doing a lot of the hard-lifting. Not really sure the role of the Principal is; they probably make a lot of money to sit at a lot of meetings. |
| Already don't have general ed para support outside for recess and the lunchroom. Really need to have these positions open as it is near impossible for administration and other support staff to take time out of day to cover this time. |
| Districtwide option schools seem costly and inequitable. Also, use data and research to inform these cuts. |
| Review and research overall effectiveness of those administrative positions mentioned in bullet point 4E (mentioned as possible budget reductions for 2023-2024 school year). Some positions could be consolidated and redefined and possibly eliminated, as they have little to no impact on student learning and the learning environment. |
| Continue to look for cost saving without reducing/ elimination support for HS teachers |
| Keep support staff! |
| I like the idea of eliminating busing for students opting into Choice or District Wide schools. If parents chose to send their child to a school across town instead of their neighborhood school, it seems fair they would be provide their own transportation there. |

| <i>What suggestions for improvement do you have?</i> |
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| You really can be stronger and leaner at the same time. You really can be better by addressing the many layers of supervisory staffing, as said by my teacher neighbors. You are top heavy...admit it! |
| Don't focus on options that impact the most vulnerable students of Rochester. |
| Stop targeting kids getting just the basic/baseline academics, like kids receiving special services (special education). Target the programs that are the "gravy" - Spanish immersion and special programs at choice schools. These programs are EXTRAs if there is money -- if no money, remove. They serve only a select group of students. Students with special services are scattered through all grades at all schools. What do you have against these students? |
| Cut positions at the higher level. Do we really need all those executive positions? Can they be consolidate? Why not propose a salary reduction on top level positions? or the Board, do we really need so many? I don't think so. Many school districts function with just one board member, we can reduce few positions there too. Why pay a company to find a new Superintendent. Mr. Pekel has proof in these few months that he is capable, he CARES! Or is the district so used of having a no show, "I don't care" individual? Is time we have someone that knows what is doing and works hard for the district. |
| Seeing elementary reading teachers on the potential 2023-2024 list makes me think that other items on the list were also not considered for their long-term student-educational ROI benefit. One suggestion I have would be in the way we are thinking about how far our money is going for each budget item; we should be thinking about cutting those budget items that education research shows have a low ROI and keeping those that are proven by educational/social sciences to have a high ROI. In summary, it would be a mistake to conflate educational ROI (student educational outcomes) with "public demand" for a given program. Additionally, thinking of school counselors as "out-of-classroom" supports is incorrect. Yes, many of the direct interactions that school counselor have with students happen outside of the classroom, but in addition to that work, school counselors deliver essential tier 1 in-classroom lessons that help ISD 535 to fulfill the state-mandated Personal Learning Plans (PLP) program. As a Minnesota school district, we are required by MN State Statute section 120B.125 to help all students have a PLP "beginning no later than 9th grade." School counselors provide comprehensive programs that cover the areas of academic, social/emotional, and career/college preparations. These are tier 1 programs that ALL students receive, and should not be thought of as supplemental in any way. School counselors, and the funding required to employ them, need to be considered as primary tier 1 resources for students of Rochester Public Schools. |
| At this time, none. |
| Keep trying hard. I know these decisions are tough. There are several items that feel scary to reduce or eliminate. I just took a deep breath and know that you are working hard. |

| <i>What suggestions for improvement do you have?</i> |
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| How can we increase revenue instead of cutting? Can we apply for grants or look into other districts and what they are doing? Do not cut coaches and sp ed staff/paras/ teaching positions without first finding out what they do and how it will affect others. Seek feedback from teachers. Look at other areas, like GATE, and Math intervention. There is no curriculum for math or reading teachers, they hardly see any kids. Why are we hiring them when they are just pulled to sub all the time? Lower the salary of the cabinet. |
| Have any of the positions of licensed staff that are not in buildings even been considered? What does the BAM team do? Do they need that many people on that team if none of us ever see them? What about the equity specialists? I cant even tell you the name of the one in my building nor what it is they do or are supposed to be doing? We need chemical dependency specialists not equity specialists. |
| Raise my taxes, find alternative ways to raise the funding. Our kids are too important. I've voted for every ballot funding since I became a local taxpayer. A couple bucks extra is well worth it for our current students and future of our community. |
| It would be nice to see those numbers on a spreadsheet to better understand what is being spent in areas and the impact of those cuts (in dollars). A visual would be very helpful. |
| Raise more money through emergency referendum. |
| How is it that we can tear down perfectly good usable buildings Bishop that might I add was just modeled Three years ago. Spent millions of dollars on with state of the art air handlers and chillers boilers roofing led lighting inside and out etc. Only to be demolished. (none of this newer equipment made it on public surplus might I add. Where did all that money that money go if those high dollar still valuable items just disappear? Why are we still considering continuing to rent out any space at RCTC? I know we have several programs going out there and I know we rent these spaces. |
| *2G, 2H - are we maximizing third party billing as a potential source of revenue? There has been no communication coming through on this for the 21-22 school year. How can we improve our outreach and identification amongst our buildings? 4I - It will not be popular, but, I agree with reviewing the purpose and need of the district wide options. In this plan, the transportation is mentioned. What does our data show in regards to the levels of achievement in each of these programs? If they are successful, why are they not being duplicated? If they are comparable to neighborhood schools, might it behoove us to look at these programs and consider restoring the SEL and Instructional support to the neighborhood, base programs? |
| Keep mental health and special education staff. Very much needed, especially now during/after a pandemic. consolidate positions of staff able to work from home and not directly working with students |
| Don't cut staff that directly support teachers or work with students. Follow through on our initiatives instead of moving on the the next biggest, best thing and spending a significant amount of money. ENVOY, CIA, IRLA, counselors and Social workers in every building (still happening, but sure to be cut), the actual Grading for Learning, Dr. Sharroky Hollie's curriculum - and all the things that came with that... Where is all that stuff now?? |

| <i>What suggestions for improvement do you have?</i> |
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| Focus on the additional revenue opportunities by improving enrollment numbers. RPS should strive to be the educational provider of choice in this community. Part of that should be a re-alignment of the bell schedules so that elementary children are not starting their school day after 9am. |
| Since Instructional coaches were introduced, I have always thought I would rather have smaller class sizes. As a parent, I thought they were a terrible idea. As staff I find them helpful but definitely should be reduced or eliminated. |
| Fully fund instructional coaches. Consider offering our asynchronous professional development to other districts for a fee to bring in revenue. |
| Cuts to the SpEd non-classroom (coaches, facilitators, supervisors, etc) Eliminate Paper Tiger, employees can make their own copies on site |
| What about looking at a 4 day school week? Instructional coaches could be eliminated. I'm still not sure why they exist at the elementary level. |
| I would like to see cuts to gifted or honors programs before cuts to special education. I have had a gifted student who graduated and attended and since graduated from the U of MN. Her honors classes were unnecessary. Her AP and PSEO classes prepared her for college and set her apart from others. My youngest daughter has an IEP and requires special education services. She needs more from her school than my older daughter to become a contributing member of society in the future. By cutting special education and other services to needful students, you are telling me that only the gifted students matter. I am ashamed to be part of RPS. Further, it appears that many of the services proposed to be cut are from the bottom up. I see building administration mentioned once. I would imagine a larger savings by evaluating what can be cut from the top down. Admittedly, I am not familiar with the leadership structure, but an evaluation of the administrative positions would likely identify some savings. |
| The turnaround for this whole process is too short. I think the process should be longer and have started earlier. I also think that there should have been live and virtual options to get feedback from all stakeholders. The whole process favors middle/upper class residents. How did this process support bilingual/multilingual residents? |
| Spend more, retain good staff, and the students will come! |
| Have money set aside and ability to pay for building prior to building. Keep up with remodeling. Keep schools safe. Allow schools to keep students in line. Make parents responsible. |
| I suggest you relook at your budget and realize that all of the cuts are hurting children's learning. Why not look into not purchasing/building pools and new schools. Why not look for more outsourcing or I don't know use the property tax to actually pay for our children to learn |
| Can RPS lease out some space for community programs in the evening, such as partnering with the Y that just closed its building? |

| <i>What suggestions for improvement do you have?</i> |
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| Quit focusing on sports and choose to educate |
| Maybe look at cutting salaries starting with the principal and above. Our teachers and some of these programs are so valued and they need to survive. |
| The teachers need more money |
| Instead of freezing para counts, look at the hiring process and supports so we can maintain the paras we have. We can then work on increasing efficiency with the great staff we have. |
| Why do we not have more federal funding? Cutting unnecessary clerical, support positions... keep coach's, paras and teachers |
| No more coaches or equity specialists in the district |
| Consider balancing the budget cuts to not target special education so significantly. |
| First there needs to be continued support of police presence in our schools, especially since some students can't behave themselves! Education is a privilege, if you can't behave you don't belong in school disrupting the education of others who want to be there to learn. And it doesn't matter what color your skin is. If you do the crime, you deserve the consequences!! |
| Close choice schools and other "Nice to Have" options and Provide academic opportunities to all. Absolutely no compromises on STEM courses as the DMC and new age economy necessitates |
| I would like to know the impact of each potential budget reduction on our district and the departments in which they serve. What will other people need to do because someone else's job is cut? |
| I really think we need to eliminate cabinet and coaching positions. In my opinion, they are just top-down positions that pass on information. |
| I would prefer to see the district keep the cuts on the low end. I preferred when the discussion was around the \$4.8-\$7 mill range. I think that cutting around \$5 mill is more appropriate for next year. |
| Ideas seem to lack some creativity. It should be more than turning down the heat and making fewer copies. I'm wondering if deeper studies of buildings should be done. |
| Options that are not being recommended such as 3A (tightening formula around PSEO students) and 4a (changing heating and cooling setpoints) sound like viable options that have less potential for effect on students/staff...unless there is something I am not understanding about those options. |
| I have no idea what the current requirements are for giving teachers new computers, but it seems lately we have gotten new technology before the old computers were "old." Have there been any inquiries into savings there? The desktops we had recently were fine, but then with the pandemic they were taken away and we were given a new system with new laptops. I don't know how long the laptops will last, but the desktops, I would think, would last longer. |

| <i>What suggestions for improvement do you have?</i> |
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| Looking more into efficiency especially in regards to energy. Evaluating more in terms of the impact that district provided technology has and if there are ways to tighten the budget on those services. Potentially looking to see if some in-house services could be outsourced. Overall looking at reducing existing, especially important service positions, as a last resort when there are other areas that do not involve terminating positions that can help reduce this need. |
| Stop building new schools Consolidate Get rid of equity officer Get rid of the RPS online school and focus on what the school district already has |
| I worry about making some of these cuts in areas that are supporting our students with greater needs (students of color, students with learning difficulties) where the ability to adjust is less than for the majority of our students who are able to adjust and have a broader tolerance for educational changes. |
| Cut district wide staffing that do not work in a building Maybe top level employees could take a small pay cut - if you wont give teachers, paras and clerical a raise, why do admin and school board members get raises. Why are you adding new Edison jobs - maybe Edison workers should all be on site like school building employees are. |
| -Reduce number of admin at elementary schools. A school with only 400 students doesn't need 3 administrators. |
| again for 23-24, eliminating bussing to choice schools seems the most equitable option, as that is completely a personal choice. |
| The reductions need a more balanced approach. This feels very one sided and discriminatory to students with disabilities. Yes there is a mention of larger class sizes and reducing sections due to PSEO but it still seems there is a bigger hit to special education. |
| Thinking to decrease nursing staff in the future is a huge mistake. they are already extremely behind on work loads, highest turn over ever seen in these staff, they feel under supported. this will not make hiring for these open positions appealing in the current work climate. |
| I would consider looking at budget shortfalls when you become aware of them instead of the year the prior to the cuts needing to take effect. |
| Evaluate why so many LSN and health offices are leaving and improve retention efforts. It is costly to orient new staff and the time it takes to on board competent staff. Increase wages of COVID support to improve hiring. |
| Utilize more of the "other suggestions". There seemed to be less impact on special education and teacher reductions. With the current state of most middle and elementary schools, removing additional paraprofessionals would make them a free for all. Behavior problems are at all time highs. |

| <i>What suggestions for improvement do you have?</i> |
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| 1. Look at the positions at the top. Why do we have a full time position for long range planning? 2. Stop cutting from the clerical positions - they already act as principals, nurses, and clerical. You are going to lose good people. 3. make decisions on curriculum and quit buying new stuff without first implementing the stuff we have with fidelity. So much curriculum just collecting dust. 4. Close the lowest performing elementary school and give those kids a chance at an academic school. |
| All students should have choice for which school they attend. Our family rents a home. The landlord lost his job and had to end our lease. We had to move to a different area of Rochester because no rentals were available in SW. We do not want to have our children have to pay the price by changing schools. Parents should be able to choose to keep children in the school they currently attend when having to make difficult housing decisions. This has been a major stress for our family. |
| If you want student growth to occur, invest in curriculum which will provide an equitable education for all. Ask teachers for input. Then, showcase these programs so that people will want their kids to attend a school in Rochester. Otherwise, they will continue to move to the surrounding communities which offer core curriculum in reading and math, STEM, STEAM, Maker's spaces, robotics, etc...for ALL. |
| If the district cannot pay for the new buildings - sell one or lease one out for use. Move up investigating setpoints for heating and cooling in the list of options. Strongly lobby the state for more funding - work with the PTSAs to create a campaign to contact our state and federal representatives for more funding. Move up the option for closing a smaller school and consolidating with another school. Look at Superintendent and Administrators (Principals) pay and consider reducing for X years to help offset (at least a small amount) some of the budget shortfalls. |
| Community involvement. Like a city-wide event, run by volunteers, to encourage Rochester citizens to donate money to the schools. |
| I would cut the # of credits required at high school from 24 to 23. This would be more in keeping with state requirements (but still provide a top notch education). Get rid of the speech requirement which has become untenable and speech could easily be imbedded in other classes. Then cut .5 electives. Also, immediately cut back more than .2 on instructional coaches or find evidence that they having a positive impact on students and schools. |
| Go to school in person for a full year without teacher mental health breaks and Covid distance learning and maybe people would be willing to vote yes to a referendum |
| Please do not take away positions that work directly with students. We need our math and reading support. We need our mental health supports like counselors and social workers. |
| Consider closing all choice schools and make all schools equal. Use that money towards deficit. There is no need to spend to cater just tiny fraction of kids. All kids need to have equal opportunities like insciedout not just some schools. If district can't offer it to all do not offer academic opportunities to anyone. Think of equal opportunities. Kids who are there to learn should not be stopped from restricting opportunities to some schools. |

| <i>What suggestions for improvement do you have?</i> |
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| There Ways to increase the funds given, why We trying to eliminate this much from the institution struggling the most thru covid?? |
| I am not sure the transportation costs to the district, but could that be further explored? Could some of the specials (e.g. art/media) be folded into the classroom for projects? Could a centralized administrative support for elementary school, middle school, etc. be considered? The school our kids attend have a team of 3 principals/vice principals... is that necessary? |
| Let staff that can rotate to work from home like Olmsted County does and share offices - only coming fir meetings when needed or to do them virtually. This would save office space and heating costs as well as leases where applicable |
| What reductions that are not building-based or have direct student interaction have been considered? Seems to be a lot of position growth, but they were not identified. How can you cut people in buildings who serve students and staff each day? |
| Why are we spending so much money on all these brand new fancy buildings when we are in a budget crisis and suggesting closing current schools and programs and cutting staff positions to save money? I am all for new schools to meet the needs of an expanding community, but I would have expected these budgeting questions / surveys to have come out well before the sudden expansion spending spree. It is difficult for the community to hear and accept the sudden need for program and teacher position cuts while while we are witnessing huge spending elsewhere. |
| This process needs to come and be conducted from the outside of RPS. Nothing meaningful will come from this. Any decisions will negatively affect taxpayers because the decision makers have to much skin in the game. Suggestion is to take this process and decision out of RPS and hand over to an outside neatral entity. |
| I would explore more top down changes. Maybe reductions in salaries of administration staff to save some money. |
| I know these decisions are difficult. I think that 4J would be disastrous to our district. Our counselors and social workers are on the front lines addressing the mental health needs of our students, and sometimes staff. |
| Decrease \$\$ spent on security/ safety officers. |
| Eliminate spending at the top. Don't hire outside consultants for surveys. We don't need things like the panaroma survey. Don't spend money on consultants. |
| Ensure that our students needs are put first when reviewing the budget. Continue to fund social work, counselor and equity positions within our district, along with special education positions. Again, why would we cut positions of our most vulnerable groups of students. |

| <i>What suggestions for improvement do you have?</i> |
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| <p>Please reconsider the drastic cuts you are proposing to make to SSS resources. The reason we need paras, float subs, coaches in the SSS department is because we deal so heavily with the legal realm of education. IEPS are legal documents and the services and supports outlined in them are mandated. We need SSS paras to support our students per their IEP. We need float subs in SSS to sub in our most intensive classrooms with our most high needs students as day to day subs RARELY take those jobs and these children cannot go without a teacher or handle a rotation of teachers offering to cover the room on their prep. We need sped instructional coaches as we can't always find licensed sped teachers so we have out of field permission staff. Without a coaches support, how would these individuals negotiate the complicated realm of due process? If you go through with the proposed cuts to SSS, are you prepared to finance the legal process that results in complaints filed with MDE for not complying with student IEPS?</p> |
| <p>Did not cut enough. Taxpayers should no be asked for more.</p> |
| <p>I wonder if the area of Edison is too top heavy? Many of the staff down there have not been in the classroom to really realize what is going on. Many of the staff are also working from home.</p> |
| <p>Really look hard at the cost of student athletics and sports: is there as much ROI for those opportunities than others that are more academically focused?</p> |
| <p>Do what is best for our students! Cutting teachers and programs that help students thrive is not the answer. Diversify the district and continue developing teachers with district and site-wide Professional Development opportunities. Our new teachers and new to the profession teachers need and deserve adequate support. Eliminating options such as instructional supports and resources, will put a strain on teachers who have no prior experience in education. Eliminating positions that support teachers and students is not the answer. Instead, new ways of teaching and new teaching modes that include technology need to be implemented in order to reach all our students. The pandemic has made it painfully obvious that our most underserved and underrepresented students are not treated equitably and are therefore not receiving the same quality education like their white counterparts, yet we are doing everything with this proposed budget cut to make the achievement and equity gap wider. We need less paperwork and red tape and more actionable steps to support our most marginalized students. By cutting supports and staff, you are doing the district and its stakeholders a huge disservice, and parents will be looking at other education options because their children will not be receiving a quality education.</p> |
| <p>LISTEN to your staff and come spend a few hours "shadowing" what we all do on any given day, so you have current, pertinent ideas as to what these jobs all entail. INVOLVE parents in the decisions and direction the district needs to go.</p> |

| <i>What suggestions for improvement do you have?</i> |
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| Keep instructional coaches, curriculum staff, and those connected to equity as these are all key positions that directly connect to our district's mission, equity statements, and vision. Instructional coaches work with individual teachers and staff in a building to support ongoing professional development; research shows that coaching accelerates growth and directly benefits students. Having coaches support multiple buildings makes them less accessible and therefore teachers ability to utilize them decreases. Class sizes are already larger than ideal in most buildings; there is also large discrepancies between grade levels and buildings. Research shows (and experience in the classroom) that class size matters in the ability to meet individual needs and help students grow academically as well as social-emotionally. |
| I'd like to see current expenses and reductions aligned with them and the proportion difference. A note to what may be the downside of the reduction. |
| Limit the amount of budget cuts impacting our low SES students, our students with mental health issues, classroom sizes, support staff, and choice schools. |
| Are there savings to be had in allowing employees to work from home: district people, online school employees, etc.? The choice schools has always been a source of inequity in the district, anyway. Do we really need to offer those? Couldn't we focus on making everyone's neighborhood school wonderful and eliminate all the special budgets and transportation that comes with the choice schools?? |
| This is not outlined in the plans, but there seem to be several positions that are middle management type positions that perhaps are not needed....I think this should be looked at |
| Don't build/approve new school buildings when you know a large deficit is coming. |
| Look at heating and cooling set points before not hiring more para's. |
| Ending the contract for School Resource Officers will save money and is an item that has been considered for several years now. I recommend this ahead of reducing/eliminating positions that help students. |
| While I understand that extracurricular activities are an essential part of the education and school experience, I really do hope that boosters and business/corporate partnerships are being considered to fund what could be viewed as an "excess" of funding that gets placed on athletic departments and sports. |
| Address staffing on a fundamental level to sustainably grow with student enrollment and economy-wide inflation and not the higher effective inflation of the education system. |
| Engage parents and teachers of students most likely to be affected for help in ranking cuts. |
| If we are going to continue to hire for positions at Edison maybe their actual work space is not at Edison, but in the buildings to help support staff as well as do their job. We currently are doing it and then some. Maybe they can do their job and then help with the lunchroom or do their job and take an hour of hall duty or cover the security or lunches for staff so we actual get a lunch. We could also combine the office manager and secretary position. The way they are now both are part time positions. |

| <i>What suggestions for improvement do you have?</i> |
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| I know there need to be cuts and those cuts become personal when you work with staff daily. |
| Some district clerical positions could be cut or consolidated - there is no impact to students with that. Teachers are busy and have to do their own paper work and manage their own calendars. Schools could be open to students 4 days a week instead of 5, giving teachers a much needed work/grading/prep day each week but reducing building operating costs and reducing transportation costs. |
| Increase building administration positions. Parents rely on the communication with the principals and assistant principals. Do not just solely go off headcount. Our need for communication and teacher support at the building is much more important than having heavy staffing at Edison. Keep the budget for staffing closer to students. I'm happy to have another capital referendum or even an operating referendum, but make sure staff and administration a priority! |
| Reconsider your definition of minimal impact. Minimal impact is not just the impact to the least number of students, it can and should also be a small impact to the majority of students. Your "minimal" impact to children in special Ed will have a major impact to their education and well being. |
| Brainstorm ways to integrate special education students in the classroom. They are isolated and often find it difficult to make friends. There needs to be more co-activities and the other students need to have an understanding of children with disabilities, instead of hiding it away. To me I consider social support, children being able to learn, support for children with a disability, and health of the students to be a top priority above anything else. If students aren't supported they will not learn. |
| Stop taxing hard working citizens of Rochester to death. Spend our money wisely. Be more transparent. Provide the information we ask for. Stop playing games. |
| Busing change options??? |
| Chuck out all the POSA and TOSA's, y'all don't need those, the kids don't even know who they are and you don't have to cut special area teachers at all. |
| You have done a good job and have had to make some hard decisions. |
| Preserve the funding for school supports in social services, as well as for special education services. |
| Cut coaches, they are not spending much time in the classrooms and that money could be used on student support |
| Reduce outside the classroom services and administration |

| <i>What suggestions for improvement do you have?</i> |
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| Ask for donations from the uber wealthy in Rochester and Mayo! Or even uber wealthy graduates of Rochester schools. More fundraising efforts! Have school February to November! Have kids at home when CoVId and the weather is the worst! More kids could walk/bike to school! Plus teachers could teach outside more! Start a GoFundMe campaign and ask for help! Cutting teachers and resources for students is terrible! Plus, cutting nurses and counselors during a pandemic?!? Terrible idea! |
| Our staffing pyramid is upside down... we have way too many people sitting in desks and offices and not enough staff supporting our students. Lets get that pyramid turned back around.... start with decreasing a few million dollars out of the budget at the Cabinet, School Board, and Director positions. If the schools are working short staffed,,, than every department and leadership area should be doing the same. Stop subletting out van rides to Kids On The GO and use the Hundreds of Thousands of dollars in Vans sitting at our Schools that are NOT being used. Kids On the GO is not dependable and we end up using our own transportation staff as back up anyway. Consolidate some of our misc. properties and then lease out the unused space to help generate some revenue. Stop changing the curriculum every few years, find one and commit to it for 'X' number of years. Reduce garbage waste by working collaboratively with some hog farmers around the area. Stop changing the toilet paper dispensers, soap dispensers and paper towel dispenser every year. Stop laying carpet, then tearing out the carpet the following year and then laying carpet back down again, in the same places. The amount of waste that is happening at the District level is mind blowing,, and cutting staff to compensate for those mistakes is poor management. |
| Wages are way below average in RPS. All positions in outside districts our size are getting paid more money. We are losing good employees and nobody will want to work at RPS because of it. |
| Only hire the people who want to be in their position and want to make a difference in their student's life |
| District wide schools here both pull good kids with involved parents out of their home schools and deplete funding from home schools. If everyone went to the school they were assigned to schools with bad reputations would have better test scores as students came back from other schools |
| You have a ton of money wrapped up in people who work at Edison who could be taking on responsibilities without our buildings to help with this. Budge cuts always seem to go after our most vulnerable population: those who actually work with the kids in our building. It doesn't seem to impact those who sit downtown. Maybe instead of saying those in the buildings can restructure and reallocate jobs, maybe do a MAJOR restructure and/or cuts with the superfluous jobs at Edison. I know the job you do is important, but we are in the business of kids. Period. When you go after the buildings and how they operate, you hurt them. Look elsewhere for cuts. |
| Consolidated smaller schools. Make long-term plans to build environmentally responsible, cost-effective, efficient schools with smart heating/cooling systems, solar energy, smart technology etc. Buildings that have the ability to grow with the student population. |

| <i>What suggestions for improvement do you have?</i> |
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| More detail. And explanation why the recent referendum built more facilities when we knew this was coming, and our current facilities are subpar and not maintained? |
| Do not wait to reduce student resiliency specialists. Do NOT wait to reduce or eliminate equity specialists. Regarding equity specialists, with salaries that combined total a very large sum, how ARE they serving our students? Are they working in schools with small groups? Are they a social worker or educator? Do they all have active teaching licenses? They should be putting 75% of their day into working directly with students, not focusing on educators unless there is a powerful need. Look at other qualified, expensive educators who are not working directly with students in schools. Students who are grade levels behind in Reading and Math not receiving intensive remediation because of staff shortages. These coaches, specialists and instructors need to be utilized with students and not add to the wasteful spending. Do not wait until next year to reduce electronic devices. Personally I have had 2 new desktops, 2 new iPads and a laptop in the past 2 years. Look into the spending of 4 different Reading curriculum in the past 8 years and the impact that has had on the budget. Stop this practice in the future. Do not wait to reduce or eliminate transportation for open schools. Outreach to the diverse and under-represented population to apply for unfilled para positions, especially our wonderful bilingual and multi cultural community. |
| Increasing community engagement by schools (once the pandemic is over) will help bonding bills pass - create programs for students and retirees to interact; bring community speakers to classrooms to discuss their roles, job fairs to allow more professions to demonstrate what they do. |
| School bonding; exploring more governmental aid/grant options; look for redundancies in positions in all areas to streamline. |
| The district should be looking for ways to increase revenue and be lobbying constantly at the state level for things like fully funding special education, etc. |
| Continue evaluating where the least amount of impact will be felt. Teachers and school office staff have already had increased burdens this year reducing these areas next year will likely lead to increased burnout amongst leading to poorer outcomes and schooling experiences for our students. Making too many adjustments may lead to more students getting placed into private schools which would further impact the future budget. Speaking from an elementary standard there already disparities of services offered amongst the different schools in town. You need to ensure some of these are equalized before removing others areas. |
| Keep teacher salaries at a level where money can be given to our kids. Stop with all these equity programs and get back to basics. |

| <i>What suggestions for improvement do you have?</i> |
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| <p>Please look at the special schools you've created - Montessori, Long Fellow, Lincoln K-8, Washington, ALC, Phoenix and CTECH - how well are these attended? Should they be looked at to cut out. 1K I do not believe this should be done if they are substitute teaching for other students and are able to provide needed support to their fellow teachers. 2C If it is almost always full I don't believe this cut should be made. 2D needs input from all teaching staff before it is done. 2L shouldn't be done, but why should para positions require a 2 year degree for the salary paid? This job used to be done by Stay-at-Home Moms who's kids were in higher grades. 3B should not be done. 4A - before it is even considered - please physically review all schools as my children at multiple schools have talked about this class is freezing, this class is hot - to the point of taking coats to some class rooms and having multiple layers to shed some in other classrooms. If you really are looking at reducing the budget you better look at administrative salaries compared to salaries in other towns of our size in this part of the country - not Seattle and cities in California. People complained about how much Mr Munoz made and I believe the new Superintendent makes more than that. The Executive director of Finance - how many people are in that department? I think you had better look at some of the research you are doing and decide if it's really necessary. Some of the topics I've seen come out are ridiculous. Picking on kids because of their color - check again from what I've seen has much more to do with their behavior that the district is having to allow go on instead of going after their parents. If the parents are engaged in the school system the children usually aren't as much of a problem.</p> |
| <p>Seems to me that a deeper review and analysis of where all the funds are going is needed. Spending needs to be tightened and new federal, state and city fund allocations need to be sought. Most importantly, the performance of RPS needs to drastically improve. Our schools are among the bottom 50% in the whole state. This is unexplainable, given the high level of education in Rochester, which is among the top in the whole country.</p> |
| <p>Reduce or eliminate instructional coaching positions.</p> |
| <p>Get rid of the feel good positions and classes that are not essential. French?</p> |
| <p>Cut administration jobs. Focus on keeping teachers and the resources for the students</p> |
| <p>Reduction of administration salaries. Bring back parent volunteers to help the para-professionals. Bring in a new school board. Eliminate school board member salaries.</p> |
| <p>Cut administration jobs. Focus on keeping teachers and the resources for the students</p> |
| <p>Getting rid of things that don't work. Stop hiring outside firms for stupid things. Read the comments on the social medias pages.</p> |
| <p>Cut electives for a few years and focus on core competencies that students have lost due to this pandemic.</p> |
| <p>Eliminate or reduce choice school, instead of eliminate the busing for those schools. Reducing clerical and administrative positions first before other positions that will directly impact students</p> |
| <p>Stop some of the after school activities</p> |

| <i>What suggestions for improvement do you have?</i> |
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| See above |
| Prioritize cuts to central office staff and gen Ed coaches. |
| With new buildings coming online that should be more efficient and with expansion capability, perhaps consider shutting down a school. |
| While it is disruptive to close a building, it would be a large cost savings. Closing a small building makes sense. |
| Put more energy into finding school fundraisers that actually appeal to the community and that will not require us or our kids to be salespeople. For example - promote the AmazonSmile program that will give back to the district a percentage of community amazon purchases. Or similar. Or perhaps propose and appeal to the community for funding - for example - break it down into what could be an individual's share of the cost that needs to come in to make the budget work. Sometimes seeing it broken down into that view might make it seem like a manageable amount that a certain percentage of the community could donate towards. For example - determine the overall shortfall for the undesired proposed reduction options - divide that by the number of families in RPS so families can visualize what their contribution could be that could make it so the schools could remain flexible to maintain a healthy staff ratio and have full support staff - and then offer options for families to donate that include "donate for your family's portion", and options to help cover for families in need who may not be able to afford their portion. I don't know, I'm just generating ideas here. Are there other options to find solutions outside the box, before resorting to reducing staff ratios or support staff? |
| Cut all of the C and I positions, cut all of the in school Instructional Coaching positions, and all of the Principals on Special Assignment. Cut bussing to choice schools and have everyone go to neighborhood schools. Make a partnership with the bus company in town. Move the programs to be in Friedell to other schools and Northrop and then sell Friedell. Get rid of bad principals instead of moving them around. Write more grants to get funding from companies like Apple and IBM. Stop buying new curriculum so often and let teachers choose curriculum. |
| Keep all special Ed supports and instructional coaches- we rely on our coaches in our difficult situations, and to assist with our numerous meetings. |
| we need direct student support positions filled |
| What ways can be creative? Are all funds bad? Is there a way to redistribute? Do buildings all need so many admin? Could they float if extras are needed? Tech does not overly help at this point, would there be a way to reduce some and allow for a more streamlined process instead of send a ticket, no call, no email, no sent a ticket. Is it cheaper to have some remote or is there no real interest? |
| Add sports fees for parents who can afford it and need based waivers for those who can't. There should not be 4 cuts to special education without a single cut to athletics. |

| <i>What suggestions for improvement do you have?</i> |
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| Rather than cut and decrease the amount of support that classroom are receiving, I would suggest cut the positions that are not filled and increase the pay for the positions that are. Then as you lose and replace people you will continue to hire and attract better candidates who can take on the work load that was left. I also noticed that there was a lot of funding in SPED that is being cut. The truth is most of the Instructional Coach position that I have seen in the school setting have done very little for the general teachers. I would suggest taking a bigger look at how the Instructional Coaches are actually supporting buildings and see if they are worth to keep. I think you might have an opportunity to restructure these positions even more. |
| In sped- less layers of administration/coaches/instructional people (honestly there are so many titles, I don't even know them all) and get people back in the classroom. |
| Place a stronger emphasis on the well-being of students and staff. It is imperative that these services remain intact as we weather a mental health crisis/storm for the next several years. |
| Have pay keep up with the cost of living for all. |
| Can we reduce the salaries of board members that they voted to give themselves a significant raise on? Can we reduce the ridiculous spending of the board (such as the tens of thousands of dollars they've spent two years in a row on the superintendent search, the money they spend on survey companies to conduct research on bell study times, etc.? These seem like extra expenses that aren't necessary and are only taking money away from our students. |
| More reduction in software licenses, less reduction in staff, we're understaffed as it is, many of us are burnt out and doing 2 people's workload, cutting staff will just make the one's left holding the bag even more overworked and then they'll quit. |
| Not a single one. Youre expecting your staff to do so much more than their jobs for an absolute pittance. Cut jobs from the top down I see no reason a superintendent or anyone not working in a school should get paid more than a principal at most. If innovation is what we want to display to people, start from the top down. |
| Cut down on special transportation for Ill mannered students. Why should the district have to pay because a child can't behave on a regular bus? Make the parents pay. |
| Keep looking at the admin level for cuts. With all this distant teaching and teaching during covid, teachers have had to figure out what is most important and it has been great to not have the higher ups telling us what to do. let us just do our jobs! |
| See "weaknesses" above. |
| Cut district level staff. Keep teachers and the people who actually work in schools. Equity people and counselors etc. actually do stuff. |

| <i>What suggestions for improvement do you have?</i> |
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| <p>1. Special Ed shouldn't be affected. Why aren't there similar cuts to the Gifted and Talented budget? It's unfair to target Sp Ed students who need more help. That's why they are in Sp Ed is that by nature they need more help. The staff that work with them have a difficult job and cutting staff is not going to help anyone. 2. How can you acquire more funds? Have you looked into getting more funds from the state? All we hear about is this big surplus. Also, are there local funders? What about RPS Alumni, could they be approached to give? 3. Sports teams could be cut or downsized. That way at least the school day wouldn't be impacted. 4. What about a hiring freeze, and working with the employees that we have versus cutting current staff? Of if staff must be cut, continuing on with the freeze. 5. Study the reasons why students are leaving RPS. If more students are going online, or to other area schools, find out why and make changes so those students come back/stay at RPS.</p> |
| <p>Understaffing is not an option. Large class sizes should not be an option ever.</p> |
| <p>If there's a way to reduce the amount of training that staff need to go to (unless the training provided does not cost the district money), I think that would be helpful. Staff can't always utilize what they've learned in training/educational programs anyway if they don't have enough time to prep properly due to large class sizes/having to give up their prep time. Every student added to a class or caseload in Gen Ed and SPED, adds extra time filling out progress reports, typing, scheduling, and attending annual IEP meetings, completing report cards/grading, and other tasks that take away from real 'prep' time.</p> |
| <p>Fire the entire board</p> |
| <p>Due to the higher pay rate of district level administration and support and the lack of direct impact they have on student achievement and well-being, I believe that being the first round of cuts would make sense. Any admin, teacher or person directly working with students on a day to day basis have no business being near a budget cut line.</p> |
| <p>Thank you for all of your work on this. These decisions are not easy. Please keep asking for staff and family input.</p> |
| <p>Reduce district staff, admin staff and leave the staff that has direct student contact and impact</p> |
| <p>Create a an Organization chart of all positions. Note job descriptions but actual job expectations/impacts. Color code based on % of direct impact on student learning and success. Then look at needs and wants. We have departments/areas that started within the last 10 years as .50 positions that have morphed into multiple FTE departments with pay on the higher end of the scale. Really review and make decisions based on Impact to students learning not necessarily experiences which are nice but not a necessity in building knowledge, character, integrity and life skills in our students.</p> |
| <p>I believe that cuts that directly impact student contact personel (principals and teachers) should be a very last resort. Are there other administrative cuts that could be made rather than cutting building administrators? Principals impact the culture in buildings. If cutting principals and instructional coaches - teachers will have less support. If increasing class sizes at the same time, students will be greatly impacted.</p> |

| <i>What suggestions for improvement do you have?</i> |
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| It would be nice to see a couple of bullet points of the effect the options would have on students and staff, or others. Would also like more information, when available, on the options that need more exploration. |
| Look more at upper administrative positions (not building level) and coaching positions. Our district has always seemed heavy on administration. There have been cuts to positions that directly serve students. How is that helping our kids? |
| Reduce executive cabinet positions. Eliminate Equity Director and Equity coaches. We have lost many students to surrounding towns and private schools/homeschool due to not having consistent in-person instruction, mask mandates, and quarantine guidelines. We have also lost many students due to behavior issues in the schools. If students had consequences for negative behavior, negative behavior would reduce. It is the perception in the community that their students are not safe at school due to the extreme behavior of a few students. Moral is low among students, parents, and staff. Listen to the staff and community. Do not ignore communication sent to the school board or central office, even if you do not agree with their ideology. When the district sends out surveys for community or staff input, but then ignores the input and does something else, it alienates those who are vital to our success as a district. Promote the RPS Online School. Many online schools have advertising and other promotional activities. Partner with other districts to increase enrollment. Our program is unique because of live instruction and could pull in a lot of additional revenue. |
| Please eliminate instructional coaching positions. |
| Be less bureaucratic and focus the mission on learning achievement results. |
| If you truly want to impact students in the least ways possible, then cut deeper into departments like HR, Insurance, Accounting, Trucking & Delivery, etc. |
| Focus on education. Activities outside the classroom should never be considered equal when budget cuts are being made. |
| Remove upper lever Coordinator of Equity. Newly hired equity specialist are not even given a job description. They can pretty much do whatever they want. I like the equity specialist in the building, but not sure the purpose of the Coordinator and that cost. |
| Cut all of the instructional coaches. Send them back into the classrooms. |
| Not to consolidate Pinewood. Yes it is a small elementary but it is a wonderful school and the reason we leave in the neighborhood we do. |

| <i>What suggestions for improvement do you have?</i> |
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| Although we are looking at the immediate future for budget cuts, look at the long-term picture. What is going to have the biggest impact in the future as well as now? In a time of a pandemic is cutting Social workers a great idea? Or will they be cut to only realize that more students need mental health support than before and we are right back to where we were because we cut the wrong thing. Students need to be the main priority. What do they need? Do they need fewer resources? Limited class choices, limited mental health support, limited extracurricular activities? How can we support students while tightening the budget? Please continue to be transparent in this process. Please use data to make cuts vs emotions. |
| Lobby to raise taxes and push to pay for the education our kids deserve instead of looking at creative ways to cut things. You will not have an education system if you continue the status quo. |
| Keep the teachers |
| I'm not sure. I know this can't be easy, and I empathize with those who have to make these decisions. I strongly disagree with cutting sped services and teachers. |
| Reassess each reduction that has a direct impact on teaching and learning (paras, instructional coaching, administration). Reassess some of the central office/support office positions that have been added in the past 12 months as opposed to reducing positions that have been supporting teaching and learning for years! |
| Levies passed year over year for tax increases and yet there is always a budget shortfall. This needs addressing as rochester area residents pay some of the highest taxes per household in Minnesota. |
| Look at more areas to cut/reduce that do not directly have an affect on the classroom/teachers. They are already spread thin. I would challenge you to look at what school board members, administrators, anyone in non-student contact roles, etc. make on average versus your educators (many of whom work more than one job) and think about how you could be more equitable. |

| <i>What suggestions for improvement do you have?</i> |
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| Define explicitly why you ended up with a massive deficit. Focus course correction on that or you will never emerge from your current situation. Then focus on high quality core academic offerings. Electives are nice but high quality core more important. Stop requiring music. One could easily make a case for required coding over music. Better yet reduce number of classes and increase quality of core. Maintain athletics but focus on key activities in sport that impart life lessons. Could easily cut back on number of games/matches/races requiring busing each season while maintaining the benefits. Rethink uniform costs. If buy your shorts of choice and a team t-shirt does the trick, get over the insanity of entire kits of tacky polyester matching garb. Quality team unity is not in the clothing. Cut the heating and cooling costs now! 2 degrees doesn't matter in livability - seeing that as a future idea is painful. If offerings now available in all neighborhood schools, no busing outside that is needed. The open enrollment option needs to be family supported for transportation (key word option). If you aren't ridiculously over-employed/funded for para/special needs, you seem to be taking a heavy aim there for cuts right now. Underfunding retirement is a short-sited option unless, once you assess the cause of your situation, the retirement plan is too "rich" to be sustainable in modern times. It simply appears you are saving pennies here and there but not addressing the core problem. |
| close a middle school |
| Cost breakdown and number of impacted students. Suggest working with RCTC to convert high school classes to remote learning for students (unless it's a lab class). Would save on transportation costs. |
| Be honest and upfront don't say they won't effect students when many of the cuts truly do. |
| Get more community cooperation and response through shared facilities like pools and sports areas that can be shared, hire more paras not less- they cost less and work very hard they make a huge difference, do not turn down help from any one willing to help teach reading or be a para, do not cut back on highschool or junior high teachers because the elementary schools are doing the best but junior high and high school teachers need more help from additional teachers and paras and they will continue to grow as well as the problems in the world so we need to bolster our future teams, use better software or IT to help save clerical and admin \$. |
| - Do not cut Special Ed services - use socioeconomic factors to determine class size (school w/ xx% free lunch has smaller teacher/student ratio) -HS staffing should change ASAP. Paying teachers for students leaving campus for PSEOs is a waste of money. - Raise or institute a minimum number of students for an elective or AP class to happen. Public schools shouldn't cater to speciality interests, the high school elective choices are insane. - You're going to have to increase class size. People are your biggest expense, I think the suggested numbers are too low. |
| Pay school workers better in order to attract quality talent in the future. |

| <i>What suggestions for improvement do you have?</i> |
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| Seriously consider whether all students actually "need" full time direct electronics access in school. While electronics provide new avenues for presenting certain material, they are not a necessity by any means. Further, it is broadly understood in the tech community that current younger generations are too reliant on electronics and often fail to understand how they actual work, relegating them to being "consumers" rather than "producers" in a digital world. |
| Consider addressing the largest expenditures and find opportunities to reduce obligations in those few areas like debt, transportation, and retirement benefits. |
| Keeping the important staff on board as reading teachers and paras |
| Sadly, I don't have any. I already wish we had more music and art emphasis in the school, and I understand there isn't money for that either. :(raise taxes? tax those more who currently have students in school? |
| More community volunteers in education, especially retired population and diversity! Get rid of some of extra costs like equity specials and things long those lines and allow the community and its diversified population to be at the schools volunteering. |
| Instead of looking at how to cut the budget, can we implore this city to appropriately invest in our children? This is an embarrassment to our city that we are considering reducing teachers, counselors, teachers, cleaning services, science and technology, special services and reading programs - especially when we are still in a pandemic. My first thought when reading this was: do we switch to private or do we move? I can't be the only one thinking this. |
| Better teachers, better use of paras, less preferential hiring , need to fire people not doing their jobs, more outreach to bring parents into the classroom, a school board and financial planning committee with more foresite. |
| What is listed above. Ask for money from Mayo and the state (they've got a surplus!) |
| The current plan for the next school year is okay. I hope more money comes from our significant state surplus. The list for possible cuts in the 2023-24 school year and beyond is almost imaginable. Most of those suggestions have a huge impact on students, families and teachers. Please do not eliminate an elementary school and pack kids in together. Please do not eliminate essential services like nursing and social work and special education. The only things I would support on that plan would be 1) changing set points for heating/cooling 2) reducing/eliminating transportation to choice schools 3) reducing tech- students can and should learn without iPads! Sell the iPads to make more money. Anything we can do to not have to take on these deep cuts to our children's futures. |
| Take a look at how many sped paraprofessionals we have that actually service students their entire day without huge gaps, cutting down on more administrative jobs |
| Don't remove unfilled positions that are needed for students success and a growing school population. |

| <i>What suggestions for improvement do you have?</i> |
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| Look at positions that are not directly working with students daily. There are many behavior positions and instructional coaching positions that do not directly work with students or impact students. Why do we have special education instructional coaches without a special education license who have no special education experience or education? |
| I would be curious to learn if there were other suggestions for reductions, if any, that were considered but ultimately not included in the recommendations. |
| Cut administration, across the board. Cut teacher salaries, across the board. Put students first for once. I voted for the referendum and got duped twice: Once during covid when school was deemed non-essential and again when you take that money to fund new schools and then claim you have no money to fund your new facilities. Start with the interim superintendent, the man is worthless. When administration feels the pain that special needs kids and parents have had the last two years, you might be getting close to making the right choices. |
| I think district-wide schools need to be eliminated. They are meeting the needs of a very small set of kids, or they at least need to provide their own transportation. Also, asking parents to volunteer to provide transportation to cut down on transportation cost. |
| Ask/seek money from Mayo. Cut sports.? |
| How about having some of the older kids (high schoolers) do volunteer work to help out. For example, help with reading to the younger kids, help with wiping tables in the lunch room, etc. |
| Take the school boards salary and cut it in half. They don't care about the rest of the staff obviously if they are asking the rest of us to make sacrifices and they are not willing to contribute. |
| No suggestions at this time. I do understand that RPS is doing what is best but it is just very concerning at the same time. |
| Cut staff. Consolidate schools. Stop building new schools. Keep the teachers union out of decision making. |
| I heard that our school was replacing all their windows. Why are we replacing windows when we have a severe budget shortfall? Seems like something that could wait. Especially windows that don't open. Seems like a terrible fire and school shooter risk. All facility improvements should be frozen unless they pose a threat. |
| I am curious about cost savings during Covid-19--when many worked from home. Is there a breakdown of utilities savings available to consider? Can we think creatively about saving costs when it comes to allowing those who do not directly work with students on a daily basis to work remotely in order to save on energy costs? I also wonder about cost savings with asynchronous Wednesdays for high school students? If the high school buildings were not entirely in use one day each week, would there be a worthy cost savings to consider? Students have expressed appreciation for asynchronous days for their own mental health and for the opportunity to meet with teachers 1:1 in a virtual setting. Are we considering using some of the lessons we learned in the past two years to think creatively about cost savings? |

| <i>What suggestions for improvement do you have?</i> |
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| continue to look at ways to cut costs from administration, clerical, supplies, inventory. cut the extra inscied out, incubator programs...programs that have very low impact on the number of students. Focus on the areas that impact numbers of students and the teachers at the teacher level. |
| Get new administrators and decision makers, new school board and get some people that know what they're doing in there. |
| Please immediately ax the equity specialists. This was a ridiculous amount of money to waste. |
| The school board must move on a referendum to address this situation now. |
| Tighten the formula in administration and administrative costs. Why did the school board give themselves a raise knowing this was coming?? Trim the fat around yourselves and do more for our teachers!!! Gah! Shame on you all!!!! |
| The mayor of Rochester needs to commit to high quality education for all attending Rochester public schools. Teachers payroll and benefits should be competitive and match their talent and skills. Taxpayer money needs to be re-routed from waste expenses to public school system. This budget deficit is alarming that RPS has the potential to degrade in quality. Whereas, many of us parents have the option for private school system it is just a terrible way to build society. |
| If you keep kids IN school maybe you won't lose so many kids to the private schools and surrounding districts. Keeping the kids in our district should increase our funding. Weird. Inconceivable. |
| Get more input on the longer range options so they can be considered systematically and well before cuts need to be made. e.g. if electives might be cut at the high school let's start talking about that now and let's stop adding electives! |
| Can you raise money for this year from among parents? 1 cent tax? |
| I trust that those reviewing this have greater understanding of the actual usage of resources than I do from a parental perspective so not sure that my thoughts are valid as I do not have enough information to go from other than gut feel. |
| Isn't the option to do distance teaching contributing to reduced costs? Should you do a referendum to see if the budget can be increased a bit? I rate the schools based on the QUALITY and PREPAREDNESS that is COMPETITIVE (nationally and internationally) that it provides to my kids. Are these changes going to impact any of these? |

| <i>What suggestions for improvement do you have?</i> |
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| 1. Cut the contract with Cenergistics, and let the Utility department handle the HVAC and building settings. 2. get rid of assistant positions that are not used properly or positions that have 2+ assistants under them. 3. instead of just throwing old equipment away, try selling it first. same goes with food, we throw so much food away, even before expiration. why not donate it and actually get the city and its people to back the district instead of wasting money and then having to raise costs elsewhere to help fund what seems to be a failing work due to so much debt. 4. pay your employees first and the school board members/administrative departments last. so pretty much anyone that has an office in either Edison or FSC building should have there raises frozen for 2-4 years. they do it to the rest of use every contract.. you wont save money by pinching pennies, you want to save money, you have to start where it all goes. It is time to get some of the younger generations into the offices. |
| Propose a tax increase |
| Get community support and raise taxes!!! |
| Is the new equity position really necessary and does it have any impact on our children getting a better education or is it just to make a statement. That can be done without spending so much money. |
| - if we did a better job with tiered systems of support, could we reduce the number of SPED staff? - really analyze how different people's time is spent. Is the job they are being paid for really an FTE always? - Schools cannot do it all. Invest in/fund community schools and really have strategic plans for leveraging community resources. - can other district buildings be closed and those staff be onsite in school buildings that have increased capacity now? |
| Consolidate athletic programs across High schools. Make programs both more competitive on a sectional/statewide level & save on costs. Participation can be maintained through inter-mural & club programs which are far less costly. |
| If you are truly about helping most kids, then you need to reduce interscholastic athletics. Run intramurals, which right now you have none of, while the full athletics budget is a monster and only serves a small number of kids. |
| I'm wondering if we could try to include more volunteers in our schools? |
| To keep the the students at right fit instead of moving them to a school where they are not gonna do good. |
| I think these options are realistic, but I do get concerned with possibly reducing SPED positions, paras, and instructional coaches. I also worry about keeping my job since the formula for hiring teachers might change. |
| Eliminate media specialists since they are so spread out and meaningless to contact with students. |

| <i>What suggestions for improvement do you have?</i> |
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| The main suggestion I have is to eliminate any position in curriculum and instruction that doesn't work with our students. Instructional coaches have not made any improvements to students education based on the fact that these positions are filled by staff that do not want to teach in a classroom. |
| If it is not there, I do feel all areas should be impacted and therefore a reduction/reorganization to cabinet should also be included. 4J - We have hired a tremendous amount of these staff most recently. While incredibly harsh, we did without them just like we did without instructional coaches, additional staff in C&I, cabinet, etc. Reduction/reorganization of these staff should also be considered for 2022-23. 4K - While this does reduce opportunities for students, since they are electives, this does seem like an option to consider for 2022-23, especially if we are saying there is no one to watch students on the playground. 4L - While we have done a lot over the years to acquire and try to get to 1:1 devices, I don't think we are using them to the level that supports the cost. This should also be considered before we look at a loss to critical staffing. RPS staff have rallied over and over during this pandemic. We are exhausted and bewildered. I get it. We have to make cuts. I just feel the least impact to staff would be the best for students and staff. |
| Case facilitators- work load/ FTE analysis, transportation costs- vehicle use, bussing routes, similar case loads across buildings for mental health- social work/counselors/MHP/ equity specialists- look at necessary admin positions in smaller buildings? |
| I am wondering if the district might offer incentives for early retirement? Surely new hires are much cheaper to staff than veteran staff members. |
| I wish you would have explained what "tightening" in hires meant. In what way? The vagueness of those statements is concerning and should have been more thoroughly explained. |
| Perhaps selling Friedell if the space won't be fully utilized, since Dakota Middle School will be open next year. |
| We still have far too many administrative positions that should be reduced. Principals on Special Assignment, Associate Principals, Directors of _____. These positions need to be consolidated and removed. |
| We could get rid of instructional coaches. They get paid a lot and don't do a lot. There could be a teacher in each building that gets a small stipend to send resources to staff and support. |
| Be better |
| Are there other open positions that could be looked at Could we look at heating/cooling set points or other items now that would not eliminate people |
| I like the plan. Just curious about the closing of an elementary when a new one was just finished. |
| I feel it is important that staff is able to even take care of themselves financially is so important to be able to take care of the kids. If anything asking for more support from your higher ups is crucial |

| <i>What suggestions for improvement do you have?</i> |
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| Use the COVID relief fund to offset some of the cost and request the city divert some funds from Mayo projects for the schools that will educate the children of the workers Mayo pulls in. Don't make cuts that will negatively affect the students and stop creating unnecessary and expensive cabinet positions. |
| Eliminate all sports. |
| Cut programming costs- teacher/administrative programs such as curriculum costs (we can create better and based on standards and our students) (CLASS Tool) |

| <i>What questions do you have?</i> |
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| I can not do this survey as the district over staff in management areas. You know how to waste money when it comes to build new buildings. |
| If you get money from the state budget surplus, will you use it to pay your teachers and paras better and give them the increase they deserve? |
| Please outline what each of the principals on special assignment do and why they are needed. |
| Why don't you lobby hard to get some of the state surplus money? How about pushing Carla Nelson to fully fund IDEA and public education? |
| How did we end up with such a deficit? |
| Why are you looking to cut funding from programs that the most vulnerable children need? Why do you not look at cutting large overhead expenses? |
| Could closing a building happen for next year? |
| Why did you not start looking at making cuts sooner so they didn't need to be so drastic. I work in finance and we are required to complete a 10 year forecast annually to head off issues like this. |
| How are many of these NOT impacting students and why do we need to continue to need to keep such a large rainy day fund or large COVID fund balance? |
| Would all of this be necessary if the referendum passes? Can you show what could happen budget wise if referendum passes? |
| The Rochester School board decided not to do in person school in the 2020-2021 school year. This led to a mass exodus of students from the district to other districts or home schooling. We are now seeing the financial effects of this decision, which was not supported by science, but on perception and fear. Teachers are now be told they will not get a raise to match inflation because of this, and the board is talking about reducing staff. The board is 100% responsible for the financial problems we have due to their poor decision making. How are they now going to provide a solution to make make up for the mess we are now in? |

| <i>What questions do you have?</i> |
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| Please do what is right for the kids. Education is about the kids and their learning. Not a big corporate business that needs administrators coming out of everywhere. Invest in people who work with kids. Cut from people who don't. Give teachers stipends to fill holes missing from those cut. It would be a lot cheaper. |
| When will the results of the survey be public? Transparency with this type of data has been an issue in the past. Some staff members say---- " They don't listen to us anyway..... ". It is hard to argue. |
| Why is tightening the formula at elementary and secondary happening first before middle school? What school is being looked at to be closed? Why do we need to waste money on a superintendent search when we have a interim who is doing a great job? Survey the public to see if they feel a search is needed. |
| Thank you for the surveys. Appreciate all that you do! |
| It would appear that your plan reduces the most services and staff for the students who have the most needs- How can this be equitable? |
| Specific areas look at - staffing at building level for instructional coaches/success coaches, administration support, - transportation:. Work an arrangement with the city to use Rochester bus service to transport students instead of a contract service. - school board make good decisions on spending. With the shortfall why spend thousands to hire a superintendent search company when the interim is doing a great job. RPS school board does not have an impressive record of hiring superintendents. Maybe an intergalactic search is not necessary. -a much tighter examination of new cost programs including long term costs |
| None. |
| I'd like to know where the money was spent that caused us to go that far into debt. |
| Why are you so short. I saw the video and it didn't explain. You have so many positions not filled so that should be saving your budget. Something is fishy and someone should be investigating. |
| -If you saw this projections coming since 2012, why is there such a large problem so suddenly? Were budgets being made (and followed) in previous years? |
| As construction is underway for several new district buildings, has anything been considered for passive energy like solar panels? It may cost more up front but could help the district down the line. |
| Have you benchmarked with districts who have been more successful in balancing their budgets than RPS? What have they done differently? |
| Isn't Walz going to give the schools more money from the state budget surplus. |
| How has the district been okay with not having a strategic plan until now? Thanks to Kent for turning this district around before running us deeper! |

| <i>What questions do you have?</i> |
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| What the hell does it matter what gender, race, sexual orientation I am or have? Stop asking such questions it makes you look like a overtly woke organization. These questions shouldn't matter on a survey about budget cuts! |
| Are there any sports programs that we can eliminate? |
| What is the rational for increasing the number of Management positions and leaving the custodial staff in content need of help ? Why are there only two open positions posted when many more openings exist ? Who does the District think is going to clean the existing buildings along with the new buildings ? |
| What are the effects of cutting staffing in the special education world? |
| The council needs to stop burdening property owners with additional taxation. it's becoming unaffordable to live in Rochester between the additional property taxes for DMC and schools. There needs to be another method of funding. Also I would question why physical structures are even necessary with online schools. Let's save the expense. |
| What is RPS doing to fix the problem of violence in middle schools. |
| What else will Friedell be used for except the Boys and Girls Club for Middle School Right Fit and gymnastics? |
| How can a change from 10 teachers to 15 make a .5 million difference? Teachers don't make \$100,000! How can you explain how the changes to the retirement funds would not affect employee benefits? Do you recognize the current special education vacancies are causing great stress to the system. Not attempting to fill those positions will only cause more staff to leave and more students to struggle to have their needs met. (There will be more behavior problems and wider academic gaps). |
| Did the board consider the impact cuts to special education will have regarding discipline disparities? Special education already has incredible disparities in this area. Not surprising when the staff that should be supporting many of these students are not hired. Now the board is going to cut all off all hope of finding people to support this group of students because these positions aren't going to even exist anymore. |
| Reduce/Combine Cabinet positions, Do we actually need the amount of Board Members? Close open enrollment so external transportation companies are hired. |
| What happens if legislation comes through with more funding? |
| How are final decisions on budget reduction made? |
| Keep the folks employed who work most directly with the students! Is RPS Online less expensive to operate and what affect does it have on the budget? |
| When will these decisions on cuts be finalized for the upcoming school year? |

| <i>What questions do you have?</i> |
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| Why did RPS hire so many new staff with only an 8% increase in students? Why are there so many new administrative positions in the past few years with little increase to special education positions? How is special education going to handle the increase of 2 new schools being open without having any increase in special education positions? What are you going to do when special education staff are so burned out, feel unappreciated and quit their jobs because it has all become too much? |
| Change to elementary school general education paraprofessional formula to 0.0059 times number of students. Why? Paraprofessionals are one of the lowest paid positions and they have one of the biggest impacts. If anything, we need more paraprofessionals. |
| As teachers we are facing a very difficult job with student behaviors that are dangerous and serious. Students are significantly behind due to the teaching models during COVID. How does cutting reading teachers, paras and teachers help students succeed? |
| Why was this not looked at before the new schools and all the staff were hired? It seems like things could have been addressed during the past 2 years to help ease this deficit. |
| Can district level staff with teaching licenses help in buildings with staff shortages? Can they sub as teachers? This could help save small amounts, but every little bit can add up. |
| How to reduce while still opening new schools? |
| Why do we have so many staff on "Special Assignment" when the teachers are stretched too far as it is right now? |
| Where is the 30% increase in staff going? Because our school has made a lot of staffing cuts in past years and we aren't seeing any increase in staffing, so I would really like to know where the increase is? |
| How can administration give themselves a bigger raise than you give the staff? |
| Is it possible to look at adjusting salaries of those outside of the teacher contract while still being able to remain competitive in the hiring market? |
| How did we get this bad? |
| MN created a law requiring K-2 students with reading difficulties to be screened for dyslexia; reading teachers will play a vital role in that process moving forward. In the past, elementary reading teachers were cut, and when scores declined, they were reinstated. Will the district keep the elementary reading teacher staff in place in the years to come and avoid repeating history? |
| Can the state provide funds based on the state's surplus? |
| How many of the cuts proposed need to happen in order to be "even"? If all the proposed cuts are made, is there still a deficit and what would that be? |
| Why special education? |

| <i>What questions do you have?</i> |
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| I think that student academics should be front and center. Why is our per pupil ratio less than other districts in the state? We have the largest state budget passed but we are cutting so much. |
| I hope the district wide school will NEVER close and that you take the option of reducing/eliminating bussing for those schools OFF the table. My children go to a choice school and if they close or take away bussing, then we are more than likely moving out of Rochester to a smaller town. I believe a lot of families would do that as well because they do not want their children to go to a school with SO many students. That is one amazing part of choice schools. A small town feel in a big city. |
| What does "tighten the formula" for staffing for elementary and high school teachers mean? And why is that an option that's on the table now but is something that needs to be discussed for middle school teachers. That doesn't make sense. How can you even consider cutting mental health support for students when mental health is a HUGE issue for our youth right now? Our counselors already have too many students. Cutting any of those positions will only hurt kids. Why are race and gender required in this survey? |
| Why are we spending money hiring an expensive "search for a superintendent" firm when we are in the middle of a budget crisis. We have a great person right here - Kent Pekel - offer him the job! |
| Why did we put money into building new schools when we knew that we were going to have a deficit. |
| Is this due to negotiations with staff or is this MN not fullfilling the \$\$ owed to the district? |
| Why are we paying a firm to a superintendent search? |
| Why wouldn't you look at changing the heating and cooling temps before cutting positions? Why wouldn't you look at reducing salaries or the number of people who work in Edison who never step foot in a classroom? |
| We have a state budget surplus of 7.7 billion. Will that surplus impact RPS? Is there anything families can do to make a coordinated appeal for increased funding for our public schools here in Rochester? |
| None. |
| Why are we building and spending money on new schools when we don't have enough students. I feel someone dropped the ball in a big way and our students should not be paying the price.. fire people who made these very bad decisions. |
| Has the current population growth matched what was expected when the new schools were approved? My understanding from looking at base enrollment is that we aren't seeing the projected increase and the problem we are currently facing is going to get worse. |
| Will free breakfast and lunch still be provided? This is a great program and I think it should be kept. Is the school resource officer program part of the RPS budget and was it considered in any of the budget reduction proposals? |

| <i>What questions do you have?</i> |
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| Again, it looks like a lot of areas were considered, but why were cabinet positions not considered and brought forward? |
| If your child struggles in reading and the school doesn't have any support services to provide other than the classroom teacher and SPED, would you be satisfied with the district???? |
| As normal everyday people, we are expecting to balance our checkbook otherwise we face the penalty that comes with spending more than we have. How is it that you have known you would be in a deficit for years yet you have made no change aside for making your numbers look good by taking the Covid money from the federal government. The responsibility for the financial department should be to make sure we are in the green without parting our students and staff on the firing line. But once again leadership can't see beyond their own pockets and what will only benefit them. |
| I wonder how some of the items are on the list and it is being said that they are far away from the classroom. I wonder if there is a way to get the complete impact statements to the decision makers so they know the impact of the decisions. I truly believe that these decisions are agonizing to make and I thank you for your time and thought moving forward. We need to get this as right as possible. |
| What areas of the budget are most out of line? What areas of the budget are on target? What areas of the budget are over-budgeted consistently? |
| It feels like there was over-spending. We just approved a bonding bill and now there is a shortage. The optics would say there is some fault of the board for this shortage with mismanagement of funds. |
| Why did we build a swimming pool at Century? It sits empty over 90% of the time and requires a lot of maintenance cleaning, chemicals, manpower. Kids are not interested in swimming. How much did this cost. How much was the projects for the new tennis courts at the high schools? They worked on them all year and still not done. Could have made repairs instead of all new. These are only two of the wistful spending projects I know about, what else is there? |
| What more can we do to increase the funding we are receiving (from the state, locally, etc.) so that we are not put in the position of reducing our budget when we are opening new school buildings and when we are seeing increased student needs? Where or to whom specifically can we advocate for increased funding? Why, specifically & historically, does Rochester have a much lower per pupil funding amount than similar school districts in the state? How can we communicate to our community what exactly our students are missing out on because of that lower funding ratio? How can we keep this advocacy going during "off" years for referenda so that we can avoid facing large budget reductions in the future? |
| When will the district know how much of the states surplus budget they will get, and if they get enough to cover the budget and/or more will they correct cuts or pocket the money, or use the funds to work to better fund staff? |

| <i>What questions do you have?</i> |
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| 1. Meals. Those take home meals are awful. I love that we keep them free for the students. We can't partner with local companies for better options? 2. Mental health? 3. Basic life skills? These kids are behind. Not all of them receive guidance at home. I want all of our kids to succeed. |
| Why was the community response time so short on this? Seems a little sneaky to give only 3 days to give feedback on such a large decision... very little transparency is very disappointing |
| Are there fundraising opportunities that could offset some of these dollars? |
| Are there any concerns on how these cuts may affect current staff retention and job satisfaction? Are there any safety or other concerns of schools learning to operate with reduced clerical/administrative/etc staff? |
| Why are kids leaving? Why won't many teachers put their own kids in the schools here? These are issues the board needs to look at. |
| Why are we \$23 million in debt? There is no excuse. If we have know this is coming, why weren't there measures in place already? Why is there such a discrepancy between increase in enrollment and increase in spending? New buildings were mentioned. We should not be building new structures if we can't afford them. Suggestion to cut custodial staff is crazy. With Covid measures they are already overworked. You are asking students and staff to spend their days in cold dirty buildings, not welcoming. Cut from the top. Cut all administration/coaches/cabinet that are not absolutely essential. This situation seems like mismanagement. |
| When are you woke libtards gonna wake up??? |
| Why not maintain the same budget when there is equal to greater needs? Also inflation is real so that budget cut will be felt even harder. |
| Why such a short time frame in looking at giving feedback? Have more staff input. Our maintainance crew is vital! Cuts to that is just plain crazy and uncaring. Shame on RPS for even suggesting the cuts of staff. |
| What kind of environment will it create of the district fires a lot of staff, and then increases workload of existing staff without giving a substantial raise to the staff? Rochester Public Schools will have a retention issue with its staff, and students will suffer because they can not get adequate help and services. The proposed closing of a school greatly concerns me, and I hope more details are released soon. |
| Why are you asking and marketing open positions so people quit their jobs to come to RPS to have their position or hours cut next year? This is an erosion of trust. |
| With this being projected for several years, why hasn't there been some talk of cuts before this? |

| <i>What questions do you have?</i> |
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| What are you doing at the state level? Are you in communication with our representatives about the financial bind we're in, again? Can they estimate/guesstimate for you how much of that 7.7 billion dollar surplus is headed this way? Considering how much the taxpayers hand over to all things DMC, it's pretty disgusting that the school district has to scratch and scrape for every single penny. Another question: Why does RPS insist on 24 credits to graduate? Looking at the actual requirements, tell me why RPS still insists that kids take Speech? That's not required to graduate. Please tell me you knew that...My nephew almost didn't graduate because of that course! |
| How can we keep students in the least restrictive environment if we don't have paras to help them in that environment. How can we run an intense special education classroom and meet federal guidelines if para positions are cut? |
| Why is education not priority number one? It's the future of my kids. |
| I'd like transparency with Freidel and with some of the smaller choice schools. If there is a deficit with some of these programs, it would be helpful to know about it. |
| Have we pursued all options to bring in additional funds!! |
| Do you really think tax payers are going to fund another referendum to give you more money when you aren't really serious about cutting costs? Think again! |
| Are we evaluating the decisions with a goal/measurement/outcomes approach? Are we meeting the needs of all our students equitably? What is the distribution of students attending choice schools - are we funding transportation of a model that caters to a socioeconomic subset that doesn't align with our student population? Adjusting temperature may be low hanging fruit for a small fix - and every bit helps, but are we addressing root issues? |
| What other cuts were looked at beyond staffing? What is the plan for after these cuts are made when the staffing the schools in the purposed way is not sustainable and the district is not able to retain staff due to the continued burn out? |
| If we are facing this budget shortage, why doesn't the school board offer to reduce their salaries? They wanted to the teachers to take a ZERO percent increase in pay. How demoralizing is that for teachers! Why are the teachers being asked to give and give and give? |
| Why only 3 days for public feedback? I work with teenagers in the County and I pay attention to the school district and was shocked that I only had a couple of days to provide feedback. |
| Where are the funds for Covid Relief being used? This is very unclear and feels like it is not transparent to staff. This is money that has been provided but we do not know where it has been used. |

| <i>What questions do you have?</i> |
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| For the potential reduction in the follow year, there are many concerns. Right now, we know there are students low in academic need and mental health needs (especially because of the pandemic and it won't go away). What happens if you cut these positions? There can be seen an increase in behavioral needs (we have seen this before/and currently at some of our schools). For example, it is suggested that school counselors and social workers have a ratio of 1:250. Right now, there are buildings that have way over that amount for a ratio and are struggling as 1.0. If you cut either, who is going to take over these struggling case loads (most general ed students would be left behind as social workers will have to handle their sped caseload priorities and administration are not trained in mental health needs)? |
| How can we avoid this problem going forward. What structures or solutions do we need to get in place so we can limit cuts like this in the future? |
| Not applicable. |
| How does the online school impact the use of teaching resources? Are the online staff teaching as many classes and do they have as many supervision roles as in building teachers? Is there a way to cut admin positions without directly impacting the quality of instruction beyond what was suggested in the presentation. |
| Why would we get rid of coaches, or force them to be stretched thin between buildings? |
| Why haven't you removed Dr. Pekel's "Interim" title? By now, he knows us, has the overwhelming confidence of many in various community groups, is very much liked by the staff (according to my neighbors), and I'm struck with how committed he is to making you better! Why are you spending money on a search firm? Why haven't you moved forward with this key leadership position? |
| How do you expect Special Education staff to be stretched even more thin than they already are just because no one has taken the position this year. Making it impossible to focus on paperwork and teaching when Special education teachers will now need to be supports in the classroom if paras will be taken away? |
| Once again, athletics are safe from cuts. Typical. |
| Why we have such a huge deficit? Why are the board members increasing their stipend when we are having this problem? Why in these situations the solutions are always to cut or reduce positions that COUNT, like in this case, those who work directly with the children. Instead of looking at higher level positions? |
| Is there a quantified rating scale available out there in the education administration ecosystem that is designed to measure the educational ROI (better student outcomes) per budget item? If there were, then one way of framing the conversation would be to rank each budget item by its educational ROI number, and then discuss cutting the lowest items until the budget is neutral. (I understand it isn't that simple in practice, but having a list of budget items organized in that ROI fashion might help to increase the chances that the budget items that do remain have the largest possible impact on student outcomes). |

| <i>What questions do you have?</i> |
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| I wonder if the line items that had positions that were not filled throughout the year were consulted with the persons this affected. Most of the time, staff are doing more and taking on the additional duties as administration is trying to find qualified candidates to fill the positions. So, my question would be if the District could truly not fill these and still meet the needs of the RPS students? |
| How much thought was put into this list of recommendations? Why were other positions not chosen, like GATE specialists and EL teachers or Math intervention teachers? It seems like a direct hit on several areas and not all. How can we make this so it is fair and reasonable. We need an explanation of how this was acquired. How will you cover classes if you get rid of site subs and support staff? We need to get back to splitting and sharing classes again. Why are cabinet members not on this list- could we decrease their salary or downsize? |
| Why is special education being hammered so hard? I can see where parents who don't have kids with special needs would be potentially indifferent because it's not facing them, but parents that do... man, this is hard to swallow. Then add in what it's like for minority parents/kids who may not have the same access to help outside the school... ugh. |
| Why is there such a large deficit? |
| Why is no one held accountable for these scenarios? Why don't we EVER look at a top down method of reduction? We then proceed to build three brand new buildings and tear down a perfectly usable one. Now all of a sudden we are in the hole millions of dollars. I am an employee and also a tax paying citizen in this community and the way I see money being spent in this district makes me sick. What good is the current school board if they just follow like sheep and don't do a little digging and back checking things on their own. |
| *What are examples of "budget assumptions" within the accounting shifts? *1D - what is an example of a contracted service? *1G - If we do not fill positions in construction, do we have the capacity to meet the needs of our buildings in a timely manner? Would this increase contracting with outside agencies and how would those expenses compare to having staff within RPS? Who takes on these work responsibilities? Is this systemically sustainable? *2D, 2F - What will the new work flow systems be? How will new strategies be utilized to write, develop and train regarding curriculum? The reduction is already impacting student learning through the lit partnership and implementation of equity work. *2I- What are examples of central office supporting positions? |
| Why did we put this out in a time of stress, and contract negotiation? I think we could have better results if we had started discussing this two years ago. |
| What data/metrics are we using to determine the areas that we are reducing? Can we be more intentional about this as we prepare for another round of reductions next year? |
| Would bringing back families paying for breakfast and lunches be helpful? |

| <i>What questions do you have?</i> |
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| No questions, just comments. We live in a community with rather high property taxes. I do not understand why we cannot provide what is needed for all students in a community like Rochester. In my role as a nurse leader, we are often challenged with staffing issues and we are told to find ways to "do it better" or "do it smarter". I am very concerned about the proposed cuts to special education, paraprofessionals, and others who are in direct contact with the students. My youngest daughter has just 5 years left at RPS, but these will be the most influential years of her school years as we all prepare her to become an adult. I fear RPS is going to fail her. |
| How are you ensuring that you are getting feedback from all stakeholders? What is the rubric used to determine the least likely impact on students? How will the cuts eliminate top heavy spending or excess spent on management? |
| Why continue to increase taxes? There is a rainy day fund, Covid money, state money, tax money. Where is all this going. |
| Why must you constantly ask for money instead of fundraising like everybody else has to do you want to tax roster people to the point of moving out of this got awful city |
| Do we really need to be paying principals and above the salaries they are making while our teachers have resources and help cut? Why aren't we compensating our teachers during these times? They are the glue to parents and kids. With programs that are going to be cut, can we use that money to pay our teachers more? They deserve it. |
| The teachers deserve more rate then other people |
| Is there further information about where the current funding is being spend. This deficit plan doesn't appear to meet direct student needs. |
| Why did special education have a longer list than general education? This list was 40% of Option 2, but special education is not 40% of the district. Where are the other cut suggestions, that impact classrooms, and student engagement? |
| How is 9 million + 4 million for a year a deficit? |
| Why are students at century and others I suppose allowed to come late to classes. Walk out whenever they wish, and not be accountable to having work in on time. What kind of responsibility you they being taught. The real world is different. I'm pulling my kids out the next time there is a fight ... it's not safe. Kids can't learn if they are not safe! |
| Rochester beating drums to be DMC while the MOST IMPORTANT ingredient to produce and attract high level talents like Doctors, Nurses, Researchers and Engineers are not possible with limited academic opportunities. Try seek any funding opportunities with DMC |
| How will budget reductions be communicated to staff? What will that timeline look like? |
| If the legislature does come through with additional funding, for example an additional 2% on the formula, will the district bring back teacher positions that get cut or will that money simply be added to growing unassigned fund balance? |

| <i>What questions do you have?</i> |
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| My biggest question is if we reduce the number of positions, will we still be advertising openings for those positions and recruiting? How will the salaries be paid if there is a shift and more qualified candidates begin to apply for the reduced roles? |
| Regarding the delays in retirement funds, will we have the money in later years to make up for the deficit in those areas? Will tightening the formulas for hiring teachers limit the variety in classes offered? Students would have less choice in their education. |
| Not so much a question, but there could be more transparency on which areas the budget is allocated - even if this information is publicly available now, having it in an accessible place to supplement this presentation would be helpful. |
| Why are there 2 Middles schools in NW Rochester? With millions of \$\$ pouring in from COVID funds, where did it all go? |
| I know tough decisions need to be made, and more so will happen if we aren't able to get a referendum passed. How will parent and educators be notified of ways to support the referendum? |
| Is it possible to do another referendum or fundraising to improve the budget situation? |
| Is it even legal to make the paraprofessional cuts? The number of students who have access to a paraprofessional won't change at this time, so if they have it in their IEP aren't we legally obligated to provide that? What about the Maintenance of Effort? Don't we have to continue to provide the services with the same level of funding year to year? |
| What is the district going to do to try to fix the imagine that was created in the past few years? RPS is not a district people are attempting to come to but rather to leave for outlying schools- Byron, Stewartville, Pine Island. The lack of solid leadership with clear consistent vision is evident. Students and families are not in the forefront of concern to the board -mental Health and stress taking a back burner. There is no sense of community and connection amongst staff, students, and families. Yes COVID is still a concern but there has to be a point where YOU put students/families first as educators. Find ways to do after school gatherings and in school field trips/parties to bring back some sense of normalcy to these kids. Also change the elementary bell times as these are hugely affecting families- this was terrible decision that once again felt was catered to high school sports, white upper class families- did not focus on families of color, those who work, those who cannot afford SACC everyday before school. Times were changed with no regard to how it would greatly impact younger children learning, or families and staff schedules. |
| If you were to cut special education coaches and teachers, how are you prepared to support teachers who are hired on variances with no formal special education licensure? If unfilled sped positions are cut how will student service needs be met, especially those in higher federal settings? |
| This is a very tough job, making cuts this significant will have a huge negative impact no matter where you make them. Why are we in this position? Was there mismanagement of finances throughout the year? |

| <i>What questions do you have?</i> |
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| 1. How many principals on special assignment do we have? Instead of hiring more can we put them back at schools? |
| Cut budgets other places and leave the school budget alone. Children are our future and deserve better. Cutting budget this much will be detrimental to our students and have long-term effects. We need additional school staff and resources to help our children catch up after the past three years of chaos. |
| Why aren't you addressing the obvious need for more revenue, how to improve better outcomes to improve enrollment. |
| Why did the school district give back referendum money that they deemed to be surplus? It seems this should have been kept to help pay for the operating expenses of the new schools - which should have included money to staff the buildings. |
| How do you justify closing friedell but not any other schools? Having just one choice school for middle school seems unfair. Let's do things fairly . Cuts need to be made everywhere not targeting one school and not another. |
| Why aren't we fighting to have adequate funding for education? Property taxes, local sales tax increase? |
| If all options are needed/applied, when they go into effect?? |
| Seems like the Edison building reductions were based on unfilled positions. |
| Why is staff growing so fast? 8% more students yet 30% more staff? Unacceptable. |
| What other areas can we look at combining to continue to offer services and keep positions within our district so that our students have the continued support that they need? Let's continue to offer the best and be the best. Our students and families deserve that. |
| I think I have outlined them above. |
| Why did you not reduce school board pay? |
| Who came up with the list of cuts? I am not remembering when teachers or specifically sped teachers or staff were included in the list of ideas. |
| How have various stakeholder groups been included in the proposed budget cuts discussions and solutions? Where is that information located and how is the information accessed if the answer is yes to my previous question? |

| <i>What questions do you have?</i> |
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| How on earth are we looking at being 23 MILLION dollars in the red, and how is it even possible to consider cutting vital staff? (paras, health office nurses, etc) when they are the ones who are "boots on the ground" for ALL of our precious students?? None of this even makes sense. New positions have been created, higher admin, department leads etc make rather comfy paychecks- and the ones doing the work here in the buildings, we are disposable. Class sizes will be ridiculously high, teachers will be further burned out- students will further falter without proper, full supports- and yet somehow this all looks feasible to our school board and admin? Unbelievable. My question is- how did this huge deficit even come about? And how, in any manner, will these projected cuts benefit even ONE of our students? |
| How will the newly approved state funding impact the budget reductions? |
| Can we get a more detailed P and L? Is that publicly available? |
| You mention altering the general ed para formula but don't say what the previous number was, so I don't have a good sense of how many positions that might eliminate. |
| When will decisions about the things needing an extra look be made? is there a way to partner with any community partners to keep the services in place, but reduce the financial burden on the district? |
| If a large deficit was foreseen, why were new school buildings approved? |
| How can you guarantee that services will not be affected by these cuts? We know that services are already being affected and by asking teachers and staff to get more creative with reduced resources services will be affected. |
| Where has the growth in staffing occurred? RPS is not alone in the growth of staff disproportionally larger than growth of student enrollment, and now it is not alone with ever increasing budgets and now budgetary shortfalls. |
| This is a really tough process. Thank you for considering such a wide range of possible options, and for requesting feedback. |
| I wonder about those staff who are tasked with making the cuts, how much time are they spending in buildings and in what capacity? I know there are significant complexities to the job, however, when we cut paraprofessionals and clerical positions I wonder if we understand the day to day work that these people are tasked with. When will we know more about the referendum? Will it be tasked to internal staff or will outside consultants be paid? If there is a new superintendent hired, how drastically will these cuts change? |
| RPS staff has worked tirelessly with online, hybrid, in-person, for the past 2-3 years. Now you have to make cuts, and any time you make cuts, that equals more work for the staff that remains. How can you push your staff as you have these past few years, make cuts, and then not compensate them with a fitting contract. Yes, cuts have to be made, but if you are asking more of your staff, they should without question be paid accordingly. Give your teaching staff the pay they deserve. My question, what are you going to do when your best teachers leave because they are treated like they are replaceable, expected to do more and more, and not compensated in any way? |

| <i>What questions do you have?</i> |
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| What was said about 2b and what was written on the document was different. Mr Carlson said no growth in sped teacher and paras. The doc only says paras. Which is it? |
| Why are special education children considered 'the first to go'? |
| Why is sexual orientation such a big thing with RPS? Why does RPS promote this with children? Why can't you teach a proper education without bringing sexual orientation or race into the mix? |
| Why do special area teachers always get the short end of the stick when it comes to cuts? Aren't music and art essential? I know as a former student music was massively important to me, but maybe it's not to y'all |
| Are enrollment projections accounted for in the budget? |
| What would you have done without the covid dollars?!?!? |
| How did the financial status at RPS become so lopsided and why is this being put on employees who have dedicated their time and hard work to the district? |
| Why does the district spend so much on New programs when the old ones, like the IRLA reading system, we're working fine and liked by teachers? Don't replace something that is working and liked by teachers for the sake of novelty. I hated district inservice where some paid presenter would be paid a fat check to lecture to us. The most informative inservices were in small groups where other members of our department or grade levels taught each other exemplary lessons. |
| How will rps ensure student safety and quality education for all students. How will rps foster school communities to support each other despite staff shortages, staff burn out and now the potential to cut positions. |
| What do teachers think? |
| The public should be able to access in a usable transparent visual of the way the school district spends all of the funding we are paying for. Where is a pie graph displaying topics such as teaching staff, other staff technology, building, transportation, technology, nutrition, etc. Why has title funding budgets been frozen and not updated. Schools that lost funding have been running on a skeleton crew and are only going to be in a deeper deficit. These schools would have qualified with more outreach and communication with families about the importance of filling out the paperwork. |
| Our main question/concern is that the budget shortfall have the minimal effect on students and teachers and the educational experience. We want our child to be well-prepared for his future. |
| Why aren't we constantly lobbying the state for better funding? And if we are, why isn't this process more transparent? |

| <i>What questions do you have?</i> |
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| I'm proposed future changes closing a smaller elementary school may be considered. More information is needed on this as this is a difficult thing to understand when a new elementary school was built, redistricting already occurring and bussing currently a struggle for the district. |
| All of the questions you are asking is trying to divide our race. We don't need division, we need unity of all, not discrimination as I see in your questions. |
| Middle School Right Fit - Is this --'s only position in the district? Project Search - what is the cost to the School District for this Program? RAIL - what is the cost to the School District? If Central office positions are eliminated what percentage of the Edison building is still full - should it be looked at closing and offices moved elsewhere? 2K - how well was it attended - should it be moved to a central site? |
| I think the budget shortcomings are not the real problem, they are a symptom of much bigger problems. Why is RPS underperforming relative to other state districts? Why are there so many safety and discipline issues? Why are teachers not being able to handle their classes? And why are there so many unfilled positions? What are they? If they are really needed, what is the need? If they are not needed, then why are they even there? |
| What do half of the budget cuts even mean? |
| What do half of the budget cuts even mean? |
| what does it mean by tightening the formula for teachers? Why high school and electuary schools first? I saw a few disability related reduction. Is it because they are expensive or can be more efficiently leveraged? |
| What is the district doing to advocate for increased dollars to cover SpEd costs? |
| The first slide said that there was a 9% student increase with a 30% teacher increase. Why such a sharp discrepancy? Between that and the budget predicament it sounds like we need to evaluate our budget assumptions closer and do more root cause for the teacher to student enrollment changes/ratio. |
| Is there any flexibility as we wait for word on the State budget surplus dollars? Are we actively lobbying state representatives and senators on this issue? Should we be talking to the local taxpayers about a referendum? |
| If the proposal by Governor Walz is approved how would that change our budget? |
| if you eliminate reading support, where is math support in the budget? |
| Where does our budget come from? can we make a case to get more from the govt? |
| Are the teachers, paraprofessionals, administrators and clerical staff being consulted? They know best what's possible and what's not. |
| What is a "resiliency" or "equity" specialist? Have these sorts of non-teaching positions always been on the public school payroll? |

| <i>What questions do you have?</i> |
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| Cut online and expensive services. |
| 1. Why wasn't this mentioned last year, if it was known for awhile? We could have been implementing some of these scenarios earlier. 2. I thought that Friedell's land was expensive to own/operate. Which is why I thought RPS built a new middle school. How is it that RPS will still operate out of the Friedell building? What if that building was sold and programs consolidated to other schools? |
| What would we save from having less board members? What would we save from lower salaries of executive members? What would we save if we had 4-day school/work weeks? |
| How will we ensure IEPs will still be followed if we're considered reducing staff in SPED? |
| How does this happen?! |
| How to keep budget cuts and who is up to be cut an objective process, especially when the people looking at these decisions work in the district center together. |
| Will the 2.4 billion dollars that Governor Walz announced help us out? It sounds like it could be a big increase in money for our MN schools. |
| Recently there were resiliency specialists positions added and now talking about cutting them? |
| We used to have a very success person run ViE and now parents feel disconnected as this program has gotten pushed to the side. Is our Com Involvement Dept really effective or just a face to the community, NAACP and find great grants that tie RPS into future cost related to grant? Why are the Equity Specialist not listed under the job title but assigned to site so know one really knows how many staff are in this area? What is their job, again not description but actual expectations? FSC - Maintenance has added layers to their mgmt. level why? We have 2 mgmt level that do not provide support when sites run short, why? |
| Again, what additional staff cuts could happen at the district level that do not have direct impact on students and teaching staff? |
| What about money coming from the state. How will that impact these cuts? |
| Why did the budget committee choose to focus on reducing sped positions? Why not central office staff and administration, who have the least impact on our students? |
| Why did staff increase 30% and student enrollment 8%? How do we even get the place of creating these staff positions? |
| Why is Friedell not being sold? This land is more valuable than the fringe programs that are being proposed for it's use. Reassess the district-wide options. Present a cost-benefit analysis to the public. I have kids in MAF. I don't feel it is fair or cost efficient for the district to offer at no charge. |
| I guess it more of a request. To keep in person learning as distance learning is not effective and causing so much delays in learning. |

| <i>What questions do you have?</i> |
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| What does the data show about instructional coaches? Are they beneficial to the STUDENTS or to TEACHERs? Not all unfilled positions should be cut, is there a matrix that supports which ones are necessary. Are there different pots of money i.e. SPED teachers vs GENED teachers? Can a building take some sped teachers and move that staffing allocation to gened? What percentage of the "teaching staff" budget is for staff who do not work directly with students? What does the DATA say about the budget cuts...how will the effects roll over to students? |
| How do we plan to be sustainable in the long term when we are understaffed and underfunded and still have to cut more? |
| When will a final decision be made and communicated? |
| Why isn't the district looking to reduce/eliminate some of the many positions that were added just this year at Edison, TSSC, FSC? Who served on the team that developed this list of proposed reductions? |
| How can we prevent yearly tax increases due to budget shortfalls in RPS? |
| So many, but I would rather say something: I think it's extremely disingenuous of you to send this out and have the survey semi-buried in an email and then in a web page while parent are already currently scrambling/struggling with Distance Learning. Just like the survey for class times, that is now being reported that 97% of teachers are against, it feels like you are trying to sneakily not get valid feedback and skew the survey to work in your favor. Whether this is intentional or not, this is 100% what it feels like. |
| How did you get to this point? |
| Why cancel INCubatoredu? Is it the lease cost? At a time when rochester is spending a lot on career readiness training (like CTECH) why eliminate a program that is at the core of the mission. |
| What is the point of cutting special education? Why would we cut nursing and health right now, it doesn't make sense? We need as much transportation help as we can get because of Covid-whether they are vaccinated or not as long as they follow mask protocol, we need cleaning and janitors so do not cut them!? we need resilience and social work teams maybe have them help train paras on organizing and mental health...devices yes cut because so many kids who already had devices got them during Covid and could have used their own at home? Why would we Cut electives because we can go back to basics? |
| When inflation is at an almost all-time high, why are we looking at budget reductions for our valuable public school systems? |
| None. Best of luck with these challenging decisions. |
| How does RPS plan on increasing enrollment to expand its budget and reduce its forecasted deficit? |
| I would like to hear more about what 1H and 2F mean...I understand cutting jobs will help with the budget, but at what cost? Will those left in these positions be overworked and possibly quit? |

| <i>What questions do you have?</i> |
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| I think it is wise to budget well, we can do this, the community can step up, help, and volunteer!! |
| - why are we not looking to increase the budget or improve funding? - how can our children get an appropriate and safe education with some of these suggestions |
| Why did the board approve new schools when they foresaw these budget deficits? |
| Why do we need 1:1 iPads in every school? Students should be learning without their face in a screen. Why aren't we getting more state money? Is there a way to petition for more benefactor support? Let parents know how they can donate money to RPS. |
| There are some admin level positions that I am uncertain what they even do. |
| What repercussions to the well being of our district staff and students do you expect as a result of these reductions? We are all aware of the difficulties the last few years have brought to our lives. I wonder how long we can expect our system to endure the current stress put upon it much less any additional stress created by reductions? What is the plan if we cannot staff our classrooms with qualified teachers? |
| Why so many special ed cuts? Haven't special ed kids been punished enough? How can you be so incompetent? At what point are you embarrassed by what you have done to the children of this community? |
| If we knew about this for several years, why hasn't the district been trying to save for it. I think there is alot of waste in this district. There needs to be more auditing of programs and positions to see what is really needed. |
| How did this short fall happen? What ran over budget? How can you keep cutting year after year? |
| Will these changes be permanent? Or once the new school has started generating revenue will you then put what was cut back in place? |
| Why are we currently building new schools if we need to cut costs? We are going to build new schools but then close a smaller elementary or reduce staff ratios at schools? Doesn't make sense. |
| I asked a number of my questions above. I appreciate the work going into this process and the opportunity to share my thoughts. |
| thank you. keep us in the loop |
| I see that staffing changes at high school and elementary are mentioned, and electives are there, yet do we have a process for adequately studying the impact these courses have and how they fit into the graduate profile? Do we also know if we are currently in compliance with all MDE content standards at all grade levels while making these changes? |

| <i>What questions do you have?</i> |
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| I appreciate your openness in sharing this with all parents. Having said that, I want this 'budget deficit' issue to not be taken lightly where it can be solved but 'cutting' expenses. There is a need to fulfill any and all expenses necessary. It will impact how favorably parents view working on staff at the Mayo Clinic and any other institution if their children can not be assured quality education. |
| I wonder how much it will cost to rearrange SpEd to make these cuts feasible. They seem necessary and prudent, but there also will need to be a lot of training on IEP's and training of remaining staff to make sure student needs are being met. How will the costs of reimagining SpEd be absorbed? |
| I don't doubt that this is a difficult decision on what goes or stays but I would like to comment that I have concerns about reducing program offerings. I mean I fully understand that there are some things that only a handful of students use so maybe resources can be better spent elsewhere but also want to make sure that all other options have been exhausted before reducing programing/options for the students. One thing that really stood out to me was all of the reductions in special education. My children don't use these services but there are so many kids we know that do and NEED these services that I'm really surprised that there are so many cuts in this area. Again, I'm sure you know more about what is needed but just a concerned parent hoping that all groups are being considered here.... |
| How can I join the task force in helping find where to really cut and help the budget? feel free to reach out and contact me. i would truly enjoy getting a better paying position in the district, but not for the money, but to help and keep the district from falling further into debt. |
| Why do you only care about my opinion if I am diverse? The bottom half of this survey is highly offensive! |
| - the huge staff increase compared to student increase - where are the greatest number of staff being added? - DWO schools seem to have greater caps on class sizes. This does not seem equitable. |
| Why would you build a new school on the edge of town to then come back two stupid years later and say you're going to close a small school? That's a giant lie and that is why the public doesn't trust you often. |
| How much money is spent on repeat course work for high school students? Is there a way to prevent students failing classes? (I know we all try.) I heard middle school kids say that work completion/grades in middle school don't matter. Does that create part of the problem in high school? (I have not seen any data. I honestly don't know if repeated coursework is an issue.) |
| Why hasn't the idea of early retirement been explored? |
| Why is it that the students from right fit move? Let's think of the emotional well being for them for once please! |
| Will this budget reduction affect my pay or my chance for a pay raise? Will my position be removed because I teach at five different schools? |

| <i>What questions do you have?</i> |
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| Why not cut media specialists? |
| Is there a reduction/reorganization to cabinet that I just don't see? Are SPED coaches included in Instructional Coaches? If not, why are reductions not included for them also? |
| Nothing was mentioned about SROs- not sure if their positions will remain or change? |
| I do not envy anyone having to make these decisions. |
| Why does your sexual orientation question NOT list heterosexual? I am a heterosexual like a VAST MAJORITY of the population. Do my opinions count less because I am too "typical"? |
| Do you see these cuts only lasting for the two years? Staffing grew by 30% - where was the largest area of growth? Special Ed? Coaching? Admin? Student Support? Those are the areas I am assuming grew based off what could be the first to be cut, but it would be nice to see the numbers. I also worry about how it will effect me as a new teacher. With cuts coming I am really afraid I will be pushed out to make room for more seasoned teachers who are displaced because they loose their coaching position and will need to return to the classroom. |
| Why has staff increased by 30% when student enrollment only increased by 8%? Are there specific areas that the district has been hiring at a particularly unsustainable pace? Is the district making a plan to prevent this situation from occurring in the future? What steps or measures can be implemented to mitigate these shortfalls? |
| How much has the district spent and budgeted on consultation fees over the last few years? For example, there shouldn't have been a need to hire a consultant to administer a staff and parent Bell Time survey when the results were so clear. Could this task have been taken on by district personnel? |
| Question 11 doesn't have a straight option. |
| -How the hell are we that short when this has been known for 12 years? -Why was the planning so poor? -Are the people or person who was leading this and getting out ahead of it being held accountable? |
| how did we seem to miss the impact of opening new buildings on some of the staffing/budgeting for that going forward? |
| How can there be such a shortfall in a city that has such a high tax rate and can provide so much money for Mayo projects whenever they ask but schools have to make cuts?! Why are we opening new schools when we are making such drastic cuts?! |
| You say equity but you don't staff equitable. You say equity but you are making changes and staffing inequitably. You say break systems of systemic racism and yet you are reproducing it by poor building cuts. |

We look forward to discussing the strategy outlined in this memo and the feedback we received from stakeholders on that strategy at the School Board meeting on February 8, 2022.