

Anchorage School District

ASD 2010 Budget Dialogue

DECEMBER 2010

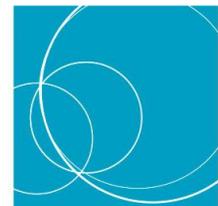
PRODUCED FOR

Anchorage School District
5530 East Northern Lights Blvd.
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

PRODUCED BY

Information Insights, Inc.
www.iialaska.com

Agnew::Beck
www.agnewbeck.com



Contents

Executive Summary	3
Overview.....	3
What Do People Value in Public Education?	5
How Should the ASD Balance the Budget?.....	7
Appendix I: Student Advisory Board.....	12
Appendix II: Clark Middle School	18
Appendix III: Hanshew Middle School.....	38
Appendix IV: Gruening Middle School.....	60
Appendix V: Efficiency Ideas from Poster	79

“Public education should prepare students to be adults who contribute positively to the community.”

—Dialogue attendees’ #1 value statement

Executive Summary

OVERVIEW

On November 4, 2010, ASD staff and the consultant team facilitated a workshop with members of the Student Advisory Board (SAB) to hear the students’ perspectives on what they value in their education and what suggestions they have for budget cuts.¹ This was the first part of a two-phase budget dialogue process by the Anchorage School District (ASD); it was important to hear from students at the beginning of the process, since they are essentially the clients of public education, so that their perspectives would be front and center in the budget discussion.

The second phase in the ASD budget process was outreach to the public. The ASD held three public meetings to solicit participation in a dialogue format about the budget and about community values surrounding public education. The sessions were held on December 1, 2 and 4 with meeting locations in East and South Anchorage and in Eagle River.

The comments from the Student Advisory Board helped inform the process for the general public. The presentation of student views gave parents and other adults who attended the meetings the benefit of hearing from those most affected by cuts as they made their own contributions to the budget process for FY 2011-12. Because the formats

¹ The Student Advisory Board is a group made up of representatives from all Anchorage high schools and middle schools.

of the SAB meeting and community meetings were slightly different, this Executive Summary focuses on the budget dialogue workshops for the general public only. Appendix I summarizes student input at the SAB workshop.

Meeting Participation

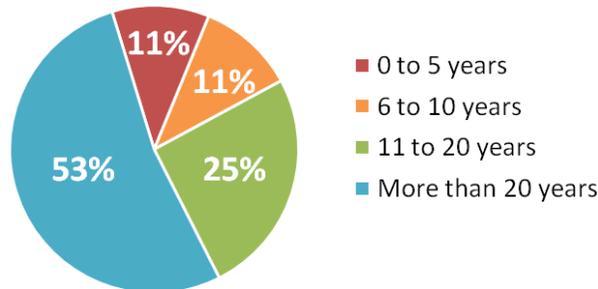
223 community members participated in the meetings, and approximately 50 more attended but chose only to observe. Detailed information on attendance is shown below:

Table 1: Meeting Participation

Dialogue	Date	No. of Attendees
Clark Middle School – Public	December 1, 2010	71
Hanshew Middle School – Public	December 2, 2010	106
Gruening Middle School – Public	December 4, 2010 (Sat)	46

More than 60 percent of participants at all three public meetings reported living in Anchorage for more than 11 years; at two meetings more than half had lived in Anchorage more than 20 years. Just over 75 percent of total attendees at the public meetings were white. Not surprisingly, roughly half of all attendees were either parents of students in ASD or students themselves.

How long have you lived in Anchorage?



Meeting Format

The meetings included a combination of presentations, small group activities, and large group question and answer sessions using an electronic audience response system called Consensor™. Discussion topics included identifying values about public education in general and the 2011-12 ASD budget specifically. The basic agenda for each meeting is summarized below.

- 1. Presentation by Superintendent Carol Comeau:** Overview of the ASD
- 2. Consensor™ poll of individuals:** What ASD programs do you value, and what aspects of public education do you value?

3. **Small Group Dialogue #1:** What are the qualities of a well-educated person and how does public education make our community better?
4. **Budget Presentation**
5. **Small Group Dialogue #2:** Balancing the Budget
6. **Consensor™ poll of individuals:** What budget cutting recommendations do you have?

Participants also had an opportunity to place budget saving and efficiency improvement suggestions on posters around the room. All suggestions are summarized in Appendix V.

WHAT DO PEOPLE VALUE IN PUBLIC EDUCATION?

To determine what participants value most in public education, the ASD staff and consultant team looked at individual responses to Consensor™ poll questions as well as themes that emerged during group discussions. Participants in the small group dialogues were asked two questions:

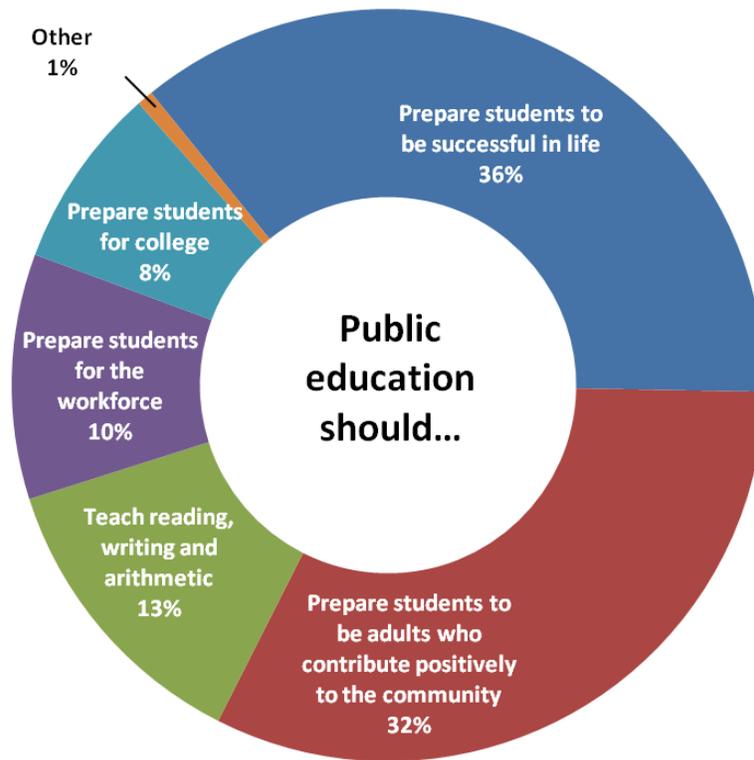
1. What are the qualities of a well-educated person?
2. How does public education make our community better?

Key Findings

Basic knowledge is an important part of public education. There was universal agreement amongst participants that being well-educated includes having basic knowledge of reading, writing and arithmetic. Most people also believe that a basic understanding of arts, languages and science is characteristic of a well-educated person. When polled individually, respondents at all three meetings indicated that reading and writing were the most vital education program followed by math. Drama was voted the least vital, below art and music at all three meetings.

An individual's self-sufficiency is improved as a result of quality public education. Well-educated people are self-sufficient; they can take care of themselves and their families. Public education gives everyone the opportunity to better themselves, regardless of an individual's background.

Public education creates engaged community members who are active participants in civic life. Attendees noted that well-educated people understand their responsibility to the community and have a global perspective; it is the foundation on which our society and our democracy are built. Public education also creates community and teaches people how to function as part of a group; it teaches them what their roles and responsibilities are and establishes a feeling of connectedness with families and students.

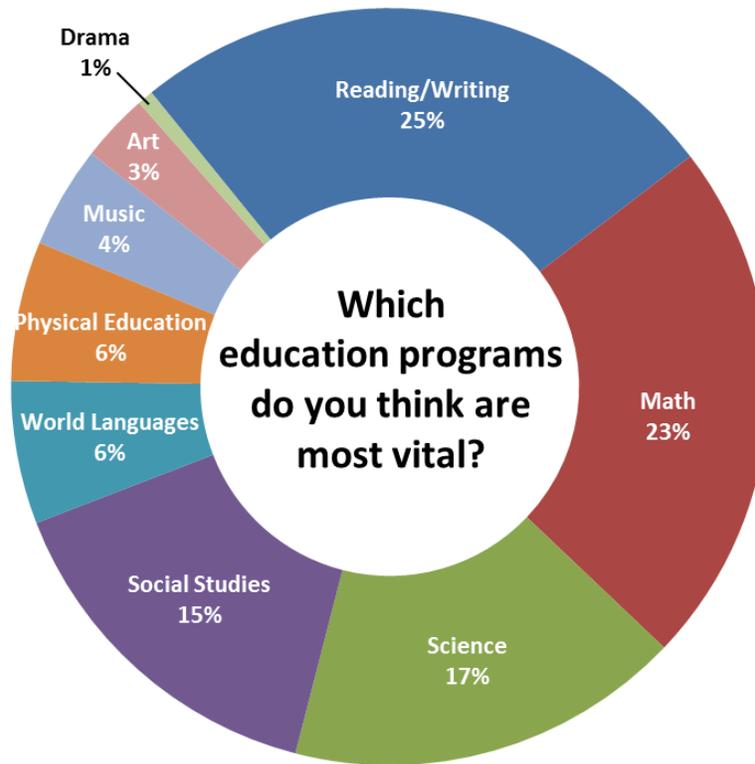


Public schools expose students and the larger community to an increasingly diverse population and foster values of tolerance and acceptance. Participants indicated that community safety is improved as crime rates are lower when a society's population is educated.

When polled using Consensor™, the majority of participants indicated they believe the role of public education is to prepare students to be successful in life and to contribute positively to the community. These responses reinforce the notion that public education has a role in educating the whole person. Only 13% of participants identified reading, writing, arithmetic as the sole purpose of public education. A third of participants indicated that public education should prepare students to contribute positively to the community.

Public education helps strengthen the local economy. Participants indicated that public education strengthens the economy by generating a prepared and stable workforce. Having students in school allows parents who might not be able to afford childcare to work. Additionally, an educated public attracts business to a community and the school district itself provides jobs within the community.

Analytical skills including critical thinking are enhanced due to quality public education. Participants indicated that public education helped to improve analytical skills and improved the ability to filter and interpret information.



The ability to communicate well is an important part of public education. The fact that schools also teach “soft skills” including strong communication, social skills and empathy toward others (including those different from oneself) was mentioned multiple times. Statements about communication were often followed by the opinion that well-educated people are often open-minded, polite and respectful toward others.

HOW SHOULD THE ASD BALANCE THE BUDGET?

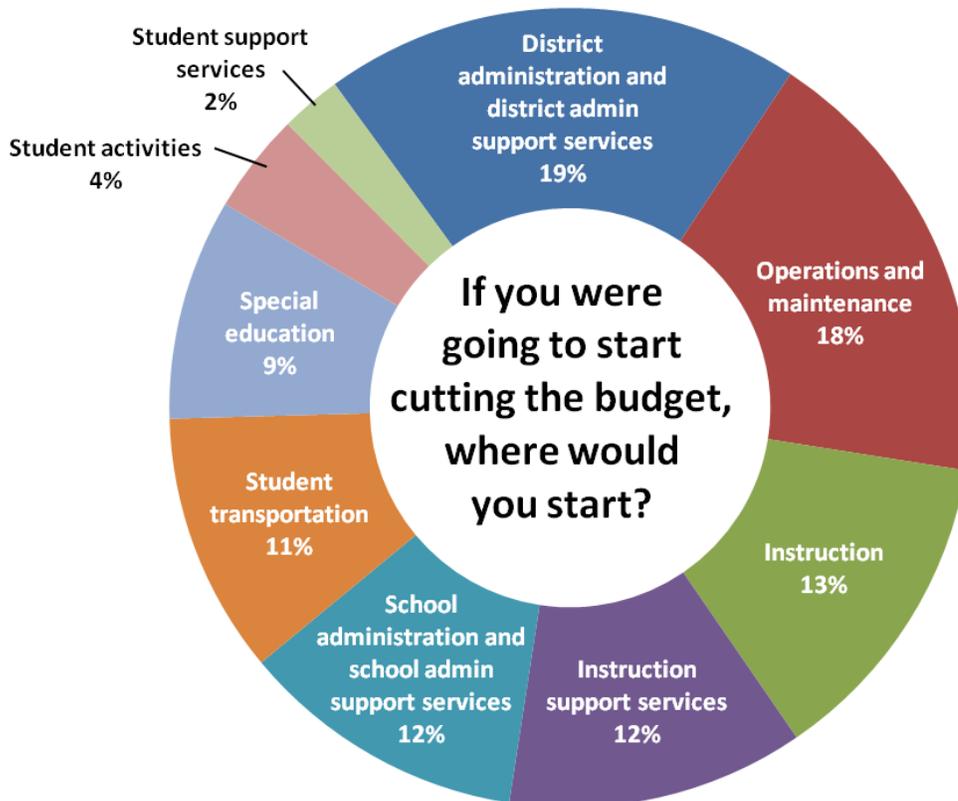
The second part of the dialogue meetings asked participants to translate their broad thoughts about what they value in public education into specific recommendations on how to balance the ASD budget. Participants were asked to identify \$13 million in cuts by budget category using a printed spreadsheet that summarized the proposed 2011-12 budget. Many participants expressed that this was a difficult task, but it offered an opportunity for community members to provide input using specific budget choices and perhaps increased understanding of the challenges faced by school board members and ASD administration in balancing the budget.

When meeting participants were asked to balance the school district budget, most groups came to some consensus about where they would cut costs to fill the shortfall. Results from these groups are displayed in Table 2.

Key Findings

Participants did not want to cut student activities. It is notable that outside of Community Services, Student Activities was the budget category selected for reduction by the fewest number of groups; only 26 percent of groups chose to make any cuts to this category. During the small group reporting time, nearly all groups mentioned how positive student activities are for students and the community. This finding held true during the Consensor™ polling where 96 percent of individuals said they did not want to cut student activities.

The categories most often targeted for reduction were instruction, instruction support services, and operations and maintenance. Attendee comments made clear that there was significant reluctance to cut instructional budgets but felt this category had to take some cuts because it represents such a large portion of the overall budget. By contrast, the general sentiment was that real efficiencies can be found and savings realized in both instruction support services and operations and maintenance. When polled individually the greatest number of people chose cuts to the category district admin/district admin support services followed by operations and maintenance as shown in the chart below.

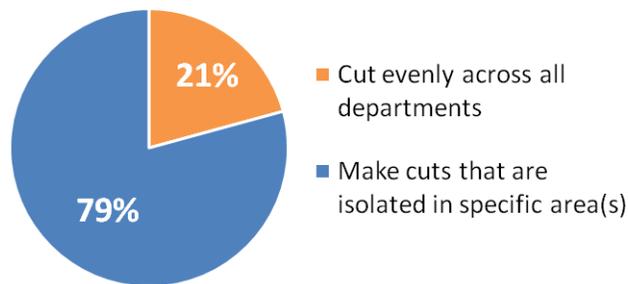


When asked individually about where to make cuts using Consensor™, attendees frequently indicated that savings can be found in operations and maintenance; discussion surrounding O&M made it clear that most people felt those savings would be found either through operational efficiencies or through energy efficiency measures to lower utility costs. At each of the meetings, Student Support Services and Student Activities were at or near the bottom of the list of budget items to be cut

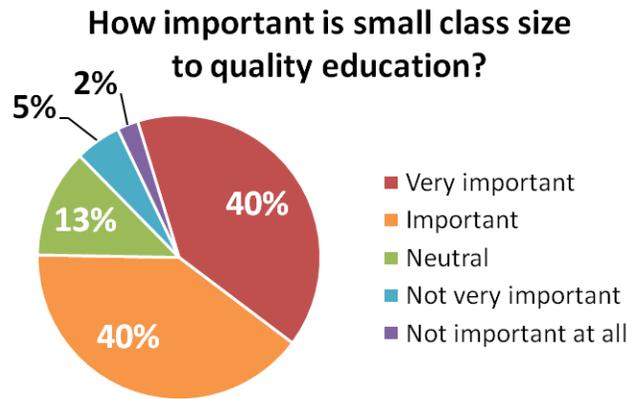
There was general reluctance to cut special education. There was considerable discussion about Special Education and Special Education Support Services because they represent roughly 17 percent of the budget. Attendees were generally reluctant to cut in these categories both because of uncertainty about what is mandated and due to an acknowledgement of the fiscal realities of providing services to students with special needs.

Participants preferred targeted cuts within the ASD budget. When asked individually if they would like to see either cuts made evenly across all departments or cuts isolated in specific areas, there was a clear preference for targeted cutting; nearly 80 percent of participants prefers a strategy of specific cuts to cutting evenly across the board.

If the district needs to make budget cuts, would you prefer that they:

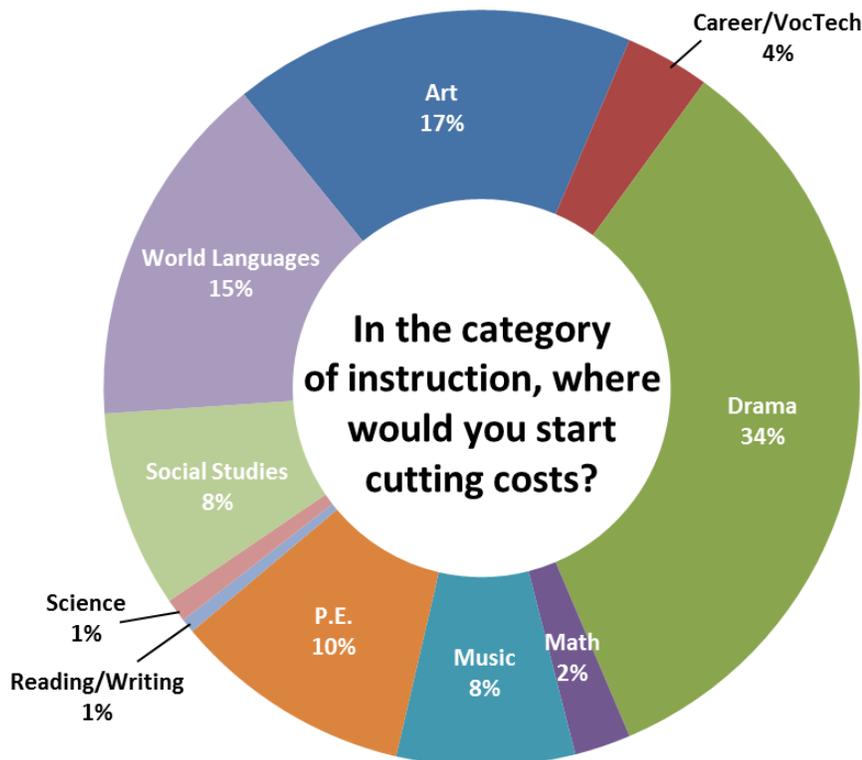


Class size is important. Eighty percent of attendees at each meeting said they felt class size was important or very important to quality education. When asked at what point they would feel concerned about the quality of education if the district had to increase class size to balance the budget, 29 percent indicated they would be concerned with a one student increase and 25 percent said two students. Attendees were also asked how class size increases should happen, should they become necessary. Thirty-six percent of respondents did not want to see class size increases in grades K through 2; twenty-seven percent said they felt class size increases should be spread evenly across all grades.



Participants were least willing to cut reading, writing, and science and more willing to cut drama. Participants were also asked about cuts to academic categories. Drama programs were the top choice for cuts at all three meetings; at the other end of the spectrum were Reading/Writing and Science, which people were least willing to cut. Note that participants were asked “where” they would cut first if they had to make cuts; making no cuts was not provided as an option.

Teacher salaries in Anchorage are not too high. The results of the individual polling indicated that participants believe teacher salaries are definitely not too high. The majority of participants indicated that teachers are either fairly compensated (42%) or under compensated (52%).



Additional budget solutions were suggested. Some groups were unable to find consensus on cuts. Several chose instead to offer new revenue streams, refusing to cut a budget they feel is reasonable. Others were either unable to come to any consensus or felt they needed more information before they could make useful recommendations. These groups offered written comments that are summarized below (numbers in parentheses indicate the number of groups making each recommendation):

- Four day school week (3)
- Cut evenly across all departments (3)
- Temporarily freeze wages (2)
- Tax to the cap (2)
- Tap State revenue to fill the shortfall
- Implement school tax

Table 2: Budget Exercise Summary

Budget Category	Current Budget for FY 2011-12	Average Cut	Percent Reduction	Percent of Groups Recommending Cuts to Category
Instruction	\$304 M	\$4.14 M	- 1.36%	74%
Special Education Instruction	\$85 M	\$0.57 M	- 0.67%	38%
Special Education Support	\$27 M	\$0.30 M	- 1.09%	35%
Student Support Services	\$33 M	\$0.61 M	- 1.83%	41%
Instruction Support Services	\$25 M	\$1.10 M	- 4.33%	74%
School Administration	\$24 M	\$0.63 M	- 2.65%	68%
School Administration Support Services	\$17 M	\$0.45 M	- 2.62%	50%
District Administration	\$5 M	\$0.10 M	- 1.78%	38%
District Administration Support Services	\$20 M	\$0.40 M	- 2.00%	56%
Operations & Maintenance	\$79 M	\$1.41 M	- 1.78%	74%
Student Activities	\$7 M	\$0.17 M	- 2.54%	26%
Transportation	\$22 M	\$0.75 M	- 3.47%	38%
Community Services	\$1 M	\$0.001 M	- 0.27%	15%

Appendix I: Student Advisory Board

ASD BUDGET DIALOGUE—NOVEMBER 4, 2010

EDUCATION VALUES EXERCISE

Students were asked individually to value different components of their education on a scale of one to ten where ten was “most important” and one was “least important”. Individual answers are shown in the table below.

Table 3: How important are the subjects below to your education?
(1=least important, 10 = most important)

	10 & 9	8 & 7	6 & 5	4 & 3	2 & 1
Math	48%	28%	15%	5%	5%
Language Arts	43%	39%	19%	0%	0%
Music	48%	10%	15%	15%	15%
Social Studies	52%	28%	10%	10%	0%
Debate	19%	24%	19%	19%	19%
Science	43%	19%	24%	10%	5%
P.E. / Sports	39%	14%	19%	19%	10%
Career and Voc-Tech	20%	38%	20%	15%	10%
Art	33%	20%	15%	10%	24%
World Language	38%	19%	33%	5%	5%
Theatre	14%	10%	29%	20%	28%

It is clear that students feel there is significant value in most of the subjects they are being offered. It should also be noted that they were answering for themselves, how important each of these areas is to their education personally.

How have you benefited from you education?

Students reported how they have benefited from their own education. The responses were numerous. Common sentiments expressed in the meeting are summarized below:

- Knowledge – literacy, reading, writing, basics needed to operate in life
- Ability to solve problems and think critically
- Communication - ability to communicate thoughts and ideas
- Opportunities to explore different interests – expanded horizons

- Social – learned how to act around other people, how to be a part of a community, how to work with others
- Preparations for college and work
- Taught responsibility, respect and good values
- Opened doors, opportunities, minds

What are the qualities of a well-educated person?

Student answers to this question ranged considerably but included common themes. It is notable that all groups mentioned the ability to communicate effectively and the idea of having an open mind as primary qualities of a well-educated person. Common themes summarized:

- Communication – can communicate in multiple ways with different types of people and be understood, listens to others
- Open minded – not bigoted, respects and values diversity, listens, understands other people’s points of view, is respectful and kind
- Motivated, driven, does well, goal oriented
- Confident, voices opinion, independent
- Has intellectual curiosity, asks questions
- Ability to apply what they know to a problem or a goal, can apply book smarts to street problems and vice versa

How is our community better because of public education?

Students were asked to discuss and report out on how our community is better because of public education. Again, common sentiments and themes are summarized below:

- Keeps kids busy, off the streets, off drugs
- Levels the playing field, provides equal opportunity regardless of background
- Creates jobs directly with the district and educated people who can create jobs in other industries, strengthens the economy
- Creates intelligent, and more productive, members of society - people who can make educated decisions, problem solve, and teach others to do the same
- Engages community in learning and progressing, exposes them (through students) to different points of view
- Creates community, everyone has a common experience, everyone sort of knows each other, students are encouraged to engage in the community
- Reduces crime through improving opportunities for jobs, decreases violence through teaching a culture of non-violence

BUDGET EXERCISE

Students were asked to cut \$18 million from Anchorage School district budget categories. The table below averages results from that exercise followed by student comments about proposed cuts.

Table 4: SAD Dialogue Budget Exercise Summary

Budget Category	Current Budget		Percent Reduction
	FY 2011-12	Average Cuts	
Instruction	\$301 M	\$4 M	-1%
Special Education Instruction	\$83 M	\$3 M	-3%
Special Education Support	\$27 M	\$1 M	-4%
Student Support Services	\$33 M	\$1 M	-2%
Instruction Support Services	\$25 M	\$3 M	-11%
School Administration	\$24 M	\$1 M	-4%
School Administration Support Services	\$17 M	\$1 M	-4%
District Administration	\$5 M	\$0 M	-3%
District Administration Support Services	\$19 M	\$0 M	0%
Operations & Maintenance	\$78 M	\$4 M	-5%
Student Activities	\$7 M	\$0 M	0%
Transportation	\$21 M	\$0 M	-1%
Community Services	\$1 M	\$0 M	0%
Total	\$640 M	\$17 M ²	-3%

²Note: one group decided they could not reduce the budget by \$18 million; that group made \$10 million in cuts, which reduced average cuts across all groups to \$17 million.

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS ON SUGGESTED BUDGET CUTS BY CATEGORY

Instruction

Why and How to Cut

- Cut tutoring
- New technology is excessive
- Get rid of some textbook since everything is online now
- A one student per class increase doesn't seem like that bid of a deal and has a huge impact on the budget, new technology is excessive
- Cut physical education, band, art and school instruments – focus more on academics

Potential Impacts

- larger classes
- less tech savvy students
- increase in money spent on equipment repairs and use of outdated machinery
- more money for academics

Special Education**Why and How to Cut**

- little group - big money
- we don't want to cut instruction for special education - look at volunteer aides in classes, maybe cut salaries
- this is too large a percentage of the money for a small percentage of students
- should focus spending on students who will be the leaders of tomorrow, the ones who will give more back to society and the community
- should meet federal requirements but not go beyond as much
- use parents and families to support more
- parents should have to pay more - cut bussing for special education students during summer - same as regular education students
- there are plenty of teachers in special education classrooms

Potential Impacts

- less effective services to special education students
- these students might be less successful in school and life
- being perceived as the bad guy
- angering parents of students with disabilities
- without one on one some students will fall further behind
- less money going to less fortunate

Special Education Support Services**Why and How to Cut**

- have to cut somewhere
- too much wasteful spending
- lots of teachers in special education

Potential Impacts

- reduced salaries for special education employees
- less money going to less fortunate

Student Support Services

Why and How to Cut

- counselors at middle school level are unnecessary

Potential Impacts

- none noted

Instruction Support Services

Why and How to Cut

- specialists are nice but not necessary
- teachers know what to do - don't send teachers to trainings they don't need
- be more focused in training efforts
- too many librarians
- computers and tech upgrades are too much

Potential Impacts

- might fail to meet certain mandates for highly qualified teachers
- more workload will fall on teacher shoulders

School Administration

Why and How to Cut

- too many principals
- unnecessary jobs

Potential Impacts

- more work spread out to other people working in the school

District Administration

Why and How to Cut

- has least impact on student education

Potential Impacts

- more work for educators in the schools

Operations and Maintenance

Why and How to Cut

- save energy
- turn lights off
- be more environmentally friendly

- turn heat down at night
- behavior is wasteful - turn off computers
- the walls don't need to be different colors - too much emphasis on aesthetics
- reduce janitor pay
- students should be enlisted to help with basic maintenance of building
- \$78 million is too much to spend on cleaning schools

Potential Impacts

- janitors might get paid less
- slower response time on maintenance issues
- money saved for other things

Student Transportation

Why and How to Cut

- it is wasteful to sit with bus running for 15 minutes while waiting for students
- reduce transportation to after school events or co-curricular activities
- conserve diesel by turning the bus off
- take another look at routes

Potential Impacts

- angry parents
- cold bus drivers
- fewer students able to participate in co-curricular activities

Appendix II: Clark Middle School

ASD BUDGET DIALOGUE—DECEMBER 1, 2010

EDUCATION VALUES EXERCISE

What are the qualities of a well-educated person?

Common themes that emerged from the question what are the qualities of a well-educated person are summarized below.

- Has knowledge of history, other cultures, math, science, language and the arts
- Can problem solve and think critically
- Self-sufficient and competent
- Good communication skills, written verbal and listening.
- Open minded and empathetic
- Curious and a lifelong learner
- Contributes to the community, responsible

Table 1

- Intellectual curiosity – open to new ideas
- Able to provide for self and family
- Global perspective – world view
- Able to respect and embrace a diverse world and diverse people
- Contribute to community – see outside self
- Knowledgeable of your heritage/history and of those things for others in community/country
- Ability to problem solve and think critically innovate
- Fostering education and educating others

Table 2

- A well educated person has a general knowledge of many areas and curiosity to find more information
- Able to think critically
- Self-motivated
- Able to read
- Globally aware
- Chooses knowledge over superstition

Table 3

- Knowledge – literacy, math, science, arts, verbal, language, culture, history
- Skills – critical thinking, problem solving, articulate, literate
- Attributes – creativity, curiosity, lifelong learning, empathy, open minded

Table 6

- Well read
- Love learning
- Someone who communicates well
- Favors critical thinking over superstition and dogma
- Someone who adapts well to their environment
- Open to difference and different cultures/multi-lingual
- Habitually pursues excellence across disciplines so that later in life these habits can be remembered (i.e. arts, music, athletics)

Table 8

- Interpersonal relationship skills
- Being able to relate to a diverse group of people
- Be able to conduct themselves
- Social skills
- Communication skills
- An understanding of diversity
- Daily physical activity and health
- Appreciation for the arts and music
- Language (multiple)
- Logical
- Open minded
- Employable
- Life skills
- Balanced thinker – logically, intuitively, morally and spiritually

Table 9

- Functions in basic skills of life (finances and job)
- Basic communication skills (reading and writing)
- Problem solving skills: being creative, critical thinking, reach resolution in positive manner
- Literate – well-read and chooses to read
- Takes ownership, mentors others in community

Table 12

- Literate in various literacies (arts/technology/cultural)
- Lifelong learner
- Responsible
- Civically responsible and informed citizens
- Respect for all cultures
- Problem solver
- Good listener and communicator
- Open to new ideas
- Confident in their abilities
- Able to enjoy and participate in the arts
- Balanced and healthy lifestyle

Table 13

- Social and emotional learning
- Civility/courteous
- Enjoys continuing to learn/lifelong learner
- Good communicator – written, oral, visually, articulate
- Community minded
- Open minded/taking in other opinions, knows how to filter information, cyber literate
- Well read
- Broad background of experiences
- Past impacts the present, learns from the past
- Able to think conceptually
- Higher level thinking skills/being able to evaluate
- While person with soft skills (social emotional)
- able to ask good questions
- critical thinking
- understanding resources available to them
- self sufficient

Table 14

- Someone who knows how to process information and take information to do something with it
- Someone who is functionally literate and articulate
- Someone who is a lifelong learner can learn from a variety of situations and people
- Someone who can compete in the world market, has skills, knowledge and ability

- Someone with some understanding of political system to develop a literate electorate
- Someone with a cultural and global awareness tying us together – knows their actions have impacts on others

Table 15

- Resourceful
- Communication skills
- Critical thinker
- Problem solver
- Learn to listen, and listen to learn
- Passion for learning
- Contribute to community
- Diverse knowledge
- Self sufficient
- Good social skills
- Cultural tolerance
- Strong academic base
- Exposure to technology

Table 16

- Think critically, apply what you know
- Know how to find information
- A person who has a broad sense of the world: different points of view, holds sense of the community and their role in the world, likely to be an active citizen and well informed, involved in improving community
- More open to many ideas, can listen to other perspectives
- A person who can reach their full/best potential
- More likely to hold a job and be contributing members of society

Table 17

- Able to communicate orally and in written form successfully
- Is well rounded in many disciplines (e.g. art, music, math, drama etc.)
- Can think critically and problem solve
- Has a global view beyond an academic setting
- Continues to both learn and share experience and knowledge with others
- Is a lifelong learner

Table 18

- Self-motivated and determined

- Literate
- Strong communication skills
- Multiple experiences
- Balanced
- Give back to society/active participant in community
- Technological skills
- Sense of humor
- Problem solvers/critical thinkers
- Inquisitive – knows how to ask questions and where to go for answers
- Objective and thinks for self

How is our community better because of public education?

Common themes that emerged when people at the Dec. 1 meeting were asked how our community is better because of public education are summarized in the bullets below.

- Strengthens economy
- Creates engaged citizens who contribute to community
- Provides equal opportunities to all people
- Engenders values of tolerance
- Makes the community safer
- Community benefits from facilities and events
- Creates a sense of community both within the school and in the larger community
- Public education is the underpinning of our democracy

Table 1

- Thriving economy
- Safer streets
- More engaged citizens/giving back: vote, contribute, philanthropy, share, mentoring
- More civil, respectful and tolerant
- Creates equality (debatable)

Table 2

- Increases community service
- Education gives us choices
- Creates people who are self-supporting
- Strengthens the economy
- Fosters good decision making
- Creates an educated electorate
- Instrument of a cohesive democracy

Table 3

- Not sure our community is better
- Personal freedom, egalitarianism leads to self-actualization
- Basic human values

Table 6

- Learn how to build community by building community in schools
- People learn how to link up with institutions, how to connect and access resources
- Students are valued in school and learn to anticipate being valued in life
- Fosters tolerance, understanding, open mindedness
- Community benefits because it is composed of people who make good decisions
- People are aware of their gifts and they can give these gifts to their community, how they contribute, they become an asset instead of a liability, a help and not a drain.

Table 8

- Exposes students to a diverse community
- Allows government to function
- Cohesive instrument of democracy
- Infrastructure is built on knowledge gained through public education

Table 9

- Every student is given the same opportunity without limits
- Opens the world up to student (cultures/ethnicities)
- Develops mutual respect and overcomes biases in diverse global world
- Social skills

Table 12

- Well educated electorate beneficial to democracy
- Outward focus, not just inward
- School is a place where people are accepted and welcome
- Families benefit from school functions, resources, outreach, facilities
- Offers educational choices
- Creates givers, not just takers
- People recognize their social responsibility
- Facilities for public use

Table 13

- Contributes to arts
- Library

- Increased productivity
- Healthier community
- More innovative
- People-resource to support
- Community minded
- Builds bridges between diverse groups
- Address issues that impact society
- Value social services/more self sufficient
- Build appreciation for diversity
- Quality of life is better
- Note that public education has failed some individuals in our society

Table 14

- People are involved in the community in a variety of roles – work, volunteer
- Without public education people would be excluded from the community
- Standard of living is raised for everyone
- More learning opportunities
- Create people who care for us and our environment

Table 15

- Better educated workforce
- Productive member
- Lower cost to community in the long run
- A way of delivering services that students might not receive otherwise
- Creates structure and consistency

Table 16

- More likely to be a better citizen of the country, the state and the world
- Because of diversity in the ASD, people are more respectful of all people of all ethnicities
- Creates contributing members of the community, good workers, hold jobs, volunteer with youth and social services
- Because our children are educated they have opportunities to grow into contributing people. They will have more ways to contribute to society. Can do more good.

Table 17

- Provides people better preparation to enter society and further their education
- Public education is accessible to all families and allows them to interact with community

- Creates opportunity to interact with a variety of people and situations and which can be applied to situations and people in the community

Table 18

- Levels the playing field
- Sense of community
- Society benefits and depends on educated citizens
- Youth of today will need to solve current issues and discover solutions

BUDGET EXERCISE

Table 5: Clark Dialogue Budget Exercise Summary

Budget Category	Current Budget FY 2011-12	Average Cut	Percent Reduction	Percent Groups Recommending Cuts to Category
Instruction	\$304 M	\$3.55 M	-1.17%	73%
Special Education Instruction	\$85 M	\$0.85 M	-1.01%	45%
Special Education Support	\$27 M	\$0.30 M	-1.12%	36%
Student Support Services	\$33 M	\$1.40 M	-4.19%	64%
Instruction Support Services	\$25 M	\$0.96 M	-3.80%	82%
School Administration	\$24 M	\$1.06 M	-4.44%	82%
School Administration Support Services	\$17 M	\$0.39 M	-2.25%	55%
District Administration	\$5 M	\$0.05 M	-0.92%	36%
District Administration Support Services	\$20 M	\$0.37 M	-1.85%	55%
Operations + Maintenance	\$79 M	\$1.72 M	-2.17%	82%
Student Activities	\$7 M	\$0.48 M	-7.16%	45%
Transportation	\$22 M	\$0.87 M	-4.03%	55%
Community Services	\$1 M	\$0.00 M	-0.85%	27%

The category with the smallest percent reduction in budget was District Administration; the largest percent reduction was to Student Activities which was pulled down significantly by one group that wanted to reduce this category by nearly half. The general sentiment expressed by meeting participants was that student activities are a relatively minor portion of the budget and they can have significant positive impact on students, in particular high risk students.

While some meeting participants expressed a desire to leave Instruction, Special Ed Instruction and Special Ed Support alone for fear of direct negative impacts to students, more than half of the groups made cuts to Instruction. Many groups reported feeling

compelled to cut Instruction because it represents such a large portion of the overall budget.

Operations and Maintenance is another category where most groups recommended cuts. Attendees consistently indicated a desire to see the district implement more energy efficiency measures including user behavior changes. Several participants also indicated they felt more control of maintenance at the school building level could help to control costs.

Groups that were unable to find consensus on the budget exercise recommended: taxing to the cap (repeated by two groups), cut two percent across each department, reinstate the school tax, and move to a four day school week (repeated by two groups).

Summary of comments on suggested budget cuts by category

Comments submitted under each budget category are summarized below. Note that numbers in parenthesis indicate the number of times a comment was written down.

Instruction

- **Why/how to cut** – use supplies more efficiently (2), cut elementary level band and orchestra and elementary ignite from all non-title IX schools, increase class size by 0.5/class by redistricting neighborhoods, utilize more online instruction, decrease technology teaching staff
- **Potential impacts** - lower teacher morale, decreased quality of instruction (2), increase class size

Special Education

- **Why/how to cut** – ratio of staff to students too high, too high cost, move to more inclusion
- **Potential impacts** - students who need direct instruction and might lose some

Special Education Support Services

- **Why/how to cut** – cut teacher consultants are not getting to enough teachers, not adding value
- **Potential impacts** - none noted

Student Support Services

- **Why/how to cut** – cut nurses assistants, middle school career resources, better workplace efficiencies, get rid of graduation counselor
- **Potential impacts** - job losses, reduction in services to students

Instruction Support Services

- **Why/how to cut** – use more tech solutions, reduce audio-visual supplies, cut teacher consultants are not getting to enough teachers and not adding value, cut

library aides (2), one librarian is enough if use aides (2), fewer supplemental resources and instructional coaches

- **Potential impacts** – some students don't have access to home computer/internet, reduced quality of instruction, professional development and training not available

School Admin

- **Why/how to cut** – reduce assistant principals at the high school level (7)
- **Potential impacts** – less evaluation of teachers, more turnover, increased workload (2), job losses, reduction services to students

School Admin Support Services

- **Why/how to cut** – career resource and purchasing could be part time
- **Potential impacts** – none noted

District Admin

- **Why/how to cut** – none noted
- **Potential impacts** – none noted

District Admin Support Services

- **Why/how to cut** – not efficient, more online resources, cut down on paper
- **Potential impacts** – reduce staffing

Operations and Maintenance

- **Why/how to cut** – look for building/utility efficiencies (3), find ways to partner with community (2), make work-order system more efficient, cut daily maintenance - not the long term stuff.
- **Potential impacts** – dirty, dilapidated buildings, loss of jobs, buildings would have to wait longer for maintenance and might create safety issues

Student Activities

- **Why/how to cut** – outsource sports/activities, have two sports - x-country running/skiing
- **Potential impacts** – reduction in activities

Student Transportation

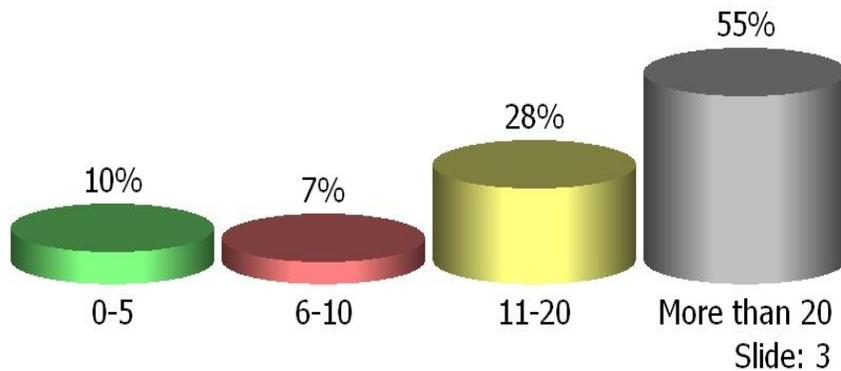
- **Why/how to cut** – stagger 1/2 elementary schools start times by 45 minutes to reduce the number of buses, high school students can walk two miles to the bus stop, middle school students can walk 1.5 miles, cut cabs, use city bus service in secondary school
- **Potential impacts** – requires change in families and daycare, safety and attendance can be negatively impacted

Community Services

- **Why/how to cut** – none noted
- **Potential impacts** – none noted

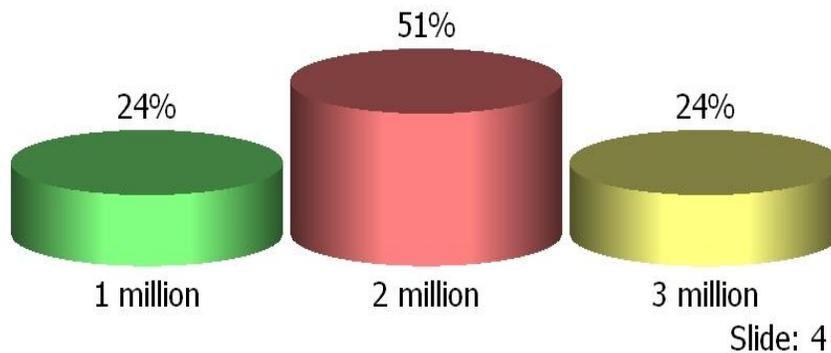
Consensor™ Results

How many years have you lived in Anchorage?

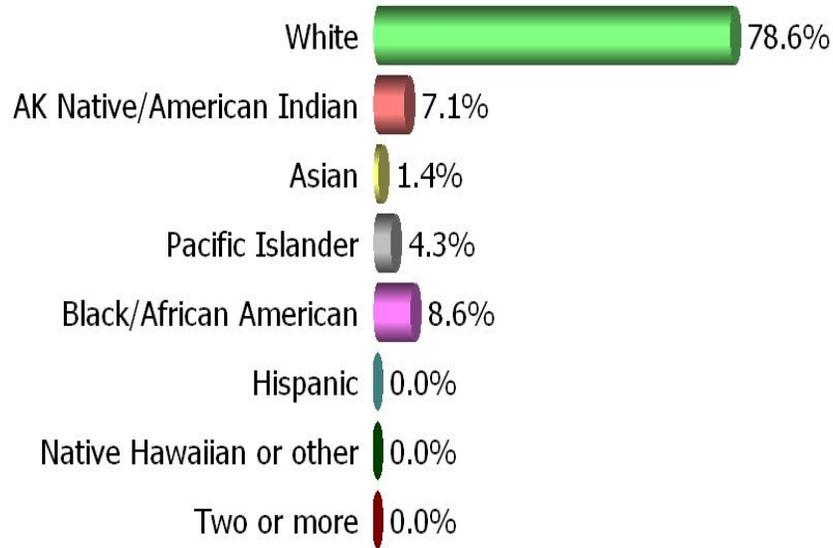


How many miles do Anchorage School District Buses drive each year?

Correct answer is 3 million



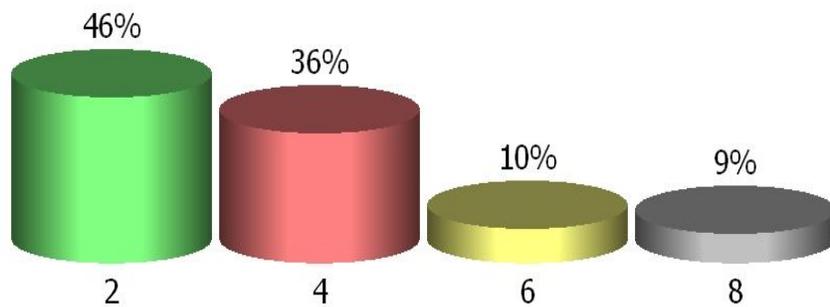
What race or ethnicity do you identify as?



Slide: 6

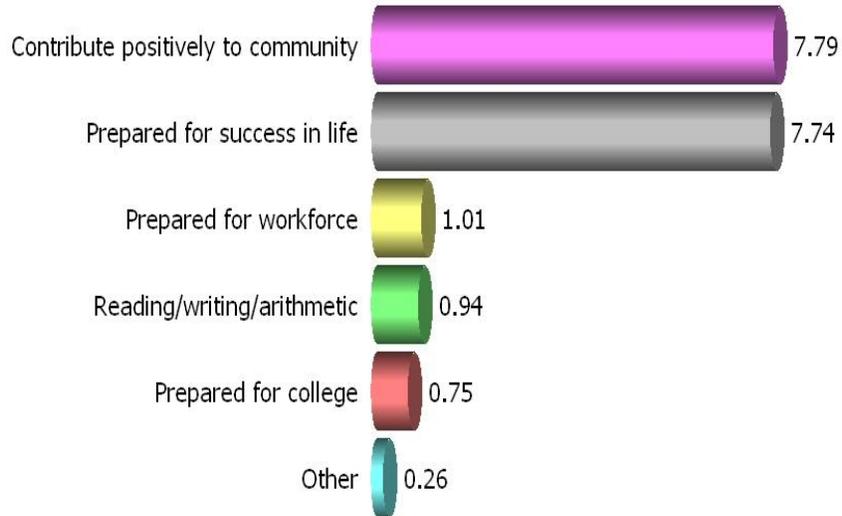
How many principals were at West/Romig 30 years ago?

The correct answer is 8



Slide: 7

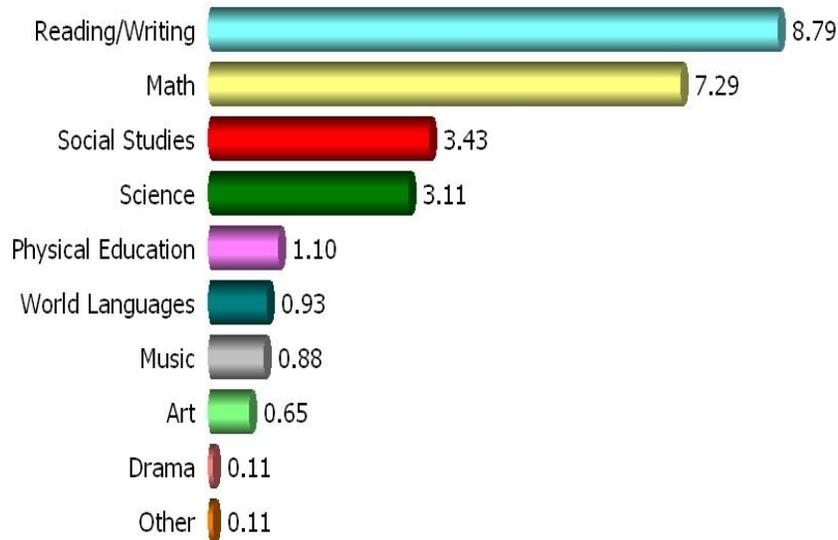
Which of the following statements most accurately reflect your feelings about the role of public education in Anchorage?



education values

Slide: 8

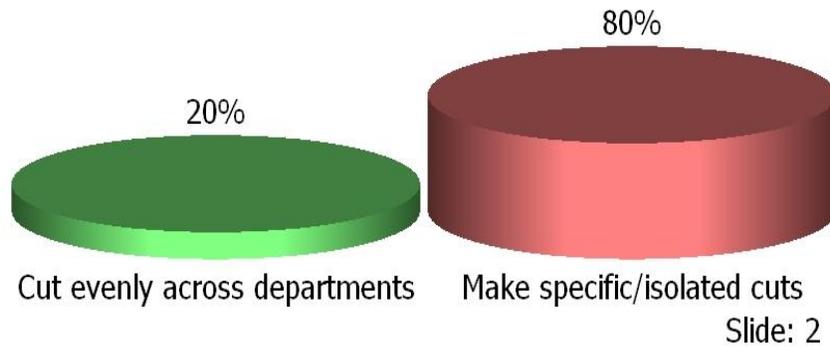
Which education programs do you think are most vital?



vital programs

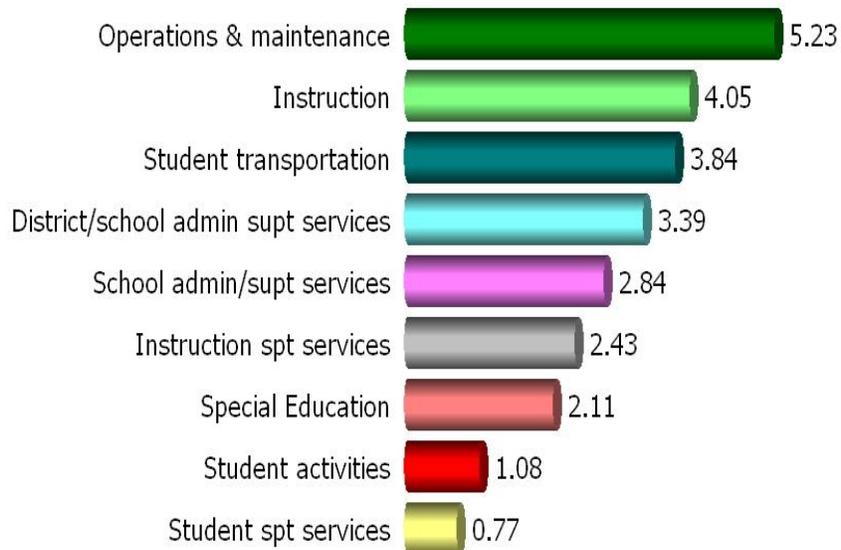
Slide: 9

If the district needs to make budget cuts, would you prefer they:



Slide: 2

If you were going to start cutting the budget, where would you start?



start cutting

Slide: 3

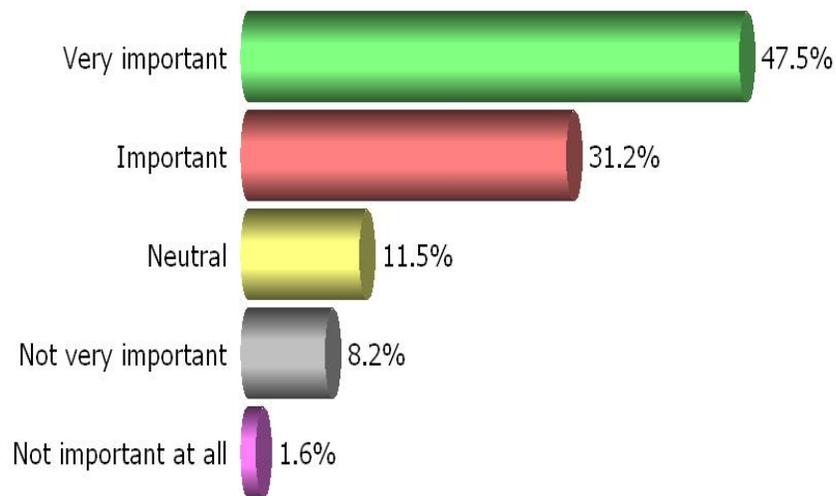
Instruction: where would you cut costs first?



instruction cuts

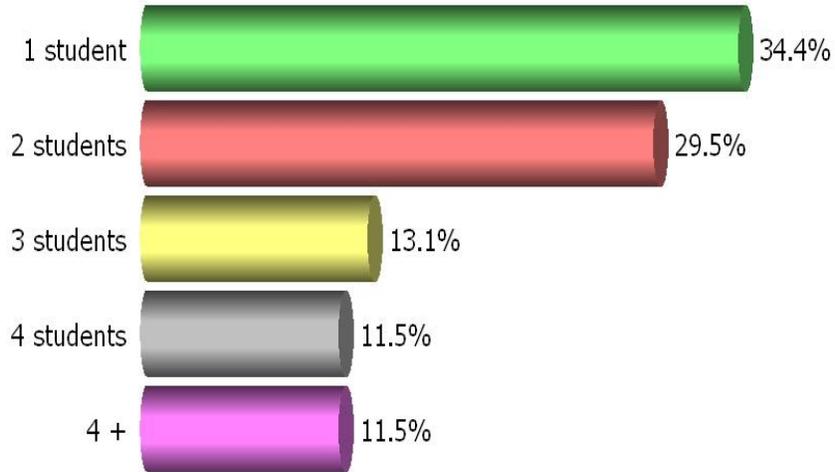
Slide: 4

How important is small class size to quality education?



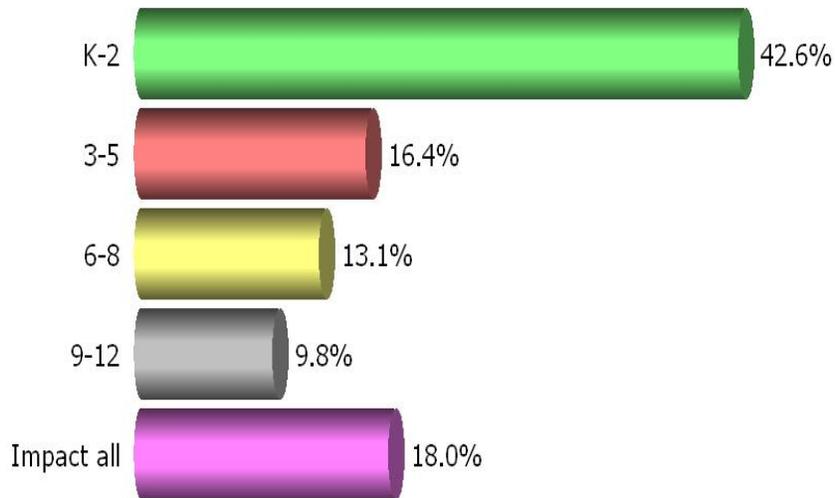
Slide: 5

If the district had to increase class size to help balance the budget, at what point would you feel concerned about the impacts to quality public education?



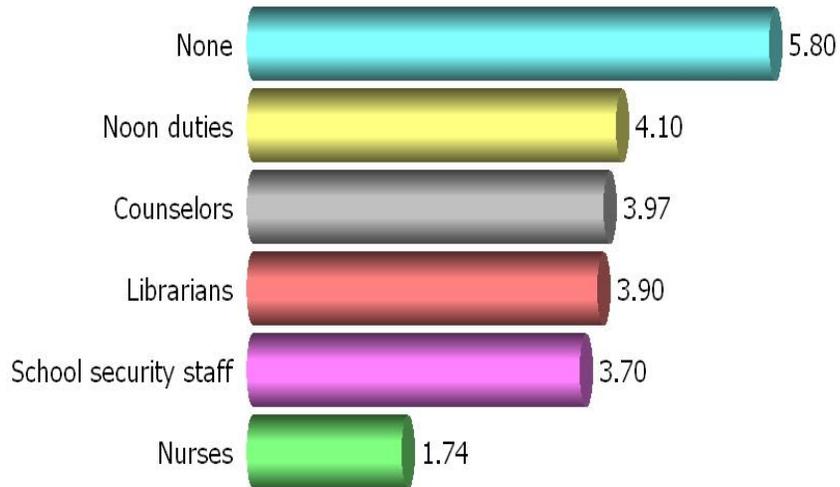
Slide: 6

If class size has to be increased in order to help balance the budget, is there an area that should NOT be impacted?



Slide: 7

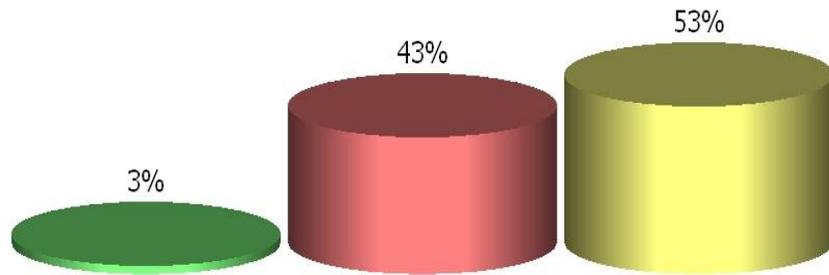
In the category of student support services where would you cut costs first?



student support cuts

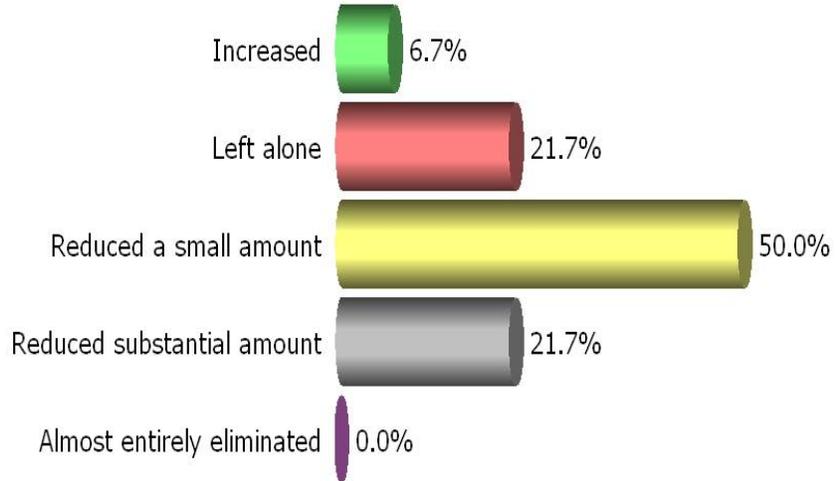
Slide: 8

Do you think teachers in Anchorage are paid:



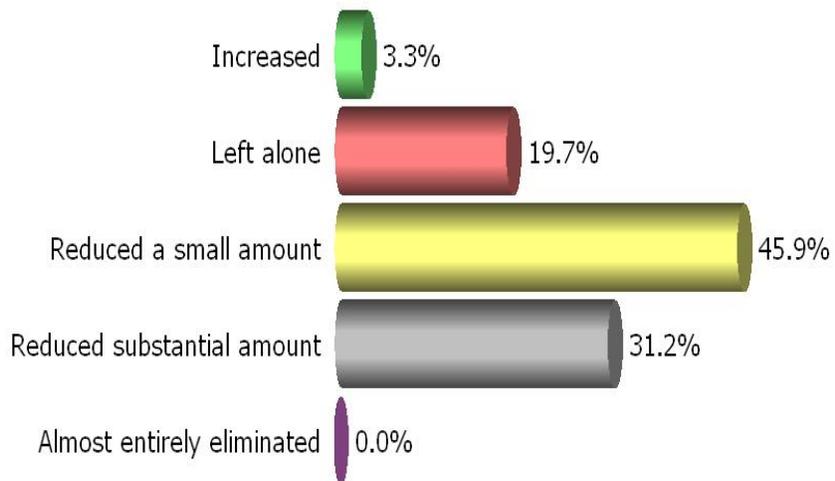
Slide: 9

Do you believe that the budget for school administration and school administration support should be:



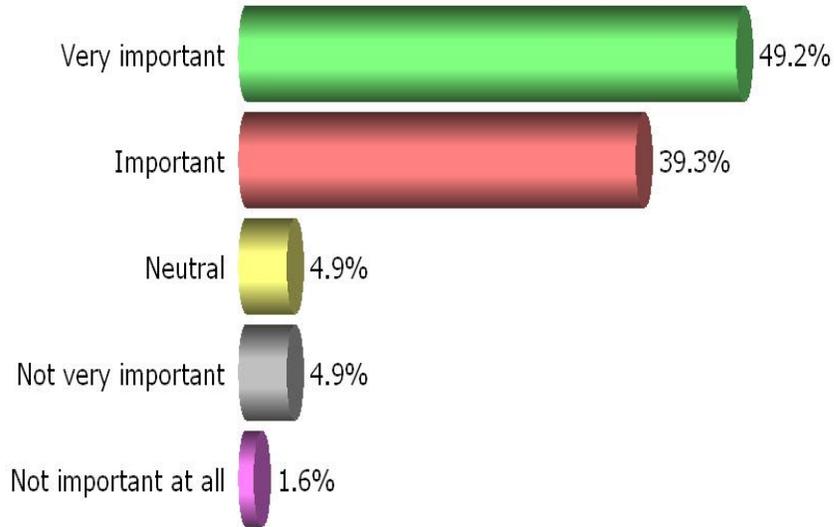
Slide: 10

Do you believe that the budget for district administration and district admin support services should be:



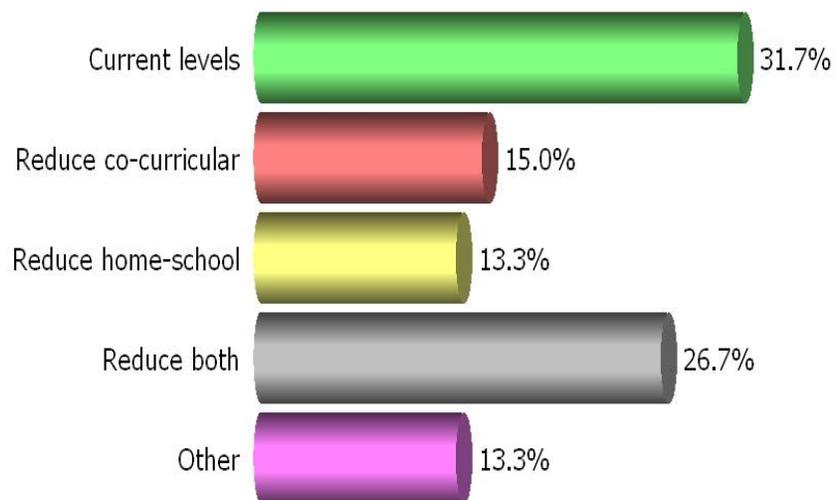
Slide: 11

How important is student access to co-curricular activities?



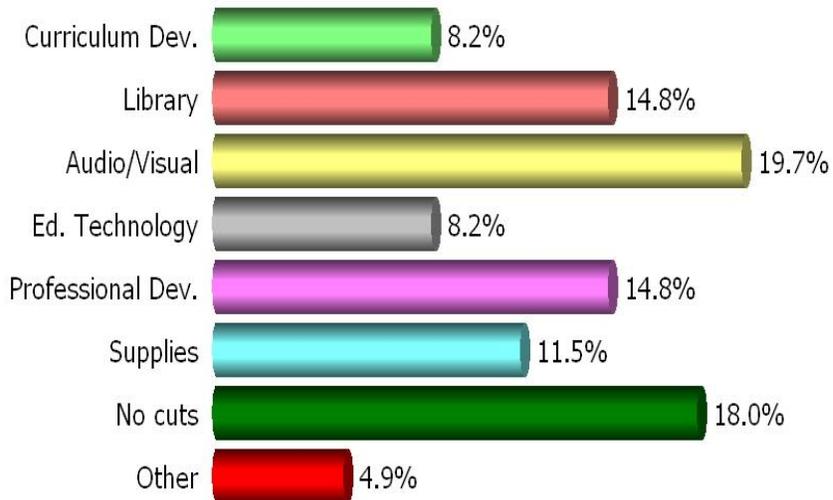
Slide: 12

Student transportation - Do you believe the Anchorage school district should:



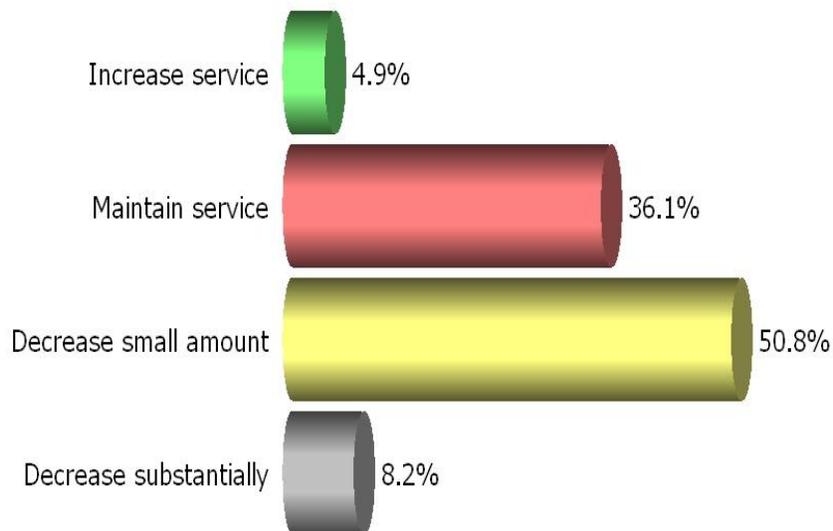
Slide: 13

From the instruction support services budget, from which category would you first cut?



Slide: 14

Regarding operations and maintenance, do you think the Anchorage School District should:



Slide: 15

Appendix III: Hanshew Middle School

ASD BUDGET DIALOGUE—DECEMBER 2, 2010

EDUCATION VALUES EXERCISE

What are the qualities of a well-educated person?

There is an almost universal understanding that being well educated includes having basic knowledge of reading, writing and arithmetic. Most people also felt basic understanding of arts, languages and science were characteristic of a well-educated person. Two “soft skills” that were mentioned again and again were strong communication/social skills, and empathy toward other people including different types of people; with this goes the often repeated notion that well-educated people are polite and respectful toward other people. Other common responses include:

- Determined and self-motivated
- Involved in the community
- Self-sufficient, has a good job
- Can problem solve and think critically
- Open minded
- Curious and a lifelong learner
- Can filter and interpret information
- Literate
- Determined
- Critical thinking skills
- Social skills – interpersonal
- More involved in the community
- Resourceful
- Economically productive
- Life-long learner/curious
- ** Empathy/compassion (there was some debate over this item)

Table 3

- Can speak with others
- Contribute to the community
- Someone who has gained enough from the school to have a basis and to have a desire to contribute learning
- A person who makes better choices

- Can problem solve
- Can critically think
- Can understand concepts
- Make independent and good decisions
- Can take leadership roles in the community
- Able to pass on knowledge and share

Table 4

- Responsible
- Effective communicators –verbal, written, various mediums
- Self-directed
- Mathematically proficient
- Computer proficient
- Community contributor
- Lifelong learner
- Empathetic
- Open minded
- International awareness
- Inquisitive

Table 5

- Renaissance man
- Problem solving skills
- Gets along and works with others
- Communication skills
- Courteous, polite and respectful
- Locates information easily
- Open to diversity of thought

Table 6

- A person who can use information in theoretical and practical ways
- One that can interact well with others in their community
- Has the ability to gain further education
- Person who is respectful, hard worker, kind, responsible, capable, confident, sociable, simple/uncomplicated, has a high degree of knowledge, honest

Table 7

- Someone who can communicate effectively
- Prepared for life after high school
- Someone who gives back to the community

- Open minded
- Take chances, not afraid to bring up new ideas
- Not only book-smart, but globally aware as well
- Empathizes with other and their ideas

Table 8

- Inquisitive, wants to learn more
- Driven to succeed, internally not just externally
- Thoughtful, civil and constructive
- Creative
- Good communication skills
- Knows basic skills to succeed in life (on time, how to work with others etc.)
- Interpret and process information from various sources
- Problem solver
- Knows how to take care of themselves

Table 11

- Can read, write and articulate their thoughts
- Knowledgeable about who they are and where they come from, place in country & community
- Able to take advantage of their environment and opportunities presented to them
- A well educated person takes the skills they learn and retains and applies them
- Able to analyze media and information, trained in critical thinking

Table 12

- Well rounded
- Understands curriculum
- Well read
- Goal setter
- Challenges and adapts
- Understands information a
- Collaboration/teamwork
- Adapt and analyze to handle whatever comes up
- Open to diversity of thought and culture

Table 14

- Good communication skills, works well with others
- Critical thinking
- Broad knowledge base

- Common sense
- Has ability to find and apply information
- Lifelong learner, knows how to learn
- Responsible, thinks before they act
- Can adapt to changing situations
- Curious about what is around them, self-motivated
- Compassionate, care about the people around them
- Can analyze information, looks ahead
- Self-sufficient, resourceful
- Goal setting
- Can transfer and apply info

Table 15

- Able to think and reason
- Able to read and write, articulate verbally
- Lifelong desire/ability to learn
- Connected to and contributes to society
- Good citizen
- Ability to be successful in life – including prepared for college or workforce

Table 17

- One who can speak well in public
- Can apply their learning to real life
- One who can solve problems
- One who contributes to society
- One who is tolerant of others
- Curious about surroundings and world
- Can communicate well
- Literate in all subject areas, reading, writing, math, voc-tech

Table 19

- Manners and consideration of others
- Articulate, fluent in standard English
- Think independently
- Confident
- Willing to ask questions – knows how and where to access information
- Open minded
- Able to make better decisions
- Able to admit wrong and when they don't know something
- Physically fit – well rounded

- Curious

Table 20

- Can think logically – looks at the past to see what has been tried before
- A person with balanced perspective of your role and place in the world
- To act with discernment, judgment and creativity
- Well rounded
- Able to share your qualities and abilities with others
- Can face challenges with an open mind and the tools and confidence to meet these challenges

Table 21

- Cordial in public
- Developed rational judgment
- Daily independent living in all areas of life
- Positive contribution to wider community
- Understanding of basics – reading writing and math
- Argues with logic rather than passion
- Prepared to go out and live independently through a well-rounded education
- Good job
- Respect from others and be respectful
- Have values
- Good communication with others
- Good listener and knows how to approach people
- Good citizen

Table 23

- Respect
- Good manners
- Discipline
- Good preparation to person in any society
- Literate

How is our community better because of public education?

Public education strengthens the economy by generating a prepared and stable workforce, by allowing parents who might not be able to afford childcare to work, and by providing jobs within the school district itself. It creates a population that has basic skills needed to be self-sufficient, make informed decisions and continue to learn. Gives everyone the same opportunity to better themselves regardless of where they came

from. Builds community and fosters a feeling of connectedness in families and students. Other commonly cited ways that public education makes our community better are:

- Breaks down cultural barriers and creates appreciation for diversity
- Raises the level of civic involvement and discourse
- Reduces crime

Table 1 & 2

- Stable workforce
- Less crime
- Better leaders
- Public education allows everyone access to education – which then creates a citizenry with the qualities of a well-educate person
- **Exposes students to diversity (there was some debate over this item)
- **Promotes civic engagement (there was some debate over this item)

Table 3

- Children know how to read and write
- Employment for community members
- Safer environment
- Helps to build social skills
- Community builder
- Gives parents the option to work

Table 4

- All kids have access, regardless of socio-economic status
- Diversity strengthens our community

Table 5

- Investing in leaders of tomorrow
- Equal access for all people
- Helps to improve involvement in community
- Our government requires an educated public
- Attract business/economic growth
- Breaks down cultural barriers

Table 6

- Giving the right to knowledge the students will follow civil and community laws to benefit the school and community
- Diverse background to benefit the community

Table 7

- It gives us the freedom to learn, which is a form of freedom of speech
- So many role models have come out of public education
- Allows diversity
- It's a place to show creativity and bring it back to the community
- It gives us the opportunity for public input

Table 8

- Everyone has an opportunity to learn and succeed
- Glue that holds together democracy
- Raises level of civil discourse
- We can't compete in a global community without an educated workforce
- Skills to give the workforce opportunity to succeed
- Interact with all different people
- Advance the common good
- Provides a sense of civics, where we can provide a role in society

Table 11

- It does the things listed in the first question, particularly for adults who do not feel equipped or are unable to educate their own children
- Creates opportunity

Table 12

- Exposure to world cultures, languages, types of people
- Analytic skills
- Better health
- Lower crime
- Better sense of community
- Environment for creative community

Table 15

- Gives us ability to govern ourselves
- Provides connection within community
- Provides opportunities for all kids
- Creates a richer community

Table 14

- Better voters (informed and have critical thinking skills)
- Promotes tolerance, increases the well-being of the community
- Increases employment, helps grow the economy

- Helps people give back to community
- Makes the community safer, gives kids a home away from home
- Draws kids away from negative influences, provides a place for troubled kids to go for help and welcomes families
- Cares for families in need
- Creates role models and community/national leaders

Table 17

- Exposes children and parents to diverse cultures
- Supplies everyone with a common voice with which to communicate
- Levels the playing field
- Equality of opportunities for all children
- Helps build the community
- Offers choice
- Supplies employable people

Table 19

- None

Table 20

- Creates a future with more choices
- Diverse and informed electorate
- Workforce with employable skills
- Our youth are better able to face global challenges
- Our community is a product of public education – doctors, laborers, teachers, assemblymen etc.
- Shows the way for people with diverse backgrounds to work together
- Promotes cultural acceptance and awareness of cultural diversity

Table 21

- Foundation for improving the quality of civilization
- Teaches how to interact with each other in a positive way
- Teaches value of continued learning throughout lifetime
- Teaches social skills and life lessons to apply every day
- Instills a sense of community
- Majority of people can read, write and use basic math

Table 23

- Keep our kids out of trouble (drugs and crime)
- Equality – everyone has a chance to go to school
- Good foundation to our society, socialization and stability

- ESL components
- Gets people ready to be useful to society
- Gives people a better lifestyle
- People from any social status can be part of a school
- Gives people what they need to be successful

BUDGET EXERCISE

The budget category that saw the smallest reduction in budget was Community Services, closely followed by Special Education and Special Education Support. The category that saw the largest increase was Instruction Support Services with an average 7.2 percent reduction. Special Education Instruction was only selected for any reductions by one quarter of the groups, less often than any other category with the exception of Community Services. Instruction was chosen for some level of reduction 83 percent of the time. While many attendees expressed concern about reducing Instruction but felt compelled to do so because it represents such a large piece of the overall budget. Many groups expressed a desire to increase revenue rather than cut budget categories.

Table 6: Hanshew Dialogue Budget Exercise

Budget Category	Current Budget FY 2011-12	Average Cut	Percent Reduction	Percent Groups Recommending Cuts to Category
Instruction	\$304 M	6.94 M	-2.3%	83%
Special Education Instruction	\$85 M	0.33 M	-0.4%	25%
Special Education Support	\$27 M	0.15 M	-0.5%	33%
Student Support Services	\$33 M	0.37 M	-1.1%	33%
Instruction Support Services	\$25 M	1.83 M	-7.2%	67%
School Administration	\$24 M	1.21 M	-5.0%	58%
School Administration Support Services	\$17 M	0.63 M	-3.6%	50%
District Administration	\$5 M	0.13 M	-2.5%	42%
District Administration Support Services	\$20 M	0.39 M	-1.9%	42%
Operations & Maintenance	\$79 M	2.31 M	-2.9%	75%
Student Activities	\$7 M	0.05 M	-0.8%	33%
Transportation	\$22 M	0.53 M	-2.5%	50%
Community Services	\$1 M	0.001 M	-0.2%	8%

Groups that did not reach consensus on the budget exercise recommended:

- save rather than cut
- uniform cuts across all departments (2 groups)
- temporarily freeze wages (2 groups)

- reduce school week to four days and preserve class size
- leave top four budget categories intact to reduce impact on students

Summary of comments on suggested budget cuts by category

Comments submitted under each budget category are summarized below. Note that numbers in parenthesis indicate the number of times a comment was written down

Instruction

- **Why/how to cut** – one student per class increase seems fine, cut electives that are not vital to learning, allow attrition to reduce staff size, fewer technology updates (2), fewer new pilot programs, consolidate services, increase hours per day and reduce to four school days per week reducing all costs. Reduce books, reduce print materials (4), and replace printed material with technology solutions. Cut gifted teachers - use inclusive model with consult, maintain class size at current levels, include kids in effort to reduce waste in their schools, require students to bring ream of paper first week of school, solicit paper contribution from community, standardize books and buy in bulk
- **Potential impacts** - parent participation in class, crowded classes and fewer choices for electives, increase in class size

Special Education

- **Why/how to cut** – none noted
- **Potential impacts** – none noted

Special Education Support Services

- **Why/how to cut** – none noted
- **Potential impacts** - none noted

Student Support Services

- **Why/how to cut** – there is no need to have both a counselor and a graduation counselor, cut student resource officers (3), give student resource officers other school duties
- **Potential impacts** – none noted

Instruction Support Services

- **Why/how to cut** – instruction support services staff tend to be disconnected to building level activity, peers can teach each other (teacher to teacher) and teacher experts should be returned to the classroom (3), libraries and professional development are not used that much, should cut them. Maintain library services and supply budgets

- **Potential impacts** – fill these functions with expertise at the school building level, let staff who are capable oversee department choice, duties and leadership. Building level people have more accountability and are less expensive, peers teaching each other might not work

School Admin

- **Why/how to cut** – combine principal and vice principal jobs, combine duties for discipline, activities and staff services (2). Too many principals per school (2), add people to the front line
- **Potential impacts** – none noted

School Admin Support Services

- **Why/how to cut** – move to online books, reduce Xerox costs, encourage students to save paper, teach staff to use resources wisely
- **Potential impacts** – none noted

District Admin

- **Why/how to cut** – education center has ballooned in people, reduce, don't need as many administrators in general
- **Potential impacts** – none noted

District Admin Support Services

- **Why/how to cut** – none noted
- **Potential impacts** – none noted

Operations and Maintenance

- **Why/how to cut** – combine with city services, share equipment with city and between schools, turn off computers and lights when not in use, budget is big. Contract out night janitorial, day workers should be ASD because they are around kids. Have observed inefficiencies, too many personnel for simple tasks
- **Potential impacts** – deferred maintenance could result in more bonds

Student Activities

- **Why/how to cut** – none noted
- **Potential impacts** – none noted

Student Transportation

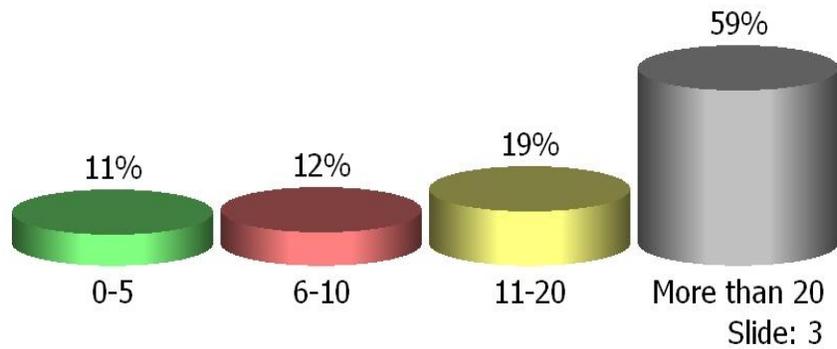
- **Why/how to cut** - improve route structure (2), poll high school students to see who is driving
- **Potential impacts** – might see overcrowding on busses, fewer routes, longer walk

Community Services

- **Why/how to cut** – Are we charging enough rent?
- **Potential impacts** – none noted

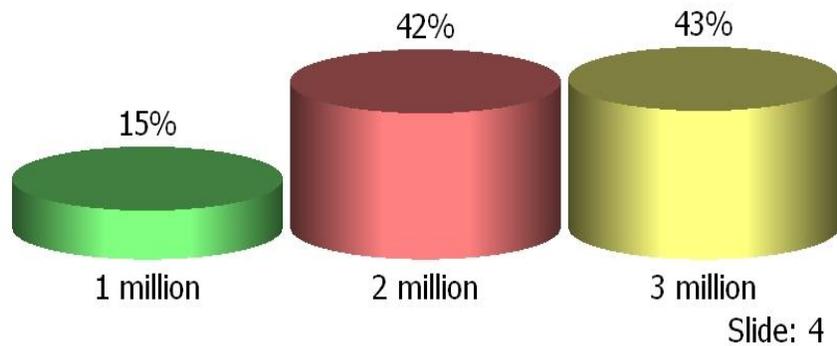
Consensor™ Results

How many years have you lived in Anchorage?

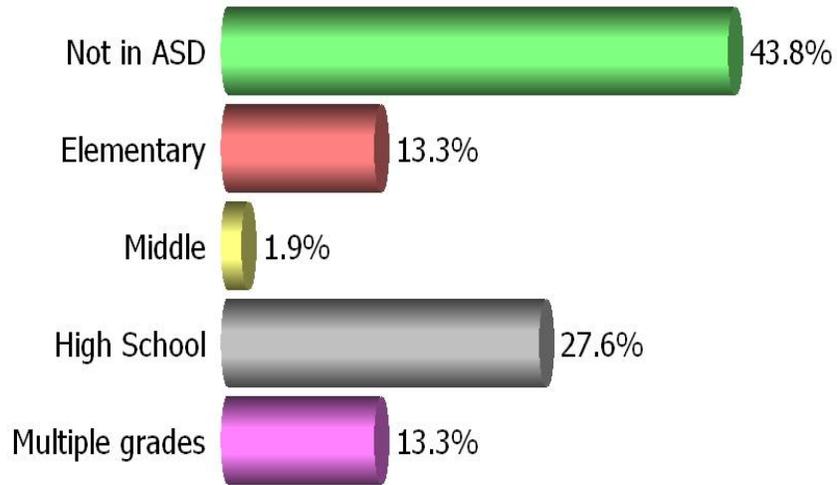


How many miles do Anchorage School District Buses drive each year?

The correct answer is 3 million

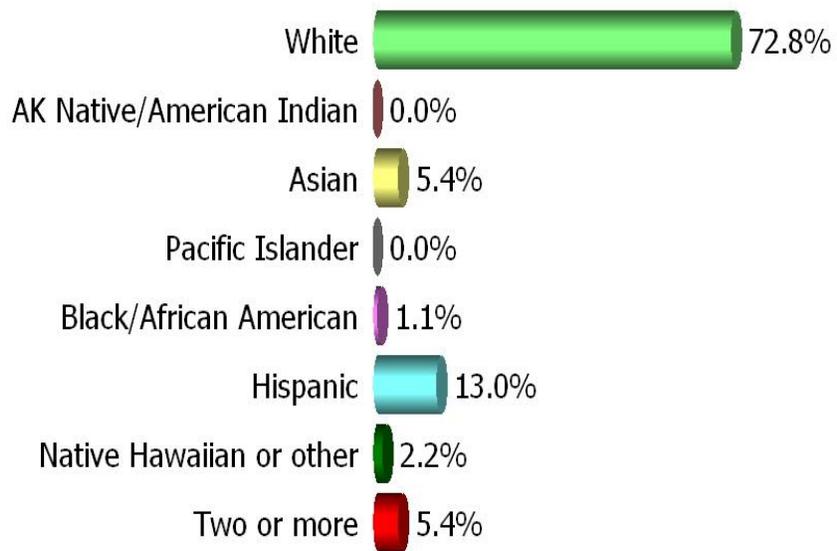


Do you have, or are you a student currently attending school in the Anchorage School District?



Slide: 5

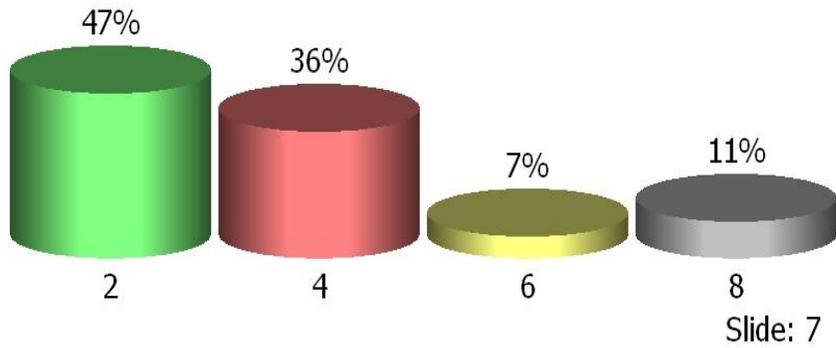
What race or ethnicity do you identify as?



Slide: 6

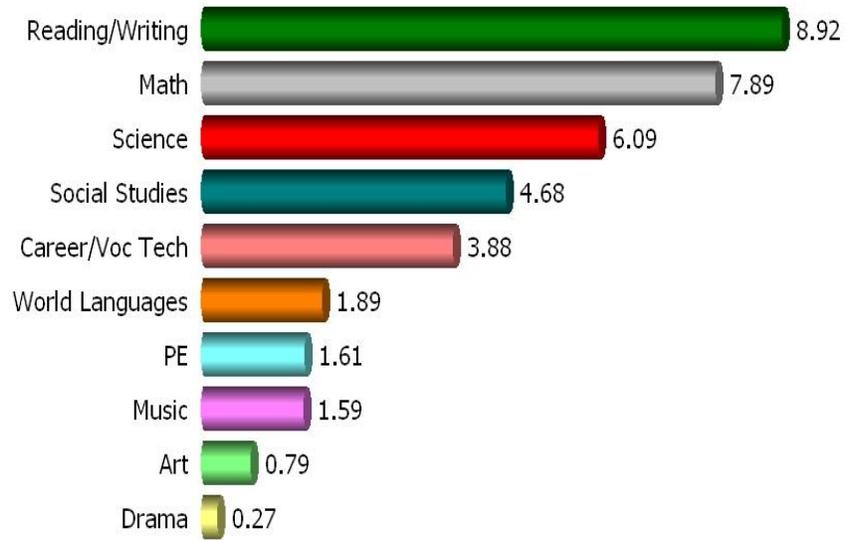
How many principals were at West/Romig 30 years ago?

The correct answer is 8



Slide: 7

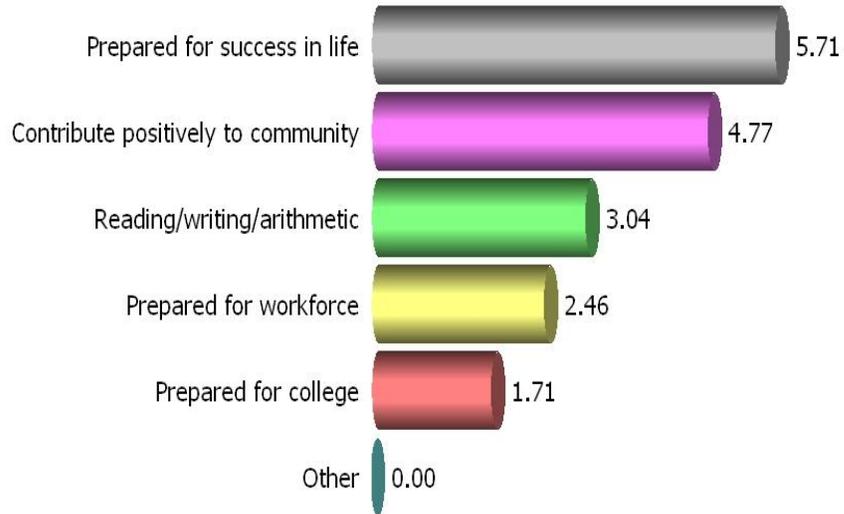
Which education programs do you think are most vital?



vital programs

Slide: 8

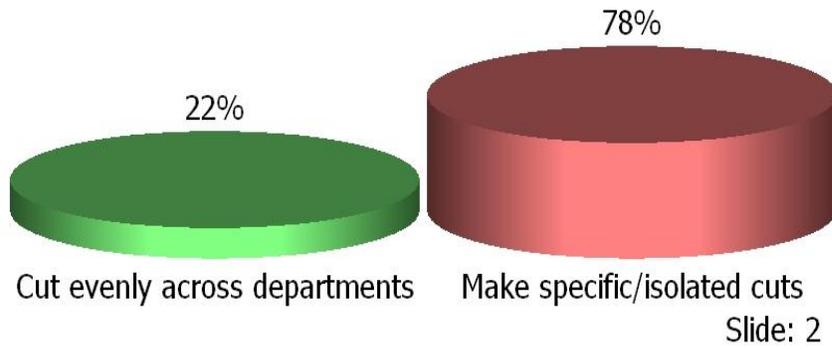
Which of the following statements most accurately reflect your feelings about the role of public education in Anchorage?



education values

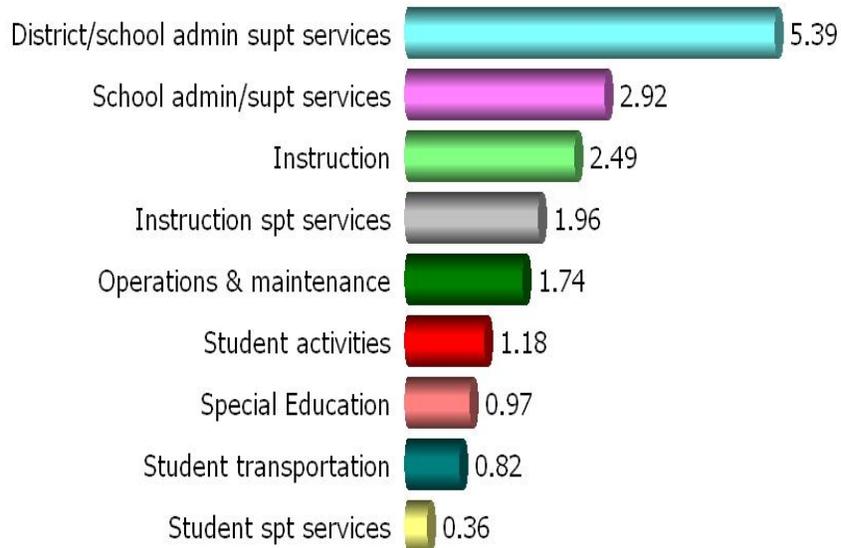
Slide: 9

If the district needs to make budget cuts, would you prefer they:



Slide: 2

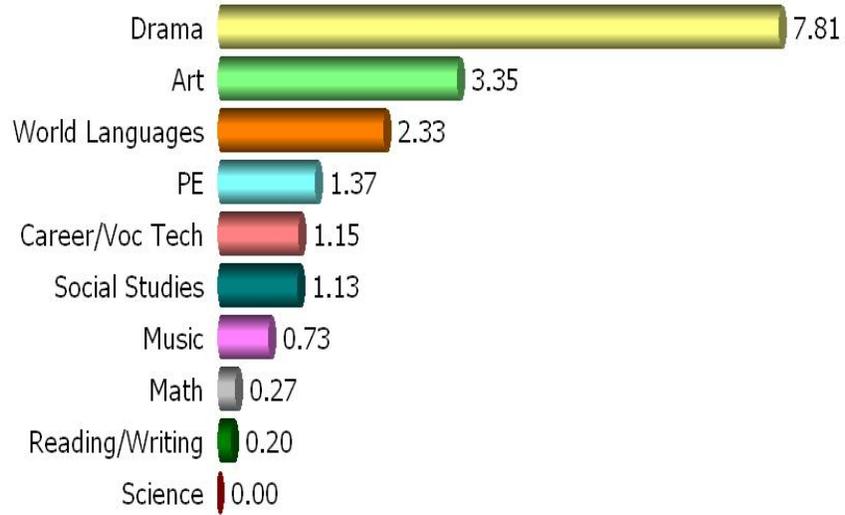
If you were going to start cutting the budget, where would you start?



start cutting

Slide: 3

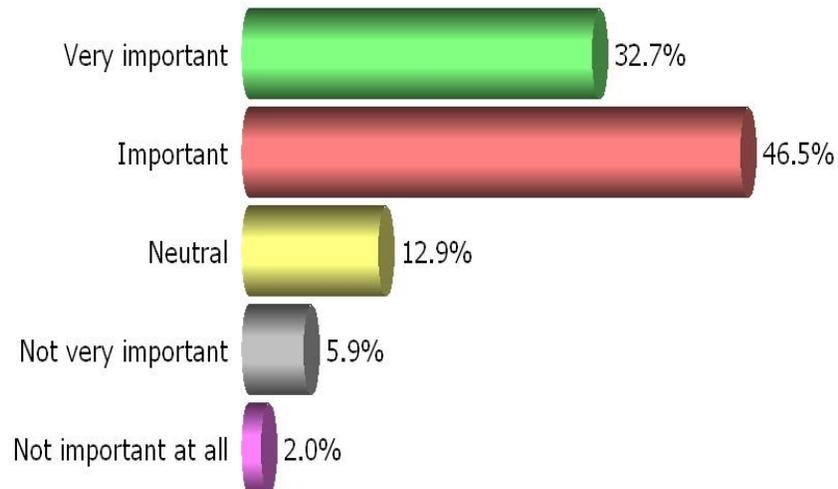
Instruction: where would you cut costs first?



instruction cuts

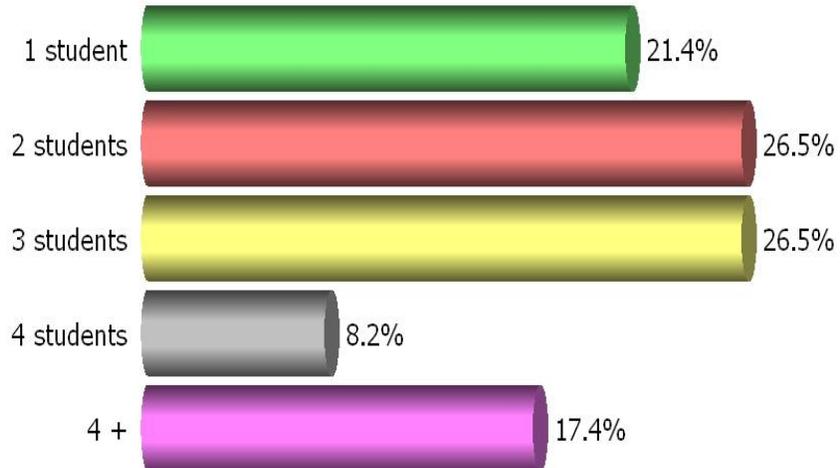
Slide: 4

How important is small class size to quality education?



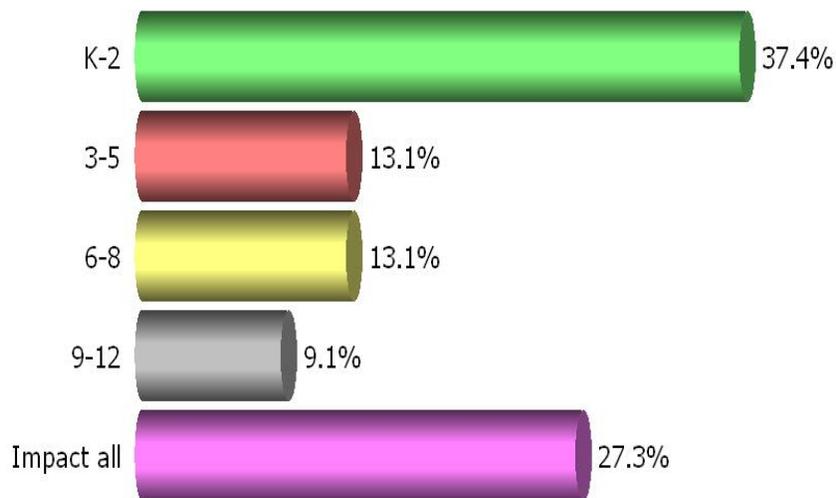
Slide: 5

If the district had to increase class size to help balance the budget, at what point would you feel concerned about the impacts to quality public education?



Slide: 6

If class size has to be increased in order to help balance the budget, is there an area that should NOT be impacted?



Slide: 7

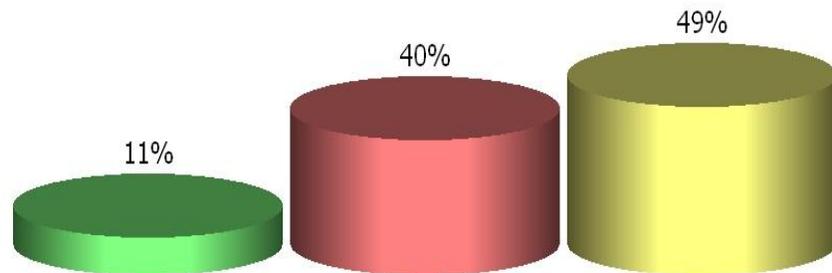
In the category of student support services where would you cut costs first?



student support cuts

Slide: 8

Do you think teachers in Anchorage are paid:



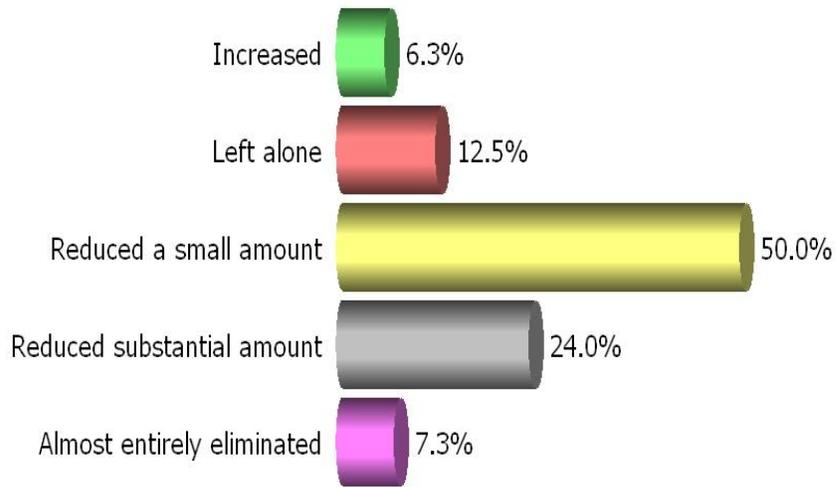
Too much

Just about right

Not enough

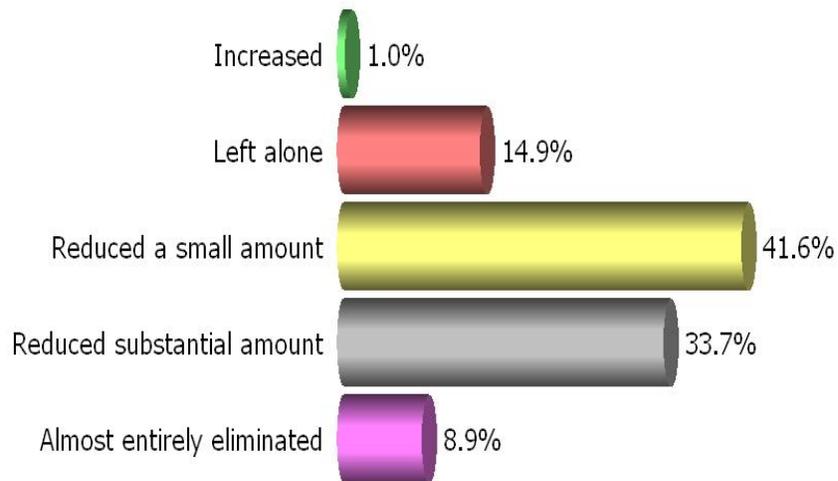
Slide: 9

Do you believe that the budget for school administration and school administration support should be:



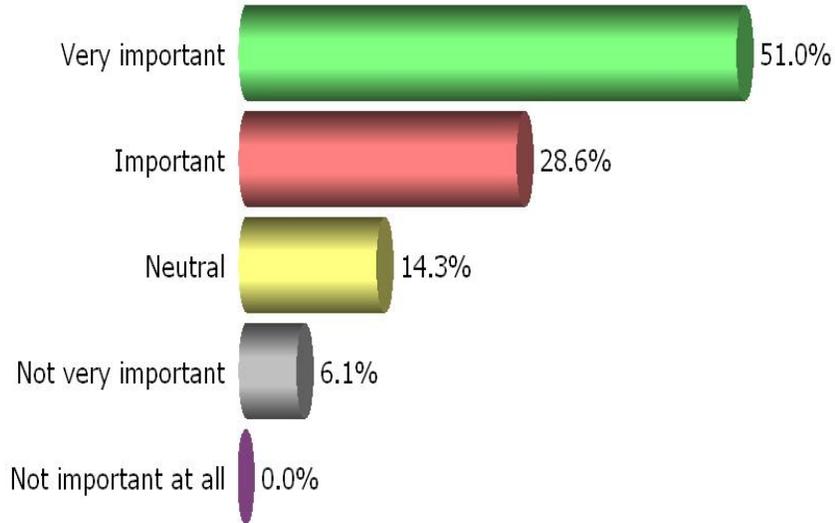
Slide: 10

Do you believe that the budget for district administration and district admin support services should be:



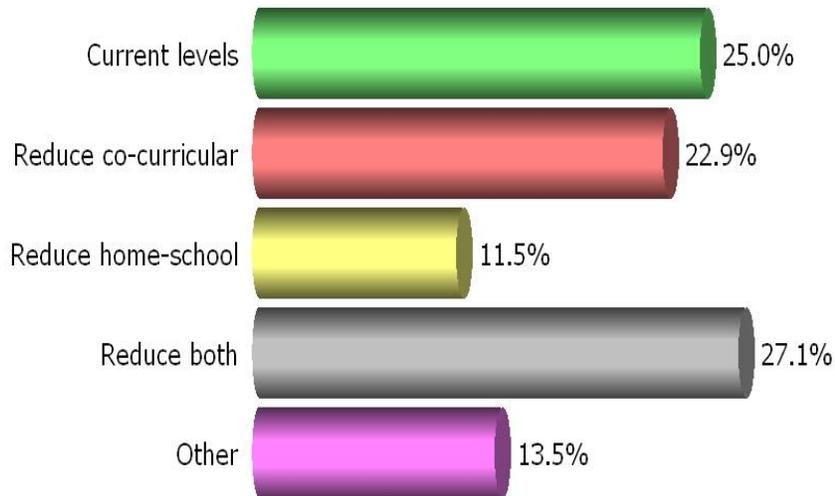
Slide: 11

How important is student access to student activities?



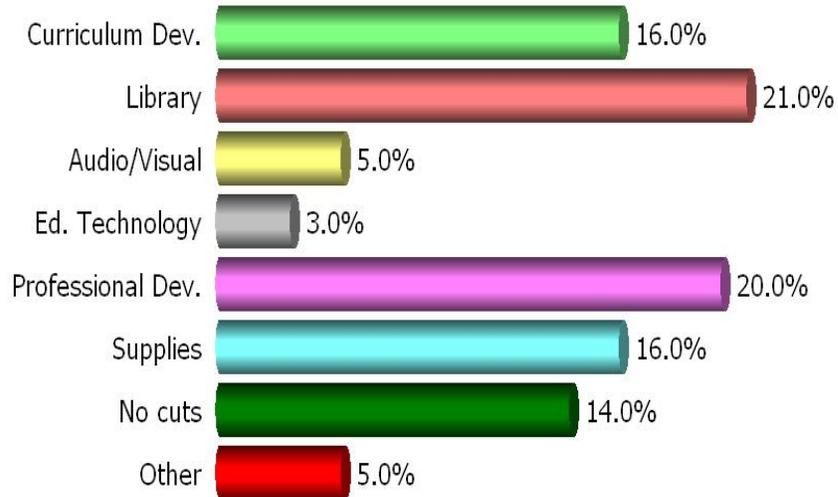
Slide: 12

Student transportation - Do you believe the Anchorage school district should:



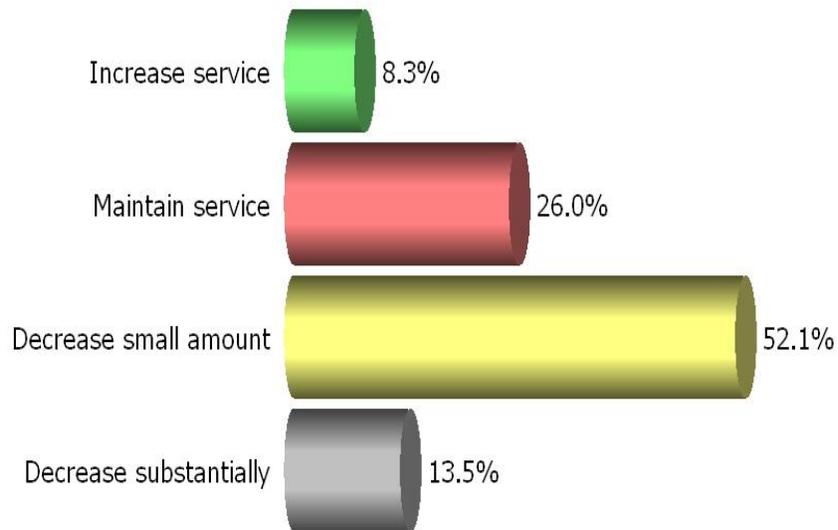
Slide: 13

From the instruction support services budget, from which category would you first cut?



Slide: 14

Regarding operations and maintenance, do you think the Anchorage School District should:



Slide: 15

Appendix IV: Gruening Middle School

ASD BUDGET DIALOGUE—DECEMBER 4, 2010

EDUCATION VALUES EXERCISE

What are the qualities of a well-educated person?

Well educated people are self-sufficient, knowledgeable, and skilled communicators. They are well rounded which means that they are proficient in basic academics including reading, writing and math and that they have knowledge of the arts. Well educated people understand their responsibility to the community; they are open-minded and appreciate perspectives and people who are different than themselves. Other characteristics that were commonly noted are in the bulleted list below:

- Critical thinker and problem solver
- Involved and active in the community
- Adaptable and competent

Table 1 (this group prioritized their answers, most important are listed first)

1. Knowledgeable
2. Critical thinker
3. Adaptable
4. Open minded
5. Well rounded
6. Can communicate ideas (spoken and written)

Table 2

- Well spoken
- Contributes to the community
- Well rounded and open minded
- Broad horizons
- Well informed
- Likes experience
- Socially engages in community
- Tends to educate and inform others around them
- Opinions are respected
- More marketable and competitive

Table 3

- Ability to communicate – oral and written
- Well rounded in math, language, social studies and the arts
- Ability to contribute to society
- Math skills at least at the consumer level
- Knowledge with global/historical perspective
- Recognition of responsibility to the community, as opposed to mere self interest

Table 4

- Can communicate their thoughts and with other
- Critical thinking
- Problem solving
- In practice of self-learning
- Basic proficiencies
- Exposure to arts and culture

Table 5

- Positive behavior
- Well rounded knowledge base
- Motivated
- Listener
- Doer
- Thinker
- Giver and helper
- Flexibility
- Well grounded

Table 6

- Life skills – checkbook, research ability, problem solving
- Critical thinking skills
- Lifelong learning – continue to want to learn
- Good communication skills
- Good sense of yourself – guidance counselors help know what you want to do, have plans
- Life planning – goal setting
- World view – awareness of other perspectives acknowledgment of differences
- Educated enough to have a better quality of life – with increased independence, involvement in community

Table 7

- Critical thinker
- Problem solver
- Aware of current issues
- Keep bias hidden
- Knowledge of basic grammar, written and spoken
- Awareness of history
- Embrace change
- Provide for family and community
- Service to others
- Open to new ideas and can work with others
- Well spoken
- Good communication
- Social skills
- Acceptable of different lifestyles
- Study skills
- Organization

Table 8

- Well skilled in the 3 Rs
- A civic understanding
- Knowledge of history and current events
- Able to collaborate, communicate and work as a team
- Critical thinker
- Understands the importance of protocols and norms
- Live independently and contribute to society
- Appreciation of the arts

Table 9

- Literate
- Well rounded
- Understands world issues
- Can think outside the box
- Knows how to find and access resources to synthesize information
- Knows education doesn't stop with formal schooling

Table 10

- Communicate effectively and cooperatively
- Respect of others views and opinions
- Lifelong learners with willingness to change viewpoints

- Socially responsible community members
- Contribute by helping those less fortunate

How is our community better because of public education?

One of the overriding themes of responses to this question was the idea that well educated people are better and more active citizens. That public education creates community and teaches people how to function in a larger group, what their roles and responsibilities are. There was also a lot of discussion surrounding the idea that public schools expose students and the larger community to an increasingly diverse population and foster tolerance and acceptance of different types of people.

Table 1

- Equality and opportunity
- Literate
- Gives choices and options
- Citizenship
- Technology
- Prepare for post-secondary education
- Help to prosper
- Sense of community
- Cultural events
- Social exposure

Table 2

- More people would be engaged in community interests
- Local job force will be sustained
- Have more well educated people in our community
- Can compete with the rest of the world
- Creates a sense of order and belonging

Table 3

- More stable
- Holistically healthier – mentally, physically and socially
- Sustainable workforce
- Well educated citizens

Table 4

- None

Table 5

- There for everyone who wants it

- Diverse information/input
- Community involvement

Table 6

- KCC – it works! Our community has business owners that got started at KCC
- Learn to interact with community
- Students are involved in community through student councils and in other ways
- Educated people are more likely to foster education

Table 7

- Open to all/everyone has a chance
- Knowledge of current issues
- Insight and knowledge of consequences
- Creates safer environment
- Provide a place for public assembly
- Current students = future workforce and leaders
- Accept differences
- Social skills
- Problem solvers working in the community

Table 8

- Quality community
- Children as students are exposed to empathy for those from all backgrounds
- Ensures opportunities for exposure to social norms and creates order
- Social tolerance

Table 9

- We get students involved in the community and contributing to the community
- Exposure to different viewpoints, appreciation and tolerance of our growing diversity
- People can get decent jobs after school

Table 10

- Being educated makes people contributors to society
- Gives everyone an opportunity to contribute to the community
- Improves society by 1. giving everyone basic skills and 2. Baseline national standards
- Kids have an idea of what society looks like and gives them some sense of community, it is inclusive instead of exclusive
- Raises awareness and consciousness of societal issues

BUDGET EXERCISE

Table 7: Gruening Dialogue Budget Exercise Summary

Budget Category	Current Budget FY 2011-12	Average Cut	Percent Reduction	Percent Groups Recommending Cuts by Category
Instruction	\$304 M	\$5.41 M	-1.8%	64%
Special Education Instruction	\$85 M	\$0.76 M	-0.9%	45%
Special Education Support	\$27 M	\$0.65 M	-2.4%	36%
Student Support Services	\$33 M	\$0.44 M	-1.3%	27%
Instruction Support Services	\$25 M	\$2.12 M	-8.3%	73%
School Administration	\$24 M	\$0.66 M	-2.7%	64%
School Administration Support Services	\$17 M	\$0.41 M	-2.4%	45%
District Administration	\$5 M	\$0.19M	-3.5%	36%
District Administration Support Services	\$20 M	\$0.67M	-3.4%	73%
Operations & Maintenance	\$79 M	\$2.47 M	-3.1%	64%
Student Activities	\$7 M	\$0.00 M	-0.0%	0%
Transportation	\$22 M	\$0.91 M	-4.2%	9%
Community Services	\$1 M	\$0.07 M	-13.6%	9%

At the December 4th budget dialogue meeting there were no groups that chose to cut any money from Student Activities; attendees noted the relatively small budget and the significant positive impact on students and community. The budget category that saw the largest decrease was community services, this is somewhat misleading as the intent of the groups making this recommendation was that ASD increase rental charges for facilities thereby increasing revenue and decreasing the cost of the district. After Community Services, Instruction Support Services saw the largest decrease in their budget at an average recommended reduction of more than eight percent; in addition to a large decrease this budget category was also recommended for reduction by groups 73 percent of the time indicating that most attendees saw this as an area for potential savings.

Summary of comments on suggested budget cuts by category

Comments submitted under each budget category are summarized below. Note that numbers in parenthesis indicate the number of times a comment was written down.

Instruction

- **Why/how to cut** – target testing and books, eliminate elective teacher planning time, consolidate schools, move non-teaching FTE to classroom
- **Potential impacts** - upset parents, teachers moving around

Special Education

- **Why/how to cut** – find efficiencies, do not cut staff, streamline paperwork
- **Potential impacts** – none noted

Special Education Support Services

- **Why/how to cut** - trim waste, increase class size, put teachers back in the classroom
- **Potential impacts** - fewer teachers, larger class size

Student Support Services

- **Why/how to cut** – share jobs, put teachers back in the classroom, cut recruiting budget
- **Potential impacts** – job loss

Instruction Support Services

- **Why/how to cut** – can be done in house at schools for less cost, include tech and IT people, put teachers back in classroom, cut part of recruiting budget
- **Potential impacts** – none noted

School Admin

- **Why/how to cut** – too much admin at the high school level (3), increase workload
- **Potential impacts** - loss of jobs, more efficient maintenance, but keep schools working and safe

School Admin Support Services

- **Why/how to cut** – increase workload, use aides
- **Potential impacts** – loss of jobs, more efficient maintenance, but keep schools working and safe

District Admin

- **Why/how to cut** – increase workload, use aides
- **Potential impacts** – loss of jobs, more efficient maintenance, but keep schools working and safe

District Admin Support Services

- **Why/how to cut** – put teacher experts back in the class, increase workload, 37.5 hour workweek

- **Potential impacts** – loss of jobs, more efficient maintenance, but keep schools working and safe

Operations and Maintenance

- **Why/how to cut** – make teachers and admin more responsible for office and classroom cleaning, replace district mail with quality fax machines and scanners. It is too hot and too cold and lights are wasted, we need more energy efficient schools. Dilute the layers of bureaucracy, work-orders quadruple admin work, make O&M on demand, consolidate services with city
- **Potential impacts** – loss of jobs, more efficient maintenance, but keep schools working and safe

Student Activities

- **Why/how to cut** – keeps drop-out rate low. Maintain, it's a small budget with big positive impact
- **Potential impacts** – more students staying in school

Student Transportation

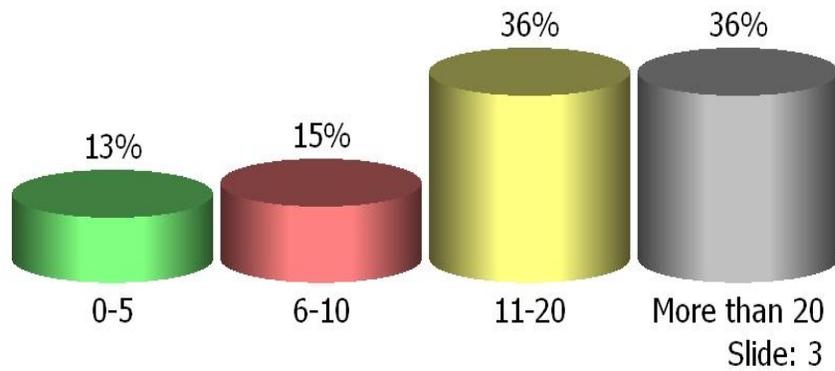
- **Why/how to cut** - limited seats, can't put more kids in limited area, charge user fees
- **Potential impacts** –more money in the budget from user fees

Community Services

- **Why/how to cut** – increase fees for school use, increase fees on UAA, make sure to charge enough to cover costs
- **Potential impacts** – loss of jobs

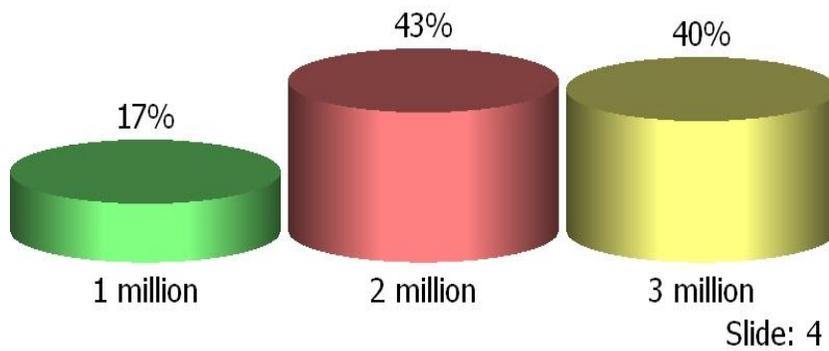
Consensor™ Results

How many years have you lived in Anchorage?

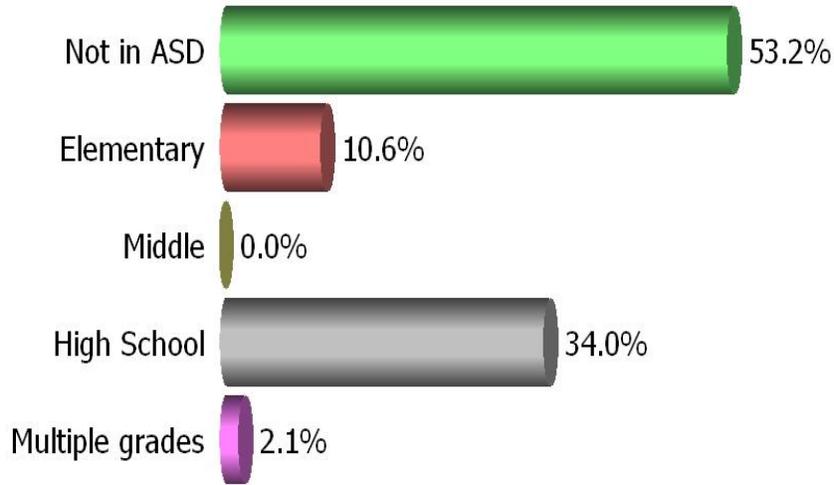


How many miles do Anchorage School District Buses drive each year?

The correct answer is 3 million

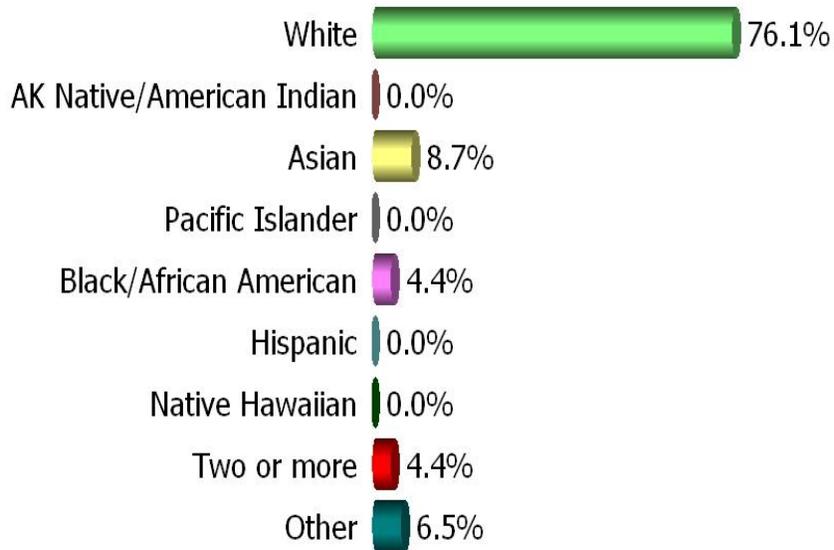


Do you have, or are you a student currently attending school in the Anchorage School District?



Slide: 5

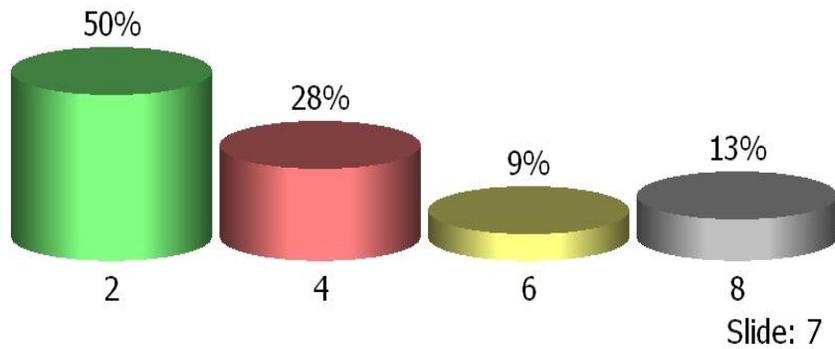
What race or ethnicity do you identify as?



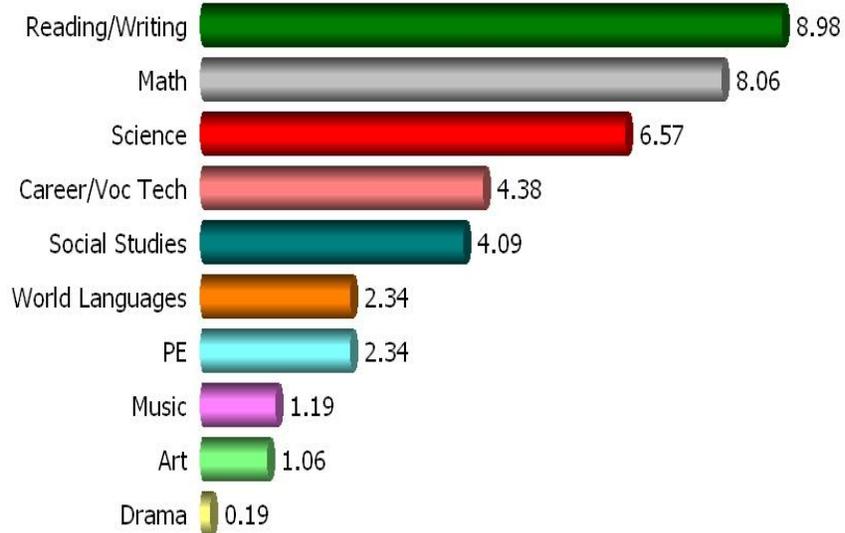
Slide: 6

How many principals were at West/Romig 30 years ago?

The correct answer is 8



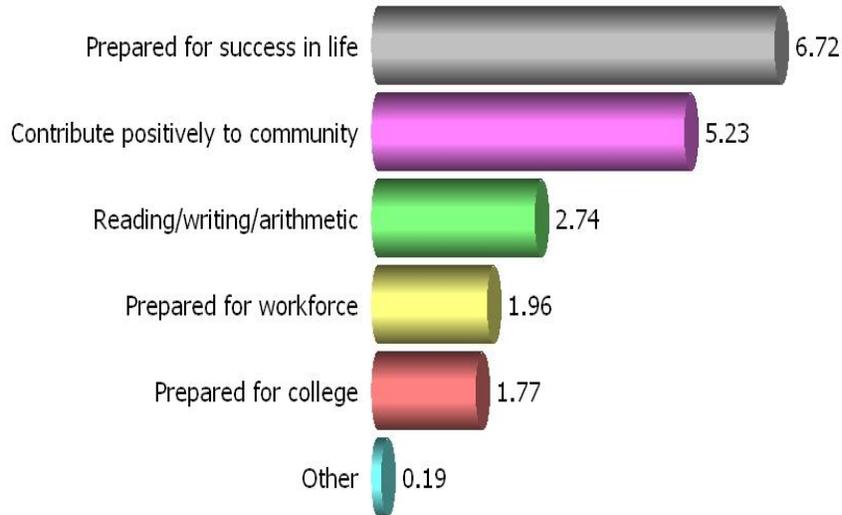
Which education programs do you think are most vital?



vital programs

Slide: 8

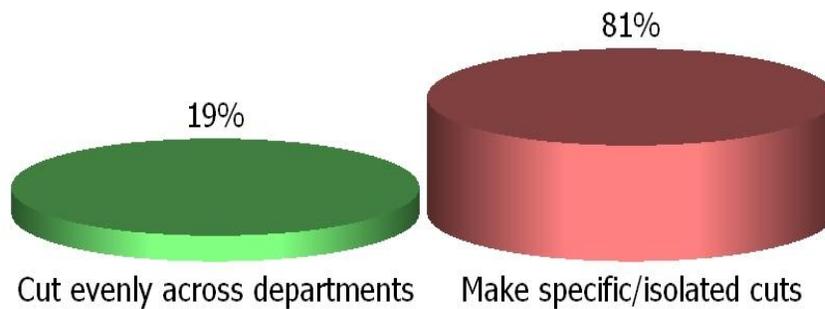
Which of the following statements most accurately reflect your feelings about the role of public education in Anchorage?



education values

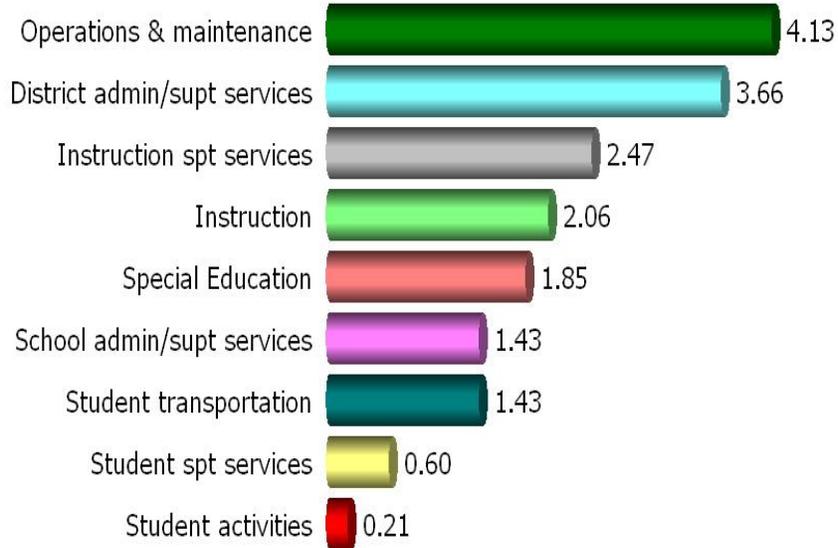
Slide: 9

If the district needs to make budget cuts, would you prefer they:



Slide: 2

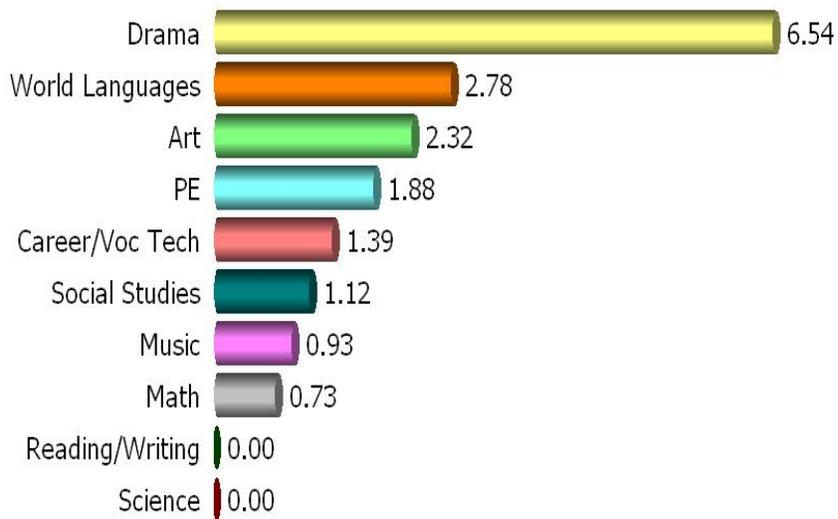
If you were going to start cutting the budget, where would you start?



start cutting

Slide: 3

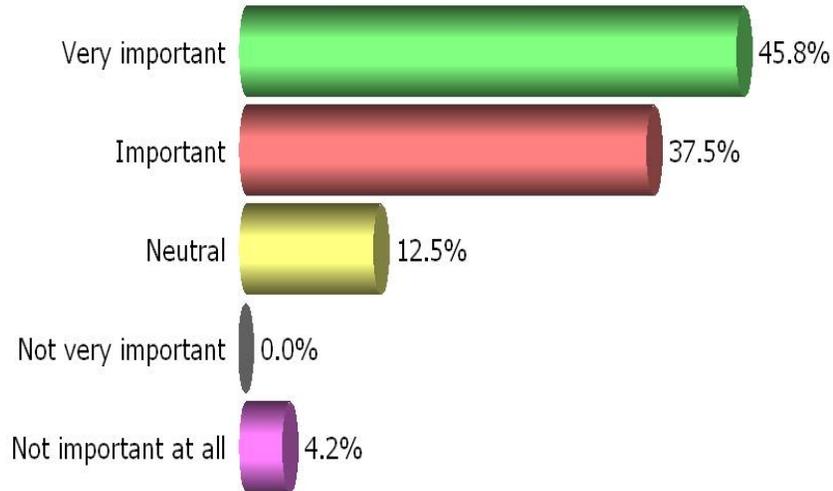
Instruction: where would you cut costs first?



instruction cuts

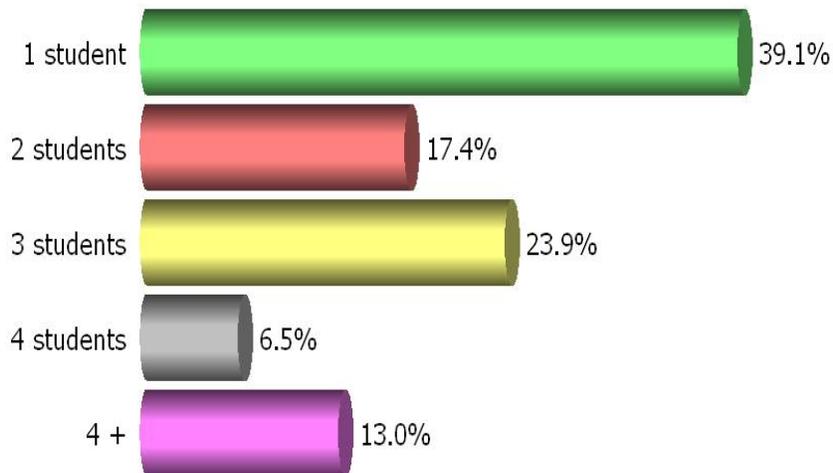
Slide: 4

How important is small class size to quality education?



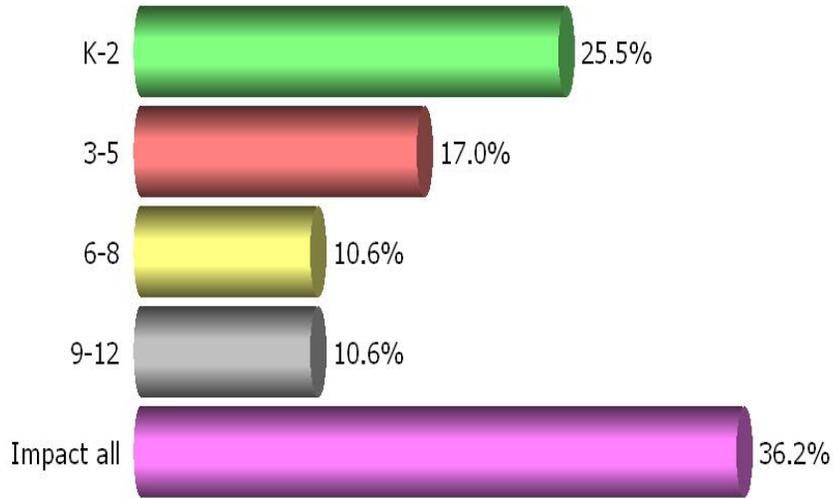
Slide: 5

If the district had to increase class size to help balance the budget, at what point would you feel concerned about the impacts to quality public education?



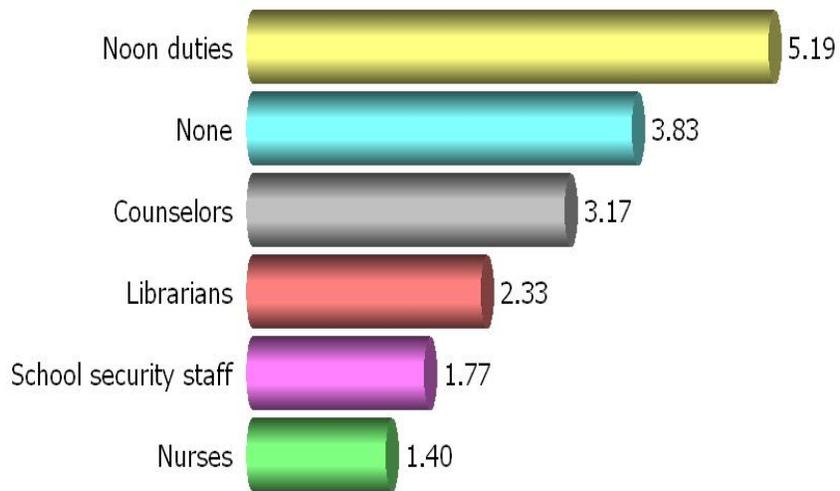
Slide: 6

If class size has to be increased in order to help balance the budget, is there an area that should NOT be impacted?



Slide: 7

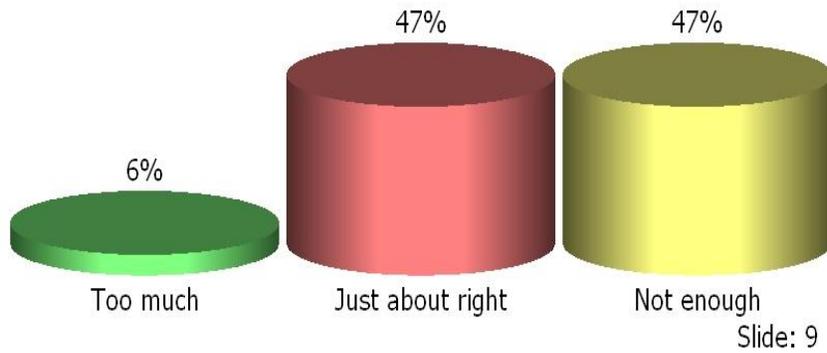
In the category of student support services where would you cut costs first?



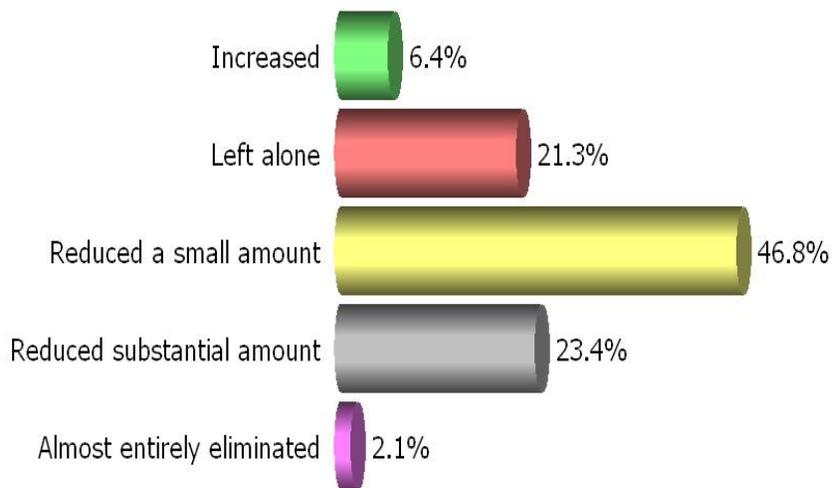
student support cuts

Slide: 8

Do you think teachers in Anchorage are paid:

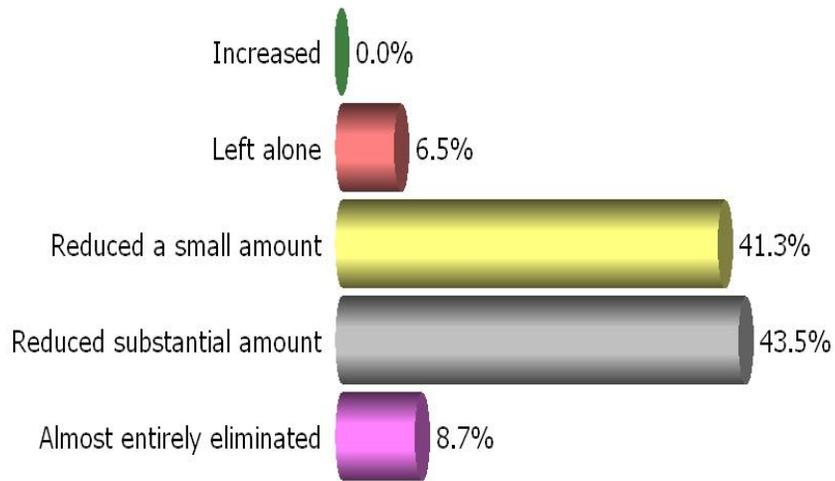


Do you believe that the budget for school administration and school administration support should be:



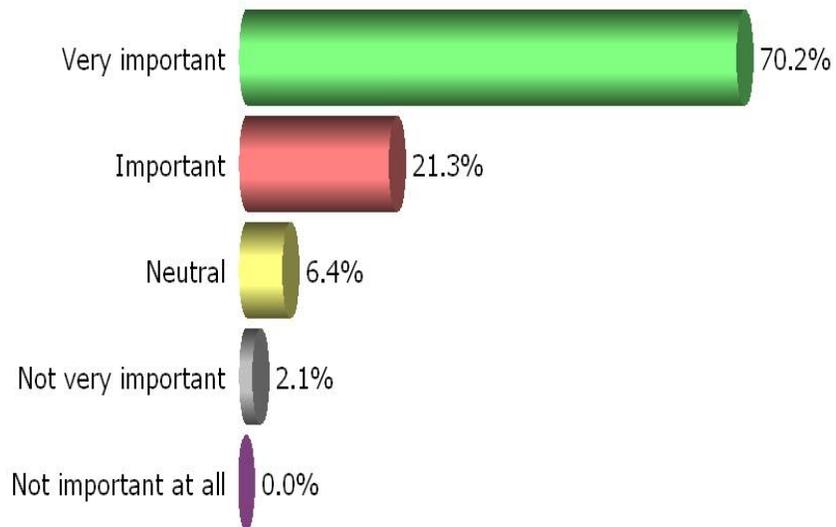
Slide: 10

Do you believe that the budget for district administration and district admin support services should be:



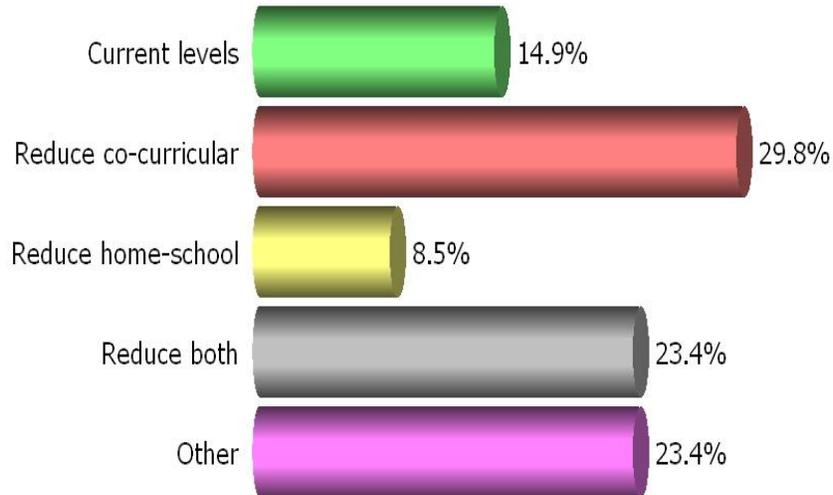
Slide: 11

How important is student access to student activities?



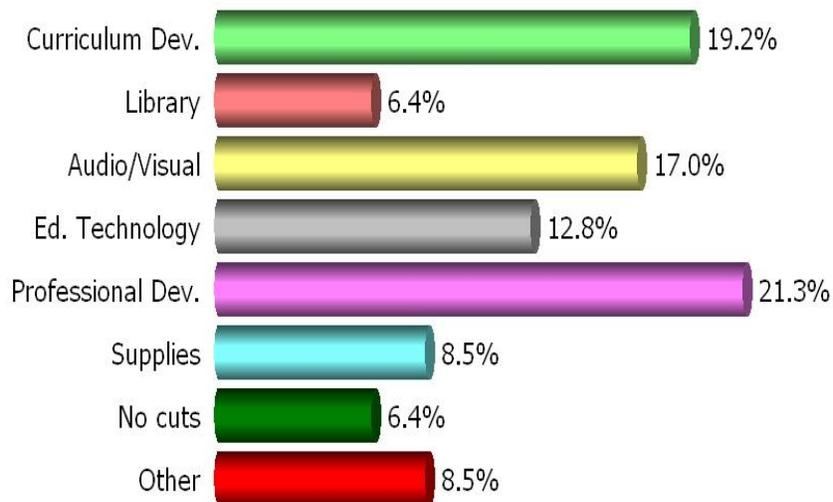
Slide: 12

Student transportation - Do you believe the Anchorage school district should:



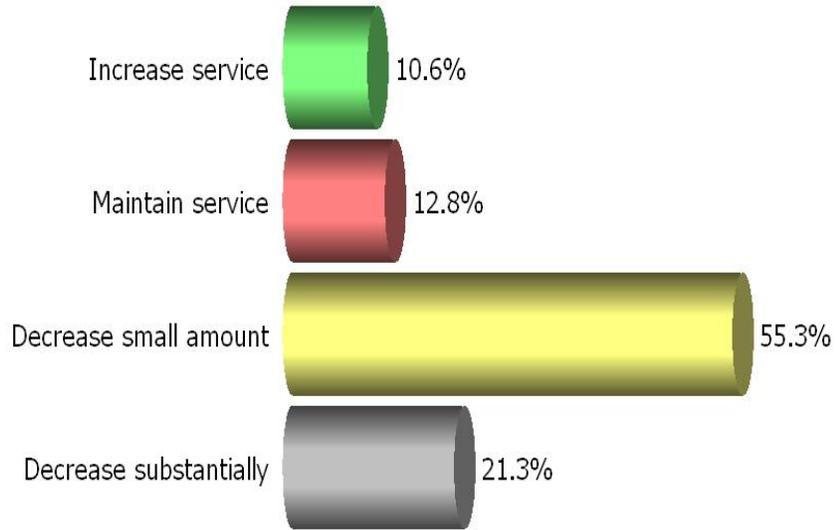
Slide: 13

From the instruction support services budget, from which category would you first cut?



Slide: 14

Regarding operations and maintenance, do you think the Anchorage School District should:



Slide: 15

Appendix V: Efficiency Ideas from Poster

ASD BUDGET DIALOGUE—ALL COMMUNITY MEETINGS

Revenue

- Increase deductibles and premiums for medical insurance (3)
- Increase/add student fees
 - Raise student parking fees (3)
 - Consider charging minimal fees for transportation for those who can afford it (2)
 - Charge activity fee that is based on the cost of the specific activity
 - Add a book fee for all students
 - Make free and reduced lunch kids pay something
 - Increase activity fees
 - Summer school fees need to be paid or at least reduced price – not free
 - Require parents to prove they cannot pay for summer school rather than accept self-reporting about low income
 - Charge students for use of after school activity bus routes home (some school shave these, others don't and they have parents drive). Free bus isn't equitable.
 - Don't allow students to charge lunch more than one time before they pay back
 - Charge students \$15 to get their phones back
 - Fines and fees must be paid to register
 - Fee for zone exemptions
- Facility rental
 - Raise rental fees (2)
 - Better use of facilities by promoting rental of spaces
 - Charge community groups more to use school space (except Campfire)
- Sell water bottling plant
- Private insurance reimbursement for services such as speech, counseling, nursing, occupational therapy, physical therapy etc.
- Rent facilities on 5th day or charge for childcare
- Tax to cap
- Look to state for more revenue
- Replacement fees for books should go to school not the general fund
- Implement a school tax
- Tap state budget reserve to fund debt service

Cuts

- Reduce admin at the building level (6)
- Don't build any more schools/land buys (2)
- Smaller special education buses (2)
- Cut admin and teacher experts (2)
- Eliminate recycling program (2)
- Reduce supply budgets across the board, there is a lot of waste generated (2)
- Wages/Salaries
 - There should be no pay increases of the cost of living has not gone up (3)
 - Look at a retirement buyout
 - Renegotiation contracts
 - Furlough Fridays one day per month
- Reduce technology
 - Computers are NOT required in primary – introduce in intermediate grades (2)
 - Schools do not need a smart board in every classroom – high tech not necessary in every school annually or every two years
 - Interactive whiteboards are not necessary at elementary level, document cameras and projectors are more useful at this age
 - Reduce IT \$3 million
 - Reduce technology – computer refreshes, program subscriptions and support staff
- Transportation
 - Don't provide cabs for transient students
 - Cut the number of bus routes
 - Don't send a bus to Eagle River for one kid
- Programs
 - Cut ignite and preschool
 - Cut MS Volleyball – money for transport and subs, keep in-house sports without travel
 - Decrease funding for student breakfasts and lunches, let parents pay or pack lunches – this is not the job of the schools
 - Abolish KELSO and DARE – not part of ASD curriculum
 - Cut art, physical education and music classes
- Special Education
 - Reduce SPED specialists
 - Special Ed intensive needs should not be in the ASD curriculum – let the gov't/state put it in their budgets if it is mandated
- Cut paper use and offer more materials online

- Cut graduation coordination position
- There should be fewer janitors
- More parent/community involvement would leave less need for support services
- Cut support services by hiring out those services to a third party
- Cut 2% from each budget except student activities
- Get rid of Social Emotional Learning (SEL) in elementary schools, it's a waste of time
- Get rid of middle school teaming, it's not efficient
- Addenda to teachers to help with added duties from decreased curriculum support personnel
- Eliminate 50% instruction support services
- Cut student resource officers
- Reduce custodial crew by having students assist in cleaning classrooms, facilities, fosters ownership and pride and saves money
- Reduce individual dept. budgets or require bids/justification for funding supplies
- Reduce district admin 15%
- Pay elementary and secondary dept. chairs addendums for support services
- Cut teacher specialists at admin level and hold people accountable at the building level
- Team planning for core classes only – no elective team planning
- Cut everything else before cutting direct services to students
- Eliminate superfluous trainings (but not all trainings)
- Elementary math – don't buy workbooks each year or copy worksheets – have students bring notebook paper and copy problems from a book. Improves handwriting, retention, organization and saves money
- Cut O&M through a community partnership where businesses adopt-a-school
- Ask student groups to do volunteer hours (like National Honor Society) in the school cleaning at the end of the day
- Get rid of tech staff that train teachers on use of technology, they can learn it themselves
- Replace lunch support for ELL and Special Education students with a student mentoring system

Restructuring/efficiencies

- Go to a four day week (6) – activities on 5th day
- Restructure school start times to decrease the number of busses needed (3)
- Increase charter school capacity to meet the demand – they are more successful (2)
- Energy conservation
 - Lower temps to 68 degrees in all buildings (3)

- Energy efficiency – insulation, more efficient lighting (2)
- Turn the lights off at night
- Lower temperature of buildings at night
- Close schools on weekends, holidays and summer vacation to conserve energy
- Turn computers off at night
- Use only half the lights in each classroom
- Use more energy efficient lighting
- Involve students in recycling and conserving supplies
- Lights are on during day outside at many schools when it is light outside, turn them off
- Turn off busses when they are sitting
- Encourage more recycling, reduce waste and costs
- District wide campaign driven by students to reduce energy costs
- Implement all economic energy efficiency measures; incentivize schools to have efficient behavior by letting them keep some of the savings
- Everyone should conserve energy and supplies
- Technology solutions
 - Got to electronic receipts for direct deposit – no need for paper copies that are just throw out (as an opt-in not opt-out) (2)
 - Offer more online instruction for High School students
 - Activation/registration online reduces amount of staff required pre-contract
 - Print in black and white, not color
 - Use open source computer software everywhere possible
 - Meetings – use Skype, illuminate, go-to meeting, instead of driving and mileage
 - Recycle printer cartridges
 - Textbooks online
 - Change the default margin settings on ASD computers to 0.75” to save paper and printing and to always print double sided (Polaris K-12 does this and has stats on how it has worked)
- Wage/salary cost reduction
 - Offer buyouts for teachers at top end of pay scale
 - Attach pay for teachers to how good a teacher they are
 - Offer merit pay for teachers willing to decertify
- Purchasing
 - Buy more local produce, spend less on packaging, and get rid of processed foods, high sugar foods and chocolate milk as choices (3)
 - Warehouse is not efficient and does not allow returns of wrong items (2)

- Extend the life of things like carpet – do not just replace because it is on the schedule.
- Textbook management
- Use balanced and efficient competitive bidding process for painting, construction etc.
- Standard building plan bought by ASD rather than leasing building designs
- Multiyear use of textbooks
- Buy in bulk
- Create a system to use resources better – spend some money up front on a good system that will save money over time
- Consolidate equipment and supply purchases (computers, basic supplies) with UAA. Bulk purchase power and standardized equipment could save in training and repair
- Standardize some subject textbooks. Schools can then exchange books as needed.
- Evenly distribute materials; some schools have too much while others have too little
- Allow schools to purchase office supplies at cheapest place vs. ASD approved vendors
- Serve students lunches without all the extra and expensive packaging
- Contract services
 - Contract out night custodial
 - Privatize services such as food transport and janitors
 - Combine operations with city
 - Contracts for copy machine, equipment costs are too high
 - Outsource O&M
- Send mailings to an address only once to avoid duplicate mailings for families with more than one student
- Change curriculum to ABC model, requires more parental involvement, leads to better grades, less resource classes
- Zero year budgeting
- Change AP science labs to college format, twice per month for 2-3 hours with all district AP students in that class together
- Build partnerships with UAA and Military, possible volunteers for tutoring, noon duties, bus attendants, nursing, building maintenance
- Increase class sizes for college prep because those kids are smart and motivated
- We need to change our foundation, find efficient ways, not just cut but teach to do things better. This should be a long term campaign for change.
- Create per student formula for school funding that allows for equity in charter vs. neighborhood vs. optional programs. Leave homeschool charter schools

- Delay implantation of new fed mandates
- Look at positions that provide redundant services, how can services be provided more efficiently
- Don't require that you have to spend your budget for this year to get the same for next.
- Redistrict to balance class size

Questions

- Are there buildings that are under capacity? If so where and why?
- What about \$16 million ASD pays for employees who do NOT take health insurance?
- With all the "techies" we have in the district, why did the district hire an agency (how much did this cost) to gather all this info and organize these meetings?
- Why does district purchase new programs for instruction when existing programs can be used free or at reduced cost?
- How far does the district have to go in terms of being responsible for severe special education students? Could there be reductions in this program?
- Why are we purchasing new computers so often?
- Why are we paying photographers to travel to the small bush school for only three students?
- Could we give each school \$ to spend themselves, don't tell them where to spend or cut, allow them to budget themselves? If they don't need the money, encourage them to give it back.

Other Comments

- Leave transportation alone, students need a way to get to and from school or this whole process is pointless. Students can get kicked off the busses because they are so full (2)
- Principal interest from bonds should be on the table because the district must pay
- Would really like to see a voucher program in ASD
- Audit the district health insurance program
- Give the Anchorage assembly line-item veto power; do full audit of ASD
- Refuse federal mandates
- Career and college readiness needs to be kept – the impact will not be seen for years
- Add more money to student activities
- Mind the middle, it matters most, don't cut instruction and delivery or increase class size
- Make vending machines GO AWAY

- Pay now \$8,000 to meet students' needs or pay later \$25,000 when on adult public assistance
- Class size and special education have already been hit by the ax. At bare bones to meet need
- More time spend on SEL components in order to create better school communities. Students who feel supported, taught to deal with conflicts, problem solving, etc., are fully educated and usually graduate.
- Need better training for noon duties