

10/15/15 Community Forum – Recap from Comment Cards and Feedback Cards

Comments about the Event Design / Process

- More time needed to answer questions
- More information needed before the event to understand what the event was planned for
- Handouts would have helped - II
- I was looking for (innovative) answers/details/options – IIII
- Stats and charts helped
- Supt needs to be more concise when speaking - II
- I would have liked having a teacher on the panel
- Lots of information provided - it's a bleak picture
- Why was the undocumented immigrant issue never addressed? I
- I appreciated the style with the intent of getting everyone on the same page
- Wonderful forum – I look forward to more! – II
- Avoided questions / danced around / You said what you want people to hear - IIII
- Read questions verbatim
- It's a start
- Glitches in the video
- I don't care for the "it's not my fault" approach
- Why did you let students leave?
- First hour was unnecessary
- Format could be more effective – limited input I
- Would have like to hear more about what's going on with rumors and how they've been addressed
- Who is going to make the decisions and how are they going to be selected?
- What mechanism will you use to ensure a "fair" reorganization of limited funds and loss of students..what are the steps?
- Please explain why you chose this format?
- Please provide better notice of upcoming sessions.
- Are any of the people in our schools and programs involved in solving the problems at our schools (teachers)?
- Need more actual conversation and less defensive posturing
- "crying wolf" and using "scare tactics" worked to get the override passed, so do you think if you "cry wolf" enough times that the community won't want to help anymore?
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School Closings / Cutting Programs

- Concerned about the future of Big Park School – IIIIIIIII
- If school closure occurs, there should be concern about parents sending their kids to other districts

- Could combining junior high to one school and k-5 to the other really happen?
- Could the arts be chopped?
- Tim Carter's answer re: school district consolidation was a highlight. Great answer
- What should we begin to prepare for in terms of loss of teachers, programs and schools?
- What areas will most likely be cut first and why?
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Teachers/Staff/Administration

- Who conducts principal and teacher reviews?
- I learned a lot! But why are teachers still so underpaid?
- How can we compete with other districts to retain our teachers?
- Why a 2 principal system?
- What's the vetting process in Appointing (asst) coaches in sports programs? Are criminal records considered?
- How are we going to support our teachers so they feel supported?
- How can we justify the superintendent getting such a significant raise and creating 2 new positions? IIIIIII
- Did superintendent increase come out of the same pot as teacher's salaries? Perhaps he should take a cut in pay - III
- Superintendent Lykins won Superintendent of the Year. Why wasn't this in the newspaper or in any media or school outlets?
- Give us ideas and direction to put money in the pockets of the k-12 teachers and staff now so we don't lose them as we cannot wait for the State Legislature timeline you stated.
- Have one Superintendent for entire Verde Valley
- How can we pay our teachers so they can afford to live and thrive in Sedona?
- Why can't teachers that were frozen be put back on payscale where they belong?
- What is the incentive to keep veteran teachers?
- Grossly unfair to suggest that the Superintendent salary be forfeited or returned.
- What benefits could the community offer teachers to keep them in our schools?
- How will the board plan to make changes to alleviate stress of our underpaid teachers?
- Have we asked why our teachers want to leave?
- Expression of gratitude for creating a supportive place for a 1st year teacher. Trainings and support are offered to improve my teaching abilities.
- How are teachers going to improve performance expectations so that we can address that students are entering college poorly prepared?
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Legislature/City Council/Community

- Demand proper funding. Publically point out failures; elect others IIII
- I believe conservatives are not interested in education
- What can residents do to change the situation at the state level? - II
- Sedona and the VOC need to work together to create communities where families and young people can live affordably
- With six funding options out there, perhaps everyone through AZ PTAs can help legislature move it forward
- Who's decision is it to have so many superintendents and separate school districts in the state, can this be changed?
- Do we have a similar situation in another state that we can learn from?
- How much should we spend per student to match the educational achievements of other states such as Massachusetts and Minnesota?
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Finance

- Update of computer labs needed
- Need \$ for effective marketing tools
- We need a financial strategy to support the creation of an excellent education
- Prioritize great wages and great facilities to learn over necessary maintenance and capital costs
- What will the override fund? SPA Center?
- The funding formula was new to me
- Use all of override \$ strictly for teachers and classrooms
- Can the override be higher?
- What are the numbers for Charter Schools – How much do they get in funding?
- How have the funding cuts impacted the number of educators in the district?
- How have the class size ratios change?

ELL

- ELL students take away from my child's education when they require additional help. Perhaps a separate school program?

Transportation

- Provide transportation for out of district students

Decreasing Enrollment

- I was never contacted when my child left the district. I never filled out a withdrawal form. You're not addressing the real problems - III
- With an 80% fail rate in intermediate algebra, why stay? A dance team won't help.
- What are we currently doing to increase student retention? IIII
- What are other districts doing? What does research suggest? II
- What data do you have that supports the statement of less kids in the district?

- Beyond enrollment and cohorts, what are the other issues and facts about why enrollment is decreasing?
- Are we looking at the number of students entering from the community next year?
- What programs are in place to help mitigate the declining trends?
- Have you asked the families that have left the district, why they left?
- Does the percentage of vacancies correlate to student population?

Ideas:

- Treat Big Park as satellite campus w/ West Sedona; combined administration
- Sell or rent out the district office
- Make better use of the SPAC
- Seek private funding
- Restructure BP & WSS to an elementary school only and a middle/junior high.
- Eliminate sports
- Encourage open enrollment by expanding YC resource (perhaps at the high school)
- Research becoming a charter/magnet school
- Provide additional options in schools; Montessori
- Can volunteerism help? What about the Hispanic population and citizen engagement?
- Better understand why parents choose a local charter vs here
- Gather districts in Northern AZ and develop magnet schools based on special programs
 - E.g.) IB, Bilingual Ed, Outdoor Ed, Technology
- In high school, revisit # of electives offered if demand is low in certain areas
- Offer a classroom completion / reward for participation and push for Sedona Kids Tax Credit
- Get more classroom technology to set the district apart
- Why is there decreasing enrollment? Partner with City Council from an economic development perspective - II
- Offer both traditional and multi-age classroom options
- Offer online learning w/ dual enrollment college credit option
- Fund raisers such as yard sales, food baskets, raffles, car washes, dances
- Build trust through concrete efforts on campuses
- Keep the community involved in decision making
 - Is online learning less expensive than a traditional classroom?
 - Is there a marketing plan partnering with the city and Chamber? Where and What is it, if so?
 - Has our District considered 4 day school week?
 - Move 6th and 7th grade to High School.
 - What would it take to have a combined school district in the Verde Valley?
 - What does our district need the most support with to continue educational quality?
 - Do we have a plan to enhance enrollment? How? Can we build new programs that other schools don't have ex. On-line middle school?

- Why can't we charge fees to attend to help with funding? When I registered my kindergartner I was shocked it was free coming from Chicago.
- How can common core and MOWR be priorities without the materials/curriculum needed?
- Can we look for more affordable insurance for family plans
- Can Yavapai College faculty serve as teachers in our district?
- Why don't we create a solution for a food kitchen and transportation maintenance vs. contract out?
- Can the school board/organizer raise funds for Big Park?