

MISSOULA COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
BUDGET WORK SESSION

APRIL 10, 2014  
6:00 P.M. – BUSINESS BUILDING BOARDROOM

Trustees Present: Michael Beers, Rose Dickson, Mike Smith, Julie Tompkins, Shelly Wills, Diane Lorenzen

Others Present: Hatton Littman, Burley McWilliams, Heather Davis Schmidt, Karen Allen, Alex Apostle, Pat McHugh, Mark Thane, Melanie Charlson

**MINUTES**

**Call to Order** Joe Knapp

Vice Chair Mike Smith served as acting chair. Smith apologized for the delay; we will start in a few minutes. Smith called the meeting to order at 6:06 pm. We do not have a quorum, but this meeting is information only, so no action will be taken as a Board without a quorum. Smith asked Melanie Charlson to lead the Pledge of Allegiance. Smith listed the Trustees present: Dickson, Wills, Tompkins, Smith, Beers.

**Introduction** Alex Apostle

Apostle thanked all for being here. We will share the process we have incorporated to move us toward the Title I budget allocation for next year and give you an update on where we are with the general fund budget for next year.

Pat McHugh checked legal items to see if we can convene a meeting that is information only without a quorum; he concluded that we do need a quorum. We will attempt to get someone by phone.

Trustee Lorenzen arrived. Smith declared a quorum.

**Title I 2014-2015 Process** Heather Davis-Schmidt

Heather explained that the information she will be talking about tonight is in the regular packet. She has given Board members a blue packet because the printouts are in color and easier to understand; the agendas on the website are in color also.

Five year view: free and reduced percentages by school

Heather explained that the data we have used historically is free and reduced. This chart shows the last 5 years, the percentage of F&R in a particular targeting month so it is fair for all the schools. It does fluctuate from day to day and month to month, but we pick a targeting date for consistency. The numbers have changed from year to year and school to school. The 9 schools at the top are the elementary. Lowell has consistently remained the highest level of poverty in the district: in February 2014 they were at 75.9%. The next school in line is Franklin at 73.5%. Last year they had a bit of a blip at 68%; it impacted their allocation last year because the percentage went down significantly; it was just a

blip on that date. Hawthorne is at 68.1%; just below them is Russell at 67.5%. One consideration we have made the past few years is whether to include Paxson as Title I: this year they are at nearly 50 percent—49.8%; but they remain significantly below our other K-5 in terms of free and reduced. Middle schools: Porter is at 59%, and Meadow Hill and Washington are significantly below that. We have a K-8 district average of 46.5 percent. The district average is very important, because we cannot fund schools that are below that; there is no possible way. But our consideration for Paxson is for a school that is above the district average. The process we use to determine which schools are included is multi-stepped. Smith: these numbers were picked on a particular day, is it a head count of students on that date? It is the number of applications received and verified on that date. The average is of the entire population of the K-8 schools.

Heather explained that the process we have gone through the past couple of years is that we have a Title I Advisory Committee, which meets three times per year to look at budgetary decisions and what we are going to prioritize in term of Title I. In addition, Title I requires an annual Meeting of Practitioners: we had it at the end of March, as we do each year. At that meeting we begin to present our preliminary budgetary allocations for the following year. Title I is on a different fiscal year, October 1 to September 30, than the rest of the school district. We will not be submitting the grant application until September, or completing our allocations—but for staffing purposes we have to start early. We will not get final allocations from the state until September. We have a good idea of what we can anticipate based on conversations with the state and information at the national level. Title I is an above and beyond program. We provide the educational services all students need in all schools across the district. For those schools that have significant poverty, Title I was developed as part of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. It is above and beyond: we are considered to be supplanting if we are using it to be providing services that should be provided by the general fund. The purpose of Title being focused on schools with a high poverty percentage is that there is a belief that the culture of a school and of a classroom is impacted by the level of poverty. If you have a classroom of 20 students and 16 are living in poverty, it impacts the background knowledge and skills that the students bring. Comparing 40% vs. 80%: 40% seems very high, but if you have 8 students instead of 16 out of 20 living in poverty it really does make a difference.

Heather pointed out the high school data. You will see that Big Sky HS has been trending upward over the last several years: currently they are at 41.2 percent. Hellgate went up; it peaked in February 2011 at 35.1 percent, but has gone down to 32.6 percent. Seeley Swan peaked in 2011 at 44.2 percent but has gone down to 41.3 percent. Sentinel has continued to trend upward and is now at 27.6 percent.

Percentage of free/reduced by grade level, February 2014—this page of data is specific to high schools. Big Sky, Hellgate, Seeley Swan, and Sentinel: at Big Sky, the percentage of F&R for grades 9 and 10 is quite a bit higher than for 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students. Hellgate has a similar situation, with a higher percentage of freshmen receiving F&R. Seeley has some interesting things because it is a small school. Sentinel has a higher percentage of poverty—or of students completing the form—as freshmen. At high school, students do not fill out the form at the rate they do at the elementary level. Partly due to open campus, students can leave for lunch, and due to the stigma, high school students begin to move away from a willingness to fill it out. Heather said it is our belief that the rate at which they do not fill it out is fairly equal across the schools.

Questions arose at our Title I Advisory Committee, at our annual Meeting of Practitioners, and with the superintendent's cabinet. There were 2 major questions we wrestled with this year: 1-whether to include Paxson at the K-8 level. We receive 2 separate grants, a K-8 and a high school grant. There is no way to intermingle under the current structure. The general feedback, overwhelmingly, is that we want to continue to monitor Paxson and their F&R status into the future, but at this point in time we will continue prioritizing our highest priority schools, the 4 elementaries and Porter.

The second question: Whether to include Hellgate High School in an allocation this year. High school is different in that there are multiple ways you can determine poverty levels. One is using F&R application percentages, as we have traditionally done in MCPS; this is based on the actual number of applications students complete and turn in.

The other method to determine poverty levels is by using feeder pattern data, using the K-8 data that feed into a particular high school as our measure of poverty. That is one way to do it. Matt Quinlan, Title I Chair at Hellgate HS, brought to a cabinet meeting a policy brief about using the feeder pattern method to determine which schools are at the highest levels of poverty. Heather said she can get you copies. We will look at feeder pattern percentages.

#### MCPS Feeder Pattern Percentages – March 2013 (Purple sheet)

Question: whether Paxson had Title I in 2012. Heather: No. 2010 was the last year. Paxson, Chief Charlo, and Lewis & Clark had Title I through 2010. The change was made to not continue to include those three schools because they were experiencing less poverty. Every year our Title I funds go down but our expenses increase. We decided to prioritize to the highest poverty schools. Tompkins: at that time you were using F&R?—Yes. So even though they are at 49.8% now, you are not going to include them? Correct. There are a lot of reasons for that. When we look at the budgets, you will see that the impact on higher poverty schools, and the resources at district level for FRC and instructional coaches, causes us to spread those more thinly and not support our higher poverty schools as much. Tompkins asked about the 5 year view on this. Heather said we can look it up.

Wills: do we allocate different amounts to each school? Yes, we do; we call it bands of poverty. When Heather goes through the budget she will share how we make that determination. The highest poverty schools receive the highest allocation, and it is based on a per-pupil amount as well. It is based on the number of students living in poverty within that school. Because Lowell is a much smaller school than Lewis & Clark, you still have to provide the amount of funding based on enrollment. Wills: Title I gives us x number of dollars and we can distribute it to schools above 46.5% however we want? No, there are specific guidelines for allocation. Heather will go through that.

Heather reminded all that in June last year we went through this information for the current year's Title I allocation. We struggled with the exact same questions a year ago. This is not necessarily new. She said she lives it every day, but you do not so it is a lot to take in.

Apostle: how many people are on the committee? There are 15-20 on the Title I Advisory Committee: parents, principals, teachers, support staff, herself, and Sindie Kennedy, the federal projects coordinator. The Meeting of Practitioners involves teams from every school, and includes parents and teaching staff. There is a representative from every Title I school. Heather added there is also a non-Title I principal. Some of the set-asides are intended for non-Title I schools.

#### Feeder Pattern Model:

Heather explained that the feeder pattern model is something that has been a consideration in terms of how we allocate our funding. It came to light last year as we considered the question of Hellgate. If you look at the trend, Hellgate was below the district average last year, at 30.6%. In September when we went to apply for the grant we believed, reading the regulations, that we had a one year grandfather period. The state interpreted it differently. We had to use the feeder pattern to determine our allocations then, because we had already named staffing decisions and were into the school year. The purple sheet and the colored chart (pie chart) is the same data she showed last year. For the purposes of this information, it was not essential that we have updated information. It describes the situation we are experiencing in MCPS.

On the purple sheet: Big Sky HS has several district K-8 schools that feed in. It shows the number of free/reduced from each of those districts, and the total enrollment, as well as the percentage at the

bottom of 48.1 percent. Hellgate is at 50.1 percent. Sentinel is at 32.6 percent, and Seeley is at 47.2 percent. It is important to note that this is based on current K-8 students attending those school districts, not on any kinds of geocodes as to where the students from those districts attend. Diane: are they based on filling out the form at the K-8 level? Yes, it is correct that they are currently K-8 students. Heather continued: another piece of data is the pie charts, which are based on our open enrollment. One shows the percentage of students in each boundary area, the attendance area where their geocode is and where they attend. For example, Hellgate: of those who live in Hellgate area, 81% attend Hellgate, 10% go to Big Sky HS, and 9% choose to go to Sentinel. Big Sky HS is a little different: of those who live in Big Sky, only 71% attend Big Sky, 17% go to Hellgate, and 12% go to Sentinel. Those who live in Sentinel: 70% go to Sentinel, 19% choose Hellgate, and 11% choose Big Sky.

The second pie chart sheet: we are looking at the number attending a particular school and asking what attendance boundary area they live in. 75% of students attending Big Sky live in the Big Sky area, 9% live in the Hellgate HS area, 15% live in the Sentinel area, 1% are from out of district, and 0% from Seeley.

At Hellgate: 62% of the students who attend Hellgate are living in the Hellgate area. It is an important distinction from the 81% of the students who live in Hellgate area and choose to go to Hellgate.

Sentinel: about 80% of their student body is from the Sentinel area.

Heather explained the reason she brings it up: last year in our conversations with the Advisory Committee, the Meeting of Practitioners and the cabinet, with the exception of folks from the Hellgate team, all folks have felt that because of our open enrollment policy, the most accurate way of determining poverty is the actual applications rather than the feeder pattern model. The feeder pattern model measures students who live in districts but do not actually attend the school that correlates.

Smith announced to anyone listening to the meeting: regarding district boundaries, we have great maps that he found on our website; if anyone needs pointing to them, they can contact him or Hatton. When talking about the feeder schools, he can see that several feed into different high schools. Maybe one part of Chief Charlo goes to Sentinel and one part of the Chief Charlo area goes to Big Sky. Correct.

Dickson: how much do you take into account the people who do attend out of their boundaries? It seems like more well off people would be those sending their kids to different districts? It seems more well off people would be able to choose other schools. Heather: the point is well taken. Anecdotally we see many students who live in the Grant Creek area who can afford to choose go to Hellgate rather than Big Sky, and it impacts their percentage. Dickson: also they have the largest student body. Correct.

Dickson asked a procedural question: When someone is filling out the free and reduced application, which they get in their packet, when do you report it for the year? Heather: the fiscal year for Title I is October 1 to September 30. Free/reduced is run through food services. It is one way of determining poverty. The numbers go to the federal government in September as part of our grant application.

Tompkins: when do you do the counts? Heather: February. We have to pick a targeting month, and those are the numbers we use.

Lorenzen: you say in high school you see an obvious drop off of people filling out the form, from freshmen to senior year. She asked about grade school. Heather: that is not her sense; they do not have off campus lunch and transportation. Families are much more likely to complete the forms.

Percentages do become different at middle school because the schools get larger.

Beers: is geography of the school factored in? For Sentinel and Hellgate, you have 2 schools geographically in walking distance of lunch places, vs. Big Sky that has the largest number and is geographically further away from lunch. Heather: there are many at Big Sky who do go out for lunch. It may be less because of transportation, cost, and the fact that being so far away takes more time. We have not specifically taken that into consideration. Hellgate went through an intensive process this year. They recognized that there was a need to get a handle on F/R applications. Videos were presented to students, and there was a concerted effort to get as many applications as possible completed at Hellgate.

Smith: we can't do a few dates and pick the best one?—No. His guess is that there are strict federal guidelines. He wants to make sure we understand there is a method that is dictated, and that we do not have as much flexibility as we would like. Heather: there is a book of federal guidelines, published every couple of years. It is closely monitored.

Heather spoke about the hot or not protocol, through which we have received feedback from various teams. She will not go through it, but pointed it out so listeners could read it. Hellgate wrote a specific message; Heather wanted to be sure you have an opportunity to read it.

#### 2014-15 Preliminary Allocation

Interpreting budget allocations: colorful. They show bands of poverty. We are allocating to bands of poverty.

Preliminary allocation (final in September): One page is with Paxson and one is just the preliminary allocation that does not include Paxson

The top part is the K-8 budget, separate grant. Set-asides.

Our projected K-8 basic budget is \$1,582,650, the amount allocated last year. Based on information we have, we do not anticipate a decrease. We ask our teams to create another scenario with a 5% decrease so we can plan ahead just in case.

First line, AYP school choice: Annual Yearly Progress school choice. It is a 10% set-aside; we are required to do this, for any school K-8 that did not make AYP in the previous year. Those families can choose to have their student attend another school that did make AYP, at the expense of our budget here to provide transportation. None of our schools made AYP, so it is a moot point, but we still have to set the money aside. We will use it to pay for FRC and FIT programs, so those don't have to come from building allocations.

SES: this is another required 10% set-aside in relation to schools that did not make AYP on multiple years of improvement according to federal guidelines. We are required to provide tutoring to those families who want it and who qualify for F/R. After we have paid for tutoring, we anticipate we will have \$50,000 in carryover, which will be allocated to schools in February 2015.

Next line: this is the required set-aside for homeless students. We have 77 students who have been identified as homeless, K-8, in our non-Title I schools only. This set-aside provides support services for families in transition and homeless students in non-Title schools. That number, 77, is multiplied at the bottom of the blue chart by the per-student amount of \$689.19, to come up with the allocation of \$53,900. We are able to round up or down a little bit to be more even.

Neglected & delinquent, 42, as identified by the state, in our Title I schools. This is a required set-aside for supportive services. The number 42 is multiplied by the per-student amount.

Administrative costs: to pay salaries of federal projects coordinators at district level, who manage our projects, make sure we meet the guidelines, verify F/R, McKinney-Vento, go through our programming. Substitutes: we need them for a variety of reasons. This helps us cover those sub costs for teachers in Title I buildings.

Parent Involvement-District level, and Parent Involvement-Buildings. These are required set-asides the federal government requires of 1%. Of the one percent, 95% has to go back to the buildings directly. We use it for FRC specialists, and we use the formula to provide a little support for family engagement and supplies. At the very bottom of the page, you see parent involvement allocations: that is how we determine how much each school will receive, divided up fairly based on student population at each school.

Professional development: 10% required set-aside—instructional coaches to Title I buildings. That is all that covers; they do a fantastic job. It is an incredibly effective way to support teachers in the classroom.

DIBELS Wireless Gen: we do DIBELS testing at all our elementaries, K-3. We do them with paper and pencils at non-Title I schools, but we can do the electronic version at Title schools, allowing teachers to

make immediate improvements to instruction and provide support. These funds cover the subscription for DIBELS at the elementary.

SuccessMaker: this is a very specific support tool used in all Title I schools K-8. It is a leveled program that helps kids feel like they are playing games, but they are getting specific math and literacy help that improves their skills; we see tremendous growth over the course of time.

Supplies: a small budget.

Indirect Costs: a required set-aside, a percentage, a formula that changes every year, around 3.5 percent, that we take out to pay for other supportive services like accountants and payroll clerks that provide the payroll checks for Title I staff.

Out of \$1.58 million projected K-8 basic budget, \$745,000 is district expenditures. We keep it as low as possible, so we can keep up the balance to the schools, \$836,600.

Below on this page: see the attendance areas, public school enrollment, and private enrollment. We are required to provide services to private students who elect those services.

See F/R in color blocks: those are the bands of poverty. We determine that those schools are in different categories of percentages, and we give them a different band of poverty: yellow for Lowell and Franklin, another for Hawthorne and Russell; Porter in another.

See the bands below and how the allocations change. Lowell and Franklin are in yellow. There is a reduction based on private schools. We worked with private schools to develop programming for students there. The amount in the box is the amount allocated to public schools: \$820 per student in the yellow, times the number of students at the top, 217, and we come to the allocation of \$177,120. Follow the same pattern down to come up with the other allocations. To the right, you see the allocation for last year. It is important to compare how buildings are affected by changes. Even though Lowell has maintained a high percentage of poverty, Franklin's percentage increased back to where it usually is, and so Franklin sees an increase and Lowell sees a decrease. Questions about how to read it?

Tompkins asked about a difference on the page with Paxson and the one without: the homeless and delinquent number? Heather: it changes. 77 and 42—if we include Paxson as a Title I school, then any student at Paxson considered homeless would move off of that. Heather said it should be 66 because those set-asides are for non-Title I schools. Smith: it is 11 of the students in that 77 that are identified in the non-Paxson page, actually go to Paxson. Those 77 students do not go to any of the schools in the color at the bottom: it is homeless students not in the five Title I schools. Tompkins: why a larger balance to the schools when Paxson is included? Heather: those students are not in the set-asides, the set-asides are for non-Title I.

2014-15 Preliminary Allocation – High school pages:

There are 2 options: 1-preliminary allocation with 0% decrease, moving forward with the F/R application as we usually do. 2- using the feeder school pattern.

Looking at the High School 2014-15 Preliminary Allocation using F/R:

At the high school our Title I funding is \$721,306.

Our ten percent AYP school choice set-aside; to cover FRC and FIT coordinator in the high school buildings.

SES, another 10% set-aside. We anticipate \$25,000 in carryover for that, which we use to fund Title I summer school.

Homeless in non-Title I: Using the non-feeder pattern method, so the non-Title schools are Hellgate and Sentinel, there are 54 students considered homeless.

N&D, for which we receive data from state, we are at 24 students at Hellgate and Sentinel, as the non-Title I schools.

Administration: we divide the administrative costs of the federal coordinator between the K-8 and high school budgets.

Substitutes: we need subs at the high schools; we have found that we have a larger cost for subs in the high schools, so it is a larger amount.

Parent Involvement: this is a one percent set-aside, of which 95 percent of that goes back to the buildings, and the remainder is for supplies at the district level.

Professional Development: 10 percent pays for Title I instructional coaches.

Supplies and indirect costs: the same formula we used on K-8 for indirect costs. The balance to schools is \$358,000, and the per-student amount is \$721. This amount is used as a multiplier for homeless and N&D above.

Seeley Swan is at the highest percentage: last year they were enough higher than Big Sky and Hellgate that we put them in a different band of poverty, but this year they are in the same band as Big Sky HS because the percentages are so close.

The allocations to the schools: Seeley Swan is at \$32,400. There are no private school students. Big Sky HS is at \$322,560. This represents a huge increase for Big Sky, and also an increase for Seeley Swan, but their allocation used to be quite a bit higher when we did not use the feeder pattern.

Smith: there is the same issue with the Homeless and N&D here. Yes; Heather apologized for that error.

Dickson: is the reason why you would choose to use F/R is that it would spread the money too thin?

Hellgate has the most kids who qualify for F/R and they make up over half the kids. Is there a reason you want to consolidate all the funds? It seems like we are shorting a bunch of kids at Hellgate.

#### High School 2014-15 Preliminary Allocation – Feeder School Pattern

Heather will go through the feeder pattern model. It changes the percentages of F/R at each school, and it changes the set-asides for non-Title I because now we include Hellgate as Title I.

Overall, the Seeley Swan feeder pattern percentage is 46.9%, Big Sky is 45.7% and Hellgate HS is 48.7%. Heather noted that it says February 2013 for the % F&R; she apologized—it should be 2014. It still gives you the same purpose: the Seeley allocation is \$18,020, Big Sky allocation is \$159,800, and the Hellgate allocation is \$205,700.

Back to the question about actual numbers of students receiving F/R meals—on the sheet that shows the feeder pattern where it says 609 (fourth column), those are not students who attend Hellgate HS, they are K-8 students who live in the geographic boundaries for Hellgate HS. Smith: the 609 is actual feeder kids. So the 330 (on the page of F&R preliminary allocation) is actual students receiving F&R? Yes, currently. So the most F/R applications are at Big Sky. Yes. It changes the percentage significantly. The reason the federal government uses percentages instead of actual numbers: we talk about L&C with 40% poverty, that is 8 out of 20 students in a classroom, compared to Lowell with 80% poverty, 16 out of 20. It really does make a difference in classroom makeup and what that is like for those students.

Dickson: is it better from our standpoint to fund two schools in Missoula than just send all the funding to one? Is it something you weigh? Heather: it is something we considered. We wanted to use the most accurate measure of poverty, because that is what Title I funds are intended to support, is schools with the highest level of poverty.

Lorenzen: how much is Big Sky getting this year? Heather: using F/R application status, Big Sky receives \$322,000 of Title I. Using the feeder pattern, Big Sky would receive \$159,000. The page shows the 2013-14 allocation.

Wills: at the beginning you said you couldn't fund schools that do not go over the average. Correct—if we use F/R applications. But if you look at the feeder pattern purple sheet, the district average becomes 49.8 percent and we can fund any of those schools with Title I funding. We can choose some that are below the average if we choose to do it, if they are above the 35 percent threshold. Last year we could not fund Hellgate HS using the F/R method because it was below both the average and the 35%.

Wills: it looks like only Hellgate is over the average using the feeder pattern.

Heather: many districts choose not to serve schools at 80%. There are a great number of schools that have significant poverty, and the school district chooses to serve those with the highest levels only, in some cases 90%. We are fortunate not to experience that level of poverty.

Tompkins asked about the \$50,000 carryover. Reply: It goes to summer programs at Title I schools.

Heather: more questions?

Beers: if we choose one model over another, can we fund more than one high school with Title I funding? Heather: we are funding Big Sky and Seeley. Beers: can we fund Hellgate if we choose to go with the feeder model? Yes. Beers thanked Heather for putting the information in a format like this. We are not seeing student impact. We are seeing percentages. He said he does not know how much of that information the group had. He knows what an impact Title I has in any school on the population it serves. Given just the F&R model, he sees a lot of students who will receive Title I services up to a certain point, then if they choose to go to Hellgate they will not receive the services they have received in the past. It is not one tile or another, but you put tiles together and you start to see segregation in our schools. This is one step toward taking us backward in time. How can we put Graduation Matters on every board outside every school and then choose not to provide Title I services in a school that has proven that they need Title I services? It is not the numbers but the narrative that he feels we are not getting.

Heather: the purpose of Title I funding, which is regulated at the federal level, is to assist those schools that have the highest levels of poverty. When it comes to providing Title I services at Big Sky or Hellgate HS, poverty no longer plays a role. We use multiple data points to determine students who are academically struggling.

Tompkins: did Hellgate have Title I last year? Heather: yes, they have had it for several years.

Tompkins said she was confused if their percentage went up, how they would lose it. Heather: using the F/R application status it didn't go up enough. It has to be above 35% or above the district average. If we continue using the method we have always used, Hellgate was at 30.6% last year; we funded them last year by using the feeder pattern model.

Lorenzen said she was running some numbers. If we were enforcing the feeder pattern boundaries, they would be at 45% at Hellgate. Only 900 live in the Hellgate boundary, so with 405-408 in need we would be at 45%. She said that it is clear that it is the influx of nonqualifying students that has tipped the scales at Hellgate. She is frustrated that we didn't see this coming. There is not only good that comes from opening up the boundaries: this is the downside. It seems logical that free and reduced makes sense. A kindergartner at DeSmet is dictating what a 12<sup>th</sup> grader at Big Sky gets or doesn't get. She knows we have to work through this. It is something we need to keep in mind in the future. We should have seen this coming.

Tompkins: we place a lot of emphasis on filling out the FAFSA for high school and college students—do we not put any emphasis on filling out F/R? Reply: Hellgate put out quite an extensive effort on filling out forms. By October 10 families have to have reapplied each year. We work very hard to contact those folks and have them reapply.

Dickson: has the decision been made, or will the final decision be made in September as to how to do this? Heather: we are in the process of gathering feedback.

Smith: there is good and bad in every decision. If we had the numbers to get everything we needed, meetings would be a lot quicker. Teachers have asked him: parent involvement/Student amount—on one side \$13.79 is for parent involvement, with a per student amount of \$721 (F&R model). And on the feeder school pattern page it is \$341 for the per student amount. If Hellgate HS loses Title I funding, teachers will have to deal with that. What does it mean to students at the other schools if we use the feeder pattern? Smith said he wants to make sure we are considering the teachers in all the schools. Is it thinning it out, does it make it more difficult to staff when you have that much less per student per



school? Heather replied that the Advisory Committee believes we should prioritize our highest poverty schools and provide funding there. The high school conversation is different: historically Big Sky and Hellgate have shared the lion's share almost equally. It doubles the capacity of Big Sky to help those students academically in need but removes the capacity of Hellgate to provide those above and beyond services.

Wills said she thought you had to do F/R for K-8 –Yes. And you have a choice for high school: F/R or feeder? Yes. But you can't do feeder for Hellgate and F/R for the other high schools.

Lorenzen: can we make it follow on headcount so Sentinel gets some too? No.

Apostle: what we are trying to figure out is what is best for staff, and what is best for our students. There are plusses and minuses with each model. This is a conversation, a discussion. No decisions have been made. One of the questions he had in the cabinet meeting is that we are spending this money: what is the impact? Are we assessing our students in terms of this funding—is it making a difference? We don't have a lot of information. He is asking for it so we have something to compare: are students being served more, are we reaching more kids, with one model over another? We need to look at the data. We have been dealing with this issue for many, many years. We prepared early. But there is a certain amount of information you have to bring forward. It is wide open right now. We want to do the best. It was a concern when we heard that Hellgate would be on the short end of the stick. We have to figure out what is best for our staff and for our kids. We will make a careful analysis of our budget so we are doing the very best for the most students and staff.

Tompkins asked about Paxson in February 2010—they were receiving Title I funds in 2010? Looking historically, it looks like Paxson has jumped 10% and Lowell has decreased—do you take that into consideration? We do, but we feel that Paxson is still far enough away from our highest poverty schools that we don't want to include them at this time. If you look at the amounts actually allocated to the schools, it shows a significant impact on the schools. When we talk about thinning out the funds, we want to focus on prioritizing the highest poverty schools.

At the highest point we had ARRA funds, and with the loss of that it decreased by 50%.

Smith thanked Heather and the committee. He would like to say we look forward to talking about this a lot in the future. It will take some serious consideration. We will look at it from all viewpoints.

Smith offered a change in the agenda, because we are going to lose our quorum. He recommends we do agenda item number 4, Updated Projections, at the next F&O. We will take that off the agenda for this meeting. Trustees agreed. F&O is Wednesday at 3 pm here in the boardroom.

Updated Projections Pat McHugh

- Elementary FY15
- High School FY15

This item was removed from the agenda and will be included in the F&O meeting on Wed., April 16.

#### **Public Comment Joe Knapp**

Smith opened public comment, saying that he appreciates everyone coming tonight. This is an important issue that impacts everyone in the district. He asked speakers to state their name, affiliation if any, and try to limit comments to 3 minutes. It is a beautiful evening.

Smith added that we appreciate your patience and participation. He reminded all that the Board is not allowed to discuss during public comment. We are listening. [Trustee Dickson left the meeting.]

Matthew Quinlan, Title I Coordinator at Hellgate HS, and a member of the Title I Advisory Committee and the Title I Meeting of Practitioners. He handed out a policy brief that details information about the feeder pattern Heather mentioned earlier. There is a second document regarding the district recommendation to use F/R applications instead of the feeder pattern to calculate poverty. It is the decision of the cabinet and the Board, from our conversations. These comments are specifically to the grade 9-12 budget. He believes relying on families to fill out and turn in forms detailing family incomes does not provide an accurate picture. It is widely recognized that parents and students are less likely to turn in forms in high school. Easy access to off campus food is only part of the problem at Hellgate. Recognizing this inaccuracy of F/R, the Department of Education allows alternate calculation methods that more accurately reflect the poverty level. The non-regulatory guidance document is another one—he copied 2 pages. Independent policy research agencies recommended to Congress that they actually require districts to use the feeder pattern to fund schools that do not receive as much allocation as their actual would require. He hopes you use these documents to guide your decision making. It is the best method of calculating. MCPS used the feeder pattern last year, as did Helena and Great Falls. As you can see, 50% of the Hellgate HS population is in poverty. The pie charts show that Hellgate retains the highest number of out of area students. Hellgate is doing a wonderful job of serving students with IB, AP, etc., drawing wealthier students from out of area. We can't serve those students at the expense of the low income students who live in our district and cannot afford to attend out of area schools. Without the use of the feeder pattern, over 400 students in poverty at Hellgate HS would not have access to support. Hellgate would lose 13 class sections. Materials, iPads, iPods, an entire library of age appropriate books for struggling readers, all would be packed up and shipped out. The inaccuracy of F/R percentage and forms can be resolved by using the more accurate feeder pattern. Inaccurate data does not become accurate because we track it for 5 years. We can serve 3 of our 4 high schools and more students, or we can serve 2 of our 4 high schools and fewer students. Do the most good for the most students regardless of where they attend school. If we are forward thinking and dedicated to Graduation Matters, we will choose to use the more accurate feeder pattern model.

Marius Reschke, Hellgate sophomore, shared how Title I has affected him and helped him through this year. He has a lot of special ed classes this year. Last year he was happy to find out he would be going into a Title I class; he thinks it is a step up from special ed. He does not always have the benefits in special ed. He knows we have a saying that Graduation Matters, and he agrees with that. If we take Title I out of Hellgate, we will have some issues with students who will be failing their classes because they do not have the support they need to follow through and pass those classes. Those kids who don't have that support will likely drop out of school. Marius said that after he graduates high school, he would like to go into the medical field. Since he is in a lot of special ed classes, it has helped him. But being in a Title I class, his reading skills have been increasing better. A lot of science and math is involved in the medical field, and Title I classes have helped him gain those skills. He looks forward to being in mainstream classes and the ability to become a paramedic. Every kid should have a chance to graduate. Even though they struggle in school, they should be treated the same as an IB student. The IB program is great, and he is glad it is out there for the kids who need it. But the kids who really struggle should have the benefits of having the Title I program in the schools so they can graduate and do what they want to in life. We should all have a choice of classes. A lot of regular ed classes he could have taken have been cut. Please don't cut the Title I classes also. He would be really sad if it were cut. It has helped him. Marius said he is glad to be in front of you. He hopes you make the choice to help Hellgate out.

Zach Kuhn, junior at Hellgate, said he has been in Title I classes for his freshman and sophomore years. He was going to be able to get into a Title I class next year for English. He would not be able to pass English easily without Title I. He said he passed it with a D last year; he had to come in and make up time. He thinks it will be more difficult senior year without Title I. He also will have a senior project and will have to spend more time on that. He would not have transportation to get to another school for

Title I; both of his parents work in the morning. He said he would not have made it as far as he has without Title I. He hopes you decide to pass Title I. A lot of his friends need Title I too.

Nancy Larum teaches ESL and Native American Studies and has been at Hellgate 24 years. To Dr. Apostle and the Board, she said that she is very concerned about the decision to eliminate funding for Title I from Hellgate. She knows many of the students who take Title I English and math, and she knows they would have many problems and difficulty in meeting graduation requirements. Over 150 students per semester are enrolled in Title I classes, in English, geometry concepts and skills, algebra enhancement, 6 periods of credit recovery, and senior project lab. Some students take more than one Title class, e.g. reading and math, or reading and English. Many more qualify, but access is limited due to scheduling conflicts and lack of staffing for additional classes. Where will they receive services if Title I is eliminated from Hellgate? Hellgate would lose 3 FTE in 2014-15. Teachers in content areas do not have time to teach reading and math skills in addition to covering content to meet Common Core and graduation requirements. RTI does not provide the same services. Title I provides daily support to high risk students, many of whom would not graduate. Parents are often disconnected from educational institutions. Their children are members of the silent majority, not trusting. Thank you to the students who just gave their witness. It takes a lot of courage to stand up here. Both Big Sky and Hellgate have students who desperately need the services. Big Sky serves approximately the same number as Hellgate in their Title I. Current law states that school districts have options for calculating poverty. The feeder pattern is a more accurate measure of poverty, because high school students are less likely than elementary students are to turn in their eligibility forms. Students who come to Hellgate from Clinton and Bonner have told her that their parents refuse to fill out the forms. She has personally provided lunch to those students when they have none. Why would you eliminate a program that makes such a difference? The district has a choice to provide funding to 2 or to 3 schools. Why would you choose to use an inaccurate measure of poverty to the detriment of so many students? The district has offered IB, AP, and music for high achieving students. It is time to consider programs for those who are marginalized and underserved, those who need support to graduate. Do the right thing. Continue funding Title I at Hellgate by using the more accurate feeder pattern method.

Tricia Caffin, junior at Hellgate, said she is a student who has benefitted from Title I funding. She has seen both sides of the academic spectrum. She is currently in credit recovery for chemistry and in AP classes. She has a college prep internship this summer. She has reaped positive benefits and academic help. She has seen the program give academic aid to students who need it. The elimination of the program would be to the detriment of her peers.

Maureen Martin Brown, special education teacher at Hellgate High School, read a letter signed by 9 members of the special ed department to the budget committee, regarding Title I funding and the decision to use the percentage method rather than the feeder method. She is not against Big Sky receiving Title I funds. She just wants you to understand how important these funds are to Hellgate students. We were the first PLC at MCPS before the term was coined. Title I teachers use specific programs to help raise AYP scores. Besides special ed, no other teacher uses these specific programs. She expressed concerns about the future math and reading abilities of students. We have witnessed fewer and fewer classes for students with low achievement, and this would be the end to yet another elective that addresses deficiencies and helps them pass courses needed for graduation. Computer and internet access are provided. It is a valuable resource we cannot afford to lose. Please consider it for the betterment of Hellgate HS students. Maureen handed a copy of the letter to Dr. Apostle.

Nancy Hirschenberger, Hellgate teacher: up until 2 years ago she mostly taught Spanish, and she had high achieving students. Two years ago she started teaching Title I geometry. She learned a lot: one thing is that the Title students definitely need the class. The math teacher in her wonders: you guys are tossing data around, but these are human beings. Our highest poverty school—when you look at the highest poverty school and the next one down, it is not very much difference. It is not justifiable. Her

concern as a teacher and community member is that we went through enough scandal and negativity when a raise was voted in and many felt there was not much transparency in that. If the community looks at these numbers, it doesn't look right. The difference in the number of students at Big Sky who need this and the number of students at Hellgate who need this are not very many. All the stuff she is using in Title geometry, she would have to pack up and send to Big Sky. When the numbers come out to the community, it does not look good doing something that lopsided. Title kids need the services. The government has recognized that and given school districts the leeway. The decision process has to be transparent. Using the F/R lunch and the disparity that is seen, she does not think that it will. Thank you for taking time and allowing us to speak about it.

Tara Barba is a member of the Title committee; she has been on it two years. Her son went to Hawthorne and Porter and is now a senior at Hellgate. Graduation does matter. He will graduate in June. It is because of Title. She was really concerned when he entered high school. Kids do not get cured from reading disabilities. We do great things for them in grade school and middle school. We can't pull that net out from under them. Hellgate was a great fit for him. She is here because she cares about kids, and she wants to do what is right for kids. She thanked Heather for this data. It is nice to have, this feeder stuff. It makes more sense when you see the numbers. Thanks for taking the time to listen to all of us. Please do what is right for the kids. Graduation does matter. These are the at-risk kids, and they need us to look out for them.

Peggy Cordell, Library Media Specialist and former Title I reading teacher at Hellgate: In that policy brief handed out earlier, the Alliance for Excellent Education actually recommends districts be required to use the feeder pattern method if it provides higher eligibility numbers. If you look at the numbers in the preliminary Title I budget, you can see across the board that at Seeley, Big Sky, and Hellgate, the eligibility numbers are higher using the feeder pattern method. It qualifies all current Title I programs, allowing more flexibility to help more students become successful. Using the F/R method does not support students. Honor your commitment to making graduation matter across the district by choosing the feeder method to serve more students and retain the Title I program at Hellgate.

Diane Anderson, Catalog and Systems Specialist for the district, thanked Heather for the chart. There is hope that we will have a data manager soon. Consider joining us; it is a great place to work. She lives in the Bonner area. She has a genuine concern for the kids she sees in her neighborhood. Consider how they view their self worth and the success they have. She is concerned if we do not have sufficient support. Parents are working 2 jobs, not available to support kids at home; there are blended families and single parents trying to do their best. Anything we can do to enhance success is a good effort.

Lee Brown, math teacher and department chair at Hellgate, said he spent two hours writing his comments, but will not read them due to their length. One thing brought up should be mentioned: the number of students attracted to Hellgate by open enrollment. It is a good thing educationally speaking; one of the main reasons for better education in other countries over the U.S. is the access to open enrollment in higher performing nations. Open enrollment results in a lower percentage but not a lower number of students at Hellgate needing services. A fair and equitable method is available in the feeder pattern method. He hopes you will support the most students. Mike Smith encouraged him to send his comments by email to trustees.

Beth Cole, teacher at Hellgate: we have heard anecdotally about student success. This week she had a student come back, who had been very much at risk—a student of poverty who struggled to get through high school. She lived on her own through high school. She came back to thank teachers. She benefitted from the Title I program. She came back to thank teachers for the success she had, and she told teachers she would not have graduated if not for the Title program and the teachers at Hellgate. Beth asked trustees to look at the successes and at Michael's point—if you can benefit from having the program at both schools, have it at both. Don't take the program away from kids.

Lisa Hendrix, Principal of Hellgate High School, said she has many privileges and authorities as principal. When it comes to looking at F/R forms, she has authority to override applications not submitted. When we look at the cut-off date, counselors brought her four cases. Reasons for not filling out applications are numerous. A case often comes to her when the student has a balance in the cafeteria, perhaps \$200-300. One was a senior: she talked to him about how he was on F/R when he was a freshman and sophomore. He replied that his dad and stepmom got in such an argument about filling out the form, that it wasn't worth it. Another student's father lost his job in December, and the student said he didn't have the courage to take the form to his dad at this time. Lisa said these are just two kids—there are many more stories like that. Younger kids are not as sensitive to the real world their parents are going through. There are reasons kids don't turn in the forms. She wanted to share the two stories.

Melanie Charlson, Missoula Education Association, said she looks at this from a perspective that is district wide and equitable. When she looks at the F/R percentage: we are talking 40 students, too close of a call. When looking at the feeder pattern, she sees 136 more bodies at Hellgate. It is a win/win. Great evidence. Thank you, Hellgate. Awesome. Melanie said she has packets of emails given to her from a number of Hellgate staff who could not be here tonight. She will keep hammering pro-feeder method for the rest of the spring and in September.

Tracy Ledyard, social worker and FRC specialist at Hellgate, said most everything has been said eloquently. She would like to reiterate that she has had a number of conversations with the director of Title I services at the state of Montana, who told her that we are not the only district that uses the feeder pattern, and that she had presumed MCPS would use it again this year. Helena and Great Falls also use the feeder pattern method. Tracy asked her whether there is a preferred, legitimate, more accurate method—No. Tracy knows the hope is to provide the same level of support without Title; she laughed. Of course, but no one expects that can actually happen when you take away funding. She wanted to provide perspective from OPI.

Alexandra Shafizadeh Startin (Zadie), math teacher at Hellgate, said she is talking from her heart. She is really disappointed that you are even considering any other pattern. Where is the logic? This other method eliminates hundreds of children from receiving these benefits. She does not see that we get support at Hellgate for our programs, and she does not feel that we have representation that is getting us that support. When it is possible for us to receive it, she is upset that you are stealing it away. When funding more high schools is a possibility, how does it make sense not to do so? She is also a Hellgate graduate, 1978. When she left that school, she remembers her last thought was that she would never set foot in this building again. Now she knows that it is the best place in the world to be. But you start taking away our funding for things that make a difference to kids that matter—please don't take that away. She is proud of her school.

Jean Croxton, English teacher at Hellgate for 8 years, and at Big Sky for 14 years before that, said she loves both schools. She wants them both to have what they need. She referenced page 6: there are 448 free and reduced lunch students at Big Sky, and 408 at Hellgate. Those are kids. Kids she knows. Under this pattern, those 408 kids get many services just taken out from under them. She wants you to think of that when you make this decision. It is 408 students who would get nothing when the 448 would get practically all the budget.

There was no further public comment.

Smith thanked everyone for showing up and for cooperating in this process. It is an immense help to us to hear from teachers, students, parents, and administrators. It helps us in everything we do. We appreciate you coming down here. Thanks to Heather for putting that together, and thanks to the Board, to the administration and to the cabinet for being here.

Apostle: you did an excellent job presenting your case. He feels we are together. We want to do the very best for staff and the very best for as many students as possible. You did a wonderful job. Your voice has been heard. We will move forward from this point. You did a wonderful job. Thank you.

Vice Chair Smith adjourned the meeting at 8:13 p.m.

As recording secretary for this Board meeting, I certify these minutes to be a true and correct copy of what was taken at the meeting.

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Elizabeth Serviss, Minutes Recorder

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Mike Smith, Board Vice Chair

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Pat McHugh, Board Clerk

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