

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FROM THE DISTRICT ONE COMMUNITY CONVERSATION

I understand that the budget has been approved to spend \$10,000,000 to adopt a new textbook curriculum that will be used uniformly for all grades for all schools for the next 5-7 years. This is a big step and undertaking. Why has not this been communicated clearly with parents and the community? As an active parent with the schools, I only found this out by not just visiting the K-12 ELA Textbook Adoption events this past week but by sitting down and talking to and questioning the staff overseeing the event.

Nothing has been adopted yet. We are in review phase and a process activity plan based on board policy is in place. We promoted the ELA Textbook Adoption Events on our website, via parent notifications (email and phone calls) and via social media. The materials offer a phone number for individuals to call for more information. We are in early phases and are asking families to come review and offer feedback.

May Howard has not had a Spanish teacher and hence a second language in the curriculum for a few years. All elementary schools should have a second language. How can students be expected to learn a new language if they are not taught at an early age? I understand this is a budget issue, but then should this be incorporated in the above budget approved?

Schools are staffed based on FTE counts. No change to staffing model has been offered. Languages are part of elective course; FTE impacts have not increased enough to gain a teacher. This could be a budget priority if enough believe this needs to be funded at the elementary level.

Yes, there is a teacher and support staff shortage. Can we be creative and be more intentional in bringing parents and the community into the classrooms/schools to help? Absolutely need to do background and maybe an education/work experience check too. This might bring in some retired/other teachers/educators who can assist teachers and staff. I am asking you to go beyond the usual 'PTA volunteers or parent volunteers for the fall festival' to having parent volunteers in the classroom to read to students, listen to students read, help students practice math problems and so on. This would not only alleviate the burn out many teachers are facing, but help kids hear from a diverse perspective.

We are grateful to welcome volunteers into our classrooms! Our VISTA – Volunteers In Schools Targeting Achievement – is active in all our schools. We encourage anyone with an interest in making a difference for a child to volunteer. There are many opportunities at our schools – you identified many! There are several ways to become involved in a school. The first step is to start your application on the volunteer portal, which can be found on the home page of our website, sccpss.com. A background check is necessary as well as a training video. Then we are off to the races!

Teacher recruitment and retention is at the top of our priorities. As part of our strategic plan, we are making concerted efforts not only to attract top quality candidates but also to retain our outstanding teachers. Our starting salary is commensurate with school districts our size, and while we realize there are mitigating factors for cost of living in our city, we also believe the culture of the Districts is one that attracts quality personnel. Our diverse professional instruction

staff boasts over 1,100 Master's degrees, nearly 200 specialist certifications, 70 Doctorate degrees and more than 800 Bachelor's degrees.