

## **Unity Point District #140 Finance Committee**

In October, the administration of District #140 convened a committee composed of board members, administrators, teachers, non-certified employees, parents, and community members. The committee's task was to establish program-spending priorities within the education fund of the district's operating budget, not to determine program reductions. The end product of the committee was a listing of prioritized programs. The listing of program priorities does not reflect the overall value of the individual programs. It will serve as a means of guidance in the event that the district would need to address any loss of programs.

The committee met on three separate dates during the month of October and November. A brief summarization of each meeting follows:

The first meeting served to have the members of the committee introduce themselves and separate into six groups. The purpose of the committee was reviewed and the ground rules were introduced. The main focus of the meeting was to develop criteria for the prioritization of programs. The committee members were asked to brainstorm in order to generate criteria that may be used to measure the appropriateness of the programs. Each group placed their ideas on post-it-notes. These were placed in one large group. The criteria were next placed in groups according to their similarities. Six categories were developed: impact on students, whole child development, maintain quality, safety, cost, community.

The second meeting began with a review of the six categories that were developed during the first meeting. The administration had prepared a listing of district programs prior to this meeting. These programs (25) were listed and a brief explanation of each program was given. The task for this meeting was to develop a program matrix that would result in a prioritization of the programs. Each program was evaluated using the six categories developed during the course of the first meeting. Each member of the group evaluated the programs on a scale of 1-5 taking each category into consideration. Group members were asked to share their ratings so that a group matrix could be developed. Each group shared their ratings in order to develop a single rating for each of the 25 programs.

The third meeting began with a review of the matrix developed by the entire committee. Each group was given time to discuss their feelings about the program rankings. Each group was given time to share their feelings in order to develop an understanding of the committee's feelings of the rankings. Using the matrix developed during the second meeting, the committee members were asked to vote on a scale of 1-5 their level of support for the program priorities.

The Board of Education will receive the priority list as developed by the finance committee during the December board meeting.