

February 17, 2010

Survey Results from Parents in Gifted Program

POTENTIAL LOSS OF REVENUE TO ROCKFORD'S SCHOOL DISTRICT 205 COULD BE FROM \$3.1 TO \$6.3 MILLION IF THE GIFTED PROGRAM IS DISBANDED.

A SURVEY OF PARENTS IN THE GIFTED PROGRAM MADE a few things very clear about any plans for District 205 to close successful programs. The community better face the fact that revenue reductions from the state will be certain. How much is not totally clear; but what is clear is that it will not be small.

PGE (Parents for Gifted Education) surveyed its parent members to get a sense of what those reduced revenue numbers might look like in the event of two possibilities:

1. Moving the Auburn Academy to East to save room at Auburn for students who would come to the main campus from closing the Auburn Freshman Campus(AFC).
2. Closing Washington Academy and the entire gifted program.

MOVING THE ACADEMY TO EAST

184 surveys about moving to East were emailed to parents who qualify to be in the Academy next year. So far as of this date 75 or 41% had responded. To the question of whether they were in favor of the move to East 73% were opposed, 11% were in favor, and 17% were undecided. As to the question of what they would do if the Academy were moved to East, 59% would go to East, 9% would go to their zoned school, and 32% would go to non-district 205 schools.

That would result in lost revenue of about \$726,000. Even if 25% of these parents intending to seek non-district 205 schools were not able to make the change for next year, the district would lose over \$545,000 in revenue.

ELIMINATING THE GIFTED PROGRAM

680 surveys on the question of eliminating the gifted program were emailed to parents who are currently in and qualify to be in the gifted program next year. So far as of this date 319 or 48% had responded.

To the question of what they would do if the gifted program were to be disbanded, 76.5% said they would find a non-district 205 school. At that rate the school district would lose over \$6.3 million dollars in revenue. Even if half of these parents who would intend to leave the district but found themselves still in the district next year, the district would still lose over \$3.1 million in state revenue.

After accounting for the reduced number of teachers caused by this exodus, we believe that the district would lose more than it would gain by the cost savings it projects. Successful programs bring students and revenue into the district. It benefits no one to consider closing them.

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Projections of Revenue losses under various scenarios

Auburn Move to East Revenue Projection Losses

	Intentions Surveyed 100% Accurate	Intentions Surveyed 33% too High	Intentions Measured 2 times over
Percentage of Auburn students leaving district 205	32%	24%	16%
Number of students in the Academy	300	300	300
Revenue per student from State	7566	7566	7566
Revenue Loss	\$726,336	\$544,752	\$363,168

Closing of Gifted Program Projection of Losses:

	Intentions Surveyed 100% Accurate	Intentions Surveyed 33% too High	Intentions Measured 2 times over
Percentage of gifted students leaving district 205	76%	57%	38%
Number of students in the gifted program	1100	1100	1100
Revenue per student from State	7566	7566	7566
Revenue Loss	\$6,325,176	\$4,743,882	\$3,162,588

Data On Survey Questions

1. Regarding parents' intentions if the gifted program were disbanded.

	Surveys Washington Bound	Surveys Auburn Bound	Total	% of Total
Stay in District 205			76	23.5%
Attend zoned school	56	15		
Auburn, stay if possible		5		
Not in District 205				
non-district 205 school	185	63	248	76.5%
Total	241	83	324	100.0%

2. Auburn bound parent's Opinion on going to East..

	Surveys Auburn Bound	% of Total
No to East	55	72.4%
yes to East	9	11.8%
Undecided	12	15.8%
Total	76	100.0%

3. Auburn bound parents' Intentions if move to East.

	Surveys Auburn Bound	Total	% of Total
Stay in District 205		47	68.1%
Attend East	41		59.4%
Go to Zoned School	6		8.7%
Not in District 205			
non-district 205 school	22	22	31.9%
Total	69	69	100.0%

4. All Parents' opinions on alternate move to West.

	Surveys Washington Bound	%	Surveys Auburn Bound	%	Total	% of Total
Yes to West	97	39.6%	34	44.7%	131	40.8%
No To West	47	19.2%	15	19.7%	62	19.3%
Don't know	92	37.6%	22	28.9%	114	35.5%
Other	9	3.7%	5	6.6%	14	4.4%
Total	245	100.0%	76	100.0%	321	100.0%

4. All Parents' opinions on expanding the gifted program by moving the 7-12 gifted grades to the Auburn Freshman Campus and expanding the number of openings at Washington for grades 1-6.

	Surveys Washington Bound	%	Surveys Auburn Bound	%	Total	% of Total
In favor	129	53.5%	51	67.1%	180	56.8%
against	36	14.9%	25	32.9%	61	19.2%
Not Sure	71	29.5%	N/offred		71	22.4%
Other	5	2.1%	N/offred		5	1.6%
Total	241	100.0%	76	100.0%	317	100.0%

5. Auburn bound parents' intentions if Auburn Freshman Campus closed and all grades 9-12 are in the Auburn Main Campus next year.

	Surveys Auburn Bound	% of Total
Attend Auburn	74	97.4%
Go to Zoned School	0	0.0%
Non-district 205 school	2	2.6%
Total	76	100.0%

Sample Population and Return

	Surveys sent	Surveys filled out so far	thus Far % return
Surveys sent to Washington Bound Parents	480	244	50.8%
Surveys sent to Auburn Bound Parents**	184	75	40.8%
Total	664	319	48.0%

**Sent to senior parents who did not fill them out

Other facts:

1. Estimated 800 students at Washington and 300 at Auburn Academy
2. Assumed state revenue per student at \$7,566
- 3.

Notes on Methodology and Logi:

1. Statistical Sample: The survey represents a statistical sample of parents currently in the gifted program. This sample was used to approximate what the opinion's of all parents in the gifted program might be. Some facts about the sample should be noted:
 - a. PGE does not have all parent's contact information. We have contact information only on those parents who want to give it to us at the beginning of the year.
 - b. Some parents have more than one child in the program at either or both of Washington and Auburn. Also some families have two parents who both could have filled out surveys.
2. Not all totals add up to equal the number of people answering the surveys. Parents were not required to answer all questions.
3. We recognize that measuring the future actions of parents this Fall by measuring intentions has its problems. But we believe that the insight received from this survey far outweighs the risks and, if used judiciously, will help school administrators and the school board in better decision making.