

## Frequently Unanswered Questions 12/16/09

*With Dr. Steve*



***Why has the BOE and the Administration hired you as a consultant in this venue when it is cash-strapped and wished to lower its expenses on legal & consulting fees?***

To quote the Joker from *The Dark Knight*, "If you're good at something, never do it for free." I suspect they called upon me when they realized that my track record as Superintendent was one of continual growth for our General & Educational Funds. I am proud of that record and obviously it has some cogency even for today. Did I say cogency? (blushes) I usually don't use such complex words! Also we had fewer expenditures and more bonuses to pass around. (broad smile)

***How come no one is "fessing up" to the situation that we have? We were told that "what was done is done and that we have to move on." Who is to blame for the fiscally irresponsible stewardship and the fiduciary troubles of an allegedly financially sound school district? Weren't the people who are in charge now actually there when these problems were developing? Didn't they foresee some necessary changes? Who is to blame for this mess?***

Were you talking to me? (question is repeated). Oh, (laughs heartily) I suppose I should answer. The Board instructed me to say this in response to this question: "Shut up, you're a stupidhead." (The question is repeated again.) Well, it's all the fault of two former administrators that were here. I won't name names, but Joel Morris and Pam Schau might know better than I. The current view of the Administration and the Board is that if we create these two red herrings and let 'em run, no one will look any closer. It is pure genius! How? First, they are both no longer here to defend themselves and second, we can attribute any other problems the district has to their time in the district. Dead men tell no tales, neither do ones who are out of earshot.

***The Board and Administration has asked the MTA to take up to a two-year cost of living freeze, yet the administration has only announced a one-year freeze for administrators. How can the administration ask more of teachers than it is willing to do itself?***

Really now, do you have to ask that question! We have seen throughout history the relegated status of those in charge and those who carry out the charge given to them. Pope Urban II called for a Crusade, but he never went on it himself. Hitler was comfy in his Bunkie while the Red Army was ravaging Berlin. Napoleon left the battlefield of Waterloo while his Old Guard was being pulverized by the British. Our boys in Iraq & Afghanistan were there on behalf of the besmirked George W. Bush. JFK could have said, "Ask not what your district can do for you, but rather what you can do for your district." Stalin never starved while Leningrad was under siege for 900 days. You had minimal raises under my administration, I got extra suitcases..

***The District Administrative cuts are not commensurate with the teaching cuts. How come?***

Listen, we're taking cuts. No more comfy hotels and lavish meals at those education conventions! Marilee was so funny wearing those lampshades. We have cut some big positions such as the Administrative Assistant to the Administrating Assistant in Charge of Administrating. Also, Head Dog Catcher was eliminated as well as American Eagle Website Consultant. Also facing the ax include no more cookies at Executive Council Meetings, Executive Administrators will now have to work at least a six hour day, and Department Chairs will be given janitorial duties to be performed in addition to their regular duties since they have not been given enough to do. Why it takes them hours to do what I could hand off to my secretary in seconds!

***Why can't the District wait until 2012-13 to not rehire the 27 teachers retiring in 2011-12?***

It's time to clean house now! Throw the bums out on the street—if they didn't take the jobs we offered them then they would not be in this mess. Remember that the District is working on the following equation:

No growth + No new taxes + No corporate sponsorship money + 3 old crumbly buildings + Fat cat teacher salaries + No casino money + Nothing ever good economically to ever happen again + No sunshine ever again + Non-touchable rainy day fund = Our current crisis

That's why.

***Now that the District has raised class sizes in English and for the Work Program, won't they be cutting teachers anyway even if we open the contract?***

Shhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh. You're not supposed to know that.

***If we agree to salary concessions now, those will impact our lifetime earnings.***

Is this a question or a sentence with a conditional clause? We are hoping that the teachers will march to the front lines and become the human shields against the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune that they're meant to be. Far better that they be soiled by the mistakes of the Board than the Board itself or its minions. You have to remember that these are elected positions and that they are beholden to the community (laughs 'til tears roll down face) who carefully monitor and support (doubled over) their actions (now on the floor kicking and howling, then composes himself) for the good of the community.

Did I answer the question? I didn't? Well, basically the Board's view is this. We wanted a five year contract that would give us more control over the salaries. The economy tanked, we spent money like drunken sailors, and the inflation rate slowed. As a result, we were outsmarted by life and we wish to avenge it; why should we allow you fools to reap the whirlwind of our mistakes?. Come on. Come on! I know you want to share some of your COLA with me. (elbows me & winks)

***What are the real numbers in terms of saving jobs? What money is the Board asking for and how will it translate into guaranteed job savings?***

Look, if we take the average teaching salary, say, \$150,000 and multiply that by the District Coefficient Confusion Code of 2.54 which brings the number to, say, a \$300,000 which you multiply by 4 because it is an earth number then divide by 2 after multiplying it 6 more times by 12.5. Subtract that amount from the State Mandated Enigma Factor and round that by another 5.24. If you take that number, multiply it by the amount of teachers in the District and you'll find that what the Board is asking for, smarty pants. Job savings of teachers? Well, that's ultimately the Board's decision -- which I am confident is like never shifting winds in Chicago.

***Even if we save jobs for the next two years there is no guarantee that those jobs will be saved in the long term.***

Hey, I am going to refuse to answer statements. What are you worrying so much about? You guys are like worry warts, You whine and complain about the future when you should be filling out your Curriculum Maps of the present. There's a guarantee. For example if I am a Haitian boat owner with a capacity of 30 on board but I am taking 75, and I ship out from Port-au-Prince with these political refugees stowing no food, water, and trying to pump out water that increases volume coming into the hold in the path of a developing Category 3 hurricane, I'd have similar chances as the boat owner of getting to Miami as that of saving those jobs.

***The District has nearly 100 million in cash balance that it has saved for a rainy day and now the rainy day has arrived. Instead of cutting teacher's jobs why not use that money to get us through the difficult financial times?***

What are you talking about, we had a November with below average precipitation. But anyway, you think that money is there for you. Well, it's not. Remember that we have to pay for other things like the award winning American Eagle Website, at Maine South electricity for the 1/3 of the lights we leave on, the ever-useful Qomo Tablets—take two and call me in the morning (he laughs heartily at his Hoosier humor), top-grade concession stands that can make any Hawk proud of the new turf not the concession stand, new turf, recycled air for the pool, my condo on Michigan Avenue, heating for the energy-efficient windowed hallways, squirrel feed for the back-up generators, curriculum mapping, traffic studies for the lot, a new floor for the leaky field house—maybe we'll fix the ceiling next, expensive pedagogy courtesy of our keynote speakers with upgraded power point technology, etc.

Apparently you have misunderstood what a rainy day is. In Chicagoland, the average rainfall is a little over 33" a year while in Tutunendo, Colombia has 463.4" a year. Based on that, we have not much rain around here lately. Get your facts straighter. There has to be rain for it to be a rainy day! So we have to make some sacrifices now to prepare for even worse times. The line for being thrown under the bus lines up by Door #54. All aboard!

***How can the salary schedule be revised so everyone takes a smaller increase, but nobody gets a total freeze or reduction compared to 2009-10 salaries?***

This is easy. We give everyone a 10% increase this year based upon the new scale. You see, if we dial back the basic steps to 10,000 for a BA, 12,500 for a BA + 16, 15,000 for an MA, 15,250 for an MA +16, 15,575 for an MA + 32, 14,587 for an MA + 64, and the top of the scale is 13,500. This new scale will allow us to get

rid of teachers at the top of the scale faster and just look at all of the money we save! District 207 is going green!

*I'm worried about the negative impact a cost of living freeze will have on my future total earnings. Over many years, this will add up to a significant amount of money. Has the future impact on earnings been taken into consideration?*

Yes, and we figured what you don't know can't hurt you. It's like a fable I like to tell. There once was a squirrel who spent all of his time gathering nuts for the cold winter ahead. Another squirrel saw the first squirrel storing away the nuts and noted their location. Then the second squirrel moved almost all of the nuts to a new location. Winter came and the first squirrel could not find his stores of food and after three weeks he died. The moral of the story? The first squirrel didn't worry about future earnings because he was dead. I think that explains it quite well. SO, stop worrying about money that you don't even have.

*If the contract is opened and teachers' jobs are saved, will the district return class sizes to their lower levels?*

Unfortunately not. We will use this time to experiment with increasing class sizes first to 37 then to 43 students per class. PE classes, add 25 to that and subtract your senior leaders as we can no longer afford the T-Shirts. Then after the transition of two years, we can get rid of the dead weight of extra teachers. Limited classroom space? No problem, we will train staff to stuff the students into the room like Tokyo Transit officials filling the Japanese trains during rush hour. Think of the cost per pupil ratio and how we can save, save, save!



Well, got to go—I have to count my suitcases...