

Community Suggestion	RESPONSE
Do not cut ARC. How will our gifted students be educated. ARC gives gifted students the chance to participate in an enriched program with their peers.	The District has established a task force to discuss Gifted services at elementary schools for next year. The Superintendent is confident that the task force will develop a plan to meet the needs of Gifted students in Leon County Schools.
Eliminate the 7th period day.	Leon County Schools has offered the 7 <sup>th</sup> period day in some form since the 1980's. When the legislature cut the funding for the program it had authorized, Leon County Schools continued to provide partial funding to support 7 periods. The current School Board and Superintendent Pons believed so much in the need for a full 7 <sup>th</sup> period program, funding was approved to support the 7 <sup>th</sup> period day at 100%. However, with the cuts to the budget made by the legislature over the past few years, the school district can no longer afford this program. The School Board and Superintendent Pons have recently made a commitment to provide a six-period day and an optional period to support the arts, remediation, and courses needed for graduation.
Have High School students pay to retake a course.	Cannot do this per Florida Statutes.
Do not purchase new textbooks and sell the surplus rather than give away.	Current legislation may possibly give LCS more flexibility regarding textbook purchases.
Do away with reading coaches.	According to State Rule 6A-6.053 the district must ensure that the number of schools served by state, federal or locally funded reading/literacy coaches is maintained or increased over the previous year and prioritized based on school need.
Do away with gifted program. Teachers can enrich these students in the classroom.	State law requires Leon County Schools to provide special services to students identified as Gifted.
4 day work week	Cutting a day out of the school week could save utility costs only if the school hours are not increased on the remaining 4 days. If student school hours are not increased, utility savings for this effort is estimated to be \$275,000 to \$300,000. A total of \$1.3 million, including utilities (garbage, propane, natural gas, electricity) could potentially be saved. The caveat for electricity savings is that the length of each day for a 4 day week not increase from what it was during the 5 day week. Transportation savings is another major piece of this calculation. Contractual salary issues with unions would have to be addressed because many employees would work fewer hours and days. Currently the 4 day work week is not an option because SBE Rule 6A-1.09512 establishes a minimum of 180 actual days for student attendance.
Shut down schools one week during the summer to save on utility costs.	LCS only cools the administration building at the school sites during the summer. All over buildings are kept in an unoccupied setting. Potential savings for this one week effort is estimated to be \$8,000.
Close all buildings during the week of Spring Break.	Currently, only administration buildings are open during spring break, all other sites are placed on an unoccupied setting. Potential savings for this one week effort is estimated to be \$8,000.
Limit the number of lunch choices.	The food service program is self-sustaining and does not use General Revenue dollars. All the cost of lunch choices is covered by the student payments combined with federal and state payments. Having more lunch choices has increased daily lunch participation by over 3,000 lunches per day.

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Investigate the feasibility of solar panels	LCS is currently piloting 3 solar projects (Oakridge, Everhart and Montford). Pending results of this effort, LCS may follow with solar installations at more school sites. Additionally, LCS has submitted for Federal Stimulus grants for solar installations at all schools sites.
Close schools for the majority of the summer.	Currently, only administration buildings are open during spring break, all other sites are placed on an unoccupied setting. Potential savings for this six week summer effort is estimated to be \$45,000.
Unplug everything when you leave on Friday.	Current LCS policy does not permit space heater, desk fans, small refrigerators, etc. Employees are encouraged to refrain from the use of these small appliances. Copy machines are to be turned off for the weekend. There are approximately 140 units district wide. Potential Savings is estimated to be \$140 a week. LCS is currently installing software the can shut down our computers from a remote location. There are approximately 15,000 computers district wide. Utility Savings as a result of this effort is estimated to be \$325,000 to \$350,000 annually.
Cut staff travel expenses	Beginning in the 2007-08 fiscal year staff travel was reduced significantly; this practice has continued into the 2008-09 fiscal year.
Cut extra resources ( supplies, technology, etc.)	Beginning in the 2007-08 fiscal year cost had to receive approval to purchase any item over \$750. This practice has continued into the 2008-09 fiscal year. Operating budgets for the District cost centers were reduced by 10% in the 2008-09 fiscal year.
Implement a 1 cent sales tax to offset cuts.	A 1 cent sales tax would produce approximately \$35 million per fiscal year. This is not an option currently within statutes. The only sales tax allowable for school districts is a 1/2 cent sales tax for capital outlay purposes. An option that is available for LCS is to hold a referendum for voters to approve or deny a levy on property taxes up to the 10 mil limit. LCS currently has 2.404 mils available. One mil is approximately \$16.2 million. The entire allowable millage up to 10 mils would raise approximately \$39 million.
Terminate all teachers who are in extended DROP or principals must recommend continuation.	Budget document approved at 2/24 Board meeting eliminated DROP extensions beginning with the 2009-2010 year.
Keep the extension for DROP. Teachers are experienced.	Budget document approved at 2/24 Board meeting eliminated DROP extensions. Teachers ending DROP may apply for reemployment in vacant positions.
Place Assistant Principals on 11 month schedule.	The cost savings for moving assistant principals from 12 months (248 days) to 10 months (226 days) would be approximately \$573 thousand. This would place a greater workload on the principals to attend to the tasks previously covered by the assistants.
Require all staff to pay for their own professional development.	If it is necessary to cut general funds for professional development, and barring any major changes in Federal Entitlements, it would still be possible to provide training for teachers and administrators in areas allowed by the grant fund sources. However, it would be necessary to be very focused and purposeful in the plans to provide professional development in areas most related to making a difference in student achievement.

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People should not be paid at Christmas Break.	The practice of shutting down district facilities during the winter break was adopted as a means of conserving energy. The practice of closing facilities during the holiday period but continuing employee pay is also used by other districts and universities. If the seven days during the shutdown this coming year (nine days minus Christmas and New Years legal holidays) were removed from employees' pay, it would result in approximately a \$115,000 per day reduction in pay for employees currently paid for those holidays, or approx. \$805,000 for seven days plus \$141,000 in benefits costs. These employees would experience an average reduction of approximately \$875 or 3% in their \$29,200 average annual pay. These holidays are currently part of these employees' compensation as provided in the collective bargaining contracts and could, therefore, not be eliminated until the applicable contract provisions were revised through negotiations. If, instead, these employees were allowed to use leave time during these days to remain in pay status, the District would have to accommodate those employees who do not have sufficient leave to cover this period or have only a limited amount of leave that they wish to use at other times in the year. This accommodation usually involves identifying work at an alternate site during the "shutdown" period which then limits the energy saving goal. Additionally, requiring employees to use leave does not provide any immediate savings, it only reduces their leave accrual for which they may be paid when they resign or retire. Many long-term employees would reach maximum leave accrual even if they used leave during this period which would result in no savings to the district.
Less administrators. Cut salaries for administrators.	We have reduced administrative costs at the district level by 56 positions and we continue to not fill 14 current positions. We have cut close to 35% of the overall district budget.
Allow teachers with 25 + years to retire without penalty.	Any early retirement incentive program needs to ensure that the costs associated with the program will be more than offset by the "savings" and that the incentive is sufficient to attract a reasonable number of participants so that the administrative costs are justified. This is very difficult to achieve given the incentives provided through the DROP program.
All bonuses-National Board Certified, School Recognition should be cut until there is a cost of living raise.	Decisions to pay Natl Board and FL School Recognition bonuses are made by the Florida Legislature and Governor Crist. LCS has no jurisdiction over this decision. Monies to pay these bonuses are provided to the District only for this purpose.
Eliminate positions not crucial to the instruction of students and streamline staff at the district level and do a reclassification.	We have been doing this and will continue to do so.
Uniform start and end times for all schools	On March 10, 2009 the School Board agreed with the superintendent to have uniform school start/end times.
Close Belle Vue and send students to Nims.	Belle Vue has been recommended to close. The district is in the process of rezoning the students.
Early Release for Fridays . Teachers leave after students. This amount to approximately 2 days furlough per month.	Given current State law and rule, we cannot eliminate ½ day of instructional time each week as proposed as we would not meet minimum annual instructional time necessary to grant credit. Teachers may currently leave the worksite at the end of the school day, with permission of their principal, if they are not responsible for student supervision and no required meetings are scheduled.
Consider consolidating vocational and technical programs at one school.	The funding provided by the legislature to secondary and postsecondary programs are of two different types. Secondary programs are provided weighted funding through the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) while the postsecondary programs, at Lively, are funded through the workforce budget. Secondary programs would actually experience cuts in funding if the School Board chose to fund all programs under the Workforce budget. The workforce budget has also sustained legislative cuts over the past few years, so fewer programs could be offered in this instance. If the school district chose to consolidate all such programs at one secondary school and fund them under the FEFP, both our transportation and capital outlay costs would soar. Facilities at current schools are in place to support the programs housed in them. If programs were moved, the school district would be required to use capital outlay funds to renovate facilities. After renovations occurred, it would be costly to transport students from their school zones to the one school offering such programs.
Cut back on standardized testing. Don't test all grades.	There have been several standardized tests "cut back" already: The State FCAT-NRT (3 <sup>rd</sup> – 10 <sup>th</sup> grades) and the District SAT/10 Programs (K – 2 <sup>nd</sup> grades) have been dropped, and the FCAT-Writing Tests (4 <sup>th</sup> , 8 <sup>th</sup> and 10 <sup>th</sup> grades) were reduced. What remains (FCAT-SSS) is required by State law.

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Put FCAT on hold for a year other than 3rd and 10th. Don't print the practice books.	Any further reduction of the FCAT would have to be a State decision. However, assessment results are used in a variety of ways (e.g., program, curricula, school and individual student monitoring/evaluation) that necessitate tests being administered more frequently than once in elementary school and once in high school. At the present time, the FCAT is the only assessment being administered in LCS whose results can be used for these purposes.
Implement a district wide license for AR tests	There is no such thing as a district-wide license for AR tests. There is district-wide licensing for the Accelerated Reader software, but it is too costly. Not all schools use AR, and the ones that do use different sets of tests. It would cost more to standardize the AR tests and then purchase them from the district than to continue to have individual schools purchase whichever AR tests they need.
Stop busing charter school students.	Florida statutes require that school districts work cooperatively with charter schools to ensure that lack of transportation is not a barrier to students in those schools. We are currently working with our charter schools to implement the most cost efficient plan possible for their transportation. We were able to assist our newest charter school in developing and implementing a plan that has enabled it to transport its own students.