

**Citizens Budget Advisory Committee Recommendations
To the Des Moines School Board
February 21st, 2012**

Quality Education is our #1 Priority Shared Responsibility in Educating the children in our community		
State	Community	District
<p>Consistent and Adequate Funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State funding does not adequately address the unique challenges faced in urban school districts. State funding levels needs to reflect Iowa's changing demographics. • State funding does not adequately address rising costs of health, facilities, utilities or costs of living. Measures should be taken to provide consistent levels of funding from year to year. <p>Greater Spending Flexibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current State Law does not allow districts to apply funds where most needed. Greater flexibility should be allowed within districts to promote efficiency and innovation. <p>Focus on Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Policy enforces specific methods for reaching desired outcomes. If we hope to foster innovation in our districts, set high expectations, but do not proscribe standard methods for achieving them. 	<p>Maintain support for current levies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2011, the school board approved an increase in the Cash Reserve Levy by 30 cents per millage. This was on top of the 55 cent per millage adjustment from the State. • PPEL - On September 14th, 2011, voters approved the continuation of the property, plant, and equipment levy (PPEL) through FY2021. • Instructional Support Levy (ISL) - Used to improve instruction via new text books, technology, professional development, reading programs, and library materials. Approved through 2017. • Drop Out Prevention Levy (DOP) - State law allows districts to annually levy an amount equal to 5% of the cost per student. Funds support the early indicator system and Academic Support Labs. <p>Business and Community Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued support of after school programs and advocacy for public education. 	<p>Reduce Cash Reserve Levels</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set the solvency ratio to a reasonable benchmark compared to similar, solvent districts to better leverage reserves. <p>Operational Efficiencies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review purchasing agreements and negotiate better terms and pricing. • Continue energy savings programs to reduce utility expenses. • Consolidate administrative functions across districts and lower administrative costs. • Consider opportunities to outsource support services while maintaining safety of students and quality of service. • Implement wellness programs to reduce expected future health costs. <p>Compensation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask all employees to limit annual compensation increases to increases in state funding levels. • Ask employees to agree to furloughs. • Consider employee contributions towards health care.