1. **QCEA: Do not hire a 4th high school assistant principal**
   a. HR has stated one assistant principal is equal to approximately 1 ½ teachers.  
      **District Note:** This is not strictly accurate. The salary difference between an assistant principal position and a teacher at the top of the scale is approximately $10,000. Administrators also work 12 months of the year instead of 10 months. On a daily rate basis, most teachers earn more per day ($530 daily rate at the top of the scale) than the administrators who supervise them ($423 per day for an assistant principal.) Compared to a starting teacher salary (at the Bachelor’s level), the comparison that QCEA cited is more accurate.  
   b. Instead, hire an additional Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA) to assist as needed  
   c. Another option would be to transfer a district office administrator to assist at the high school full time  
   d. HS staff has shared that an additional administrator won’t necessarily fix the school’s problems. The current admin team could be working more efficiently and effectively.  

   **District Response:** The savings associated with this budget reduction would be **$177,222** (this includes salary/PSERS/medical benefits, etc.) if the position is removed from the budget. As part of the building closings and budget reduction strategies, we have eliminated **4** administrative positions in the past two years - the Director of Elementary Education, the Supervisor of Cyber Programs, one elementary principal, and one high school assistant principal. We made all these reductions for 2017-18 because we had resignations and retirements that allowed us to eliminate three of the four positions by attrition. The fourth individual transferred back into a vacant teaching position.

B. Events at the high school this year, including teacher feedback, suggest that we do not have adequate administrative staff at the high school this year to support teachers and students. It is primarily a safety issue. We have proposed adding one assistant principal back to the high school for 2018-19. Adding an additional TOSA could meet some needs, but TOSAs cannot supervise teachers or discipline students (other than low level discipline) and would not provide the high school with the same level of support for teachers and students. If the assistant principal position was replaced with a TOSA, the savings to the budget would be **$100,222** (TOSA LTS cost is $77,000 - as the TOSA’s classroom assignment would be performed by a non-contracted teacher). This strategy would not save a furlough.

C. Covering assistant principal duties with a district office administrator would not be cost-effective, nor provide an adequate level of support. District office administrators frequently support buildings in the absence of the principal to cut substitute principal costs, like two weeks ago when the HS principal and assistant were chaperones on the student trips to Peru and China.
D. There are other options that could be considered to improve the overall climate at the high school, such as increasing the available options for students who require a higher level of support services, but all the options cost money. For an example, the average cost of an student being placed outside of one of our schools costs at least $60,000, while the average per student cost in-district is $13,500. A greater level of administrative oversight for the high school is recommended as the optimal option at this time.

2. **QCEA: Eliminate the new Communications Director Position**
   a. His salary would be equal to one teacher’s position
   b. Save money by having somebody else write the newsletter, make snow cancellation announcements, etc.
   c. This job used to be done by a teacher for a fraction of the cost.
   d. Either offer the position as a stipend position for a teacher or reassign the work to a district office administrator or employee.

   **District Response:** The savings associated with this budget reduction would be **$102,772** if the position was just eliminated and not replaced with an alternate staffing option. Improving communications with the schools, staff, and community was added as a board goal several years ago in response to criticism about the level and types of communication provided. Executing an effective communications strategy at the level expected requires a full time position dedicated to those duties. Previously, many of the duties were performed by a teacher at the high school who had substantial release time, and also received additional hourly payments for doing the work. It became untenable to expect a teacher to teach additional classes and to devote the time necessary to communications. The annual hourly payments for 2016-17 to a teacher for work outside the release time in her day totalled **$19,970**, in addition to her regular salary. The salary of a full time communications position is considerably lower than the salary for a full time teacher, and no additional stipends or hourly payments are required, so having the duties performed by a non-teacher is a more cost effective approach, saving approximately **$83,000** annually.

3. **QCEA: Delay the 5 Year Curriculum Cycle**
   a. Use the money saved from not purchasing a new elementary RELA curriculum to keep teachers.

   **District Response:** The savings associated with this budget reduction would be approximately **$400,000**. This cost could be reduced by purchasing fewer materials in grade levels that are departmentalizing and by selling old materials through book sellback programs. A guaranteed and viable curriculum is a critical component of student success with the more rigorous demands of the PA Core. The elementary RELA resources are from 2011 and 2013 and teachers are currently piecing together parts of the old *Journeys* curriculum. The *Journey’s* curriculum is not common core aligned, with other resources in order to deliver the necessary content. Failing to update our curriculum and resources to current standards will handicap our
students in preparing for grade level standards in reading and writing. It remains the recommendation of the elementary RELA curriculum committee (comprised of administrators, reading/instructional coaches, specialists, and teachers) to move forward with this purchase.

4. **QCEA:** Instead of furloughing teachers, keep them with their current salaries as Building Subs.
   a. Since we have continuous sub issues this would help with the consistent need for coverages throughout the district, including for IEP meetings.
   b. Less money would need to be paid to Source for Teachers for the sub coverage
   c. We would have teachers subbing with experience and understanding of our district’s expectations and curriculum.
   d. This would address the concern that there isn’t any space for the teachers to teach in.

**District Response:** Retaining the furloughed teachers at their current salaries as building substitutes would require adding **$750,000** to the budget, an expense that would almost certainly come out of fund balance since we do not have other areas to cut to save this amount of money. There are no (or possibly minimal) savings associated with this suggestion, especially if the role of the substitutes is expanded to provide coverages that are currently provided by other teachers. With declining enrollment and a relatively small number of retirements expected in the next few years, the district would carry this cost forward for and at least several years before there is sufficient attrition to absorb the excess staff.

This suggestion does not account for the fact that by consolidating buildings and making our assignment of students more efficient, we do not need the positions that are being eliminated. We are hopeful there will be additional retirements or resignations that will allow us to retain these awesome professional staff members in contracted positions.

5. **QCEA:** Stop printing paper newsletters
   a. Digital newsletters would save money
   b. The district could ask the community to contact them if they need to receive a paper copy.
   c. Printing newsletters is a step backwards in 21st Century technology and communication

**District Response:** The savings associated with this budget reduction would be approximately **$4,500** per issue, a very minimal amount compared to the budget gap. Developed at the board’s direction last year, the district newsletters are part of the overall communications strategy to reach out to every household in the school district, and not just those with children in our schools. Approximately, seventy percent of district taxpayers do not have children in the district, and do not get the communications we send regularly to parents. We also produce a regular digital newsletter and use many digital tools in
6. QCEA: Renegotiate or investigate a different transportation contract
   a. How long have we used the current company and how often do we seek alternative bids?
   b. Recently discovered that our current company doesn’t even use GPS, which is common technology in the bussing industry.

   **District Response:** The current transportation contract runs through 06/30/2020. Levy Bus, Inc. a local community company, has transported QCSD children since 1927 - before QCSD was incorporated as QCSD! Most Levy's employees are district residents and taxpayers. The terms of the current contract provide for an increase at the average of the CPI and the Act 1 Index each year. When the current contract nears expiration, the board could certainly seek proposals to determine the provider best positioned to meet district needs. This cannot occur, however, until the current contract is up. What we have learned from studying other school district transportation expenditures and contracts that there is often a first contract savings. Then, after the local bus company no longer exists, the new bus company ramps up the cost of the second contract. So far, Levy Bus has been flexible with QCSD, e.g. by going to the hub system which has saved the school district $600,000 per year.

7. QCEA: District Office Staff Reduction
   a. In the future, the new furlough law states that administration needs to be cut by the same percentage of teachers being furloughed. Although it’s not required currently, have any proposals for district office personnel cuts been proposed?
   b. Many comments have been made within the district and in the community, that district office is overstaffed.

   **District Response:** Reducing costs for district level services has been going on for over four years. As noted in the response to suggestion #1, we have actually eliminated 4 administrative positions in the past two years - the Director of Elementary Education, the Supervisor of Cyber Programs, one elementary principal, and one high school assistant principal. We made all these reductions for 2017-18 because we had resignations and retirements that allowed us to eliminate three of the four positions by attrition. The fourth individual transferred back into a vacant teaching position. In addition, both the Office of Teaching and Learning and the business and support services departments have been reorganized over the last two years, reducing positions from 63.6 positions to 59 positions and generating annual savings compared to the previous organizational models. District level staff provide support to buildings on a daily basis in a variety of ways. Any reduction in the current level of district office staff would require building personnel, including teachers, to assume responsibility for those duties.
8. QCEA: Sell Properties
   a. Sell one or a combination of Pumping Station Rd, Milford land, or District Office
   b. Milford M.S. could be renovated and turned into district office. Although it will cost money to renovate, how much of the current building sale could offset those costs. Does all of Milford need to even be renovated in order to house the district office?
   c. Although land sales are a once and done lump sum of money, the money could be used to save the people who directly work with students.

   **District Response:** These are good ideas which the Board and Administration frequently talk about. Selling one or more properties could generate a one time infusion of cash only, so it would not help in terms of retaining professional staff members. The purpose of closing old buildings with many repair needs was to improve efficiency in staffing, and to remove those buildings from the district inventory, and eliminate the costs of renovating each of them. It is possible to consider selling one or more of the properties listed, as long as we are making sure we have the land available to meet the needs of the district far into the future.

9. QCEA: Bring back the Cyber School Model that once made the district money
   a. This would take true planning and communication with other districts and marketing. Previous agreements with other districts need to be renegotiated so we’re not getting paid minimal amounts.
   b. Districts are paying a lot to outsource cyber education and anything less than that would be enticing for districts to work with QCSD and its teachers.

   **District Response:** QCSD previously operated a cyber school model - and no matter how it was tweaked, re-invented, or marketed, the costs far outweighed the revenues. In 2013-14, for example, the cyber program had revenues of approximately **$300,000** and district labor costs (only) of well over **$1,000,000**. So it did not ever make money. Different pricing models were thoroughly explored over a two year period, with the IU/Bridges as a partner, and with other individual school districts as partners. Unfortunately the cost of QCSD providing the services was far in excess of what other districts are willing to pay. This is largely due to the high cost of our labor relative to other districts or charter schools. The full analysis was provided and reported on publicly in 2014-15 and 2015-16. The inability to provide cyber services in a cost effective model is the major reason why the cyber program was eliminated. We also found that we had limited staff interest in teaching cyber classes, which made it difficult to consistently be able to offer the courses students needed at a high quality level.

   Here’s an example of the cost analysis. The cost of teaching one class using the average salary of a QCSD teacher is approximately **$25,000**. The typical enrollment in a single cyber class was 5 or less students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># Students in the Class</th>
<th>Labor Cost per Student for the Class</th>
<th>Total Cost per Student Taking 7 Classes - for Teacher Costs Only</th>
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<td>20</td>
<td>$25,000/20 = $1,250</td>
<td>$8,750</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>$25,000/10 = $2,500</td>
<td>$17,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>$25,000/5 = $5,000</td>
<td>$35,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>$25,000/3 = $8,333</td>
<td>$58,333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>$25,000/2 = $12,500</td>
<td>$87,500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is easy to see why the cost of providing a cyber course exceeds the price point that other districts are willing or able to pay.

**10. QCEA: Reevaluate individual building and district office budgets**

a. In the past, building and district spending have been frozen to save money.
b. Determine where budgetary cuts can be made

**District Response:** The savings associated with this budget reduction would depend on the level of the reduction. A total of $865,000 is assigned out to nine schools across the district, about 0.8% of the total budget. Most purchases from building allocations are for items that directly impact teaching and learning, such as copy machine paper. Reductions would most likely have a direct impact on students. Our direction from the board was to bring the budget into balance without impacting student programs.

Department budgets at the district level are almost entirely designed to (1) support programs at the school level, or (2) provide district-wide essential services from financial software to lawn mowing. A very minimal amount is discretionary and directly for district office, such as for supplies.

It is important to remember that the strategies we employed to bring the budget into balance over the two year period were to improve efficiency. This is different from using austerity strategies in which all expenses are reduced regardless of the impact on the core mission.

**11. QCEA: Reevaluate money being spent on digital resources to determine if all of them are needed**

a. Study Island, Big Brainz, Canvas, etc.
b. Panorama and Bright Bytes contracts

**District Response:** The savings associated with this budget reduction would be as follows:

- Big Brainz: $ None for 2018-19 - 3 year agreement ending in 2020
- Study Island: $ None for 2018-19 - 3 year agreement ending in 2019
- Canvas: $48,000 annually
- Panorama: $10,276 annually
- Bright Bytes: $7,259 annually
Evaluating our digital resources to make sure we are paying for what we need to provide appropriate interventions for students without duplicating resources is an annual process. The types of resources and the number of licenses for each is determined each year based on these needs. Some digital resources are continued or added, and others are discontinued (like Compass Learning) based on this analysis. Some of these programs, such as Study Island and Big Brainz are under multi-year agreements so cutting them would not be possible at this time. Panorama and Bright Bytes are important parts of our board goals for student engagement, family engagement, and technology integration. Our recent high school graduates tell us through surveys that Canvas is by far the number one Learning Management platform that colleges they attend are using. Other survey results indicate we have a lot of room for improvement in student perception of their school experience, family engagement, and technology integration. Consistency of use of these digital platforms continues to be a challenge. With so many needs evident in these areas, the Administration does not recommend discontinuing these services.