Option 1: Equip People to Succeed
Deliberation focused on the first action – “Boost K-12 student achievement by reducing class sizes and providing extra support to students who need it” along with the word “succeed” and how we measure success for our students.

Life skills (more needed) versus academics (focus now) to equip people to succeed. How are we defining succeed? For the individual or for the society? By what standard? Not everyone should go to college. We need trade school and service workers for community to function. Not every student will be a contributing member of future society.

Elementary students were brought back during the pandemic to “micro-classrooms” – recent experiences with this in the district.
Benefits of 15-student Smaller classes size (micro-classrooms)
- Less behaviors, more learning, more trauma informed
- 1:1 time
- Designated desks (for decreasing transmission) improved behaviors

Expectations may not meet developmental needs (online learning)
System in place doesn’t evolve with needs
Plans on paper don’t execute well always

Action – Re-education teachers with tools for new generation
Action – “standardized” testing isn’t for every student
Action – evaluation human development needs and make appropriate changes to system

Are we using data we gather?
Support teacher’s mental health
What did we learn from pandemic?
From health in general?

Action: What if the district prioritized continuing micro-classroom 15 students per class in elementary school?
What would some unintended consequences or tradeoffs be?
- Can kids go to their home/neighborhoods school? Will there be space?
- Staffing (more classroom teachers needed)
- $ space/classrooms – need more
- Devices – for kids who stay remote
- Social connections – may be harder with smaller classes
- Spending cuts to other things – retirement fund?
- EQUITY issues
• Social workers – fewer employed but also maybe fewer needed to address classroom issues (but trauma won’t have decreased)
• Building updates – training facility is very nice compared to some of the elementary schools
• Teachers may do better in smaller classrooms
• Pandemic showed us new partnerships

Option 2: Give Everyone a Fair Chance
Proposed Action: Increase civic engagement
• How to communicate effectively (as part of civic engagement)
• empathy, self, relationship, service, hearts and minds change, increasing exposure to other experiences
• What is motivating people? – relationships

Drawbacks (to increasing civic engagement and more people advocate for what they want/need)
• Higher taxes
• More ruffled feathers
• Schools overburdened (teaching this)
• Younger people with less experience in charge (if run for office/win)
• Only elite affected (if efforts aren’t targeted to underrepresented, action won’t result in giving everyone a fair chance)
• Equal does not equal equitable

How do we form policies to increase relationships (to give everyone a fair chance, for future generations to thrive)
• Scooter story (teacher interacted with neighborhood kids on scooters, wouldn’t have otherwise)
• Advocates work with the vulnerable
• Reward those that do
• Civil rights are still there to protect people
• Stay away from being absolute

Option 3: Focus on Economic Security

Many of our students and parents are in survival mode, attitudes focused on immediate needs
Many adults don’t understand the taxes on their paystubs or how a mill levy works

Actions
• Renewable energy investment may raise rates, so what if incentive programs tax non-renewable energy
• Lower prices to buy electric cars and tax gasoline more – people with older vehicles stuck with expensive gas
• Restructuring tax obligations for state (they didn’t fund public retirement fully in pandemic)
• Legalizing marijuana in Kansas and tax it (for economic security)
• Tax firearms/permits
• (but) Sin taxes is judgmental and people already can’t afford taxes in Kansas (higher rates than other places)
• Stop withholding student diplomas because of fees, not the student’s fault. (also a metaphor for this option)

Action: Investing in Job corp for training in skilled trades – example of teaching wind energy options to trade students and integrate the benefits of economic security of renewable energy into the education/job options for our students/young adults

Reflections

• Who wasn’t in the room: Board members, stakeholders, adults that don’t have kids, children, money/fiscal oversight, rural community, retired folks

• Agreements – YES to smaller class sizes