



Proposed Budget Cuts Impact All Areas of Dist. 95

It was a packed house of parents, students and staff that greeted District 95 school board members and Superintendent **Dr. Brian Knutson** as the Board of Education held its regular Committee of the Whole (CoW) meeting on Thursday evening, February 12.



In all, the budget reductions and fee increases total \$4,236,997 and are necessitated by an unexpected drop in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) from 4.1 percent to 0.1 percent, leading to a projected significant shortfall in property tax revenue, as well as a possible shortfall in property tax collections.

The topic of interest: \$4 million in budget reductions that are being proposed for the 2009-2010 school year. If approved, the massive budget cuts would take affect July 1.

Presented by Dr. Knutson and Assistant Superintendent **Mary Kalou**, the budget reductions were developed using a framework that was designed to 1) Preserve the instructional program; and 2) Maintain a comprehensive program for our students.

While the proposed budget cuts do maintain that framework, there is no area of the school district that remains untouched by the proposed budget reductions. Whether it is eliminating staff positions and programs, reducing coaches, cutting sports, or increasing fees, every student, parent and staff member will feel its effects.

"This recommendation for budgetary reductions is perhaps the most difficult recommendation I have ever had to make in my career," said Dr. Knutson. "Unfortunately, our district is not immune to the impact of this economic crisis in our country and we are forced into making extremely difficult choices on how we spend our limited resources."

Broken down by area, the reductions include:

- Closing Charles Quentin School - \$250,000
- General Administration - \$1,118,000
- Elementary - \$336,500
- Middle School - \$851,990
- High School - \$1,041,897
- Special Education - \$175,000
- Fee Increases - \$366,110
- Flexible Staffing - \$(150,000)
- TOTAL - \$3,989,497
- One Time Reductions - \$247,500

Closing of Charles Quentin School (\$250,000)



The closing of Charles Quentin Elementary School at the end of the current school year is expected to save approximately \$250,000 in staffing costs, plus an additional cost of approximately \$120,000 in operating costs. However, that savings will not be fully recognized next year because of the cost incurred by moving supplies, equipment and other items out of Charles Quentin School.

General Administration (\$1,118,000)

The greatest area of budget reduction was in General Administration, which included eliminating or reducing the following:

- \$165,000 savings by replacing the copy machines
- \$119,000 by freezing administrator salaries
- \$200,000 reduction in the Operations & Maintenance budget
- \$100,000 reduction in the district's technology plan
- \$152,000 by eliminating the Director of Communications position and combining the high school Guidance Department Chair and Assistant Principal for Student Services positions
- \$76,000 by reducing Support Staff increases to 2%

Budget Cuts *cont.*

- \$75,000 by eliminating the remaining elementary assistant principal position
- \$75,000 by shifting payment for paper to school buildings/departments
- \$40,000 by reducing supplies
- \$34,000 by eliminating Middle School late buses
- \$20,000 by reducing the building technology technician to .5 FTE
- \$20,000 by eliminating and closing the Print Shop
- \$21,000 by eliminating kindergarten transportation above state requirement and reducing/eliminating paid riders
- \$15,000 by replacing a retiring Certified School Nurse with a Registered Nurse
- \$6,000 eliminate coach busses for state tournaments

Elementary Schools (\$336,500)



At the elementary school level, the good news is that the budget reductions maintain current class size targets

of 21 at kindergarten and first grade; 25 at grades 2-5, with K-1 maximums of 23 and grades 2-5 maximums of 27. All core instructional programs were preserved, and art, music and physical education were recommended to be maintained at their current levels.

On the bad news side of the ledger, the following reductions/eliminations were recommended:

- \$200,000 by eliminating fourth and fifth grade band/orchestra program (4 teachers)
- \$75,000 by reducing extended day kindergarten by 50 percent (1.5 teachers)
- \$24,150 by eliminating clubs, intramurals and chorus, or increasing the participating fee to \$25 with a minimum of 30 students
- \$20,000 by eliminating team leader positions

- \$12,400 eliminate band/orchestra stipends
- \$5,000 by using school busses instead of coach busses to go to Taft

Middle Schools (\$851,990)



The middle schools will maintain a class size average of 26-28 for core and encore classes. In addition, the middle school concept and all core instructional programs were preserved, allowing the schools to continue offering a comprehensive

program for students.

In the area of reductions and eliminations, the district is recommending the following:

- \$480,000 by increasing core class size to a target of 26-28 students (9.6 teachers)
- \$100,000 by reducing from 2 to 1 guidance counselors at each middle school (2 teachers)
- \$100,000 by placing Band and Orchestra in the encore program (2 teachers)
- \$100,000 by eliminating computer classes from the encore program (2 teachers)
- \$50,000 by increasing PE class size with a target of under 30. (1 teacher)
- \$6,140 reduce 2 of 6 boy's wrestling coaches
- \$4,380 reduce 2 of 4 girl's softball coaches
- \$4,380 reduce 2 of 4 girl's soccer coaches
- \$2,710 reduce 2 of 4 student council sponsors
- \$4,380 reduce 2 of 4 Boy's soccer coaches

Lake Zurich High School (\$1,041,897)



While Lake Zurich High School did take the second largest budget hit behind general administration, the proposed cuts to preserve a class size average of 30 or less students in core classes, while maintaining all core instructional programs, will thereby ensure a comprehensive program for all high school students.

The reductions and eliminations include:

- Department Chairs teaching 2 classes (reduction in class size numbers)

- \$530,000 reduce low enrollment classes and keep class size average to 30 or less (excl. PE) (10.6 teachers)
- \$125,000 reduce behind the wheel and increase PE class size to a max of 40 (2.5 teachers)
- \$80,000 elimination of School Resource Officer
- \$73,900 reduction in departmental supply budgets
- \$50,000 reduce 1 guidance counselor
- \$16,000 eliminate in-school suspension aide (becomes a staff duty)
- \$11,000 *Bear Facts* newspaper online only
- \$10,000 eliminate Performing Arts Center asst.
- \$10,000 students purchase Language Arts paperback books
- \$9,000 reduce seats in Ombudsman program from 20 to 18
- \$3,280 reduce morning supervision by three of eight
- \$3,000 eliminate summer counseling hours

Athletics



- \$19,370 eliminate Boy's and Girl's Golf
- \$14,690 eliminate Boy's and Girl's Bowling
- \$12,230 eliminate freshman/sophomore B Boy's Basketball
- \$10,000 close weight room or charge a \$35 per season fee for student access
- \$6,450 eliminate freshman B Girl's Basketball
- \$4,710 eliminate JV Cheerleading
- \$4,730 eliminate freshman B Boy's Baseball
- \$4,080 eliminate freshman B Football
- \$3,440 eliminate freshman B Girl's Volleyball
- \$3,120 reduce 1 of 2 Poms coaches
- \$2,420 eliminate sophomore Girl's Soccer
- \$2,200 eliminate JV Boy's Soccer

Extra-Curricular

- \$4,630 reduce 1 of 3 theater productions
- \$3,380 reduce 1 of 2 Scholastic Bowl coaches
- \$1,440 eliminate Percussion Director stipend
- \$3,250 reduce 1 of 2 National Honor Society stipends
- \$2,410 reduce 1 of 2 Senior class sponsors
- \$2,320 reduce 1 of 2 Junior class sponsors
- \$2,320 eliminate Strolling Strings stipend
- \$2,320 eliminate Literary Magazine stipend
- \$4,060 eliminate Speech/Debate stipend

- \$1,490 eliminate Drama Club stipend
- \$1,440 reduce 1 of 2 Sophomore class sponsors
- \$1,440 reduce 1 of 2 Freshman class sponsors
- \$1,440 reduce 1 of 2 Student Council sponsors
- \$1,440 reduce 1 of 2 Math Team coaches

Special Education (\$175,000)

- \$50,000 reduce self-contained program due to enrollment (1 teacher)
- \$75,000 reduce Resource program (1.5 teachers)
- \$50,000 reduce Social Work program (1 teacher)

Fee Increases (\$366,110)

- \$49,000 increase K-12 grade registration fee
- \$173,500 increase high school athletic fee
- \$4,890 increase high school parking fee
- \$36,400 increase high school fine arts, clubs and academic competition fees
- \$66,320 increase middle school athletic fee
- \$36,000 increase middle school fine arts, clubs and academic competition fees

One Time Reductions (\$247,500)

- \$17,500 reduce curriculum writing
- \$170,000 reduce textbook budget
- \$60,000 reduce technology plan

To allow for flexible staffing at the school level, Dr. Knutson proposes keeping \$150,000 (3 FTE) positions to allocate after schedules and sections are completed based upon need.

If the budget cuts and fee increases are approved by the Board of Education as presented, **Dr. Michael Egan**—who will take over as superintendent July 1—will take the helm of a much different looking school district than the one that currently exists.

“The global recession has affected every segment of our economy,” said Dr. Egan. “This is a very rough time for our community, our students, our staff, and our parents. We have an excellent staff, and we may lose some very good people due to these proposed budget cuts. However, I am confident that the school district will continue to focus on doing what is best for our students in spite of these difficult circumstances.”

The Board of Education is expected to further discuss the proposed budget items at its March 5 CoW meeting. The Board of Education will take action on personnel-related items at its March 26 regular Board of Education meeting, however the tentative budget will not be approved until June 25, and the final budget will not be approved until September 24.

THRIVE in 95 is produced by the Community Unit School District 95 Office of Communications & Community Relations for staff and interested community members. Story submissions are greatly encouraged.

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