

GLENDALE  RIVER HILLS
SCHOOL DISTRICT

March 22nd, 2024

Dear Glendale-River Hills School District community members,

We are writing to share the latest developments in the Glendale-River Hills School Board's ongoing work to respond to budget challenges in our district. Further background and FAQs communicated on March 14th can be accessed at glendale.k12.wi.us/school-board under "Budget Information."

In January, the board learned that there were significant errors in accounting and budgeting made by staff that are now no longer with the district, and that our revenue and savings would be insufficient to cover the expected deficit in the 2024-25 budget. We immediately hired financial consultants to verify and correct the financial data from prior years, investigate past revenue and spending to determine the full extent of the budget deficit, ensure that district operational expenses are fully covered through the 2023-24 school year, and build a fiscally responsible budget for the 2024-25 school year.

Although our accounting and financial experts are still working to determine the full extent of the budget deficit, we are certain that we will have to make significant budget reductions for the upcoming school year. Administrators, staff, and the board have been discussing potential efficiencies and areas for cost reductions since January.

We can say with certainty that our schools will remain open, course offerings in our curriculum will remain the same, and the quality of the education we offer will not be diminished. However, with heavy hearts, we have realized that staff reductions must be part of our budget solutions.

After careful consideration, the board approved administration recommendations at the March 20th meeting to implement staff reductions for the 2024-25 school year. These reductions, totaling 13 positions that span multiple job classifications within the district, are projected to generate over \$1 million in budget savings and were strategically selected to keep reductions away from classrooms as much as possible. Notably, **a majority of the reductions were achieved through attrition resulting from resignations or retirements, aimed at mitigating the impact on existing staff. No course offerings will be removed from our curriculum as a result of these reductions.**

The cut positions are as follows:

District:

Registrar
Board and Superintendent Secretary
Custodian

Parkway Elementary School:

Two (2) Building Substitutes
SEL Support Position

Glen Hills Middle School:

Supervisory Aid
SEL Support Position
Library Teacher
Two (2) Building Substitutes
World Language Teacher
Math Teacher

The reduction recommendations were prepared by our administrative team based on their deep understanding of programs, student needs, and staffing priorities. Before voting, board members carefully and strategically considered the proposed reductions with the administrative team to ensure they were reasonable for staff and had a minimal impact on school programs and student experiences. Despite the heartfelt difficulty of having to cut positions, we have full confidence that we are taking the necessary steps to continue delivering the highest quality education to our students.

Since the board decision on March 20th, administrators have met with affected employees, and our superintendent has provided district staff with detailed information about the reductions. Building administrators have also invited staff to meet with them to ensure all have opportunities to ask questions, fully understand our situation, and discuss the changes.

These staff reductions are an important first step toward a healthy fiscal landscape. With collaboration and oversight from the school board, our administrative team and financial experts will continue exploring efficiencies to identify additional significant cost savings that can be implemented going forward.

We are grateful for the dedicated leadership team and staff in our district who continue to prioritize our learners, especially during times of uncertainty and change. Our dedicated administration and board will forge ahead in building a fiscally responsible path forward, while always keeping in mind our singular goal of offering an exceptional education to our students.

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We acknowledge the concerns voiced by some members of our community regarding the timeliness of information regarding our budget status and efforts. We appreciate both the voices of support and the high standard the community holds us to. Moving forward, we will make every effort to provide regular written updates as our budget work progresses.

In addition, you can access information regarding ongoing board efforts, including links to meetings and documentation, through our website at glendale.k12.wi.us/school-board.

In community,

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Glendale-River Hills School District

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