

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
School District of South Orange-Maplewood
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To: Brian Osborne
Board of Education Members

From: Cheryl Schneider, Business Administrator

Subject: Preliminary Budget Documents for March 5, 2012 Board of Education Meeting

Date: March 2, 2012

We received additional state aid in the allocations released last week, increasing our state aid by approximately \$765,000 over last year. The total allocation is still less than what we received just a few years ago, and so even with the increase, the budget is still tight, and you will continue to see the tightening on account lines like supplies and textbooks. As indicated at last week's Board of Education meeting, reining in of some of the high cost drivers such as health costs, out of district tuition, transportation and energy costs, has also helped control the number of cuts in other areas. The 2012-13 Preliminary Budget has been developed by incorporating the various district initiatives defined by the district goals as well as ideas that have been suggested by the district administrative team.

The highlights of the 2012-13 Preliminary Budget include:

- Continued support of teacher evaluations:
 - Administration is looking at introducing a computerized system for teacher evaluations that models the Danielson model but will allow a more efficient system for teacher evaluations. The system would allow principals and supervisors to enter information into the program rather than manually having to write each evaluation. This will allow principals and supervisors more time for evaluations and feedback as well as provide modeling for the evaluations. \$50,000 is budgeted for this initiative. **\$50,000**
 - Switch remaining elementary assistant to the principals to become assistant principals: Marshall and Jefferson are the only two remaining schools without assistant principals. This change was requested by the District Administrative Team (DAT) as well as addresses Goals 1 and 2. This was originally included in last year's budget but needed to be removed to meet the 2% cap with the anticipation of including it in this year's budget. This change does not incur an increase in head count, but an anticipated increase of approximately \$24,000 to the budget (\$12,000 for each position) **\$24,000**

- Support for transition to IB Middle Years' Programme: Year one costs for implementing the IB program are budgeted at \$54,000. The majority of the costs are for professional development for the middle school teachers. Required training is offered throughout the year in multiple locations. The amount budgeted includes travel but we are anticipating that teachers will attend the workshops in New York City resulting in a significantly lower cost. However, in the event that some teachers are closed out of the New York workshops, travel fees have been budgeted to insure the appropriate trainings are completed to maintain the 2013-14 implementation timeline. **\$54,000**
- Peer mentoring/support: District goals call for the piloting of a peer review model during the 2012-13 school year. \$25,000 has been budgeted to allow for this modeling including funding for 10 teacher leaders, each receiving a day of training and time to directly observe and coach deficient staff. The money budgeted includes additional time for the teacher leader as well as substitute coverage while they are out of their own classes. **\$25,000**
- Middle school curriculum specialists (1 fte at each middle school): With the success of the curriculum specialists at the elementary level, the budget expands the curriculum specialists to include 2 specialists to work with staff, and on curriculum, at the middle school level. The middle school principals will develop these positions and will determine if the specialists should focus on specific content areas (eg., math and language arts) or if they should focus on building-level strategies. These specialists are budgeted at a cost of \$90,000 each, or a total of \$180,000. **\$180,000**
- Reinstate the ASPIRE Grade 1 Autistic Class: The ASPIRE program did not exist in the District this past year as there were no students eligible for the class. However, the Child Study Team has indicated that there are approximately 5 students who would benefit from this program and therefore the class has been budgeted for next year. We are exploring the benefits of offering this program through a private organization that will staff the program in-district or hiring staff directly. The anticipated cost of this program is approximately \$200,000. If we did not offer this program, the alternative is that students would be sent to out of district placements where the cost of the program would exceed the \$200,000 budgeted. **\$200,000**
- Centralization of data processing, converting existing positions to be K-12 support: Data processing is currently staffed with two people at the 9-12 grade level, servicing the high school and one person covering the responsibilities of the two middle schools. The elementary report cards are handled at the building level with support from the Chief Information Officer and printed out either through the Technology Department or at the individual buildings. With the increasing demands of the state reporting, including direct reporting of student records to the state system, the centralized department will allow greater support and consistency in all the reporting systems. The middle school position

will move to the high school location so that all staff members can work together. With this move, the middle school staff will have increased involvement with scheduling and progress report creation. The middle school principals agree that this would be a benefit to the district and have developed plans for completing these tasks with existing staff. A cost of converting the 11 month middle school position to a 12 month K-12 district has been budgeted at approximately \$10,000, in the event that a decision is made to make all these positions year-round positions. **\$10,000**

- Introduction of in-district SE program for fragile students in the secondary schools: As indicated at the last Board of Education meeting this initiative is a result of the District Management Council's opportunity review. Discussions are taking place with a private provider in developing a program that will be available at the district's secondary schools. The program is expected to allow out of district students to return to the district as well as offer services to other students to deter additional out of district placements. This program is expected to save the district approximately \$200,000. **(\$200,000)**
- Convert one tech trainer position to be a 12-month "help desk" support position: The "help desk" is currently staffed by an outside provider. This service is a great asset to the district and as a result the hours expanded to be a full-time, 12 month position. The cost of covering the full time position at an hourly rate exceeds the cost of a salaried 12-month position. It was therefore determined to bring this service in-house. At the same time, it was decided that staffing the desk with someone who could go beyond the technical questions and was familiar with Powerschool and other district programs, would allow faster response to building-level questions since the tech trainers are only in the buildings on certain days. Therefore, a decision was made to convert one of the three tech trainers positions to a 12-month AV technology position that would cover the help desk. The cost of the AV position would be approximately \$10,000 higher than the cost of the of the tech trainer, however, we anticipate a savings of approximately \$100,000 from the purchased technology services. **(\$90,000)**
- Eliminate 1.4 fte's in speech services: The 1.4 fte's in speech services have been ongoing vacancies in the district. The services have been provided through contracted services while these positions were budgeted and remained open. The decision was made to continue to service these needs through contracted services and to eliminate the 1.4 fte's from the 12-13 budget. Staffing the positions would have cost the district approximately \$117,000. **(\$117,000)**
- Eliminate 2.0 secretarial positions at the high school (one CHS, one Montrose): With bringing the alternative program back to Columbia High School, the Montrose secretarial position is no longer required. In addition a second high school secretarial position is being eliminated. At least one secretary has already put in for retirement and we are hoping that the second position will also be eliminated through attrition. During last year's budget process the administration indicated that we would reduce the number of

secretarial positions in the district through attrition over time. The reduction of 2 fte's is estimated to save \$120,000. **(\$120,000)**

- Eliminate .6 clerical positions at SOMS: the secretarial staffing at the two middle schools is uneven with there being 3 secretaries and a clerical aid at SOMS and 4 secretaries at MMS. The placement of the extra secretary at MMS was implemented many years ago in response to the office layout at that building with the assistant principals on the second floor and the guidance office being separate from the main office. This makes it logistically impossible for the secretaries to share responsibilities. Although the fourth secretary was not needed at SOMS with all of the offices in one location, a .6 clerical position was added to "even out" the coverage at the two buildings. Working with the SOMS administration, it was determined that the .6 clerical position could be eliminated for a savings of \$20,000. **(\$20,000)**
- Energy reduction resulting from solar installation at SOMS and Clinton: as has previously been discussed at board meetings, the installation of solar at both SOMS and Clinton is expected to take place this summer. We anticipate a savings of \$25,000 to \$30,000 through the solar energy. **(\$25,000)**
- Eliminate 1.6 fte's in transportation: with past efficiencies realized in the transportation department as well as the elimination of half-day programs, the reduction of .8 driver and .8 aide is possible. The route currently handled by these staff members will be contracted through one of the transportation cooperatives we use for out of district routes, netting an estimated savings of \$20,000. The aide position will be the reduction of an existing vacancy. **(\$20,000)**
- Eliminate 2.0 fte's special education: with ongoing analysis and projections regarding enrollments and schedules, we are anticipating the need for two less inclusion teachers at the high school level. This decision is based on the anticipated enrollment and is not a change in the current inclusion model. Although changes have been proposed by the District Management Council (DMC), these options are still being explored and are not being implemented in the 2012-13 school year. Therefore this reduction is not a reflection on the suggestions from the DMC. The elimination of these 2 fte's is expected to save the district \$168,000. **(\$168,000)**
- Continue re-registration in single grade annually: while not a large cost impact (approximately \$1,000), the re-registration is highlighted as an initiative to meet the milestones of District Goal 4. The costs associated with the re-registration are mainly secretarial overtime and some supplies and mailing costs. **\$1,050**
- Increase in technology budget: A slow-down in technology spending was experienced in the last budget as we allowed time for teachers to learn to use the technology that had been purchased in the recent past. The budget analysis presented to the board in December indicated the need to again increase spending, identifying approximately \$750,000 in possible technology increases. An additional \$180,000 has been added to the technology budget for 2012-13. The Chief Information Officer is analyzing the Long

Range Technology Plan, including future initiatives such as “cloud computing,” to determine the most beneficial use of these funds during the 2012-13 school year.

\$180,000

- Textbook acquisitions for 2012-13: The ongoing textbook replacements are budgeted in the 2012-13 budget. Specific use of textbook funding has been earmarked for the acquisition of textbooks for K-5 Singapore math (\$200,000), elementary Social Studies (\$50,000) and driver education (\$3,500) **\$253,500**