Board Budget Reduction Exercise

Protecting and Sustaining the Instructional Core

Scenario

The Anytown School District is facing a $1.0 million budget shortfall for the upcoming school year. As members of the school board, your task is to adopt reductions totaling $1,000,000.00 while making every deliberate effort to protect the Instructional Core.

The superintendent has provided a list of potential cuts, each valued at $250,000. As a group, you must decide on four items to eliminate to meet the $1 million reduction goal.

Budget Cut Options

Cut Option	Impact Description	Selection
Eliminate Instructional Coaches	Eliminates district math and literacy coaches. *Removes job-embedded feedback, co-teaching, and curriculum implementation support for teachers.*	
Freeze Curriculum and Materials	Delays planned adoption of updated math/reading curricula. *Requires teachers to self-curate or rely on available unaligned materials.*	
Increase Class Sizes	Reduces secondary staffing. *Increases average middle/high school class sizes from 22 to 25 students per section.*	
Cut Non-Mandatory Electives	Eliminates advanced STEM labs, journalism, and secondary career and language pathways. *Reduces specialized teaching staff.*	
Defer Tech and Adaptive Software	Cancels adaptive learning software licenses and delays device refreshes. Retains working older hardware without direct digital intervention tools.	
Reduce Paraprofessionals by 50%	Cuts classroom aides in early grades. *Certified teachers absorb all Tier-2 behavioral and academic differentiation independently.*	
Reduce mental health services and counseling staff	Increase student stress, anxiety, and behavioral issues. *Higher absenteeism and lower academic performance. Decreased support for at-risk students and greater strain on teachers and administrators.*	
Cut Extended Learning/Tutoring	Eliminates after-school academic intervention and tutoring for struggling students outside regular school hours.	
Eliminate Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction Position	Requires remaining district administrators to add to their current responsibilities, broadening the scope of their work and tending only to high-visibility compliance/operational areas.	
Consolidate Neighborhood Schools	Merges two small elementary schools, streamlining facilities and administrative overhead.	