



OAK LAWN-HOMETOWN

School District 123

DISTRICT 123 MEDIA RELEASE

BOARD AND SUPERINTENDENT ADDRESS FINANCIAL CHALLENGES

After a series of meetings and input from the administration and the Financial Advisory Committee, the board finance subcommittee completed the first step in the formal budget process by providing guidelines for the district to follow for current budgetary planning. The guidelines include the overriding recommendation to reduce the 2011-2012 budget by \$750,000 to \$1,000,000. The following assumptions were provided to give direction when enacting the reductions:

- Maintain current class size
- Minimize any impact on the curriculum
- Approach the budget solution incrementally
- Focus on recurring costs
- Communicate effectively with all stakeholders

Superintendent Fessler supported the rationale behind the guidelines while expanding on several of the assumptions. He noted the budget solution needed an incremental approach as the \$2.2 million deficit is significant and cannot be fixed all at once. In addition, the economic climate remains unstable, and it may take a combination of strategies for the district to effectively respond to the current changing conditions.

Mr. Fessler also reiterated the importance of maintaining transparent, open communications with stakeholders as the district progresses through the budgeting process. He encouraged an open exchange of ideas from the public with the goal of gathering input that will continue to help lead the district to make the best possible decisions moving forward.

Superintendent Fessler finished his discussion by sharing potential scenarios for the district to utilize when working to accomplish the budget reductions. Highlights of the approach include approximately \$920,000 in net reductions for fiscal year 2011-2012. Over 80% of the planned reductions shared are for recurring operational costs with virtually no impact on class size or current curriculum. The document with the specific information about each scenario can be viewed [here](#).

The schedule for financially related topics was provided in the recent board meeting notice and is reprinted below for reference. The public is encouraged to attend the next committee of the whole meeting on February 10, which is an open discussion forum to the provide feedback and exchange ideas regarding the 2011-2012 budget.

- Board Meeting- January 25: Presentation of challenges, assumptions and proposed reductions
- Committee of the Whole- February 10: Gather feedback from the board and the public
- Finance Subcommittee- February 15: Present formal assumptions and list of proposed reductions
- Board Meeting- February 28: Board action on budget reduction recommendations

