



Office of the Superintendent

Dodge City Public Schools • Unified School District 443

1000 N 2nd Avenue / Room 208 • Dodge City, KS 67801-4415 • Telephone (620) 227-1700 / Facsimile (620) 227-1695

May 15, 2009

USD 443 Faculty and Staff,

During the past several months, the USD 443 Board of Education has discussed options for the Fiscal Year 2010 budget, as well as facilities needs in the school district. In recent weeks, budget information has been presented to the Board in response to the various state funding proposals offered by the governor, as well as the two houses of the Kansas Legislature.

The state's FY 2010 budget recommendation was sent to Governor Parkinson's office on Saturday, May 9, by the Kansas Legislature. It reflects a significant reduction in funding for the Dodge City Public Schools (nearly \$2.1 million dollars) over what was authorized by the 2008 Kansas Legislature, and a reduction of nearly \$1.1 million dollars from the school district's FY 2009 budget amount. In addition, 2009 legislation has eliminated the state's equalization of the Capital Outlay budgets for the school districts, resulting in an additional loss of \$350,000 annually for Dodge City USD 443.

During these same weeks and months, our Board of Education identified budget and facilities priorities for fiscal year 2010. These include:

- Facilities infrastructure repairs for Dodge City Middle School,
- Preserving current staffing,
- Additional classroom space for Early Childhood Education, in order to access additional federal ARRA stimulus dollars available for Head Start programs, and
- Maximizing the school district's Contingency Reserve Fund in anticipation of future budget short-falls and/or rescissions by the State.

In order to accomplish these Board priorities, and in light of the approved budget reductions by the 2009 Kansas Legislature, a number of options were presented to the Board on Monday evening regarding budget cuts, reallocation of expenses, revenues, and expenditures for FY 2010. These included a multi-faceted approach to the school district's budget reductions and the Board's facilities priorities.

In addition, these recommendations position the school district to access a total of about one million dollars in the federal Title 1 program ARRA stimulus funds over the next two years. While these funds can only be used for very targeted expenses, the fact that they are available makes it possible to reallocate or transfer some current expenses to these funds in the short term that might have otherwise been reduced or cut completely.

The Board approved the following broad categories of budget adjustments, including some more specific examples of each, in order to bring the FY 2010 budget into balance:

- The elimination, reduction, or deferral of identified additional expenses over FY 2009.
- The reduction and/or deferral of some non-salary expenses.
- The reduction, reallocation, or deferral of expenses related to programs and services not mandated by federal or state statute.
- The reduction of some extra duty, supplemental, and special salary expenses, such as the number and duration of staff on duty before and after school, etc.



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- The reduction and/or deferral of some other salary expenses, including a district-level administrative position and the some classified staff salaries, as a result of rescheduling full days for district wide staff development activities rather than half-days.

More detailed information on the programs and services that may be affected is included on the attached spreadsheet.

The Board approved this information on Monday evening, May 11. Now, we will begin the work of making these budget cuts, reallocations, revenues and expenditures even more specific. Some items will require negotiations with the teachers' association, Dodge City NEA. Others will require, what we hope to be, short-term and temporary interruptions in the way our school district has operated in the recent past. Some may be almost invisible, while still others may have to become permanent. As additional information becomes available, I will share it with you.

I appreciate the many comments and suggestions from both certified and classified staff over the past few weeks and months. Your ideas have been incorporated into the action taken by the Board of Education whenever possible.

While the next year or so may be difficult, I do not know of any group of people better able to "make lemonade" out of this unfortunate economic situation than the faculty and staff of USD 443. We will continue to do more with less, as public school teachers and staff seem to have always had to do. (But, you have to admit, we are pretty good at it.) Our success rate is seen in the faces and lives of the children who move through our schools and classrooms each year.

Thank you for your continued dedication to the children and youth of the Dodge City Public Schools!

Sincerely,



Attachment

*Alan R. Cunningham, Superintendent of Schools · cunningham.alan@usd443.org
Wendy McClure, Secretary to the Superintendent · mcclure.wendy@usd443.org*