

The last three years The Zane Trace Local School District has been operating under deficit spending. For the current fiscal year, the Treasurer's updated five-year forecast is projecting deficit spending totaling 1.8 million dollars. Part of this serious inadequacy in funding is due to reductions in both state and federal funding, as well as decreases in student enrollment.

The Board and administrative team have made repeated attempts to reduce the District's budget over the last four years, yet the forecast still looms ahead. Some of these measures have included the following:

- At the end of FY 2009, three certified employees retired or resigned and none were replaced (annual savings of \$250,860).
- In the current fiscal year, the District has worked with local contractors and the Ohio School Facilities Commission to make changes that would significantly decrease the District's utility expenses by recommissioning the HVAC, replacing halogen lights, and installing waterless urinals (estimated annual savings of \$90,448).
- In FY 2010, all building budgets were significantly cut (annual savings of \$15,000).
- In FY 2010, the Board capped on all administrative and non-bargaining unit employees' salary increases at 2 percent.

In order to help control this projected deficit in 2010 and to help balance the District's budget and overall fiscal health in future years, the Zane Trace Local School District Board of Education ordered the development of a budget reduction plan totaling \$900,000. The District's administrative team met several times to develop this plan.

However, prior to implementing the plan for FY 2011, the Board requested both unions (Zane Trace Education Association and Zane Trace School Support Personnel Association) to accept freezes in contractual salary increases and incremental steps for the 2010-2011 contract year. However, when this option was reviewed with both unions by way of draft Memorandum of Understanding, regrettably, both unions refused to agree to this change. Implementation of this option could have saved the District a total of \$323,912 for FY 2011 alone. Given no other option to recapture these types of dollars back into the District's budget, the District was forced to move forward with the following reductions in force:

- Use Federal ARRA funds to support three certified positions that were slated to be reduced in force (one time savings of \$286,459).
- Charge a \$75 activity fee per season with an annual cap of \$150 per family (annual collection of \$40,000)
- Reduction in force of three teaching positions through attrition (annual savings of \$224,299).
- Reduction in force of Talented and Gifted teacher (annual savings of \$55,638).
- Elimination of two office aide positions through reduction in force (annual savings of \$51,427).
- Elimination of two bus driver positions through reduction in force through attrition (annual savings of \$63,499).
- Elimination of one Assistant Treasurer position (annual savings of \$39,035).
- Elimination of one media coordinator aide position through reduction in force (annual savings of \$43,313).
- Elimination of in-school suspension through reduction in force (annual savings of \$35,743).

- Elimination of the following extra-curricular positions through non-posting (annual savings of \$40,411):

*1 JH Football	*Jr. Class Advisor	*FBLA
*1 HS Asst. Football	*JH Student Council	*Choir
*1 MS Golf	*JH Honor Society	*Flag Advisor
*1 HS Drama	*MS Science Fair	*County Fair
*1 Varsity Asst Boys Basketball	*HS Student Council	*Sr. Class Advisor
*1 Varsity Asst Girls Basketball	*7 th Grade Power of the Pen	
*1 Freshman Basketball	*8 th Grade Power of the Pen	
*1 Assistant Baseball		
*1 Assistant Softball		

The goal in comprising these plans was and still is to have the least educational impact possible on the students of the Zane Trace Local School District. Regrettably, though, some of the cost-cutting measures that have already been implemented have impacted student learning by forcing the District's class sizes in the elementary to increase and by eliminating much needed intervention. However, as we all know, all positions are valued and the elimination of any position in the District will have an impact on the educational process no matter what we do.

The implementation of the options described above, comprising the Board's budget reduction plan, will unfortunately only result in a total savings to the District of approximately nine hundred thousand dollars (\$900,000), which is only a fraction of the Board's projected deficit for FY 2010. That is why the Board is committed to moving forward with the full-scale implementation of its budget reduction plan, as painful as that process may be. District employees and students will be impacted by the implementation of this plan, but it is unavoidable, as the state of the District's finances, if left unaddressed, will only compound in future years. It is a regrettable position the District is in, but one that is not too unlike other Districts similarly situated across the state.