

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES
Wilmette Public Schools

Information Item

January 18, 2011

To: Raymond Lechner, Ph. D.

From: Margaret Clauson, Ed. D.
Administrator for Human Resources

Subject: **Principal Feedback on Proposed Program Reductions**

The Program Costing Document details reductions that will be implemented for the 2011-12 school year absent any additional revenue. The administration has been diligently working on detailed implementation plans in preparation for these potential reductions. While we have worked hard to keep programs intact and reductions as far away from students as possible, the proposed cuts in this section of the Program Costing Document will, in many cases, dramatically change our overall school program and our students' educational experience.

Highlights of some of the more significant student impacts include:

- Increased class size may result in less time available for individual students. As class sizes increase, space within the classroom may limit the types of instructional activities in which students may participate. This is especially evident in subjects such as science, music, art, drama, photography, and PE where movement and space are crucial to the program.
- Reduction in elementary specials (PE, Art, Music, and Spanish) will impact the amount of curriculum that can be taught and experiences that students have in these areas. Preparation for a musical performance, adequate time for experiences with clay and 3-D art, and the amount of Spanish vocabulary that can be introduced are just a few examples. These programs are slated to be reduced by 33-50%.
- Increased sharing of specials staff may result in a reduction of uninterrupted instructional time (K-4) and decreased opportunities for providing extra support to struggling students.
- Reduction in Library Media Services (50% reduction K-8) impacts the role the LMC plays in developing information literacy and research skills (21st Century Learning) and project-based learning that occurs above and beyond the weekly 30-minute library instruction period. Additional impacts include the ability to deliver literacy enrichment opportunities through all school events.
- Reduction in Technology Teachers (50% reduction at grades 5-8) impacts the development of technology skills and enrichment of core curriculum.

- Potential loss of non-tenured teachers impacts the investment that the District has made in recruiting, hiring, and training. The uncertainty surrounding a position for next year has already put the district at risk of losing excellent faculty.
- Reduction in Differentiation Support Teachers (DST) results in the discontinuation of the K-2 differentiation services to children and a significant reduction in instructional collaboration and coaching at all grade levels. One of the DSTs primary functions is to support the needs of the high achieving learner; consequently, this reduction reduces services to those students.
- Elimination of student support programs such as Homework Assistance impacts students who are not identified as special education but who require extra academic support.
- Reduction in teacher leadership positions, special education coordinators, elementary assistant principal, and Administrator for Curriculum and Instruction reduces time available for district leadership to support district goals and school improvement plans.
- Reduction in building support services (paraprofessionals, clerical staff) impacts time available for instruction and support of individual student needs.

At tonight's meeting the K-8 principals will elaborate on the specifics of the impact of these changes on our existing school program.

MEC/mec

Recommended for approval
By the Board of Education

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Raymond E. Lechner", written over a horizontal line.

Dr. Raymond Lechner,
Superintendent