

School Board explores budget cuts

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Possible reductions needed to close a \$7 million gap between expenditures and revenues for the Grand Island School District's 2012-13 budget were outlined for the Board of Education on Monday by Superintendent Robert Christmann.

He said, "None of these are recommendations . . . they are starting points for the board to begin its discussions." The board expects to adopt a budget March 26.

The draft \$54.1 million budget reflects an increase of \$2.3 million over this year. Major increases include \$1,068,358 for staff salaries; \$367,500 for special- education tuitions; \$267,146 for health insurance; \$239,250 for the teacher retirement system; \$129,000 for the (non-instructional) employee retirement system; \$115,500 for utilities; \$82,187 for BOCES contracts; and \$50,000 for building maintenance/heating and air conditioning.

Proposed revenue increases totaling \$5.7 million include \$921,000 from an increase of 3.2 percent in the property tax levy; \$2 million from the appropriated fund balance; \$1 million from the debt service reserve; \$800,000 each from employee retirement reserve and employee benefit reserve; \$100,000 from the unemployment reserve fund; and \$82,500 in additional sales taxes.

Christmann said possible reductions that could meet the "phase 2 shortfall" of \$1,390,508 include:

Retiring teachers, \$300,000; administrative salaries, \$50,000 from a realignment of administrators; BOCES services, \$100,000; utilities, \$200,000; field trips, \$2,500; a cut of 10 percent in school supplies, \$80,000; staff and Board of Education conferences, \$7,000; all intramurals, \$35,000; and dropping one edition of the district newsletter, \$3,000.

Sunday use of the high school by community groups, \$12,000; a 50 percent cut in modified athletic teams, \$25,000; athletic teams, \$50,000; 10 percent cut in

extracurricular activities, \$7,500; operation of the pool from April 1-Aug. 15, \$30,000; special-education tuitions, \$150,000.

Also under consideration are changes in bus routes and sharing business office operations with another school district.

Personnel cuts totaling \$918,000 under consideration include three elementary school and three secondary teachers, \$420,000; a pupil services staffer, \$70,000; two transportation workers, \$50,000; three full-time monitors, \$120,000; a senior library clerk, \$50,000; and two custodial/maintenance workers, \$100,000.