

From: SPRING BRANCH INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT [mailto:email@blackboardconnect.com]

Sent: Friday, April 15, 2011 4:38 PM

Subject: SBISD Budget Update Message



Spring Branch Independent School District
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Following is a message from SBISD Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Duncan Klussmann. For more budget information, please visit the SBISD [budget website](#). To join the community-based group, Spring Branch Speaks, that has organized around public education issues, visit www.springbranchspeaks.com

Dear SBISD Parents,

The past two weeks have been a very difficult time for everyone in SBISD. Over the next couple of weeks, I plan to send you updates on the budget situation and provide more details about the effects of the cutbacks on our school system. Today, I will focus on the increase in class size at all grade levels. Next week, I will provide more details regarding counseling services and the new instructional support model that will be put into place as a result of the decrease in state funding.

As you know by now, on April 5th, the SBISD Board of Trustees approved measures to reduce district costs for the 2011-2012 school year due to the projected loss of millions of dollars in revenue from the State of Texas. These measures will reduce the district's budget by approximately \$17 million and eliminate roughly 350 positions across the school system.

Last week, we provided an [overview](#) of these budget cuts by major category, including 105 teaching positions. Roughly 70% of all eliminated positions are in non-teaching roles; about 30% of the eliminated positions are classroom teachers.

Campus Staffing Allocations/Class Size Increases

Each year, we conduct an extensive enrollment analysis to develop our staffing model. This process involves analysis and review of enrollment projections for the next school year, residential building and construction, and input from our school principals. Based on enrollment projections and student-to-teacher ratios, staffing allocations are then determined. Through this ratio process, some schools may lose staffing allocations while others remain the same or gain positions.

In prior years, staffing was allocated to elementary schools at a ratio of 22 students per teacher for grades kindergarten through 4. At the secondary level, the staffing ratio average was 18 students per teacher for low socioeconomic students. The staffing ratio for all other students was 21:1. Staffing ratios for special education and music teachers are not calculated based on these ratios.

As a result of the decline in state funding, we have adjusted the staffing allocation model as part of our budget reduction process. This adjustment has resulted in the elimination of teaching positions at most of our schools. Staff will be allocated at the elementary level based on a cap of 24 students (grades K-4), and a cap of 27 students in grade 5. At the secondary level, staff will be allocated based on a ratio of 20:1 for low socioeconomic students and 23:1 for all other students. Essentially, we have increased all staffing ratios by two students per teacher.

The impact by campus will vary depending upon the campus' projected enrollment for the 2011-2012 school year. Through this ratio process, most schools will lose staffing allocations while a few others remain the same or gain a few positions. Any campus gaining positions is a direct result of increased student enrollment even when the new ratios are applied. We have worked very hard to ensure that each campus has been treated in an equitable manner. Every campus has been affected by the budget reductions.

Based on our current projections, we anticipate that 43 of the district's 733 elementary classrooms will be at the maximum class size of 24 students. Average class sizes will increase by about two students per class. At the secondary level, we estimate average class size will also increase by about two students per class.

Some special education positions, including teachers and assistants, have been impacted to bring our staffing in line with the current enrollment of students receiving special education services. Over the past three years, the number of students enrolled in special education services has been declining.

At the Pre-K level, we currently have a teaching assistant in each Pre-K classroom. For the 2011-2012 school year, the model will be adjusted to provide one assistant for every two classrooms.

Going Forward

In the days and weeks ahead, we will be working with our campus leaders to find the best possible solutions as we try to maintain the level of service

our community expects with fewer resources and fewer personnel.

This has been a very difficult time for the Spring Branch family. We have worked very hard for many years to develop a positive culture that focuses on the needs of our students and the expectations of our community. We are hopeful that the State of Texas will start approaching the support of public education in the same manner.

Sincerely,

Duncan F. Klusmann, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

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