

From: SPRING BRANCH INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Sent: Thursday, April 21, 2011 3:38 PM

Subject: A Budget Message Update from Dr. Klussmann



Spring Branch Independent School District

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Following is a message that SBISD Superintendent of Schools Dr. Duncan Klussmann shared with District staff earlier today. 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 Members of the SBISD Family,

Last week, I shared information with you about modifications to our staffing allocation model that will result in average class size increases across the school district. Today, I want to share with you more information about how our ability to provide counseling services will be impacted.

As you know, on April 5th, the SBISD Board of Trustees took action to reduce \$17 million in expenses for the 2011-2012 school year to align our district budget with the anticipated reduction of \$17 - \$45 million in revenues from the State for each year of the upcoming biennium.

These measures are not taken lightly. After years of budget challenges in SBISD due to the state's finance model for public education, this is the first time we have had to significantly impact our classrooms and some of our student services.

In spite of the budget reductions we have had to make, SBISD is not eliminating any student programs. However, the way in which some services are provided will change. One of the programs that is directly affected is counseling services.

Counseling Services

SBISD's counselors provide valued support for our students and their families. The services they provide range from guidance lessons on a variety of topics and large group consultations with students to individual counseling sessions with students and often with their parents. They serve as a vital link in the

coordination with outside referral sources and work closely with partners to identify and provide students in need with uniforms, eye glasses, school supplies and other needs. Our counselors also lead initiatives such as Red Ribbon Week and the No Place for Hate® program and provide the academic and career guidance, financial aid seminars, career days and other initiatives that support our emphasis on post secondary readiness and success.

Modifications to the counseling program model will reduce the level of services our counselors can provide. At the elementary level, we will no longer be able to provide a full-time counselor position for each campus. Instead, counselors will be assigned to two elementary campuses and will be asked to split their weekly schedules. Middle schools with enrollment under 1,000 students will lose a counselor position due to new staffing ratios. At the high school level, one counseling position will be eliminated.

We are continuing to work through the impacts of these staffing modifications and are identifying ways in which we can continue to meet the needs of our students. We hope that the continuation of Communities in Schools services on our high-needs campuses as well as revising some aspects of our campus administrative roles will help us bridge these gaps.

I will continue to provide information to you about the budget situation and I hope you all have a great and well-deserved holiday break. Thanks for all you do for the nearly 33,000 children who depend on us every day.

Duncan Klussmann

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