

Budget Not Expected to Improve Soon

As school districts across California struggle with the economic conditions, budget cuts, and lower enrollment facing education over the next several years, we are looking at a variety of options for balancing our resources and programs.

Twin Rivers Budget Actions

This past year, our schools and departments made a number of painful cuts and lost a number of valuable people. We are doing all that we can to avoid the number of cuts going forward, including:

- Freezing all but the most critical spending
- Partnering with organizations and companies on joint projects
- Applying for a number of grants and seeking other funding opportunities
- Asking our families to turn in free and reduced meal applications to ensure our schools receive the maximum possible funding (already up about 20% over last year)

Potential Additional Actions

School site consolidations are one of many areas under consideration to limit additional staffing cuts. Our district can save approximately \$500,000 by moving students and staff from one school to neighboring schools. That means \$500,000 less in cuts that would need to be made in the next year.

While the budget benefits are obvious and most can agree that more resources for our remaining schools is a good idea, consolidating school sites is a very emotional process and must be done as fairly and transparently as possible.

Advisory Committee

The first step has been the creation of the Superintendent's Facility Advisory Committee (SFAC). This is a stakeholder group that represents a cross section of 25-30 people who would be affected, including teachers, classified staff, families, community members, and representatives from facilities, budget, human resources, transportation, elementary and secondary academic leadership, school site principals, communications, and charter schools.

Committee Process

The SFAC group will be looking at a multitude of information sources and will consider many possible options. SFAC will meet four times in September through November, and hold a series of public community meetings in the neighborhoods that will be affected to collect feedback on the initial option ideas in December and January. The SFAC will meet twice again after the community feedback is received and provide their final suggestions to the Superintendent.

Providing Input

If you have information you think the SFAC needs to know about, please email the committee at SFAC@twinriversusd.org. In addition, you can attend the SFAC public meetings in December and January. The meetings will be held primarily in the areas that will be affected. Details on those meetings will be distributed as they are set. Our district leadership will be meeting personally with staff at sites that are under consideration.

Going Forward

It is natural for possible school consolidations and realignments to cause anxiety and for staff and community members to attempt to guess at possible outcomes. Many will wonder about the impact on their job and that of their colleagues. If there are any consolidations of sites, those personnel will be entitled to positions at other sites based on seniority.

We hope that sharing the process with everyone and providing opportunities for public participation will ease that anxiety and allow us to focus on the important work of raising student achievement.