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Superintendent reveals more Phase 1 budget cuts

Superintendent John Allison presented more administrative recommendations to reduce the 2011-12 budget during the March 7 Board of Education meeting. The two additional recommendations are part of Phase 1 budget cuts and total \$437,000. [Click here](#) to watch the presentation. [Read the fact sheet.](#)

- **One furlough day for all district employees except teachers and para-professionals** – The furlough day, which will occur during the 2011-12 budget year, will save \$300,000. How the furlough day will be scheduled has yet to be determined. Because of their negotiated agreements, teachers and paras are not included in this furlough. The impact of a furlough with these two groups included would be an additional \$1.2 million.
- **Elimination of external leases** – Leases at the Workforce Learning Center and Midtown Community Resource Center will be eliminated, which will save \$137,000. The programs at both locations and the Multilingual Education Services (MES) Center are not being eliminated, but will be relocated. Decisions on the new locations will be made later.

During the February 28 BOE meeting, Superintendent Allison recommended [changing bell times at 9 schools](#), which is anticipated to save \$437,000. The total anticipated savings for Phase 1 totals \$887,000. The district is looking to cut a total of \$30 million for next year.

“These are the less hurtful cuts. The more hurtful cuts are yet to come,” said BOE President Connie Dietz.

Updated budget information will be posted on the [Wichita Public Schools'](#) website as more decisions are made.

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Budget Stakeholders look at suggestions for cuts



Superintendent John Allison talks with members of the Budget Stakeholder Committee as they study suggestions on where to cut the budget. Photo by Susan Arensman

The Community Budget Stakeholder Committee provided Superintendent John Allison feedback as the district continues to look at ways to cut \$30 million from the 2011-12 budget. Employees have been submitting their suggestions on where to cut the budget through a link on the district's portal page. During the Community Budget Stakeholder meeting on March 10, committee members, working in small groups, reviewed employees' suggestions and highlighted which areas they would like the district to pursue further. To read employees' suggestions, [click here](#).

Some of the top areas that the committee asked for further study include pay cuts or furloughs for all employees, magnet school transportation, shorter school year

and longer school day, fewer PLCs and inservice days and having instructional coaches serve more buildings.

"These aren't votes for cuts, but it helps guide us as we continue to make budget decisions. And this wasn't easy, was it?" Superintendent Allison asked the group.

Superintendent Allison and district officials will look into the committee's recommendations and study the costs associated with those suggestions, how they impact student learning and how they may be tied to other programs and federal and state requirements.

Besides the Committee's suggestions, Superintendent Allison is also taking into consideration the feedback that was provided last year during the site council meetings and Board's Night Out and student feedback from the Superintendent Student Dialogue session last fall. He said he will continue to collect suggestions.

Employees who still wish to submit their suggestions to cut costs can fill out the form on the [Wichita Public Schools' portal](#). Non-employees may submit suggestions at info@usd259.net.

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35 bond issue projects to proceed



Thirty-five schools will have their bond issue projects proceed this spring while the Wichita Public Schools continues its “pause and study” with bond issue improvement projects that aren’t already under construction. With the current budget situation, funding to staff additional classrooms and open new schools has disappeared. [Click here](#) to watch the presentation. [Read the presentation.](#)

The Wichita Public Schools will continue with 35 bond issue projects for 4 high schools, 9 middle schools and 22 elementary schools.

- **High Schools**
North, Northwest, South and West
- **Middle Schools**
Allison, Brooks, Coleman, Hadley, Hamilton, Mayberry, Pleasant Valley, Truesdell and Wilbur
- **Elementary Schools**
Allen, Anderson, Beech, Benton, Buckner, Cessna, Chisholm Trail, College Hill, Colvin, Enterprise, Franklin, Gammon, Griffith, Jefferson, Kelly, Kensler, Lawrence, McCollom, Minneha, Peterson, Price-Harris and White

These schools were selected as part of the [guiding principles](#) that the district is using on how future bond projects proceed and their scope. The schools that were selected don’t have FEMA safe rooms, or are elementary schools that are 450 students or larger that do not have separate cafeterias and multipurpose rooms. While those are not the only items that will be constructed, they are included in the schools’ bond issue plan.

Some of those schools’ projects have been modified to remove classroom additions strictly for class-size reduction, since there is no funding for additional staff at this time. Some classroom additions will be bid separately as add alternates, which means that within 90 days after the project is bid the district will decide whether or not to build the addition now or wait to build it later with capital dollars.

There are several schools’ projects that are still on pause, but that doesn’t mean the projects are not going to be constructed.

“We are working as quickly as possible with the pause and study,” Superintendent John Allison said. “We need to look at all options and make sure we are making the right decisions for the long-term.”

Of the \$370 million in bonds, the district has sold \$320 million to take advantage of low interest rates or federal stimulus programs, which has already resulted in approximately \$23 million in savings. The district will face financial penalties if the bonds are not spent in a certain amount of time, which is why the district is working quickly with the pause and study.

More information about the bond issue can be found at www.bond2008.usd259.org.

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Schools participate in state-wide tornado drill



Clark Elementary students practice the tornado drill in one of the classrooms that is also a safe room storm shelter. Photo by Susan Arensman

District schools and administrative centers participated in the state-wide tornado drill on March 10. Four schools participated in the annual drill for the first time in their school's new FEMA safe areas. Clark, Cloud, Cleaveland and Seltzer bond issue projects were completed this school year, which included FEMA safe areas. The FEMA safe areas at Clark, Cleaveland and Seltzer are constructed in new classroom additions. Cloud's FEMA shelter is the school's multipurpose room.

"This is so much better than having to seek shelter in the hallways and bathrooms," said

Clark principal Judy Wright. "We can have all our students in one area and we know they are safe."

Constructing safe rooms in schools that don't have them is one of the guiding principles on how the district designed its bond plan. Every school that does not have a safe room will have one at the end of the bond issue implementation.

Thirty-nine schools currently have FEMA shelters: Adams, Allen, Buckner, Cessna, Chisholm Life Skills, Clark, Cleaveland, Cloud, Emerson, Enterprise, Franklin, Gateway, Gordon Parks, Greiffenstein, Griffith, Harris, Harry Street, Horace Mann, Hyde, Jefferson, Kelly, Kensler, Levy, Linwood, L'Ouverture, McCollom, Metro-Boulevard, Metro-Meridian, OK, Park, Payne, Riverside, Seltzer, Sowers, Washington, Wells, White, Woodland and Woodman.

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Enrollment for fall prekindergarten underway

Enrollment for free prekindergarten classes is going on now. Parents begin the enrollment process by completing an Interest Form either on paper or electronically on the Wichita Public Schools' Web site. Both forms are found at www.ec.usd259.org.

Children must turn 4-years-old by August 31, 2011 and be screened to meet the eligibility criteria for the program. Parents can call Early Childhood at 973-4708 or their neighborhood school for more information.

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Heights basketball and bowling teams win state championships



The Heights boys basketball team celebrate their third consecutive 6A State Championship win. Photos courtesy [Heights](#)

The State Championship titles for Heights High School sports teams keep coming. The Heights boys and girls basketball teams, and the Heights girls bowling team, won the 6A Kansas State Championships.

Both the Heights' boys and girls basketball teams won the state titles during championship games at Koch Arena on March 12.

The Heights boys basketball team were named 6A State Champions for the third year in a row. They defeated Blue Valley Northwest 58-51. The state championship win topped off their 25-0 season, coached by Joe Auer. The team set a 6A record for consecutive wins.

The Heights girls basketball team also completed an undefeated season with the state championship win. The Falcons defeated Shawnee Mission West 53-51. It is the Heights girls first title win since 2007. The team, coached by Kip Pulliam, was ranked number one all season.

Both teams were expected to bring home the championship trophy, and the teams didn't disappoint their fans.



The Heights girls basketball team win the 6A State Championship at Koch Arena.



Heights girls bowling team won its second straight state championship.

The Heights girls bowling team successfully defended its Class 6A title at Northrock Lanes, winning its second straight championship with a team score of 2,458. The team, coached by Justin Crumley, came out strong and took an early lead in the tournament and maintained the lead throughout.

Team scores include Victoria Connelly 636; Juliahna Stockham 628; Kennedy Johnson 588; Kasey Anderson 576; Emerald Weaver 502; and Shelby Burns 499.

Basketball and bowling aren't the only sports where Heights teams have won state championships this school year. The [Heights wrestling team](#) won its state championship on February 25 and the [Heights football team](#) earned the state championship title on November 27.

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Chisholm Trail students inspired to reach new Heights

Third- through fifth-grade students at Chisholm Trail Elementary School were encouraged to do well during the Kansas State Assessments by their teachers and from Heights High School students. The school held a pep assembly to encourage students to reach new "Heights" on the assessments.

The students received high-fives from the high school students as they entered the gym. The Heights students, including some Chisholm Trail graduates, talked with them about the importance of doing well in school and encouraged them to reach new "Heights." The students, who were involved in different academic, athletic, music and leadership groups, talked about how academics is important to them and how they are role models for others.



Chisholm Trail students receive high-fives from Heights High School students as they walk into a pep assembly inspiring them to do well on the state assessments. Photo by Susan Arensman

Staff and the Heights students shared test-taking tips, including eating well, checking their work and getting a good night's sleep. The assembly ended with the Heights Cheer Squad encouraging them all to do well.

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Wichita group shares traditional tales with students



The Wichita Griots, a group of African-American storytellers, shared traditional tales with students at Mayberry, Isely, L'Ouverture, Clark and Hyde. The group uses high-energy storytelling and music to teach students about African-America history, as well as tell humorous stories.

"I thought it was very interesting, especially what they taught us about Martin Luther King," said a Mayberry student.

"I liked the stories about how women played a

role in freeing the slaves, not just men," said another student.

The Griots were featured on WPS-TV. [Click here](#) to watch more about their performance at Mayberry.

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Good Apple Award deadline is this week

Principals and building committees have until Thursday, March 17 to select the employees, volunteers and partners who will be honored with the Spring Good Apple Award. The Good Apple Award is intended to recognize those who support the district and its mission.

Award recipients will be recognized by the Board of Education during a ceremony and reception at Stucky Middle School on April 18 at 6 p.m. The cost for this event will be underwritten by sponsor Midwest Single Source. Midwest Single Source also sponsors the district's Red Carpet Award.



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More information about the Good Apple Award is available on the [district's website](#).

Principals must email their Report Forms to Susan Kelley-Linder by March 17.

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District network applications down during spring break

The IST department will be performing major network maintenance over Spring Break. All core applications and services will be offline and unavailable. The applications will be down starting at 6 p.m. on Monday, March 21.

The district's Outlook email and VPN is scheduled to be available Thursday, March 24 at 6 a.m. All other applications will be down through March 25 at 6 p.m.

If employees have any questions, they can call IST Customer Service at 973-4357.

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PDC looking for employee representatives

The Professional Development Council (PDC) is looking for employees to serve as representatives. The PDC is a group of certified and classified personnel in the Wichita Public Schools involved in planning, developing, implementing and operating the district's staff development plan. The PDC establishes the standards for evidence or documentation to be accepted for the awarding of professional development points that can be used for renewing an educator's license. Much of the information used by the PDC in awarding points is from [MyLearningPlan](#).

Meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month from September to May. Council membership requires a commitment to attend and is compensated at the district's current in-service hourly rate. Members are selected or elected from the group they represent.

The following vacancies need to be filled:

- Teachers
- 3-year elementary term
- 3-year secondary term

For more information, contact Larry Landwehr, United Teachers of Wichita, at 262-5171. The application form is posted on UTW's website, www.utw-ks.org. Applications are due by April 4. Applicants will also have an opportunity to speak at UTW's Pro-Rep meeting on April 11.

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Education EDGE mini-grants due March 29

Applications for the spring Education EDGE Classroom Mini-Grants are due at 4:45 p.m. on Tuesday, March 29. Teachers can be awarded up to \$1,500 for a classroom mini-grant and teams can apply for up to \$5,000.

The Request for Application (RFA) package can be downloaded from the [Education EDGE Web site](#).

For more information, or for assistance downloading the RFA, contact Grants & Development Services Office at 973-4626.

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Help high school students by donating to Gown Town

Prom Season is here, and having a dress for the big event is very important to every girl. Gown Town allows girls who can't afford a dress the chance to wear the perfect dress to prom for free.

Gown Town is currently accepting donations of gently used formal gowns. Donate your formal dress at any In the Bag Cleaners location.

Gown Town will be open for students to select dresses on Saturday, April 2, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m., at the Casado Campus Center at Friends University. All high school students are welcome to attend. Please bring your school I.D. There will be free gowns, on-site alterations and accessories based on donation availability.

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South student receives Linwood Sexton Scholarship

Hanie Baayoun, a senior at South High School, has received the Linwood Sexton Scholarship from Wichita State University. The four-year scholarship covers tuition, books, fees and on-campus housing.

Baayoun was also named a WSU Dean's Scholar. He plans to major in engineering.

The scholarship was established in honor of Linwood Sexton, a member of the Shocker and Kansas sports halls of fame and an active member in the Wichita community.

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Klaus Kollmai receives State Officials Award

Klaus Kollmai, Hearing Officer for the Wichita Public Schools, has received the Distinguished Active Officials Award from the National Federation of State High School Associations for his contribution to high school athletics. The Award represents the states of Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota and South Dakota.

Kollmai has officiated boys and girls soccer for 21 years and girls basketball for 2 years. Before that, he was a high school and college soccer coach for 13 years. He has conducted numerous soccer clinics for officials and parents, stressing the philosophy that sports are an extension of the classroom and participants are in an educational setting.

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Price-Harris student's artwork displayed in Topeka

Angela Potvin, fifth-grade student at Price-Harris, was selected to have her artwork displayed in Topeka. Her artwork was featured in the Youth Art Month student exhibit at the State Capitol in Topeka. Her work was displayed among other artwork by students from across Kansas.

The Youth Art Month at the Statehouse display is sponsored by the Kansas Art Education Association.

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