

## Budget Questions from the Castro Valley High School PTSA Meeting of October 27, 2009

*Board member Janice Friesen and Superintendent Jim Negri met with the Castro Valley High School PTSA on October 27, 2009. The PTSA submitted a number of questions in advance. The following questions dealt with the budget.*

### Budget

1. **It looks bleak. When do you see the school budget crisis recovering?**
  - The current state budget crisis and its ripple effects on school budgets will be felt for some time. Current projections show the state deficit at \$7.5 billion for Fiscal Year 2009-2010 and \$15 billion per year in Fiscal Years 2010-2011 and 2011-2012. These state deficits will more than likely result in further cuts to the district since K-14 education is guaranteed 40% of the state budget. As state revenues fall, the dollar amount of the 40% guarantee also falls. Like any business, the district continues to experience increasing operating costs (e.g., utilities, gas, insurance) with declining revenue
  - It is important to note that there is a 12-18 month lag time between the time the economy turns around and schools start to see the benefits of the economic turnaround.
2. **Will next year's budget be worse?**
  - We honestly do not know. Last year's budget was far worse than anyone initially predicted. It will depend on the state and national economy, and how the state deals with its deficits.
3. **What were the specific things that were cut at CVHS? Mr. Alvarez said that \$1 million was cut at CVHS.**
  - The budget cuts at CVHS included the following: the seven-period day (3.6 FTE), counselors (2.0 FTE), 20:1 class size reduction in 9<sup>th</sup> grade (4.4 FTE), Small Learning Community supplemental allocation (1.6 FTE), library tech (0.5 FTE), 50% of the athletic budget, and district-wide custodial staff. Additionally, site funds were used to maintain instrumental music (0.6 FTE) and an assistant principal (1.0 FE), which were cut from the General Fund.
4. **What happens to the extra grant monies that are not dispersed or allocated?**
  - The terms and restrictions vary from grant-to-grant. Typically, grants allow the school or district to carryover the funding to the next year, but other grants require the funding to be returned if it is not spent during the year
  - Categorical funding is a type of state funding. Historically, categorical funds had to be spent within limited parameters. Last year, the Legislature re-classified categorical funding into three categories (Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III) and allows district use of Tier III funding for any purpose.

### Personnel

5. **Do you foresee any future personnel/teacher layoffs?**
  - Based on the current projections of state revenue for the district for the 2010-2011 school year (e.g. \$3.1 million less revenue in 2010-2011 for the district; a \$1.85 billion shortfall in state revenue for the first four months of the fiscal year), indications are that further reductions will be needed to balance the 2010-2011 budget. The final amount of reductions necessary will not be known for some time. (Note: For 2008-2009, the state made further reductions after the close of the fiscal year.) State revenues have been coming in below estimates and there are several pending legal actions related to the state budget remedies that could result in more budget cuts. In developing the 2010-2011 budget, the Board and staff will consider

reductions to all programs and personnel categories while maintaining a focus on the district student achievement goals.

**6. What was the breakdown of the personnel cuts?**

The following chart shows the personnel reductions made in the spring of 2009:

| Employee Category | # of FTE Reduced | % of Employee Category |
|-------------------|------------------|------------------------|
| Management        | 3.3 FTE          | 6.7%                   |
| Teachers          | 20.4 FTE         | 4.3 %                  |
| Classified Staff  | 6.6 FTE          | 3.1%                   |

Several management positions were re-assigned to bargaining unit positions.

**Salary**

**7. Why did the administrators give themselves a raise during this budget crisis?**

- Only the Board of Education can grant raises and no raises were granted.
- The only increase any employee received for the 2009-2010 school year was based on "Step-and-Column" on the Board approved salary schedules. "Step-and-Column" increases are based on years of experience in the position (step) and additional professional development/course work (column for teachers and classified only).
- Teachers and classified employees are represented by a collective bargaining unit (CVTA and CSEA respectively). Management is not represented by a collective bargaining unit.
- About three years ago, some classified and administrative positions were re-classified, which resulted in a different placement on the salary schedule, which changed an employee's salary

**8. Why weren't the administrators given a pay cut along with the cuts from teachers and pertinent learning programs that were cut?**

- No employee (i.e., teachers, classified, administrators) had his or her salary cut for the 2009-2010 school year. In some cases, employees were assigned to a different position, which had a lower salary, but these moves were made to save positions where possible
- Personnel and programs were cut across the board. See Question #6 for the breakdown of personnel cuts
- Pay cuts may be considered as part of the budget development process, but any reduction of pay for teachers or classified staff would have to be negotiated.

**Program**

**9. Instead of dropping Advanced Placement (AP) classes, can we charge fees for classes that can earn college level units?**

- The simple answer is, "No." The California Constitution requires "a free and public education." The district and school cannot charge for classes
- AP courses are dropped from the schedule only if there is not adequate student sign-up for the course. For example, AP Computer Science was dropped this year due to the lack of student interest. The class was too expensive to run with limited student enrollment. The budget crisis does not allow the District to offer under-enrolled classes
- Currently, CVHS is blending AP language classes, which illustrates its dedication to maintaining AP classes.

## Technology

10. CVHS teachers and parents have been told that the high school will soon have a web program where teachers can post grades and test scores so parents and students can access their account to keep track of student progress. It has been two years now and it is still not available. Is it still in the works? What are the plans?

- The District has been planning to migrate to a new Student Information System (SIS), which requires a new Wide Area Network (WAN) due to the centralized nature of the new SIS. Because the WAN upgrade is currently in progress, the new SIS implementation is now planned for next fall.
- The new SIS includes components that will allow parents to have Internet access, protected by username and password, to student information such as grades and attendance. Due to the nature of the new SIS implementation, this feature may not be included in the initial phase, but will be part of the features that will be deployed.

*Responses provided October 27, 2009*