

How Will Lawrence Township's Proposed Budget Cuts Impact the Performing Arts Programs?

March 10, 2010

Be Informed! Act!

Key Points

- **We are all in this together!**

Last December, Governor Daniels announced major state funding cuts in K-12 public education. These state cuts require our school board and administrators to reduce immediately next year's school budget by an **additional \$4.5–4.9 million**. **ALL** Lawrence Township schools and educational programs—including the performing arts and other signature programs—will be significantly impacted by these new cuts.

- **It is possible to continue COST EFFICIENT, HIGH Quality Performing Arts Programs**

A Lawrence Township Performing Arts District Redesign Committee – composed of teachers, administrators and parents – is working to design district-wide performing arts programs that reduce costs AND continue to offer our children extraordinary educational experiences and performance opportunities. The redesign depends on keeping the right performing arts directors in the right places!

- **STAFFING is the KEY ISSUE!**

The proposed cuts initially introduced in January included recommendations that would dramatically undercut the quality of performing arts programs, specifically the ELIMINATION OF SPECIAL AREAS IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (music, art, physical education, media center). If passed, the ELIMINATION OF SPECIAL AREAS would create a harmful DOMINO EFFECT. ALL music education positions would be opened and filled on the basis of SENIORITY (per the teachers' contract). If this would happen, many elementary music educators (with high seniority) who are skilled at working with young children would be asked to replace several of our most knowledgeable and experienced MIDDLE SCHOOL directors who have specialized skills to work with beginning and advanced instrumental and choral students. We need to keep the right teachers in the right places!

The new recommended package of budget cuts – released MARCH 10th – takes the ELIMINATION OF SPECIAL AREAS off the table. This is good news. It retains the STAFFING needed to continue HIGH QUALITY performing arts programs. BUT Lawrence Education Association (teachers' union) must RATIFY the package OR negotiations will be re-opened and 44 additional teaching positions will need to be eliminated. The ELIMINATION OF SPECIAL AREAS in elementary schools will likely be back on the table.

- **We encourage Performing Arts parents and supporters (1) to SUPPORT the new package of proposed budget cuts and (2) to ADVOCATE for adequate funding for our public schools!**

The proposed cuts are painful. Lawrence Township teachers and administrators are making significant sacrifices to maintain the quality of our schools. We (parents and supporters) need to express our appreciation and demonstrate our support for our teachers, administrators and school board members AND we need to work with other LT groups to advocate for our public schools. IF we don't ACT, we will be facing deeper and harder cuts next year

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What Can You Do?

- 1) **WRITE** to Lawrence Township decision-makers today!
- 2) **ATTEND** the Lawrence Township Schools Town Hall Meeting (March 16th) and the Board of Education Meeting (March 22)
- 3) **CONTACT** our State Representatives and Officials.
- 4) **ASSIST** in fundraising for performing arts and advocacy for our schools to ensure that **ALL** Lawrence Township students continue to have access to high quality performing arts educational opportunities.
- 5) **EXPRESS** gratitude to Lawrence teachers and administrators for the sacrifices they are making for our kids.

Suggestions for Letters and E-mails to Lawrence Township Decision-makers

- Remain positive. Our school decision-makers face very hard financial decisions. We wish to work *with* them to address the budget deficit issue AND maintain high quality programs.
- Write from the heart. Tell stories about what LT schools have done for our kids.
- Express concern about STAFFING for performing arts programs. **THIS IS THE KEY ISSUE.** We need the right teachers in the right places.
- Express gratitude. Our educators work hard and are making sacrifices for our children. Take this as an opportunity to say, "Thank you."

Key Dates

**March 16th -- Lawrence Township Schools Town Hall Meeting
Lawrence North HS Auditorium at 6:30 pm**

Lawrence Township School Board Members and Administrators will gather input from the public regarding the proposed budget cuts. This is an opportunity for individual citizens (performing arts parents and supporters) to share their thoughts with key decision-makers. Individuals may speak for two minutes.

**March 22nd -- Lawrence Township Board of Education Meeting
Education Service Center at 7:00 pm**

The Lawrence Township Board of Education will vote on the proposed budget cuts at its monthly meeting. The public is invited to attend.

Show Your Support for Lawrence Township's Outstanding Performing Arts Programs!

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Contact Information

Lawrence Township Decision-makers

Members of Board of Education

- Ms. Susan Fuldauer, President susanfuldauer@msdlt.k12.in.us
- Ms. Carol Helmus, Vice President carolheltmus@msdlt.k12.in.us
- Mr. Lawrence Yarrell, Secretary lawrenceyarrell@msdlt.k12.in.us
- Dr. Henry Fernandez henryfernandez@msdlt.k12.in.us
- Mr. Adam Goldstein adamgoldstein@msdlt.k12.in.us

Lawrence Township Administrators

- Dr. Concetta Raimondi, Superintendent concettaraimondi@msdlt.k12.in.us
- Dr. Janice Combs, Asst. Superintendent janicecombs@msdlt.k12.in.us
- Mr. Robert Albano, Asst. Superintendent robertalbano@msdlt.k12.in.us

Lawrence Township Education Association Representatives (Teachers' Union)

- Ms. Rebecca Crum, President rebeccacrum@msdlt.k12.in.us
- Mr. Robert Cook, Vice President robertcook@msdlt.k12.in.us
- Ms. Michele Lefkovitz, Recording Secretary michelelefkovitz@msdlt.k12.in.us
- Ms. Vicky Bratt, Corresponding Secretary vickybratt@msdlt.k12.in.us
- Ms. Kari Bordner, Treasurer karibordner@msdlt.k12.in.us

Indiana State Officials and Representatives

Governor Mitch Daniels

Office of the Governor

Statehouse

Indianapolis, Indiana 46204-2797

Phone: 317-232-4567

Fax: 317-232-3443

Email: mdaniels@gov.in.gov or

<http://www.in.gov/gov/2631.htm>

Senator Scott Schneider

Indiana State Senator, District 30

200 W. Washington Street

Indianapolis, IN 46204-2785

(317) 232-9400

(800) 382-9467

Email:

http://www.in.gov/legislative/senate_republicans/5315.htm

Lt. Governor Becky Skillman

Office of the Lieutenant Governor

Statehouse

Indianapolis, Indiana 46204-2797

Phone: 317-232-4545

Email: <http://www.in.gov/lg/2935.htm>

Senator Jim Merritt, Jr.

Indiana State Senator, District 31

200 W. Washington Street

Indianapolis, IN 46204-2785

(317) 232-9400

(800) 382-9467

Email:

http://www.in.gov/legislative/senate_republicans/5315.htm

Tony Bennett

Superintendent of Public Instruction

Indiana Department of Education

151 West Ohio Street

Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

Phone: 317.232.6665

Fax: 317.232.8004

Email: tbennett@doe.in.gov

Senator Jean Breaux
Indiana State Senator, District 34
200 W. Washington Street
Indianapolis, IN 46204-2785
(317) 232-9400
(800) 382-9467
Email:
http://www.in.gov/legislative/senate_democrats/homepages/s34/578.htm

State Rep. John Bartlett
Indiana House of Representatives
200 W. Washington St.
Indianapolis, IN 46204-2786
1-800-382-9842
(317)232-9600
Email: h95@in.gov

State Rep. Brian Bosma
Indiana House of Representatives
200 W. Washington St.
Indianapolis, IN 46204-2786
1-800-382-9842
(317)232-9600
Email: h88@in.gov

State Rep. Gregory W. Porter
Indiana House of Representatives
200 W. Washington St.
Indianapolis, IN 46204-2786
1-800-382-9842
(317)232-9600
Email: h99@in.gov

House of Representatives
Indiana House of Representatives
200 W. Washington Street
Indianapolis, IN 46204-2786
(317) 232-9600
(800) 382-9842

Senate
Indiana State Senate
200 W. Washington Street
Indianapolis, IN 46204-2785
(317) 232-9400
(800) 382-9467

TDD Telephone Numbers
TDD (317) 232-0404
TDD (800) 548-9517

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