

August 10, 2023

Blog – Changes for the 2023-2024 School Year

I had originally thought to title this week's blog "Feeling the Pain", but since not all individuals will feel the pain equally, I thought this title would be appropriate because we will all experience changes this year. When the operational referendum failed in both November 2022 and again in April 2023, the Board and Administration needed to make some very hard decisions that would adversely impact the Parkview School District. The failure of the referendum meant that the District's budget had to be cut by over \$1,000,000. There is no way to cut this amount of money from the District's budget without having a dramatic impact on the students, staff, parents and community.

Here are a list of some of the changes that you will notice this school year:

- 1) The number of bus routes has been reduced from eleven (11) routes to nine (9) routes. This means that more students will be riding on each bus and that the route times will be longer than they were last year.
- 2) Two classroom teachers were eliminated – one teacher from the elementary school and one teacher from the Junior/Senior High School. This means that class sizes in the elementary school had to be increased, especially at the third grade and some math classes will no longer be offered at the Junior/Senior High School.
- 3) Three paraprofessionals were eliminated – two of the paraprofessionals worked with special education students at the Junior/Senior High School and one paraprofessional worked with regular education students at the Elementary School.
- 4) One Elementary School Counselor was eliminated.
- 5) Two Full-Time District Substitute Teachers were eliminated – Each School had a full-time designated substitute teacher that was hired to take over classes when a teacher was absent due to illness or other circumstances. Now when a teacher is gone and no substitute can be found, classroom teachers will need to lose their preparation period in order to cover the absence.
- 6) The Director of Communications position was cut from the District Office.
- 7) Two technology integrator positions were eliminated.
- 8) The Buildings and Grounds staff was reduced by two maintenance workers and a part-time custodial position.
- 9) Stipends were reduced in curricular and co-curricular assignments. This means that the additional compensation that individuals received for being coaches, advisors or taking on extra assignments were reduced.
- 10) The Pizazz (Show Choir) program was eliminated. The Board decided to eliminate this program based on the program's declining numbers and the resignation of the program's coach/advisor.
- 11) Student and staff technology devices that were up for replacement had to be delayed at all grade levels with the exception of 8th grade.
- 12) The District reduced supply and material budgets by roughly \$250,000.

The bottom line is that in order to balance this year's budget, the District had to cut staff, student offerings, extra-curricular programs, professional development programs and supply and

material budgets. In addition to the cuts, the Board had to draw down in Fund Equity (Saving Account) by almost \$200,000.

The Board knows that these cuts cannot be sustained in the future, if the students of this District are going to receive the services and opportunities they need to be successful. So the Board is already discussing what options they have going forward, including asking the public to support another referendum in April 2024. The Board and I want your input. We want to know what you want us to consider going forward – what opportunities should our students be provided and what can be done to help the District attract and retain our current students and staff?

Working together we can solve the problems and issues facing the District, but we need to start those discussions now. So I will be reaching out to you to get your input and using your input to work with the Board in developing and implementing a solution that will benefit us all.