



## Gateway to use rainy-day fund to balance budget

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The Gateway school board plans to spend about \$2.7 million from the district's rainy-day fund to balance next year's budget without raising taxes.

Paul Schott, district treasurer, said during a budget committee meeting Monday that about \$2.3 million will be spent to build six classrooms and a new library at Moss Side Elementary School. Removing that one-time expense, however, leaves the district with an operating deficit of about \$432,000, he said.

When the board started putting together the budget, the gap between revenues and spending was more than \$2 million, but the district eliminated most of that difference through budget cuts and some good news from its health insurer, he said. Premiums are going up four percent next year instead of the 10 percent the district projected, Schott said.

Overall, the district plans to spend about \$68.2 million next year. The board plans to have a final discussion at 7 p.m. June 15 before voting on a spending plan at 7 p.m. June 24.

Spending from the general fund would total \$65.9 million next year, a 5.24 percent increase; the cafeteria fund about \$1.7 million, with no price changes in students' meals; the athletic fund \$369,000, the same as this year; and the capital reserve fund \$300,000.

The board trimmed about \$400,000 from the general fund by eliminating 10 summer jobs and four teaching positions, along with discontinuing funding for one of two police officers in the schools. Monroeville Council has agreed to pay for the police officer, but a Spanish teacher, a social studies teacher, an English as a Second Language teacher and a teacher's aide are out of work.

The board still is considering cutting about \$200,000 by axing six more positions -- two part-time computer aides, a part-time secretary, a full-time inventory control position in

the athletic department, a full-time community service director and a full-time transition coordinator.

Several people at the budget meeting spoke in favor of keeping the positions and questioned why the board was considering further cuts when it had already balanced the budget.

School board member Dawn Neilly said the district is spending its reserve to balance the budget, an unwise long-term strategy.

"When we need it for a rainy day. It's not going to be there," she said.