

## **C.R. schools told to cut \$105,000 in salaries**

Written by Jim Ecker

Wednesday, 11 April 2012 16:43 -

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The Cedar Rapids Community School District plans to cut \$105,000 in salaries for coaches and others involved in co-curricular activities at Jefferson, Kennedy and Washington high schools and the six middle schools.

Each of the three high schools has been told to slash \$25,000 in salaries from its budget for the 2012-13 school year and each of the six middle schools has been told to trim \$5,000. Added together, it comes to \$105,000 in proposed reductions.

Jill Cirivello, the executive director for human resources for the school district, sent a memo Wednesday to the high school principals, high school athletic directors and middle school principals announcing the expected cuts. The Metro Sports Report obtained a copy of the memo Wednesday afternoon.

Scott Kibby, the activities director at Jefferson, estimated his school might have to eliminate five to seven positions in order to meet the \$25,000 reduction.

"There aren't a lot of things that make me sad. This really makes me sad," said Kibby. "This hurts. Sad is the word I would use."

Kibby estimated he'll have to trim his budget for co-curricular salaries by approximately 5 percent. He spoke by phone following a Mississippi Valley Conference meeting in Dubuque and did not have access to all his facts and figures, but he thought 5 percent would be about right.

Kibby will be leaving Jefferson after this school year to become the athletic director at Iowa City West High School, but he plans to be heavily involved in the decision-making process of which jobs to eliminate before he leaves.

Cirivello instructed the principals and athletic directors to submit their budget-cutting plans by May 11.

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Kibby quickly informed his staff members of the memo from Cirivello and told them about the need to trim \$25,000 from the budget.

"I sent the coaches a note this morning and let them know it was coming," he said. "I said this is not the way I wanted to go out, and I know some of you are going to be frustrated with the decisions that I make, but you need to be in the loop that this is coming. It makes me sad, as I said."

The cuts involve "Schedule C contracts," which Kibby explained are contracts for all co-curricular activities such as sports, fine arts, the yearbook and all other activities that require extra time in addition to normal classroom duties.

Principals and athletic directors were asked for input on possible budget cuts at a recent Athletic Council meeting that normally includes the superintendent of schools and invited guests.

"Thank you for your input during the last Athletic Council meeting regarding the assignment of Schedule C contracts," Cirivello wrote in Wednesday's memo to the school officials. "It is understood that these assignments are important to our students, schools and community.

"Your request during that meeting was that if reductions were necessary, you would prefer that we set the target budget reduction amount and let each school decide how to reduce assignments. That request was discussed and approved.

"Therefore," Cirivello wrote, "each school will be asked to reduce its Schedule C budget as follows:

"High Schools: \$25,000 reduction from each school. Middle Schools: \$5,000 reduction from each school.

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"I know these decisions will be difficult and therefore we are allowing you four weeks to provide a plan for reduction. Please have the written plan to me by Friday, May 11, 2012.

"Thank you in advance for your work on this issue."

Mary Wilcynski, the principal at Kennedy High School, said each school has a certain amount of flexibility in contracts and ways to make cuts, such as possibly splitting contracts for assistant coaches.

"We'll just have to adjust. It's not devastating," she said. "We'll just have to go to the drawing board. It's not ever good news, but I don't think it's devastating."

Kibby and Wilcynski said the highest-paid coaches at the Cedar Rapids public high schools make approximately \$8,000, depending on the sport. Football coaches make more than tennis coaches, for instance.

"The coaches don't do it for the money," said Kibby. "They do it for the love of the activity. They do not make much money per hour, when you think about all the time they put into their activity."

Kibby is not sure what impact the \$25,000 in cuts will have on the total program at Jefferson. "That's the million-dollar question, isn't it?," he said. "It will have an impact. The coach-to-athlete ratio will certainly go up. It's possible that a program could be cut."

Kibby said he doesn't know if more cuts will be coming in other departments at the Cedar Rapids schools.

"I have no idea, but I'd guess if they're trying to save \$105,000 from activities, I'd guess that's not the only place they're going to save money," he said. "If we have budget issues, I can't imagine that \$105,000 is the number that we'd get to. I don't have any inside information on

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that."

Wilcynski does not think programs will be cut. "No. Not at all," she said. "We're not going to get rid of programs."

Kibby, Kennedy athletic director Aaron Stecker and Washington athletic director Paul James rode together to the MVC meetings in Dubuque on Wednesday and had a chance to discuss ways of cutting \$25,000 in salaries at each school. The co-curricular budgets at all three high schools are almost exactly the same.

"I want to develop some sort of criteria, because it can be arbitrary," said Kibby. "As soon as it's arbitrary, the person you cut is going to want to know, 'Why me?'"