

December 10, 2010

*Message from the Superintendent -*

How many times can the sky fall?

I know it seems to you, as it does to us, that every year we are predicting dire circumstances when it comes to the school system's budget for the upcoming year. We are certainly there again! This is the third consecutive year that the school district's budget has been cut by the state and each cut is in addition to the previous one.

I am sharing this information with you at this time for two very specific reasons: (1) I want to be sure everyone is aware of the potential cuts in personnel for our district next year; and (2) I want to encourage you to stay informed and help us communicate with those making decisions at the state level as to the impact these reductions will have on our children.

The state is currently facing a \$3.2 billion shortfall for the fiscal year 2011-12 and the Office of State Budget and Management has asked all governmental agencies to identify budget cuts at both the 5% and 10% level to cover that shortfall.

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) has responded to this request and identified allotment reductions in categorical areas for each school district. When the 10% formula for reduction is applied specifically to Pitt County Schools, the result is a projected loss of approximately 314 positions directly impacting classrooms.

NCDPI 10% Budget Reduction Scenario Applied to Pitt County Schools

	<u>Positions</u>	<u>Months of Employment</u>	<u>Dollars</u>	<u>*Calculated Positions</u>
Classroom Teachers	83	-	-	83
Instructional Support	13	-	-	13
Assistant Principals	-	61.00	-	6.10
CTE	-	78.00	-	7.80
Teacher Assistants	-	-	\$6,113,479	204.45

Additional administrative cuts and reductions in allotments for supplies, textbooks, transportation, funding for At-Risk Children, funding for Children with Special Needs/Academically Gifted Children, and many other support programs would also be cut. \*If the worst case (10% scenario) becomes necessary, this formula would have to be adjusted somewhat to make allowances for reductions our district has already made in some of these categories of personnel.

It is also noteworthy that these cuts are in addition to the 4 percent budget reductions that are already included and ongoing from previous reductions made by the state, which means the 10% cuts are really 14% cuts.

This is a *potential* scenario, not a plan, and we certainly hope the situation is not as dire as projected. However, the Governor and the vocal voices coming from the General Assembly have indicated they will not support tax increases to address the budget deficit. What is very

clear is that unless other measures are identified, significant numbers of public education personnel will be impacted and class size increases will be necessary.

I encourage you to stay up to date with these issues and to help us communicate broadly how devastating it would be to our district and to our instructional program to shoulder the loss of over 300 positions. Look at your own work site and imagine what a 10% reduction would be and how responsibilities would have to be reshuffled if 10% of your colleagues were eliminated.

At a time when our efforts to improve student achievement are so very critical, we need our state officials to stand tall for public education and find other means to cover this shortfall.

If you would like to understand more about the budget process and the state's responsibility to fund public education, you may access a wealth of valuable information on our website. On the [www.pitt.k12.nc.us](http://www.pitt.k12.nc.us) home page, you may click on [Finance Department](#) and then [Community Guide to the Budget](#).

Thank you and have a great week!