



## Staff Subtraction

The potential loss of staff to the Teton School District if budgets are cut should the supplemental levy fail to pass. The numbers are FTE (full-time equivalent) and are only estimates at this time.

### ADMINISTRATORS

$$8.7 - 5.77 = 2.93$$

What the district has      What the state pays for      Who could go

### INSTRUCTIONAL

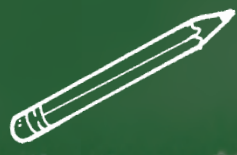
$$95.86 - 84.69 = 11.17$$

What the district has      What the state pays for      Who could go

### CLASSIFIED

$$64.61 - 28.87 = 35.74$$

What the district has      What the state pays for      Who could go



TVN infographic/Amy Birch

# No school levy=significant cuts across the board

Part two in a series on school funding

**Ken Levy**  
TVN Staff

Part Although the Teton School District has a strict policy about making budget cuts as far from the classroom as possible, student educational experiences could be affected should voters fail to renew an expanded supplemental levy.

The district has more staff, including administrators, teachers and classified, than the state pays for. State and local funding together cover all of those positions, with some special education and Title 1 remediation programs funded federally.

But local funding — primarily the supplemental levy — picks up the cost of those not covered by state money.

“Without the levy there would be significant cuts in every category position we have in the district,” Monte Woolstenhulme,

### Supplemental levy meetings

Monday, Feb. 18, 7 p.m. at Tetonia Elementary

Monday, Feb. 25, 7 p.m., at the Teton School District Office boardroom, 445 N. Main, Driggs

Monday, March 4, 7 p.m. at Victor Elementary

TSD Superintendent, said.

“The levy is needed due to State of Idaho education funding cuts, combined with an effort to keep high quality staff, retain quality programs, and expand where needed (full-day kindergarten, grade level splits to create 4-5 Rendezvous Upper Elementary School) and further support quality education,” said Diane Temple, executive director of the Teton Valley Education Foundation, in an email.

In a worst-case scenario, if the levy vote, scheduled for March 12, should fail, the district could run it again during the primaries in May, try again in August and the general election in November. The school board would look at the margin of failure in any of those cases and make adjustments

**School cuts** continued on A12

# School cuts

continued from A1

to the request as needed.

Layoffs could begin if the levy fails in March and in May, because by May and June “we’re making staffing decisions for the next school year, and there would be dramatic cuts in staffing and programs, but we’d still plan to run it again in August. But you’re already committed to contracts and staffing for the next school year.” Woolstenhulme said.

Those layoffs would be across the board. Classified support staff are paid hourly and would take the biggest cuts in a four-day week because of fewer bus runs and fewer meals to cook, for example, he said.

Woolstenhulme said the district spends about \$41,000 a day to operate on a five-day week. If everyone’s salary is reduced by one percent, that saves \$41,000.

With five snow days built into its calendar, which adds more hours than the state requires, the district could eliminate those and meet the state minimum, saving \$205,000.

“That’s an additional 2.5 percent salary reduction for all staff, because you’re shortening their contract by that much,” he said.

“There is no great solution to trimming a budget by 10 percent, and I expect that we will all feel the pinch next year,” said Dan Abraham, who teaches physics, environmental science, Earth systems science and advanced placement biology to juniors and seniors at Teton High School.

“Whether it be supplies, staff, personnel, professional development, or extracurriculars, I think everyone in the district, including the students, will feel

the [effect] of such a big cut,” he said.

Many of Abraham’s science classes use one-time lab use equipment, materials and supplies. Should cuts dig deep, “I can expect to see a decrease in what I can complete in the laboratory, an increase in the size of lab groups, and will continue supplementing supplies out of my own pocket,” he said.

While no cuts have been determined as of yet on the local level, a 3 percent statewide school budget increase proposed by State Superintendent of Education Tom Luna may not go very far in meeting actual classroom needs.

For example, the increase includes helping fund school computer programs to help manage student achievement data.

“But they’re not fully funding teachers on the salary schedule,” Woolstenhulme said. “At the state level, they’re funding teachers at minus two years’ experience.”

The TSD decided to continue to support and try to keep teachers retained in the district by making up the difference.

“Either school districts make up that difference to keep them at the level they are, or they cut the teacher by that two-year differential, following what the state is funding,” he said.

“When you dig in to the numbers, they want to pay for computer programs but they don’t want to fund teachers fully on their salaries. I don’t understand that. That’s the core of what we do, is teachers in the classroom. To say a computer program is more important than funding a teacher’s salary, I strongly disagree with that.”



**Above:** Dan Abraham, center, teaches physics, environmental science, Earth systems science and advanced placement biology to juniors and seniors at Teton High School. Here, he checks on the progress of a student experiment on photosynthesis using colored filters, with Kody Hill, right, as Jacob Miskin prepares his project.

**Left:** Dan Abraham checks on the progress of a student experiment on photosynthesis using colored filters.

TVN Photos/Ken Levy