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EDUCATION

Akron Public Schools administration shares plan for \$10M in cuts, including 59 jobs

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The Akron Public Schools administration is proposing the elimination of 59 jobs across the district as part of an effort to cut \$10.2 million from the budget ahead of next school year.

Chief of Staff Angela Carter said Monday night a majority of the affected positions are currently open jobs that will not be filled. She did not have exact numbers.

The cuts are in the ballpark of [what was promised last fall](#), after voters passed a levy, the district's first in 12 years. School board members said at the time they still expected to see cuts made, and even declined to vote on a five-year forecast in November until the administration made assurances cuts would happen in the spring.

The details around the cuts now being presented are still vague. The administration made a presentation to the board's finance committee on Monday, but did not say which jobs would be cut, only which departments would have either operational cuts or personnel cuts made, or a combination of both.

"We're proposing a reduction in force to eliminate redundant roles and create a leaner, more efficient organization," Carter told the board. "Importantly, this reduction is based on structure, not individual

performance."

The operational cuts may include purchasing, equipment, or other services. Personnel cuts are jobs, but they may or may not have people currently working in them. A total of \$4,476,706 in operational cuts is proposed, along with \$5,774,670 in personnel cuts.

The cuts to each department are:

Academics: \$733,572 operational, \$2,099,729 personnel.

Communications: \$85,051 personnel.

Operations: \$2,987,134 operational, \$2,623,084 personnel.

Schools and Accountability: \$542,918 personnel.

Student Services and Supports: \$754,000 operations, \$276,841 personnel.

Talent and Organizational Development: \$147,044 personnel.

Carter said a pre-notification would go out to employees affected by the layoffs April 1, ahead of the board's final vote on the matter. Unions would be notified a day prior. The board would vote at its April 14 meeting.

Superintendent Michael Robinson said there had been a collaborative effort to come up with creative strategies to avoid additional reductions in force.

"And so the objective here is to achieve sustainable, optimized operational efficiency through strategic restructuring," Robinson said. "We must align the district's five-year forecast and strategic priorities to our blueprint for excellence, our strategic plan, while maintaining a focus on student achievement and maintaining also educational excellence."

Board members pressed for additional details, including the overall number of jobs impacted, which was not part of the formal presentation.

Treasurer and CFO Steve Thompson also gave a presentation updating the board on monthly financials, which show the district has spent more than \$7 million more than anticipated this fiscal year, which began in July, but has also taken in about \$3.5 million more in revenues than expected.

Thompson warned actions proposed at the state level could heavily affect Akron's budget next year, possibly requiring deeper cuts.

Thompson said the formula behind the Fair School Funding Plan is expected to be implemented next year, as expected, but may not account for inflation. That could cause a \$6 million hit for Akron, he said.

"Even though our year is coming together better than anticipated, better than forecasted, it gets basically all taken away from this proposed new funding bill," Thompson said.

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