

School District Facing Budget Shortfall

Vernonia School District Superintendent Ken Cox recently informed the School Board that the District is facing an estimated \$828,000 budget shortfall for the upcoming school year. That shortfall is based on the Governor's \$5.56B budget for K-12 education.

According to Cox, the District has developed a budget showing all income and expenditures.

At the recommendation of the Budget Assistance Team (BAT), the 2011-12 budget was based on contracted raises and a full school year (190 days for teachers and 260 for year-round employees).

Cox noted that the State School Fund (SSF) adjustment from the Governor's \$5.56B to the legislature's \$5.7B resulted in a net increase of \$76,315. The District is also expecting some grant funding next year that could help pay for some staff positions.

Cox stated that the District is currently considering the following suggestions for cuts that came up during brainstorming sessions in the BAT meetings:

- Reduce District Office AP position from 1.0 to 0.8 FTE
- Eliminate District Maintenance Supervisor position
- 2.5 FTE in retirements
- Eliminate Middle School Social Studies and Elementary Physical Education teaching positions

- Athletic Director position filled by a teacher
- Transfer .2 FTE of Superintendent to Fund 280 (construction account)

According to Cox, these proposed cuts still leave the District with a shortfall of approximately \$245,000. However, this budget is for 190 days rather than the current 185 day calendar, or last year's 180 days. The District has yet to make any athletic department or teacher supply budget cuts. He also noted that the District's operating budget and the construction budget are two completely separate funds.

Cox indicated that the Administration and Budget Assistance Teams will continue to look for ways to close this gap prior to presenting the District Budget Committee with a Proposed Budget at their meeting next month and is open to input from the board, staff, and community.

Cox told the Vernonia Voice, "It is unfortunate that these types of cuts, which are typical of those being done in other districts across the state, have come to represent the current attitude toward education in Oregon. I hope that the legislature, while they have many demands on limited funds, will realize the importance of making a sustainable investment in the future of our nation by providing adequate funding to provide the best possible education for our children."

School Project Costs Increase

The Vernonia School District Superintendent Ken Cox, after meeting with BOORA Architects and P&C Construction, informed the 47J School Board that the Vernonia School Project is facing a set of price adjustments. The Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) presented to the School Board brings the total project budget up to \$42M, which is a \$3.8M increase.

Cox informed the Board of the following reasons for the increase: **\$1.649 million**-- Material costs have increased: fuel prices are up 27%, asphalt roofing is up 30%, and differences in the details between initial construction documents and the final set of plans.

\$696,000-- Late start due to FEMA requirements and wet winter weather conditions.

\$1.464 million-- The project will maximize energy efficiency and sustainable building practices in an innovative design which includes a community center, school based health center and adult education facilities. Most of these front-end costs are either covered by the \$1M Department of Energy grant or will be made up over the life of the building in energy and maintenance savings.

Cox suggested a proposed approach for addressing the increased cost by: Completing the main

building on time while continuing to look for additional savings in materials, incentive and in-kind opportunities; and postpone starting the science, art, and shop classrooms until next spring (rather than this fall) to allow more time to seek additional funding sources to fill any remaining gap.

Cox indicated that the K-12 main building is still on track to open in September, 2012, and that the science and art classes can be accommodated there until the second building is completed.

VHS Band Headed for State

The Vernonia High School Band has been invited to compete in the State Band Festival for only the second time in the last twenty-four years.

Band Instructor Rob Izzett was very excited to announce that his students will be heading to Oregon State University on May 12th.

The last time the Vernonia Band performed at the State Festival since 2000.

Vernonia's Voice would like to wish Mr. Izzett and the Band congratulations and best of luck at State!

Natural Path to Health: Diabetes-- The Natural Approach

By Dr. Carol McIntyre

I would like to conclude our series on type 2 diabetes by discussing the natural therapies used to prevent and treat this increasingly prevalent disease. As we know, type 2 diabetes is a dysregulation of glucose in the body. Poor diet plays a crucial part in the development of type 2 diabetes and diet alone is the "deal breaker." So let's talk diet!

Diet is not defined as the latest "fad" on how to lose a quick couple of pounds. Diet is what you eat on a daily basis. Your diet is ultimately your health! Please remember that.

Starting with dietary choices, sugar is not our friend! Regardless of whether you are diagnosed with diabetes or not, having any type of excess sugar will cause your blood glucose to increase. Sugar includes: fruit sugar, fruit juice, honey, enriched white flour/pasta/bread and all types of sugar, itself

(white, brown, cane, high fructose corn syrup, corn syrup etc...). For some people diagnosed with diabetes, they have to avoid ALL sugars... including fruit and honey! If you're wondering why I include enriched white flour in the sugar group, it's because the product is so refined, it basically turns directly into sugar after you ingest it! Anything that is refined from its original state of being is going to turn into sugar in your body faster than it would if it were left in its whole state.

Guidelines to control type 2 diabetes with diet would be:

Avoid sugars as defined above.

Eat whole grains; meaning whole food grains such as steel cut oats, stone ground whole wheat flour, brown rice, wild rice, quinoa.

Incorporate protein into every meal to help stabilize your blood glucose.

Eat frequent small meals, again to stabilize blood glucose (this may be

every 2 hours depending on the severity of glucose dysregulation).

Avoid excess sodium.

Reduce consumption of saturated fat.

Exercise!

Increase fiber.

Increase foods rich in Omega 3 and 6 essential fatty acids.

Avoid food intolerances/sensitivities/allergies.

The most common supplement used in the treatment of type 2 diabetes is chromium. Chromium is a trace mineral that helps the cells become more sensitized to insulin and therefore acts to increase glucose/sugar uptake by the cells. Dosage can be anywhere between 200 mcg and 1,000 mcg depending on the severity of glucose dysregulation and the body's response to the supplement. It should be taken at the same time each day to provide rhythm for your system.

Other home remedies include

parsley tea and huckleberry tea. There are many beneficial foods, minerals, vitamins and herbs that can be included in the treatment plan. Each treatment plan is based on what is best suited for the individual, but would always include the basic dietary guidelines discussed above. In many cases, it is necessary to use combination therapy (Rx drugs and nutrition / supplementation) together, until the patient's blood sugar is controlled.

Lifestyle changes and awareness of proper food intake are the keys to preventing and treating type 2 diabetes. Becoming more aware of what we put into our bodies will allow us to once again embrace our bodies as a model of health and wellness. The "cure" is eating well! With effort, we can achieve optimal health and overcome the devastation of disease.

Thank you for joining me... Be Well~

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