

# Claremont Unified cuts \$628K

School board forming advisory committee to address projected budget deficits.

**Joshua Pelzer**  
Claremont-Upland Voice

CLAREMONT — Claremont Unified School District board members trimmed an additional \$628,000 from the budget, but they still have a \$372,000 deficit to solve this year.

To help them get that job done the board members decided to form a committee to study ways to trim the budget further.

At this week's board meeting, they slashed funding for school supplies and staffing for alternative education programs. The board members also dropped some administrative positions.

Responding to appeals from teachers and school officials at the board meeting, the board chose not to eliminate school department heads.

District officials are accepting applications for volunteers to serve on the committee to study budget cuts. The committee will consider some tough choices such as boosting class sizes, allowing students to transfer schools or seeking a property tax increase.

"We are expecting to have that budget deficit last a while, so we need to plan ahead for how to manage those resources so this committee can take many different directions," Board President Joan Presecan said after the meeting.

"We've had a whole lot of suggestions from folks about how to gore somebody else's ox and sometimes it's been so explicit . . . that it becomes not very helpful," board member

"All of these cuts are going to have an impact and there's no doubt about it. Anyone who says anything different is kidding themselves. There is no fat. We're down into the very muscle of the beast."

**Sam Mowbray**  
Claremont Unified School District board member

David Speak said at the meeting. "So if you're willing to come to participate in a committee like this or come to a meeting like this; one demonstration of good faith ought to be to bring an ox."

District officials said they have tried to keep cuts away from the classrooms, but some fear that they are running out of options.

"All of these cuts are going to have an impact and there's no doubt about it," board member Sam Mowbray said. "Anyone who says anything different is kidding themselves. There is no fat. We're down into the very muscle of the beast. I hope that we don't see a significant degradation in student performance, but I honestly fear that we may and I don't know what to do about that."

The board has not determined the full size or responsibilities of the committee, Presecan said. Those interested in applying or recommending a candidate can submit a letter to Supt. Sheralyn Smith's office at the Claremont Unified School District, 2080 N. Mountain Ave., Claremont, CA 91711. No deadline has been set. Letters should include names, dates, background experience and an explanation of what the applicant would offer the committee.