

Report from the TEMS PTO School Board Liaison
On the TESD School Board Meeting
held January 3, 2012

Submitted January 4, 2012

Tuesday evening in a special session the TE School Board passed a preliminary budget proposal for school year 2012-13. Basically this proposal gives the school board options as they try to close a \$6.2 million budget deficit. TE residences argued both sides which focused on raising property taxes by the allowable rate of 3.3% (which includes 1.6% covering contributions to state retirement and special education). In the end the board voted 7-2 to keep their options open while putting everything on the table which includes taxes, cost cutting measures like outsourcing custodial services, and additional revenues like an activity fee.

The short fall is a result of shrinking revenues through property tax reassessments (approx. \$6 million) and growing district contributions to state retirement fund (PSERS) and special education. Over the past 2 years the school board has cut over \$10 million from educational programs which includes both teachers and administrative staff. Last year both the teachers union and support staff union reduced expenses by forgoing raises a half year for teachers and a full year for support staff helping the district close last year's deficit. However, as in the past uncertainly over state contributions could cause the deficit to grow.

At the next meeting (January 23) the board will vote on the actual preliminary budget with final approval scheduled for June 14, 2012 as they consider all options to close the shortfall.

Finally, last night President Karen Cruickshank announced that on January 9th the district will begin negotiations on a new collective bargaining agreement with the teachers. The TE team will be led by Superintendent Dr. Daniel Waters.

Paul Billman