

# Ripon Area School District

Press Release  
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For Immediate Release

## **School District Budget Planning Team Schedules Public Listening Session**

The Ripon Area School District is in the process of reviewing potential budget cuts for the 2008-09 school year and is inviting the public to give feedback at a special listening session scheduled for Wednesday, December 5, at 6:30 p.m. in Ripon High School 167. Faced with a projected \$342,000 deficit for the 2008-09 school year, the Ripon Board of Education has formed a Budget Planning Team to collect employee and public input before making recommendations to the Board at its January 21 meeting.

In the past month the school district administration has held Budget Brainstorming Sessions to generate suggestions for budget reductions at each of the district's five buildings. Those suggestions are now being researched and will be brought forward for public feedback at the December 5 Listening Session. Employee feedback is also being sought through Budget Listening Sessions scheduled for each building in the same manner as the previously held brainstorming sessions.

Based on feedback from the listening sessions, the district's Budget Planning Team will whittle the list of suggestions down to a recommended list that will be presented to the full Board of Education at the January 21 meeting. The Board is expected to act on the budget cuts at its February 18 meeting.

"We believe this process provides more opportunity for all employees and residents to be part of the budget development process," explained Business Manager Rick Ketter. "During last year's budget hearing we discussed the need to change the process so that everyone could be involved as the budget was being developed rather than being limited to reacting to a budget after it was developed. This process gives everyone who attends the brainstorming and listening sessions a voice for our future direction."

The \$342,000 budget cut is necessary because the cost of maintaining the district's current program next year will cost more than state revenue limits will allow. The district is projecting 2.8% increase in its revenue cap while state law requires a minimum of a 3.8% compensation increase for staff. This is the fourteenth year that the state's revenue limits have placed school districts in this financial bind.

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