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## Greece's proposed school budget slashes jobs, special programs

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GREECE — The proposed 2011-12 school budget unveiled last night by Greece Central School District Interim Superintendent John O'Rourke slashes music instruction, cuts nearly 90 jobs, increases class sizes and adjusts the elementary school starting times by a half hour to reflect reduced instruction in music and art.

O'Rourke's proposal calls for \$195.8 million in spending next year, a 1.16 percent increase over this year's plan.

Earlier this year, the Board of Education told O'Rourke to develop a budget for next year that would increase the property tax levy by no more than 2 percent.

The plan he outlined during a school board meeting last night would increase the levy by 1.9 percent, and increase the tax rate about 1.7 percent to \$22.95 per \$1,000 of assessed value.

Next year will be the second in a row that state aid to the district has been reduced and the district made deep cuts to compensate. Overall, district spending has remained flat since the 2008-09 school year.

O'Rourke said this year's budget "was the single most difficult budget I've ever worked on."

These are some of the cuts included in his proposal:

---32.2 full-time equivalent elementary school teaching positions, including six vocal music positions, 3.7 instrumental music positions, six art positions and eight general education positions.

---30.3 secondary teaching positions, including 7.5 each in core and special subjects, seven literacy coaches and 3.5 instrumental music positions.

---two top level administrative positions.

---five special education teaching positions.

In addition, the plan calls for increasing elementary school class sizes to 25 students per class, and intermediate level class sizes to 27 per class. Class sizes in high school would increase to as high as 32 per class.

The school board will consider the proposal in coming weeks and is scheduled to adopt a proposal on April 12. The community budget vote will be held May 17.

O'Rourke's proposal is available on the district's website at [www.greece.k12.ny.us](http://www.greece.k12.ny.us) under "budget information."

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