

Mill Valley School District Staff Budget Reduction Comments

Budget Suggestion/Comment	Category
Curriculum & Instruction	
Have Kiddo fund math	Curriculum & Instruction
Opt out of CST (I am not even sure if this is possible, or if it costs us money) or work with the state to eliminate 2nd grade testing. The cost of providing this test to all California students is prohibitive.	Curriculum & Instruction
Don't buy test prep materials for CST. Many teachers do not use them, and you can use released CST test questions online.	Curriculum & Instruction
First- I think the teachers, admin and parents should lobby the state about testing in 2nd grade and get rid of it...that will save money overall. Then I think we should end our contract for DORA, MAPS and DATA Director. We tested it out last year and it doesn't tell us much more than just reading with the kids and using the assessments we've already developed. Before we cut anything else, I think we should get through this year with the \$700,000 and wait to see if it is really 2.4 million the year afterwards.	Curriculum & Instruction
The MAPS Assessment Program is unhelpful, and uses up class time which could be used for furthering a lesson or more useful teacher-made assessments. The results are completely in line with those of the STAR test, so there is no benefit of the MAPS results. The numbers/RTI scores that the teachers receive are difficult to understand (I was told that the score of one of my students says that he is at a 12th grade math level, where he is a bright student, he is definitely not at that level).	Curriculum & Instruction
MAPS Testing and all the expenses related to it could be cut. After using it last year and again just a few weeks ago, we noticed that the scores align precisely with the STAR results (free test) and the GATE test (also free) given at the end of 4th grade. The MAPS assessments do not tell us anything new about students or their progress.	Curriculum & Instruction
Eliminate MAPS & DORA	Curriculum & Instruction
Suspend MAPS assessment program	Curriculum & Instruction
Eliminate MAPS	Curriculum & Instruction
We don't need MAPS testing – it is not only expensive, but limits the use of computer lab for rest of school.	Curriculum & Instruction
Eliminate MAPS testing. It takes away from instructional time and doesn't provide truly new information.	Curriculum & Instruction
Scan all homework and post it online so parents can print it out at home – Savings on paper and computer maintenance.	Curriculum & Instruction
Increase use of paperless online homework assignments. 1 day per week per classroom would create a large savings. Continue to improve intervention programs in grades K-3 to remediate difficulties before students move into larger classes in grades 4-8. Create a Paraprofessional Volunteer Corps: Parents who would be trained to take on roles as actual unpaid classroom assistants at all grade levels to help with small group or individual instruction, particularly with students who need intervention. The Corps members could be assigned to their own child's school, but not necessarily their own child's classroom. They would need to view their work the way a paid classroom aide does: a daily commitment to assist with instruction. Provide more prep time for grade 4 and 5 teachers to keep up with increasing class sizes and make it more in line with the prep time at grades 6-8. Find creative ways to involve parents and local businesses in underwriting costs of specific needs at school sites: ie: local paint company could donate paint, parents could have workdays at school sites to help with various maintenance and improvement projects, local theatres or music producers could	Curriculum & Instruction
Ask before ordering textbooks and instructional materials - is there any way to refuse textbook funds - or add these to the general fund? The funds can go back to the state and perhaps help there - and most teachers do not use them in Mill Valley.	Curriculum & Instruction
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I think we could cut the Library Coordinator position that works at IMC. This could be filled with a classified employee since this person does not have direct contact with students.	Curriculum & Instruction
Have the Resource Assistant double as RAMP specialist	Curriculum & Instruction
We currently have a part-time employee who makes copies for teachers (saves time, paper, copier repair costs, etc.). I would like to see a scanner purchased for this employee. That way, we could drop off items (worksheets, parent letters, etc) to be SCANNED. The items could then be posted to our teacher web pages and PARENTS/STUDENTS could print them off and bring them to class. This would reduce our paper expenditures. Also, I would like to see "Cute PDF" software (free) installed on all teacher computers. This would allow us to make our own PDF's of Word documents (so that we could also post these to be printed at home). For this idea to work, it would have to be made VERY clear to parents/students that it is now THEIR responsibility to print documents and bring them to class. Teachers should also be given an additional 1/2 work day to bring their web sites up to speed (learn how to upload documents, etc).	Curriculum & Instruction

Facilities

Do not pay for private parking in the church parking lot when we have a district parking lot on site.	Facilities
Stop paying for the parking in the church lot	Facilities
Is it true that the District pays for parking?	Facilities
Go solar! There are government (state, not sure of fed) no-interest loans. Also, is MVSD looking at buying power from the new, local, Marin cooperative power company.	Facilities
Increase rental rates to preschools	Facilities
Fence our schools so we can keep weekend users from leaving their trash	Facilities
Please educate parents. The face of Mill Valley Schools right now is the modernization, which is poorly understood as to funding, by the public. It appears that we are doing just fine because of construction. Consider forming an action committee of parents and school district staff to educate and advocate for change.	Facilities
In the past few years, I have heard staff members voice their frustration with the frequent remodeling in the DO. A wall was built, then a another wall for the Director of Student Services' old office, then a new small office in front. The frustration I have heard is that the DO seems to have plenty of funds to use (aside from the issues of "walls" and locked doors), especially when MVMS is growing and we hear that Kiddo and the DO will be moving.	Facilities
Research more revenue sources for renting out space.	Facilities
Can we rent out gym or room to private groups?	Facilities

Other

Cut out Scott Foresman Social Studies consumables EnVisions Math consumables: use online resources and xerox (not sure if that would still be just as expensive) Cut out some aspects of PD (we've developed a lot and can afford to take a break from these expenses for 2-3 years) Author/Professional Speakers for Parents lectures/evenings (or are these people paid for by the PTA Association?) MAPS Scale back on \$ from DO (maybe by \$100 or \$200 for classroom materials. Most of us probably have plenty to use for 2-3 years. New classrooms would need start up expenses Church parking lot – only rent space for handicapped.	Other
Eliminate all food for all meetings	Other
Eliminate all food and travel at professional development and meetings	Other

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Budget Suggestion/Comment	Category
Eliminate district provided meals for meetings, negotiations, etc.	Other
Eliminate one of the assistant superintendent positions.	Other
Eliminate one of the technology support positions.	
Furlough days for all school employees - is the only way to ensure the sacrifice is shared at every level.	
Paperless staff directory	Other
At my old school they limited us to 1000 copies per month on the copier. Each teacher had a unique code the punched in before making copies. It made teachers much more mindful of not wasting paper and the cost per copy use of the xerox machines. Also, take away the laminating machines and color copier. That is a good chunk of money that is an "extra" not a necessary item.	Other
Explore limiting the number of per month copying; explore going "paperless"	Other
Eliminate lunch program	Other
Explore funding from George Lucas' foundation (Edutopia), to fund technology in the schools, thus freeing up technology funds and fundraising to pay for other programs.	Other
Cut everything that you can by a little bit. Cut out at least 1-2 full line items that are not absolutely necessary.	Other
I really liked the idea of having us all meet together and hear the same information at the same time - thank you for doing that. I would like to find out of the 87% of our money going to employees, how much of that is teacher, how much administration and how much classified.	Other
Eliminate crossing guard positions and make it an extra duty for school staff	Other
I was surprised that the district purchased a new absence/sub system. I was not aware of any problems (in fact it worked just fine) with the former system, and wondered if this was money that did not need to be spent. Were any of the users consulted as that might have saved \$?	Other
There are many confidential employees in the DO. Confidential = directly involved in negotiations. Would someone look into this and reclassify the positions that are not truly confidential. This was done a few years prior beginning with 3 positions. Thank you.	Other
Do we need so much fancy technology in these times?	Other
Don't supply facial Kleenex for all.	Other
Stop supplying paper products.	Other
No technology reserve	Other
Freeze on technology spending for one year.	Other
Reduce Admin/ DO staff	Other
Administrative (Inc. Supt., Asst Supt/Bus., etc.) should be closer to what it used to be. Our top salary hasn't changed in years. Theirs is up 50-80,000 more.	Other
Use the Middle School marquee to urge parents to contact Sacramento.	Other
How could we change the way we get money for our schools beside property taxes?	Other
Combine districts to consolidate administrative costs.	Other
No merit pay for Superintendents when test scores are high or for results that teachers deliver.	Other
Could we further engage the parents of school age children? The parents in Marin are a resource.	Other
We provide top private school education at public school prices, except for class size. Pony up more money to keep class size down.	Other
Paperless District Directory. Parents can buy them.	Other
Scrutinize perks for some employees – phones, housing, travel expenses – that other employees pay for out-of pocket.	Other

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Would like to see the pie-chart with budget amounts broken down. Classified-Admin - Other Staff. Budget amount + number of people. Classified almost the same chunk of the pie but way fewer people - \$ doesn't add up! Need everything broken down to make it more clear and transparent.	Other
No one should get a housing stipend in this district. Most teachers live here, too...	Other
Eliminate housing allowances.	Other
Eliminate teacher supply budget, school PTA's can pledge to make up the difference. Ask parents to send in some supplies, too.	Other
Thank you for being open and honest with us. We really feel like you're on the same team with us. Thanks for asking our feedback; it shows you value what we have to say.	Other
Do we need so many administrative people at the D.O.?	Other
Can we have a place where we can report waste?	Other
Don't use color printing for board packets. Use plain, not glossy paper.	Other
Do you need a \$1,000 per month stipend in this economic climate?	Other
Consolidate several school districts.	Other
Ways to cut the budget: Parking for District Staff (church) Get rid of Middle School tech class that only has 10 kids that show up Get rid of Schoolwires - we don't need a new website We don't need new white boards - they are nice to have - not need to have Get rid of MAPS; testing at MS Consider flexibility and increasing class sizes	Other
Shared Sacrifice	
Reduce or eliminate stipends	Shared Sacrifice
Furloughs	Shared Sacrifice
What would one furlough day for all staff members save?	Shared Sacrifice
Furlough	Shared Sacrifice
Furlough Days would be a "shared sacrifice" between parents as well as the district.	Shared Sacrifice
Furlough Days → Shared Sacrifice x ②	Shared Sacrifice
Furlough Days would be a "shared sacrifice."	Shared Sacrifice
Cash in lieu of health benefits	Shared Sacrifice
New phone system - a waste	Shared Sacrifice
Perks for Admin and higher ups	Shared Sacrifice
Staff should pay a portion for their health insurance costs. It is almost unheard of to have your health benefits paid at 100% for a family.	Shared Sacrifice
As many furlough days as possible Raise class sizes in grades 1-3 to 24 (and add aide time) Eliminate grade level meetings (and stipend for grade level leaders) Eliminate stipend other positions Reduce P.E. in grades 1-5 from 5 to 3X per week - I know this is prep time for them, so maybe shorten the school day to create prep time Eliminate staff development days (especially during the school year)	Shared Sacrifice

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Share in medical costs like other school districts.	Shared Sacrifice
Make all aide positions less than the needed number of hours so that they do not qualify for health benefits or cut aides. This is a luxury in these financial times.	Shared Sacrifice
Eliminate two district office full-time executive assistant positions	Shared Sacrifice
Do not cut janitorial service.	Shared Sacrifice
No more janitor cuts.	Shared Sacrifice
Eliminate Grade Level Meetings (most leaders say easiest job ever for \$)	Shared Sacrifice
Realize that all/most "shared sacrifices" trickle down to instructional programs. To think otherwise is inaccurate and/or disingenuous.	Shared Sacrifice
Increase all retirement benefit contributions for retiree health benefit (C-something) from 350 to 400 per all employees (teachers, admin...).	Shared Sacrifice
Eliminate Stipends – Do by need, using PTA, etc.	Shared Sacrifice
Temporarily freeze contracted stipends or consider a percentage reduction	Shared Sacrifice

Utilities

Get rid of mini fridges	Utilities
Get rid of individual refrigerators in classrooms.	Utilities
Remove all personal appliances (fridges, microwaves, toaster ovens, etc.) from classrooms.	Utilities
Install better thermostats for control of heat	Utilities
Energy audit re: heating and cooling and required auto-off after 6:00 pm.	Utilities
Keep boiler/heat regulated at school –we have to call Maintenance to turn off boiler at Park School.	Utilities
The huge gaps under our doors at Tam Valley let warm air out. This wastes money.	Utilities
More efficient use of lighting and heating.	Utilities
More efficient use of lighting and heating.	Utilities
Send all stuff home at year end instead of paying for huge dumpsters.	Utilities
Keep all lights off unless needed, in classes, etc. Even during class time.	Utilities
When I work weekends and nights, many heaters are on. We can hang signs to remind people to turn OFF heaters when they leave – not just program them to stay at low temp.	Utilities
Keep Hallway doors closed.	Utilities
Fix leaky toilets at T.V. School! Water costs \$. Weatherstrip the new classroom doors.	Utilities
Idea for potential small savings, but involves kids: - Publish the water use total per month at each site. - Compare it to same month in previous - Challenge students and staff to reduce the water use. - Provide incentive. Could same be done with electrical? Trash?	Utilities

Multiple Comments

<p>Use some of the reserve. Suspend MAPS assessment program</p> <p>Have all classrooms turn off heat when leaving at the end of the day, not just set the thermostat lower or program it lower.</p> <p>In past years, the board has exercised an option in the Superintendent's contract that allows them to give bonuses, merit pay, etc...to the Superintendent for passages of Parcel Taxes, test score goals, etc....often the goals were the direct results of teacher work. Please suspend this practice.</p> <p>Don't pay for parking at the church. It's over \$7000 per year. We were told it was a safety issue of walking to cars in the dark....we all walk to cars in the dark if we work that late. If you insist on the extra spots, please don't purchase them for the year, purchase only the amount of days the parking is actually needed. Furlough Days district wide.</p>	Multiple Comments
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<p>1. Eliminate cell phones - phones are in every classroom, office, food prep area, copy room, etc. If a principal is off campus and needs to be reached at the district office, people can call them on land lines. If there is an emergency staff has personal cell phones. In case of an earthquake or other natural disaster...cell phones are unreliable as the serve can be overwhelmed as it was in the East Coast earthquake.</p> <p>2. Eliminate paid parking at the church for district office staff - Mill Valley is safe. Parking in neighborhoods is SAFE. Old Mill staff has been parking on city streets and making it to their cars safely for eons.</p> <p>3. Eliminate district directory - not only will this save in manpower costs, it will save in printing costs as well. I am a parent in the district and have never used this expensive tool. I have the class list with phone numbers and can arrange play dates other ways!</p> <p>4. Eliminate district accountant - wouldn't we all love to have assistants to help us with our paperwork? A school district our size doe not warrant an accountant (according to CTA rep Ed Hasson.)</p> <p>4. Eliminate TLC.org and MVTLC - now is not the time for endless committees that often repeat work of previous committees. Let for con</p> <p>5. Eliminate MAPS math assessment - before this program (at \$12.50 per student) was approved by the board, teachers begged for this p</p> <p>6. Eliminate DORA - see reasons above.</p> <p>7. Reduce or eliminate outside presenters and consultants. Only use them if they are being paid for with restricted funds.</p> <p>8. Eliminate association dues - teachers pay for their own professional association dues...so should all staff.</p> <p>9. Investigate costly staff development payments to places like Harvard by administrators.</p> <p>10. Eliminate TB testing for "some" staff who had TB tests paid for by the district...the rest of the staff paid with their own money.</p> <p>11. Reduce or eliminate extra summer custodial staff - teachers dust and clean their own rooms (I have been doing this for 17 years so ye</p> <p>12. Work with MVTA to reduce or freeze stipends positions which may freeze some programs...but we should only do what we can afford.</p> <p>13. Eliminate housing, car, and bonuses for administrators. Teachers don't get these expensive perks.</p> <p>I am sure if I had more information how the district spends money I could come up with more reductions.</p>	<p>Multiple Comments</p>