

Boone school board asks state's OK to cut kindergarten to half-day

One board member objects to even considering switching to half-day

By **Greta Cuyler**
Reading Eagle

The Daniel Boone School Board on Monday voted 8-1 to petition the state Education Department for authorization to cut all-day kindergarten to half-day and to eliminate a full-time librarian at the middle school.

State approval would not force board members to implement the cuts. It would give them options to consider as they work to cut an additional \$2.2 million from the 2010-11 budget.

The Education Department is expected to approve or deny the petitions within a week, Superintendent Gary L. Otto said.

Board member Alan D. Ross voted against both petitions.

"Our primary responsibility as board members is to help with the education of our children, especially young children," Ross said after the meeting. "This is wrong and shouldn't be considered."

The district's proposed budget for 2010-11 is \$53.4 million, up from this year's \$49.2 million.

Reverting to half-day kindergarten would save the district approximately \$250,000.

Cutting a middle-school librarian - and distributing the duties to other district librarians- would save about \$50,000.

During the public comment session, Birdsboro resident Tom K. Schadt pleaded with the board to keep full-day kindergarten and retain the same number of classroom aides in the elementary schools.

Schadt said, "To not do that won't produce a bare bones budget, but a budget that breaks the bones of the elementary school children in the Daniel Boone school system."

The board voted 9-0 to table a petition to cut a German teacher at the middle school.

Board member Margaret M. Fiset suggested that district administrators rework the request so that students can still take a cultural explorations class in middle school, a class aimed at helping them choose which foreign language to take in high school.

The board also appointed Tamara Twardowski to replace departing board member Michael D. Sheerer. Sheerer, who got on the board as a write-in in 2005, is moving out of state.

Twardowski was one of two people from Birdsboro the board interviewed for the job. The other was John Selkirk.

Twardowski received 5 votes, and Selkirk, 3.

Twardowski's first meeting will be May 10.

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Reading Eagle: Lauren A. Little
Tom K. Schadt of Birdsboro addresses school directors during the Monday night meeting of the Daniel Boone School Board.

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