

APPENDIX A



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Tuesday, Jun 2, 2009

Posted on Tue, Jun. 02, 2009

School district might raise taxes to save jobs

Proposal would keep 30 teachers

By TIM FLACH
tflach@thestate.com

Lexington 1 might raise taxes to keep 30 teachers in classrooms rather than abolish their jobs.

A new proposal would save the positions, reducing staff cuts forced by state aid reductions to 10 nonteachers.

It comes after some school board members expressed concern that fewer teachers mean larger classes. That could damage the academic performance that makes Lexington 1 home to many of the area's top schools, some board members said.

"You're not going to turn out the quality expected," school board chairman Ed Harmon of Lexington said.

The prospect of 30 fewer teachers suggests "we aren't doing enough to protect classrooms" from state aid declines, he said.

Any job cuts would disappear through attrition. No one would be laid off.

Lexington 1 now has 1,704 teachers. But retaining all those jobs might require a tax increase some board members don't want.

Keeping 30 teachers means a property tax hike of \$34 on a \$100,000 home, the new plan estimates. There is reluctance to raise taxes in a recession but "it's something we're going to have to consider," Harmon said.

A tax hike could be smaller if more savings are used, but board members are concerned about depleting reserves too much.

Lexington 1 schools educate nearly 22,000 students in Gilbert, Lexington, Oak Grove, Pelion, Red Bank and nearby areas.

So far, two of Lexington County's five school districts raised taxes while others shed teachers and other staff in response to less state aid.

Lexington 3 in Batesburg-Leesville and Lexington 4 in the Gaston-Swansea area approved a tax hike after cutting a small number of teachers and other staff.

Reach Flach at (803) 771-8483.

APPENDIX B



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Monday, Jun 1, 2009

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More teachers scramble for fewer SC openings

The Associated Press

South Carolina's annual job fair for teachers is expected to draw thousands of jobseekers vying for far fewer classroom openings.

The state Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention and Advancement will hold its 21st annual job fair Monday at the state Fairgrounds. The event will feature less than half of the state's districts.

More than 2,000 teacher hopefuls have pre-registered for the event. That's nearly double the number who signed up in advance last year. But districts statewide are advertising about 600 fewer vacancies, for 300 total.

Districts across the state have eliminated positions amid recession budget cuts and the continued uncertainty over whether they will receive federal stimulus cash meant for education that Gov. Mark Sanford has refused to request.

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APPENDIX C



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Long stimulus fight might be near end

Case heads to S.C. Supreme Court

By JOHN O'CONNOR and RICK BRUNDRETT
joconnor@thestate.com rbrundrett@thestate.com

Gov. Mark Sanford said Monday he would not — win or lose — put the state through a protracted legal fight over control of \$700 million in stimulus money. It is a signal the dispute over the federal aid might be ending soon.

Sanford made the announcement after he received a major legal setback in federal court.

A federal judge ruled Monday that two lawsuits asking the state to determine whether Sanford or state lawmakers control the disputed money should be decided by the S.C. Supreme Court. Sanford wanted the lawsuits heard in federal court.

He acknowledged Monday it is likely he will lose the battle when the S.C. Supreme Court hears the cases Wednesday morning. If that happens, Sanford would withdraw his pending federal lawsuit.

"We will not attempt to exercise those appeals," Sanford said of his legal options. "Whatever decision (the S.C. Supreme Court) makes, we will live by.

"It looks like we will be bound to spend that money."

Sanford has refused to accept the money unless lawmakers pay off an equivalent amount of state debt. Lawmakers included the money in their recently approved budget and ordered Sanford to apply for the funds, sparking three lawsuits, including one filed by the governor.

Monday's federal court hearing focused mainly on technical and procedural questions.

Sanford had asked a federal judge to decide if all three suits belonged in federal or state court. His attorney Adam Charnes argued the state could be sued because it was a "nominal" defendant in the case, or a party with no responsibility or fault.

But U.S. District Judge Joe Anderson rejected those arguments, and ruled that two suits, one brought by a pair of Midlands students and another by the S.C. Association of School Administrators, should be decided by the S.C. Supreme Court.

State Attorney General Henry McMaster, who is representing the state in the students' suit and is a defendant in the federal suit, took the position that the U.S. Constitution prevents Sanford from suing the state in federal court.

"I think he made the right decision," McMaster said, noting Anderson took no position on the cases' merits, leaving those decisions to the state court. "It's a question of states' rights.

Some legal experts think Sanford faces long odds in state court. The state Supreme Court in 2002, for example, ruled that then-Gov. Jim Hodges violated the separation-of-powers clause in the S.C. Constitution by asking — without legislative approval — certain colleges and universities to return money from a special fund to help balance the budget.

With the S.C. Supreme Court quickly scheduling a hearing for both cases Wednesday, the months-long dispute could be settled before a July 1 deadline to request the money.

"The people of South Carolina, we believe, will get the hundreds of millions we need to move forward," said Dick Harpootlian, attorney for students Casey Edwards and Justin Williams, who filed one of the suits.

Superintendent of Education Jim Rex agreed, noting school districts have put their budgets on hold while the

dispute has lingered. The money — about \$350 million in each of the next two budget years — could be here two to three weeks after S.C. submits its paperwork, the agency said.

“At this point, every day counts,” Rex said in a statement. “But if they know the money is coming, they won’t have to eliminate as many positions. They can avoid their worst-case scenarios.”

But McMaster, who is a possible 2010 Republican gubernatorial candidate, worried a South Carolina Supreme Court decision would “erode the (governor’s) powers almost into irrelevance.”

Sanford said he was concerned about setting a legal precedent, but decided it was better to wait until a court orders him to accept the federal money.

Then, Sanford said, referencing a conversation with state Sen. Tom Davis, a longtime friend and former chief of staff, state residents will “be awakened” to the extent of legislative control in South Carolina. Sanford noted the court is elected by lawmakers and must lobby the General Assembly occasionally.

The whole situation, he said, makes the case to restructure state government to grant governors more executive power.

“If you’re already naked, you’re naked,” Sanford said of requesting the money just to head off a court ruling. “The question is how you make it real to the average guy.”

Reach O’Connor at (803) 771-8358. Reach Brundrett at (803) 771-8484.