



**PITTSBURGH
PUBLIC
SCHOOLS**
COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING
341 S. BELLEFIELD AVE.
PGH., PA 15213

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Contacts: Lisa Fischetti (412) 622-3603
Ebony R. Pugh (412) 622-3616

School District of Pittsburgh Adopts Budgets for 2007

Board Approves Appointment of New Chief of Research, Assessment and Accountability

PITTSBURGH, December 19, 2006 – At its December Legislative Meeting, the Pittsburgh Board of Education adopted the District’s General Fund Budget totaling \$531.4 million. The General Fund includes the District’s total revenues such as real estate and earned income taxes along with State appropriations for basic education. The General Fund does not include Title I funds or state/federal funds for Special Education and Early Childhood, which are supplemental programs. Private and foundation grants are considered supplemental funds and are not a part of the General Fund. The Board approves supplemental programs as each application is brought forward throughout the year. The 2007 Final Budget of \$531.4 million is \$2.2 million less than this year’s budget of \$533.6 million. The final General Fund Budget and Fund Balance projections are detailed below.

Final 2007 Budget for General Fund:

2007 Revenues	\$506.3 million
2007 Expenditures	\$531.4 million
2007 Operating Deficit	\$ 25.1 million

The Fund Balance Projection:

Projected Fund Balance at December 31, 2006	\$ 62.5 million
Less: 2007 operating Deficit	\$ 25.1 million
Projected Fund Balance at December 31, 2007	\$ 37.4 million
Fund Balance Requirement (5% of budget)	\$ 26.4 million
Projected Unreserved Fund Balance at December 31, 2007	\$ 11.0 million

The deficit of \$25.1 million was reached by incorporating a 6% across the board budget reduction resulting in a savings of \$10.2 million; including \$12.2 million in budgetary contingencies and additional appropriations for items that are consistent with goals for 2007. Additionally, \$3.2 million of major maintenance costs that had been borrowed in prior years are being transferred to the General Fund as operating costs.

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Beginning in 2005, the District lost \$4 million annually as a result of no longer being able to receive its share of the Regional Asset District Tax and an additional \$4 million annually due to the inability to levy a mercantile tax.

In 2007, the District will begin to experience the reduction in its earned income tax as it is “shared” with the City of Pittsburgh. The reductions in earned income tax revenue are as indicated below and are as required in Section 652.1(a)(2) of the Public School Code which states “A school district of the first class A located in whole or in part within the city of the second class shall share earned income tax under this section with such city of the second class as follows; in tax year 2007, one-tenth of one per centum (0.10%) to the city, in 2008 two-tenths of one per centum (0.20%) to the city, in tax year 2009 and thereafter, one quarter of one per centum (0.25%) to the city.”

2007	net levy 1.90%	(Reduction of 0.10% Loss of Revenue - \$ 4.4 million)
2008	net levy 1.80%	(Reduction of 0.20% Loss of Revenue - \$ 8.8 million)
2009	net levy 1.75%	(Reduction of 0.25% Loss of Revenue - \$11.0 million)

The District will continue working with State Officials on addressing the needs of the District.

The Board also adopted the 2007 Capital Program of \$48.7 million. Significant projects include reconfiguration of the open classroom design at Carmalt Academy of Science and Technology, as well as gym and/or classroom additions at Colfax Accelerated Learning Academy, Concord K-5, Miller African-Centered Academy, Sterrett Middle School and Vann K-8.

In Other Business

The Board approved the appointment of Dr. Paulette Poncelet to the position of Chief of Research, Assessment and Accountability. A former Director of Research and Evaluation, Dr. Poncelet exhibits clear knowledge and experience in urban education, K-12 education, high school reform and using data to drive decision making. As the District’s Chief of Research, Assessment and Accountability, Dr. Poncelet will report directly to Pittsburgh Public Schools Superintendent, Mark Roosevelt.

“Having Dr. Poncelet join our leadership team will provide the expertise and internal capacity necessary to ensure that we are using data at every level of the organization to drive decisions,” said Superintendent Mark Roosevelt. “It’s very important that principals have the necessary training and data to use student achievement results to change instruction in the classroom.”

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Dr. Poncelet will be relocating within the District from Akron, Ohio. A start date in January has yet to be determined.

As the District's Chief of Research, Assessment and Accountability, Dr. Poncelet will be responsible for providing the data and information to the Superintendent that supports the selection and implementation of appropriate measures for the assessment of student achievement, as well as, school and classroom instructional programs operating in the District. Dr. Poncelet will provide frequent updates regarding national best practices and work closely with administrative and school based staff to provide the information, data and research insights that support the development of programs for student achievement.

"Pittsburgh's framework for improvement, "Excellence for All," is one of the best I've ever seen. Its strategies represent the cutting edge of PreK-12 education," stated Dr. Poncelet. "I look forward to playing a critical role in helping principals and teachers use data to drive instruction."

Background on Dr. Paulette Poncelet

Dr. Poncelet comes to the District from Cleveland Municipal School District where she served as the Director of Research and Evaluation. As the Director of Research and Evaluation, she was responsible for building a research, evaluation and assessment that supported a results-driven organization that was responsive to the community and focused on improving student learning. Dr. Poncelet also oversaw and conducted evaluations that informed the District's decisions with supporting research and evaluation efforts.

Dr. Poncelet conducted the evaluation of the Cleveland Municipal School District K-8 restructuring plan, which looked at the impact of phasing out middle schools and the phasing in of K-8 schools. Dr. Poncelet also conducted evaluations on the impact of extended day on student achievement.

Prior to joining the Cleveland Municipal School District, Dr. Poncelet was a Tech Prep Director at Lorain County Community College, Lorain, Ohio and Cuyahoga Community College, Cleveland, Ohio. She was responsible for writing, implementing and managing federal grants to colleges and large urban and suburban districts to develop articulated associate degree programs.

Dr. Poncelet received a Bachelor of Sociology in 1975 from The University of Akron, Akron, Ohio and in 1991 a Master in Technical Education with a specialization in Curriculum and Instruction also from the University of Akron. In 1999, she received her Doctorate in Education with a specialization in Policy from Cleveland State University, Cleveland, Ohio.