

***Interstate 35 Community School District
Instructional Support Levy
2015-2016***

On Monday, February 16, 2015, the Interstate 35 Community School District Board of Education approved a resolution instituting the Instructional Support Program (ISP) for a five-year period. The resolution was for the maximum allowed by law (no more than 10% of the General Fund) and would be supported through property tax. No petition requiring a vote of the public came forth within the 28 days following approval of the resolution; consequently the Instructional Support Program is in place for the school years of 2015-2016, 2016-2017, 2017-2018, 2018-2019, and 2019-2020. At the completion of the current five-year approval, the District will have the option of renewing a five-year Board-approved ISP or a 10-year voter approved ISP.

At I-35 Schools, the ISP generated \$385,437 for this school year. The only stipulation in the law is ISP money must be used for the same purposes as the General Fund. In approaching the ISP at I-35, we identified three priorities:

1. Maintain programs and reasonable class sizes
2. Increase available technology
3. Update curricular materials

Maintain Programs and Reasonable Class Sizes

As a backdrop, the state support of schools for 2015-2016 increased by 1.25%, which for I-35 meant \$128,926 of new money. Couple that with increased costs estimated at 3.0-3.5% (final costs will be figured at the end of the fiscal year), the Instructional Support Program allowed us to maintain all current programs. We did reduce the Family and Consumer Science program to half-time but that was based solely on student enrollment. We estimated without the Instructional Support Program, we would have pursued the following reductions for 2015-2016:

- 3.5 fulltime teaching positions - estimated savings of \$175,000
- Bus route - estimated savings of \$35,000
- Four assistant coaching positions - estimated savings of \$10,000
- Three teacher associate positions.- estimated savings of \$60,000
- Delay on purchasing materials - estimated savings of \$50,000

Total amount of reductions would have been approximately \$330,000. We did not get into specific details of which programs/people would be reduced as the ISP allowed us to maintain current programming, e.g., not hurt student offerings or increase class size.

Increase Available Technology

The District appropriated approximately \$300,000 to upgrade and add computers throughout the district, added white board technology to elementary classrooms, as well as iPads to all elementary rooms. These expenditures were paid from the Secure an Advanced Vision for Education (SAVE) fund. However, training/professional development for use of this technology had to be paid from the General Fund. These costs are estimated at \$7,500.

Update Curricular Materials

The primary area of curricular material updates was in the area of grades 6-12 math; every middle school grade level and high school math class is using a new, articulated program this year. After researching multiple options, a committee of secondary math teachers and an AEA consultant selected Big Ideas Math. The selection of Big Ideas math was made for the following reasons:

- Provide continuity of math curriculum through the entire secondary program
- The program moves into conceptual thinking and application of real-world math
- Well-aligned with the Iowa Core.

Cost for these materials was paid from the Instructional Support Program, and totaled \$41,306, plus an additional \$5,500 for additional materials after the school year started. Further, professional development at the elementary this year is also in math, working on alignment within grades, with the Iowa Core, and preparing kids to move into Big Ideas Math at the secondary level. Curricular materials from the Iowa Core were provided to each elementary teacher; total cost of these materials was approximately \$12,500.

In conclusion, the Instructional Support Program has been a savior for Interstate 35 Schools; we have been able to not only maintain programming and class sizes, we have also been able to move forward with new curricular materials in math, and improved technology. Although difficult to track every ISP dollar as it goes into the General Fund, the district has used the additional revenue as was advertised prior to approval of the ISP by the Board of Education.