

### USD 409 To Hold Public Forum On Budget

(KAIR)--The USD 409 Board of Education will be conducting a public forum Monday evening, to give residents a chance to provide input for the 2015-2016 district budget.

Superintendent Susan Myers says the board is especially interested in the mill levy included in the budget. "We have four taxable funds. We have a general fund, a supplemental general fund, a capital outlay fund, and a bond and interest fund; and so we pay attention to the mill levy in all of those funds. The good news this year is that our proposed mill levy actually goes down a little bit from last year. The board likes to be able to hold that mill levy steady if at all possible...this last year, our mill levy was 57.109 mills, and this year it will be 56.914 mills. So it is down a little bit."

Myers adds that recent changes to public school funding at the state level also had an impact. She says that "what was done is whatever our budget was last year was pretty much frozen for the next two years, but what it does do, is...if we get new children, there is no advantage for that. We were funded back in the last formula on full time equivalency students, and so if you got additional students, it only makes sense that you need a little more money to educate those kids. That factor has been removed, all the weighting factors have been removed. If we have more children in poverty as measured by free lunch, that additional boost was taken."

Myers says the board is well informed, and she expects the budget to be adopted with little difficulty when it is voted on Monday evening after the forum. "We are very thorough in educating our board all through the budget process, and actually way before...the block grants...there was a lot of question marks on that, so we had a lot of different plans if we would be hit even more. The board is well aware and has asked their questions."

The forum will take place in the Board of Education Community Room at 5:30, and Myers says the meeting is open to anyone who may have questions or concerns about the budget. She also encourages anyone who wants more information to contact her at 913-367-4384.

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