

April 5, West Aurora Dist. 129 schools plan staff cuts

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This week, 128 West Aurora School District 129 staff members received notification that their positions have been eliminated.

Although some lost their jobs due to performance reasons, the large majority were let go for economic reasons, according to Christine Crouch, assistant superintendent of human relations.

Among the positions eliminated were 44 teachers and 84 staff support positions, which include custodial staff, bus monitors and mechanics.

“We’re trying to keep as far away from the classroom as possible,” Crouch said.

The staff cuts come just before District 129 residents vote April 17 on a request to increase the tax rate to \$3.53 per \$100 of assessed valuation. That would add up to an additional \$500 in the first year for a home valued at \$300,000.

Because the district is required by state law to give affected staff members notice before the referendum, some of the teachers whose jobs were cut may be asked back if it passes.

However school officials also must study the possibility of elimination or changes to some academic programs before they can determine how many that will be.

“There would be some asked back, but even if the referendum passed, not every individual would be coming back,” Crouch said.

The staff cuts are part of West Aurora’s effort to improve funding in the district. More than \$1 million a year in salary and benefits have been saved in the past two years by eliminating 12 administrator positions and two other central office positions.