



District 300 board hears silence over proposed cuts

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Community Unit District 300 school board members thought they might get an earful from parents Monday about the district's proposed cuts for the next two years.

They didn't get so much as a whimper.

No one addressed the board Monday on the proposed cuts, although a vote on the recommendations was moved from Monday to June 22 to allow more dialogue between parents and the board.

A big reason for that was the district's announcement last week that a proposal to reduce physical education for elementary school students is off the table because the district is already at the state-mandated minimum for physical education.

Still, other controversial proposed cuts, such as the elimination of the district's gifted program and the elimination of bus aides for preschoolers who lack special needs, did not generate a public response at Monday's meeting.

Superintendent Ken Arndt said the administration could look at saving money on bus aides but noted the logistical difficulties of keeping a bus full of preschool-age children safe.

"We don't want to spend money we don't have to," Arndt said, but added, "It's not going to work if we put 20 kids on a bus."

Board President Joe Stevens stressed that the panel that recommended cutting the gifted program intended to spur district educators to design a more effective program in its place.

"What we have is not acceptable," Stevens said. "They would have - to put together a program that would be supported."

District officials say the cuts are needed to avoid asking voters to approve another tax increase. The last tax hike passed in 2006. Cutting the bus aides could save more than \$400,000, according to the district.