



## Dist. 204 has balanced budget - for now

By Justin Kmitch | Daily Herald Staff

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Despite presenting the board with a balanced 2010 budget Monday, Indian Prairie Unit District 204 officials warned Monday that the current fiscal year is merely the calm before the storm.

By June 30, 2010, Assistant Superintendent for Business David Holm is predicting the district's \$284 million budget to have a surplus of about \$437,000.

One year later, in June 2011, however, he warned the district could be facing an \$8 million hole.

The surplus, Holm said, "didn't just happen." It is the result of nearly \$6 million in budget cuts coming from restructured service contracts, the addition of the federal lunch program and the district purchasing its own diesel fuel. About \$3 million in federal stimulus funds also helped add to the district's bottom line.

Holm warned, however, that some of those reductions may be more difficult to make next year.

"It's a positive fund balance of \$437,000, which is 15/100 of 1 percent (of the entire budget)," Holm said cautiously. "So it's balanced, but it's not much more than that."

For this year, Holm is predicting revenues from state sources to be about \$43.6 million for education and transportation but he said it's hard to predict any future revenue from the state.

"When we talk about how we do long term, the state's role is as big a factor as anything else," Holm said. "We're set up to be able to survive for a while but long-term, we really need the state to step it up."

To make sure all stones are overturned, Holm said the district has reformed the citizen's finance advisory committee, which he described as "a group of business folks we bring in to give us some financial advice and keep us honest."

In the coming weeks, Holm said the committee will be seeking more input from the community as they seek any "innovative or creative ways" to fill the gap.

During the Oct. 5 board meeting, Holm said he will provide a further update of the district's financial projection.

"We clearly have a lot of work ahead of us but I'm feeling pretty good about it," he said.