

**Germantown Elementary School  
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**Learning Comes from  
Everything and Everyone  
Around Us**

**germantownbulldogs.org**

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September 1, 2011

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

As I write this correspondence, we are two weeks into the 2011-12 school year. The transition into the new school routine has gone very smoothly. The students seem to be adjusting well. Hopefully, everyone at home is adjusting to the new routine as well.

The week before the start of the new school year, the Illinois State Board of Education notified schools that General State Aid was being cut by 5 percent. For Germantown, this cut equates to a loss of nearly \$45,000 in state funding from last year to this year. Along with this state cut, we are dealing with the loss of almost \$90,000 in federal money. Needless to say, our revenue has decreased significantly this year, yet the cost of purchasing supplies and providing services to educate the children is on the increase. While we have money in reserves to help us through these difficult financial times, we want to limit our use of that money because there is no way of knowing how long these financially troubling times are going to last. Last school year, we were able to trim approximately \$118,000 in expenditures from our budget. As a result of the cost cutting measures taken, we ended the fiscal year with a balanced budget. Due to the significant decrease in revenue we are experiencing this year along with the uncertainty of receiving state payments in a timely manner, we continue to look for ways to streamline our expenditures even more. Recent cuts we have made include:

- Decreasing the summer high school custodian hours.
- Eliminating the tuition based PreK assistant position due to decreased enrollment.
- Encouraging teachers to attend local workshops offered by the Regional Office of Education as opposed to Regional and State workshops that are more costly.
- Eliminating ITBS testing for kindergarten and grades 3-8. All grades will continue to be assessed in reading and math through AIMSWeb. Grades 3-8 will continue to take the ISAT.
- Spending less on paper and printing costs as a result of utilizing electronic newsletters

As a school district, we stand strongly committed to providing the students with a top quality education, thus we are limiting our cuts to only those that least impact curriculum and instruction.

Schools across the country are battling the same challenge we are facing here in Germantown, how to do more with less. Despite the challenges we face, we should consider ourselves fortunate to have a “savings” from which to pull in difficult times such as this. While we are by no means “broke”, it is imperative now more than ever that we make wise financial decisions. I am working closely with the Board of Education to do just that.

My office door is always open to anyone with questions, comments, or concerns. Feel free to stop by any time to discuss school finance or any other education related topic of your choice.

With warmest regards,

Robin Becker, Superintendent  
Germantown Elementary School