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# \$14.5M in school reductions proposed

The budgetary cuts would affect benefits, teacher workshops and other services

STORY SUMMARY | [READ THE FULL STORY](#)

The state Board of Education has proposed adding \$14.5 million in programs to a financial hit list because of the slowing economy.

The money funds 36 Department of Education positions, salary benefits, teacher workshops and other services that could be gone by the next academic year.

This week's suggested reductions raise the total to \$46.3 million -- but Gov. Linda Lingle has asked school officials to trim \$70 million from the DOE's \$2.4 billion budget because of the economy.

Officials added the new proposed cuts to the \$31.8 million in programs identified last week for possible exclusion.

The Lingle administration has asked state departments to prepare to lower expenses by up to 20 percent in the 2009-11 biennium as the state seeks to avoid a projected \$903 million deficit by fiscal 2011.

The current DOE plan crops almost 15 percent of its discretionary budget.

[By Alexandre Da Silva](#)

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FULL STORY >>

[By Alexandre Da Silva](#)

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About \$14.5 million that funds 36 state Department of Education positions, salary benefits, teacher workshops and other services could be gone by the next academic year under an increasingly leaner budget being prepared for Gov. Linda Lingle.

That is on top of 208 jobs -- some vacant, mostly at the state and district level -- as well as funds for everything from science textbooks to night security that could be slashed from Hawaii's public school system through an additional \$31.8 million identified for possible exclusion last week.

## FUNDING REDUCTIONS

Some major cuts in the latest proposal by the Board of Education:

Substitute custodian	\$2,406,905
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The suggested reductions -- now at \$46.3 million -- still fall short of nearly \$70 million that Lingle is considering trimming from the Education Department's \$2.4 billion budget because of slow economic growth.	Substitute clerical	\$1,729,914
	Substitute teachers	\$800,000
	Substitute security	\$264,736
	Communications	\$101,772

The Lingle administration has asked state departments to prepare to lower expenses by up to 20 percent in the 2009-11 biennium as the state seeks to avoid a projected \$903 million deficit by fiscal 2011. The current Education Department plan crops almost 15 percent of its discretionary budget. **Source:** Department of Education

While education officials have been carefully shaving administrative and extracurricular services, they warn that school programs will be affected as they reach deeper into the budget, possibly leading to more crowded classrooms and not as many tutors and materials.

"You try to keep it as far away (from schools) as you can, but you are still going to have an impact," said Schools Chief Financial Officer James Brese. "It may be less of an impact by not cutting directly at the school level, but you still have an impact."

Nearly half of the extra \$14.5 million in proposed cuts would come from employee health and Social Security costs if 244 positions, including a number of resource teachers and secretaries, are eliminated. **MORE DETAILS**

▶ **PDF no.1:**[Fiscal Biennium 2009-2011](#)

▶ **PDF no.2:**[Recommended Reductions](#)

"We are not going to have any fringe-benefit costs on those positions if we don't have them," said Schools Budget Director Adele Chong. ▶ **PDF no.3:**[Program and Impacts Overview](#)

Officials also are planning to limit workshops for teachers, resulting in savings as substitutes will be called less often to fill in for absent teachers being trained.

State Sen. Norman Sakamoto, chairman of the Senate Education Committee, said he believes schools can use existing money more efficiently, but he hopes Lingle will preserve school funding once she receives budget proposals from other agencies.

"I think that ... across-the-board cuts is not the best way to approach prioritizing the needs of our citizens," said Sakamoto (D, Salt Lake-Foster Village). "We can perhaps live with potholes and perhaps live with longer lines at the regulatory agencies, but we cannot live without our students expanding their horizons. They cannot catch up. They cannot repair what they missed in third grade."

A Board of Education committee will discuss the Education Department's budget recommendation at 3 p.m. Monday at McKinley High School's Hirata Hall.

The full school board is scheduled to make a final decision on Thursday, one day before the Education Department's deadline to submit its budget to Lingle.

The schools budget plan has been posted online at [www.doe.k12.hi.us](http://www.doe.k12.hi.us). The public can submit testimony to the school board by visiting the same Web site.

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