

Carlisle School Board wants state aid numbers

By RICK SELTZER, of The Patriot-News

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Carlisle Area School District's board of directors will send a letter to Gov. Ed Rendell and the state legislature expressing frustration at the prospect of having to pass a budget before knowing how much state aid to expect.

"It's getting worse," said board member Tim Potts, who drafted the letter. "This year is far worse than last year because of the economy and how we have different budget proposals at the state level. Also this year we don't know about the federal stimulus money. We don't want to put a tentative budget at the table that may be different from the one we adopt."

Last week the board approved a \$63 million tentative budget that includes a 4.9 percent property tax increase by a 7-2 margin. Board members Phillip Gillespie and Brian Guillaume voted against the budget, citing concern over the size of the tax increase.

District director of finance Tom Longenecker said that tax increase could be slashed significantly depending on the amount of federal stimulus money Carlisle receives. That uncertainty led the board to ask Potts to draft the letter to Rendell and the Legislature.

Carlisle is scheduled to approve a final budget at the school board's June 18 meeting. The latest the district could approve a final budget is June 30. The state also faces a June 30 budget deadline, but in recent years it has not had a budget agreement by that date.