

Ohio School for the Blind

Senate Education Committee

Meegan M. Michalek, Economist

Legislative Service Commission

April 30, 2003

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LSC Redbook for the Ohio State School for the Blind

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***Attachment: LSC Budget Spreadsheet, Executive to House Passed
Comparison***

April 30, 2003

Note: The estimated General Revenue Fund (GRF) spending for FY 2003 used in this LSC Redbook reflects the 2.5% reduction made as a result of the Governor's January 22, 2003 budget cut order. The executive reduction was applied across-the-board to FY 2003 GRF appropriations, subject to certain exceptions. Subsequent to such reductions (and not reflected in the Redbook), state agencies were permitted to reallocate the amount that each of their GRF appropriation line items was reduced, while still absorbing the 2.5% budget cut within the total amount of their GRF appropriations.

Ohio State School for the Blind

- A maintenance budget
- Overall increases of 3% in FY 2004 and 2% in FY 2005

OVERVIEW

Description of agency: The Ohio State School for the Blind (OSB), located in Columbus, is a state-supported residential educational facility that provides services to Ohio's school-aged children with visual impairments, including those children with multiple disabilities. Established in 1837, it was the first state-supported residential school for the blind in the United States. The State Board of Education supervises the School.

Under the Ohio Revised Code, section 3325.01, the School operates according to a charter from the State Board of Education and is under the control and supervision of the Board. The School follows the established minimum standards for the State of Ohio and the Rules for the Education of Handicapped Children (Rule 3301-51-04-C) promulgated by the Ohio Department of Education. The School was established in 1837; management and oversight of the school were transferred in 1927 from the Department of Welfare to the Ohio Department of Education.

The School's goal is to enable its students to become self-sufficient and contributing members of society. Accordingly, it is dedicated to their intellectual, social, physical, and emotional growth. The School's mission is to work cooperatively with students, families, and communities to provide effective, enjoyable educational experiences through specialized curriculums, equipment, materials, and individualized disability-specific instruction to develop its students' unique potentials.

The School divides its activities into three core programs: educational, residential, and buildings/grounds maintenance. The educational program provides instruction and support services to students with wide ranges of ability levels and achievements. The elementary and high school programs must meet the standards established by the Ohio Department of Education, and are accredited by the Department. The School also maintains an additional accreditation with the National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped.

The School's residential programming is geared toward the personal and social development of the students. Instruction in the daily living skills of eating, dressing, bathing, etc., is included in all aspects of the students' programs. Students receive speech and physical therapy based on the recommendations in their individual education plans. Students also participate in extracurricular activities, leisure activities, and competitive sports (i.e., swimming, track and field, wrestling, and cheerleading).

In terms of its physical plant, the school's maintenance program seeks to maintain the buildings and facilities, most of which date from the early 1950's and require continual repairs. The program also maintains the grounds and the school's equipment. It also provides for textbooks, other school supplies and materials, and food and utilities.

Enrollment: The Ohio School for the Blind has seen an increase of 25% in the number of children being served since the 1995-1996 school year. The increase can be attributed to the demand for appropriate educational services and programs for the blind and visually handicapped child. The program currently serves 126 visually impaired, blind, and multi-handicapped children from 68 local school districts throughout the state.

Teacher Salaries: Teacher salaries at both the Ohio School for the Deaf and School for the Blind are defined in the Ohio Revised Code (section 124.15(L)). The formula in the Revised Code specifies that the minimum salary for teachers is the average of the six highest paying school districts in Franklin County for the ensuing fiscal year. Salaries are then adjusted for education and experience accordingly. In school year 2002-2003, a teacher with a bachelor's degree and no experience would have a starting salary of \$33,596. Also, 5% is added to reflect that the school's teachers are special education teachers. The average per year increase in the starting teacher salary over the past five years has been 3.3%.

Overall budget funding recommendation: The following table indicates the major budget items for the Ohio School for the Blind (OSB). A complete listing is provided in the Analysis section.

Ohio State School for the Blind: Major Budget Items					
Fund	ALI	Description	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005
GRF	226-100	Personal Services	\$6,003,624	\$6,287,483	\$6,456,616
GRF	226-200	Maintenance	699,999	685,256	685,256
FSRF	226-626	Coordinating Unit	1,278,475	1,390,000	1,384,000
	Other	Equipment, grants, fees, gifts, Medicaid reimbursement	503,596	369,350	369,350
		Total	\$8,485,694	\$8,732,089	\$8,895,222
		Change from prior year	2.9%	2.9%	1.9%

Budget issues: The budget would maintain the school's essential operations; no major initiatives are planned. The primary issues that OSB faces for the biennium are the following:

1. **Technology:** The Ohio School for the Blind seeks to provide adequate equipment for blind and handicapped students. Electronic translator programs (braille to print), like Jaws and Duxbury, cost approximately \$300 to \$600 per machine. The Ohio School for the Blind has approximately 120 of these machines.
2. **Maintain Current Service Level:** The School will, as the budget allows, maintain current staff levels. According to state law, teachers will receive an estimated 3.3% increase in the salary schedule each year.
3. **Support Local School Districts:** The School continues to expand its outreach program to local school districts through multi-factor evaluations done on campus and visits to the

community to teach districts how to better serve their blind student populations. The Ohio School for the Blind serves approximately 200 children in 72 Ohio school districts.

4. **Maintenance:** The major issues arise from the age of the facilities, which continually require significant maintenance. A roof repair project and security improvements are two recent focus areas. Requests for a new school during the capital budget went unfunded.

No Child Left Behind: The passage of recent federal legislation (H.R. 1 or “No Child Left Behind”) has impacted all K-12 schools, including OSB. One of the major focuses of this legislation was student assessment tests. Currently all students at the School for the Blind take the Ohio Proficiency Exams, even though many are exempt from taking them under Ohio law due to multiple learning disabilities. The new federal mandate requires all students to take assessment tests. Reasonable accommodation must be given for handicapped students. One of the other major provisions in this legislation specified that all teachers must be “qualified teachers.” Although the federal government has yet to define what this means, OSB teachers Visually Impaired (VI) qualified. Visually Impaired qualified teachers are licensed to deal with visually impaired children. Visually Impaired teachers are in high demand because there are so few of them. Only two Ohio universities (Ohio State University and University of Toledo) offer VI certification at the graduate level. The two universities typically only produce one or two VI certified graduates a year.

ANALYSIS OF EXECUTIVE PROPOSAL

Ohio State School for the Blind

Purpose: The School provides primary and secondary educations to Ohio's children with visual impairments, including those with multiple disabilities.

The following table shows the line items that are used to fund this program, as well as the Governor's recommended funding levels.

Fund	ALI	Title	FY 2004	FY 2005
GRF	226-100	Personal Services	\$6,287,483	\$6,456,616
GRF	226-200	Maintenance	\$685,256	\$685,256
GRF	226-300	Equipment	\$121,355	\$121,355
SSR: 4M5	226-601	Work Study & Technology Investments	\$42,919	\$42,919
GSF: 4H8	226-602	Education Reform Grants	\$61,476	\$61,476
FSRF: 310	226-626	Coordinating Unit	\$1,390,000	\$1,384,000
FSRF: 3P5	226-643	Medicaid Professional Services Reimburse.	\$143,600	\$143,600
Total funding: Ohio State School for the Blind			\$8,732,089	\$8,895,222

Specific line items within SchoolNet that this analysis will focus on include:

- **Personal Services**
- **Maintenance**
- **Equipment**
- **Coordinating Unit**

Personal Services 226-100

The executive recommendation proposes \$6,287,483 in FY 2004 and \$6,456,616 in FY 2005, an increase of 4.7% in 2004 and 2.7% in 2005. This line item provides for GRF-funded salaries for teachers, youth leaders, staff, administrative personnel, as well as for purchased services. Six new positions that were requested for the upcoming biennium are unable to be funded at this recommended budget level. Based on history, the teacher salary schedule is expected to increase approximately 3.3% each year. Given the increase provided for 226-100, Personal Services, this salary increase appears to be funded in the executive request. No money is provided for purchased services in the 226-100 line item. Overall, purchased services account for less than 1% of the entire OSB budget.

Maintenance 226-200

The executive recommendation proposes \$685,256 in FY 2004 and \$685,256 in FY 2005, a decrease of 2.1% in 2004 and then no change in FY 2005. This line item provides for maintenance of the grounds, textbooks and supplies, computer usage and upgrades, food, and utilities. Additional smaller maintenance expenditures are supported by other line items, chiefly federal funds. Approximately 19% of this line item is usually dedicated to classroom needs. However, due to the age of the facilities, costs for repairs are increasing and are expected to decrease the amount of funds spent on classroom materials.

Equipment 226-300

The executive recommendation proposes \$121,355 in FY 2004 and \$121,355 in FY 2005, a decrease of 13% in 2004 and then no change in FY 2005. The Governor's recommendation fully funds OSB's request for this line item. The 300- line item will be used to purchase replacement equipment throughout the school. There is a continual need for replacement of housekeeping appliances within the dormitories, as well as lawn care equipment, and classroom equipment.

Coordinating Unit 226-626

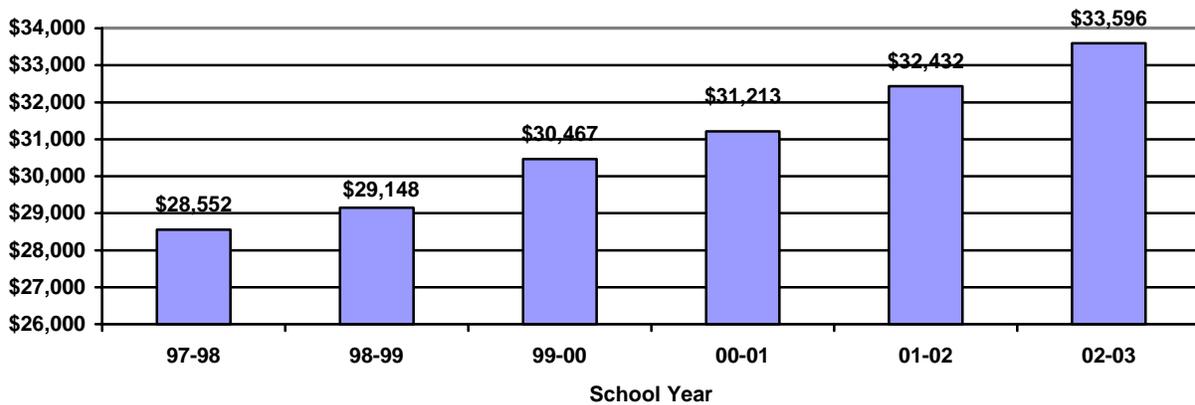
The executive recommendation proposes \$1,390,000 in FY 2004 and \$1,384,000 in FY 2005, an increase of 8.7% in 2004, and slight decrease of 0.4% in 2005. Funds in this line item are used to support multi-handicapped children, as well as some teachers' salaries. Of this line item's appropriation, approximately 93.8% goes towards employee salaries. These federal funds are distributed through the Ohio Department of Education on a discretionary basis, although funding has been fairly consistent.

ADDITIONAL FACTS AND FIGURES

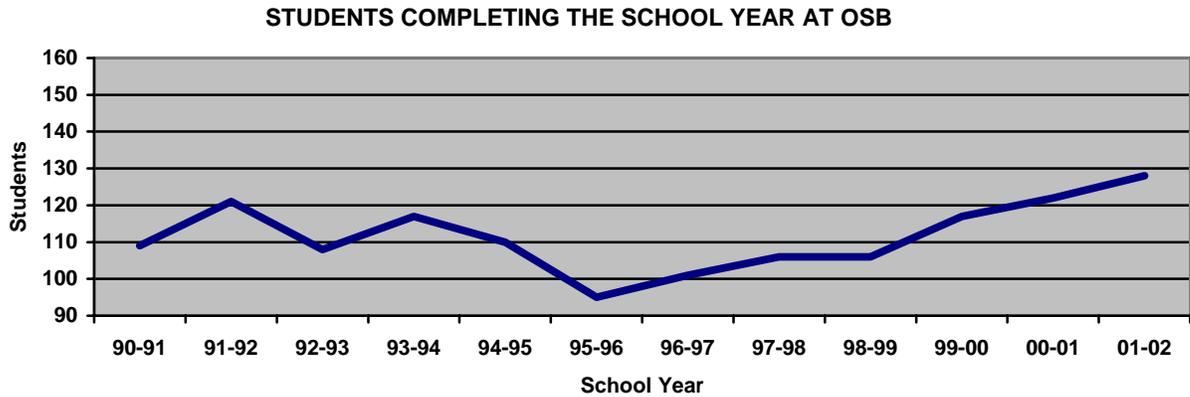
STAFFING LEVELS									
Source of funding	Fiscal year					Estimated			Recommended
	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	
GRF: Full-time	106	109	109	107	109	109	109	109	
GRF: Part-time	4	4	4	11	11	11	11	11	
Federal	25	24	24	22	23	23	23	23	
Totals	135	137	137	140	143	143	143	143	

- No new staff positions are recommended for this biennium.

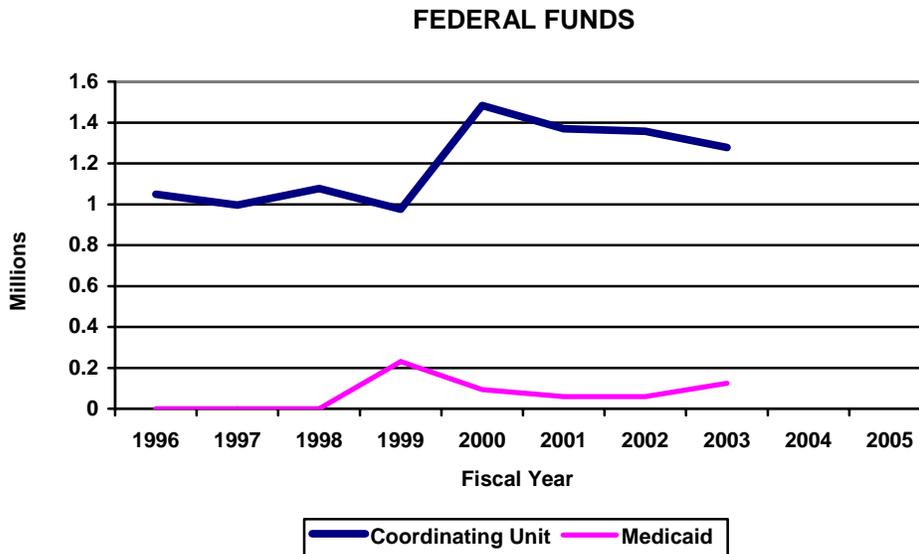
ANNUAL BASE TEACHER SALARY



- The Revised Code (section 124.15(L)) sets teacher salary at the School for the Blind and School for the Deaf. Base salary is calculated as the average of the six highest paying school districts in Franklin County.
- The above graph shows that since 1997, the salary for a teacher at the School for the Blind with a Bachelor's degree and zero years experience has risen 17.6%. Inflation in that same time period has risen 12%.
- Base salary has increased an average of 3.3% per year in the time period shown.
- Special Education teachers in the State of Ohio receive a 5% increase over the regular salary schedule amount.



- Attendance at the School for the Blind has increased 35% over 1995-1996 levels to 128 students completing the 2001-2002 school year.
- As of January 2003, enrollment is 126 students.



- The Ohio School for the Blind receives federal funds under two line items: the Coordinating Unit (310), and Medicaid (3P5).
- The Coordinating Unit is supported by seven different federal grants, by far the largest being the Title VI-B funds, which are used for the multi-handicapped students. The continuation and grant award amount each year is determined by the federal dollars received by the Ohio Department of Education. The largest portion of funds comes from Title VI grants. Over the past three years revenue flow from the fund has been fairly consistent. In FYs 2002 and 2003, OSB has experienced a 2.5% decrease in Title VI Discretionary Grants over FY 2001 levels. Included in this federal line item are federal receipts from the Child Nutrition Breakfast and School Lunch Program.

- The School for the Blind became Medicaid certified in 1997, and revenues received under this fund have increased ever since. The increase can be contributed primarily to two factors: increased student enrollment that are Medicaid eligible and the ability of staff to report services provided as they become more familiar with the requirements and reporting process. Approximately 45% of the students at the School for the Blind are eligible for Medicaid.

PERMANENT AND TEMPORARY LAW

This section describes permanent and temporary law provisions contained in the executive budget that will affect the School's activities and spending decisions during the next biennium.

There are no permanent or temporary law provisions with fiscal effects on this agency. Temporary law provisions specific to the previous biennial budget have been removed.

REQUESTS NOT FUNDED

Personal Services						
Fund Line Item	FY 2004 Requested	FY 2004 Recommended	Difference	FY 2005 Requested	FY 2005 Recommended	Difference
GRF 226-100	\$6,651,098	\$6,287,483	(\$363,615)	\$6,805,190	\$6,456,616	(\$348,574)

Requested items that would not be funded under the recommended budget:

- Without funding for the additional five instructional positions (Reading Specialist, Technology Coordinator, Academic Specialists, Orientation & Mobility Specialist, and Daily Living Skills Specialist), OSB will not be able to provide additional services to the students attending the school or implement the Outreach Program that would not only serve students at the school but also serve the blind and visually impaired students at local school districts throughout Ohio.
- The sixth new staff position requested was for an Air Quality Technician to service the new air conditioning units in the dormitories funded through the capital budget. Without qualified licensed staff to maintain these units on a daily basis, the life of this equipment will be shortened. As a result, this equipment will only be serviced when obvious problems occur.

Maintenance						
Fund Line Item	FY 2004 Requested	FY 2004 Recommended	Difference	FY 2005 Requested	FY 2005 Recommended	Difference
GRF 226-200	\$717,948	\$685,256	(\$32,692)	\$717,948	\$685,256	(\$32,692)

Requested items that would not be funded under the recommended budget:

- Approximately 19% of this line item is used to fund classroom materials, books, administrative needs, and residential needs. Because of the age of the facilities at OSB, needed repairs will continue to use up a larger portion of these funds. Therefore, this reduction in funding could have an impact on classroom instruction with lack of materials and updated textbooks.

General Revenue Fund

GRF 226-100 Personal Services

2000	2001	2002	2003 Estimate	2004 House Passed	2005 House Passed
\$5,483,398	\$5,478,595	\$5,861,254	\$6,003,624	\$6,287,483	\$6,456,616
	-0.1%	7.0%	2.4%	4.7%	2.7%

Source: GRF

Legal Basis: ORC 3325

Purpose: This line item provides funds for personnel and fringe benefits for the Ohio State School for the Blind.

GRF 226-200 Maintenance

2000	2001	2002	2003 Estimate	2004 House Passed	2005 House Passed
\$744,596	\$887,066	\$794,007	\$699,999	\$685,256	\$685,256
	19.1%	-10.5%	-11.8%	-2.1%	0.0%

Source: GRF

Legal Basis: ORC 3325

Purpose: This line item provides funds for general operation of the Ohio State School for the Blind, other than personal services and equipment.

GRF 226-300 Equipment

2000	2001	2002	2003 Estimate	2004 House Passed	2005 House Passed
\$57,312	\$76,115	\$126,109	\$139,201	\$121,355	\$121,355
	32.8%	65.7%	10.4%	-12.8%	0.0%

Source: GRF

Legal Basis: ORC 3325

Purpose: This line item provides funds for equipment for the Ohio State School for the Blind.

General Services Fund Group

4H8 226-602 Education Reform Grants

2000	2001	2002	2003 Estimate	2004 House Passed	2005 House Passed
\$52,024	\$15,475	\$28,507	\$131,476	\$61,476	\$61,476
	-70.3%	84.2%	361.2%	-53.2%	0.0%

Source: GSF: Three state grants: Venture Capital (FY 1999 funds are being carried over and being used in the current biennium); Ohio SchoolNet Grants; and Parent Mentor Support Program

Legal Basis: Section 100 of Am. Sub. H.B. of the 124th G.A. (established by Controlling Board on May 29, 1996)

Purpose: This line item provides state grants for school improvement in areas such as technology, parent support groups, and venture school improvement activities.

Federal Special Revenue Fund Group

310 226-626 Coordinating Unit

2000	2001	2002	2003 Estimate	2004 House Passed	2005 House Passed
\$1,483,662	\$1,369,992	\$1,357,705	\$1,278,475	\$1,390,000	\$1,384,000
	-7.7%	-0.9%	-5.8%	8.7%	-0.4%

Source: FED: CFDA 10.553, School Breakfast Program; CFDA 10.555, School Lunch Program; CFDA 84.027, Title VI-B Handicapped; CFDA 84.151, Drug Free Schools & Community

Legal Basis: Section 100 of Am. Sub. H.B. of the 124th G.A. (established by Controlling Board on September 22, 1956; originally established by H.B. 929 of the 101st G.A.)

Purpose: This line item contains federal moneys intended to support teachers' salaries, technology, Goals 2000, child nutrition, mobility training, and other activities in the federally funded multi-handicapped program. Of this line item's total appropriation, approximately 93.8 percent goes towards employee salaries.

3P5 226-643 Medicaid Professional Services Reimbursement

2000	2001	2002	2003 Estimate	2004 House Passed	2005 House Passed
\$92,909	\$59,407	\$58,813	\$125,000	\$143,600	\$143,600
	-36.1%	-1.0%	112.5%	14.9%	0.0%

Source: FED: CFDA 93.999, Community Alternative Funding System

Legal Basis: Section 100 of Am. Sub. H.B. 94 of the 124th G.A. (originally established by Controlling Board on February 9, 1998)

Purpose: This line item contains federal moneys for the reimbursement of expenditures incurred by the school in providing support services and specialized care for the Medicaid-eligible students. This line item was established after the school became Medicaid-certified in 1997; funds were first received in FY 1999. The funds may be used for general maintenance, equipment, and staff in-service.

State Special Revenue Fund Group

4M5 226-601 Work Study & Technology Invest

2000	2001	2002	2003 Estimate	2004 House Passed	2005 House Passed
\$26,341	\$42,493	\$16,540	\$107,919	\$42,919	\$42,919
	61.3%	-61.1%	552.5%	-60.2%	0.0%

Source: SSR: Donations; sales revenues (graphics)

Legal Basis: Section 100 of Am. Sub. H.B. of the 124th G.A. (established by Am. Sub. H.B. 152 of the 120th G.A.)

Purpose: This line item contains donations; it also contains funds earned from the vocational program's workshops (e.g., creating room and name signs for other state agencies).

LSC Budget Spreadsheet by Line Item, FY 2004 - FY 2005

<i>Fund ALI ALI Title</i>	<i>Estimated 2003</i>	<i>As Introduced 2004</i>	<i>House Sub Bill 2004</i>	<i>% Change Est. 2003 to House 2004</i>	<i>As Introduced 2005</i>	<i>House Sub Bill 2005</i>	<i>% Change House 2004 to House 2005</i>
<i>OSB School for the Blind, Ohio State</i>							
GRF 226-100 Personal Services	\$6,003,624	\$ 6,287,483	\$ 6,287,483	4.7%	\$ 6,456,616	\$ 6,456,616	2.7%
GRF 226-200 Maintenance	\$699,999	\$ 685,256	\$ 685,256	-2.1%	\$ 685,256	\$ 685,256	0.0%
GRF 226-300 Equipment	\$139,201	\$ 121,355	\$ 121,355	-12.8%	\$ 121,355	\$ 121,355	0.0%
General Revenue Fund Total	\$ 6,842,824	\$ 7,094,094	\$ 7,094,094	3.7%	\$ 7,263,227	\$ 7,263,227	2.4%
4H8 226-602 Education Reform Grants	\$131,476	\$ 61,476	\$ 61,476	-53.2%	\$ 61,476	\$ 61,476	0.0%
General Services Fund Group Total	\$ 131,476	\$ 61,476	\$ 61,476	-53.2%	\$ 61,476	\$ 61,476	0.0%
310 226-626 Coordinating Unit	\$1,278,475	\$ 1,390,000	\$ 1,390,000	8.7%	\$ 1,384,000	\$ 1,384,000	-0.4%
3P5 226-643 Medicaid Professional Services Reimbursement	\$125,000	\$ 143,600	\$ 143,600	14.9%	\$ 143,600	\$ 143,600	0.0%
Federal Special Revenue Fund Group Total	\$ 1,403,475	\$ 1,533,600	\$ 1,533,600	9.3%	\$ 1,527,600	\$ 1,527,600	-0.4%
4M5 226-601 Work Study & Technology Invest	\$107,919	\$ 42,919	\$ 42,919	-60.2%	\$ 42,919	\$ 42,919	0.0%
State Special Revenue Fund Group Total	\$ 107,919	\$ 42,919	\$ 42,919	-60.2%	\$ 42,919	\$ 42,919	0.0%
<i>Total All Budget Fund Groups</i>							
	\$ 8,485,694	\$ 8,732,089	\$ 8,732,089	2.9%	\$ 8,895,222	\$ 8,895,222	1.9%