

Area school districts bra

A time bomb is sitting in the laps of the commissioners of the high school sports leagues in California and it will explode the day the state budget surplus runs dry.

It will be then that the originally well-intentioned Proposition 13 will take full effect, forcing school districts to whittle their budgets to the bare bones.

And high school sports programs are included in those budgets.

The impact has already been felt on the Peninsula, with each school district making adjustments (which are outlined below) in its athletic program to tighten the outflow of cash.

Even though the problem is universal to all districts, each hopes to solve it independently, using different methods. "It's a district-by-district problem," said Dr. Frank Seely, assistant principal at Cubberley High and president of the Santa Clara Valley Athletic League's Board of Managers.

"We haven't had too many specific changes yet," Seely added. "We're going to postpone them until next year—we've been rescued by the surplus until then."

With a year of breathing room, district officials should have the time to plan an equitable solution. But if they wait until the money runs out to look for an answer, Prop. 13 could blow up in their faces.

Districts have two directions to choose between: 1. Find new ave-

nues to create funds, or, 2. reduce the budget by offering less.

Raising money seems the viable alternative and has already been implemented by the Sequoia Union High School District in order to maintain the diversity of sports offered in the South Peninsula Athletic League.

At least five ways exist to raise funds:

- Charge athletes to play.
- Institute seasonal fund raisers.
- Charge each student an "athletic fee" regardless whether he or she participates.
- Raise admission and concession prices.
- Cut pay of administrators and transfer excess to athletic programs.

The Sequoia District set a precedent last week, deciding to charge each athlete \$10 per sport with special arrangements for three-sport performers, families with more than one competitor and hardship cases—an historic, unanimous decision.

The result will be the continuation of a full sports program allowing maximum participation for students. All athletes share the load.

Fund raising from the community is another tact which could be pursued. The preps could take a tip from San Jose State's Spartan Foundation, which provides \$410,000 a year earmarked for athletics.

Again, the Sequoia District has been one step ahead of the other



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districts, raising \$9,000 from the community before school sessions had even started.

The new pay-to-play fee in conjunction with the fund drive will give the SPAL a significantly larger athletic program than many of the other Peninsula leagues, which have taken a different direction.

Rather than seek new sources of income, other districts have chosen to reduce the budget, using one or more of the following methods:

- eliminate district-funded transportation.
- reduce or eliminate non-league games.
- cut "minor" and non-varsity sports.
- reduce the coaching staff.

Consolidating sports programs would cut out a large number of athletes who play what some call "minor" sports. Just don't try to tell a water poloist, volleyball player or wrestler that his or her sport is minor—it just happens to be what they are suited for.

Regardless, that's the present direction of many districts.

Here's what changes Peninsula school districts have planned for athletics in 1978-79:

Santa Clara Valley Athletic

Sept - 19 Ps. 2

Fee set to take part in sports

A fee of \$10 per student to participate in high school interscholastic sports has been approved by the Santa Clara Unified School District Board of Trustees.

A maximum of \$20 per family per year may be charged. The board left it to the discretion of each school as to whether the fee will be paid by parents or through fund-raising projects.

Due to passage of Proposition 13, sports budgets at each of the district's four high schools were slashed by \$5,000.

A special fund will be established for families who cannot afford the fee. California law prohibits barring poor children from participating in any high school activity.

ce for Prop. 13 cutbacks

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Tom Stienstra

League (10 schools)—The first changes came a year ago—and the Palo Alto schools chose to drop golf and freshman sports. (By dropping golf, the district saved at least \$50 per school.) Apparently, no varsity sports will be cut this year, although the league has a coaching problem, according to Seely.

"On paper, we're offering all sports, but we've (Cubberley) lost four coaches," Seely said. "We've had a shrink in student numbers and thus less staff."

De Anza Athletic League (seven schools)—Transportation to and from athletic contests has been eliminated from the budget.

The Fremont Union High School District Board of Trustees eliminated 70 classified positions—leaving three bus drivers and one mechanic on the payroll—for a savings of \$220,000.

A full sports program will be offered.

South Peninsula Athletic League (five schools)—Each athlete will pay \$10 per sport to complement a \$9,000 fund raising drive. No athlete will pay more than \$20 for the year and consideration will be given for hardship cases. This will prevent the elimination of golf, lightweight basketball, frosh-soph basketball and tennis for boys, along with badminton and JV volleyball for girls.

West Catholic Athletic League (seven schools)—No problems or cutbacks are expected at any of the league's schools. Each school operates independently and relies on an "athletic fee" charged each student.